

The Ages 551

Chapter 551 - Primordial God Race, Soul Servan

The white-clothed youth shared the story of how Jun Shenxiao led an attack on the Southsky Sect, and even used the lives of three hundred thousand mortals. Autarch Qian was very patient throughout the white-clothed youth's story and listened carefully. He even asked, "So how did they lose in the end?"

"The other party seemed to have rescued everyone all of a sudden, allowing Li Wudi to kill my father in the chaos," said the white-clothed youth.

"You're telling me they dealt with the heavyweight first?"

"That's right."

Autarch Qian wasn't afraid the Decimo Dao Palace would use this tactic against him. That was the least of his concern.

"Father, this method isn't viable. Even if the Decimo Dao Palace is unstable, you need to be a saint to enter. Even if we captured the commoners, there's no way we can throw them in," said Dongyang Ling.

"You don't need them to be thrown in," Dongyang Yun sneered.

"What do you mean?" Dongyang Ling was still confused.

Autarch Qian suddenly laughed. Patting Jun Nianchang's shoulder, he said, "Men, reward this child with an empyrean manna."

Jun Nianchang rejoiced and immediately dropped to his knees. He was so happy that his face became distorted. "Thank you, Your Majesty. It's my honor that I can do my part to help!"

"Not bad. But it's not considered helping." Autarch Qian narrowed his eyes into slits.

"What?"

"I was just looking for someone who shares the same thoughts as me," said Autarch Qian.

The white-clad youth understood what Autarch Qian meant. Autarch Qian was an odd person; he would never share what was in his mind, but he would listen to what others said.

"Back down," he said.

"Yes!" The white-robed youth bowed and left. His face was distorted with excitement and pain. The hatred rooted deep in his heart had made him abandon his faith and will. It made him feel as though a sword was constantly stabbing his heart. But whenever he recalled what happened that day, he would be devoured by the demon in his heart.

After he left, Dongyang Ling asked, "Father, since we can't throw them into the formation, what use does this method have?"

"Who says I'm going to throw them into the formation?" Autarch Qian glared. His smile was so amicable that it looked adorable.

“Then what are you going to do?”

“Ninth brother, I’ll explain it to you,” Dongyang Yun said with a smug.

“Go ahead. Let me test your comprehension,” said Autarch Qian.

With confidence in his tone, Dongyang Yun explained, “Our objective is to lure them out of the formation. There’s no need for us to enter, we just have to bring them outside the Decimo Dao Palace and allow the Cyclic Mirror to absorb their fate souls for father to cultivate. Sooner or later, the dao palace will come out.”

“Don’t put it that way. I’ve had the Cyclic Mirror for four decades, and I’m feeling guilty about that toward my descendants. This time, I’ll have everyone from the Theocracy cultivate with the Cyclic Mirror. If the dao palace doesn’t come out, we’ll just carry on cultivating,” Autarch Qian interrupted.

His words excited Dongyang Yun. It had been over four decades since he had last touched the Cyclic Mirror.

Even Dongyang Ling was smiling. He replied, “That’s a good idea. The ancestors didn’t do it because it wasn’t good for our reputation. But our reputation doesn’t matter now. We have no other options, and we can only recoup our losses by eradicating the dao palace. Worse comes to worst, we’ll just change a batch of our citizens. Anyhow, they’re merely ants, and we don’t have to be concerned about what they think.”

“You’re partly right. There was another reason why the ancestors didn’t do it. There’s nothing we can do about the Evil Suppression Formation, even if we manage to draw them out. We won’t be able to shake their foundation with them hiding within the formation. But the moment they suffer greatly in their strength, the Evil Suppression Formation won’t be able to stop me anymore!” Autarch Qian smiled.

“Father, that’s wise! This is our only opportunity to turn the tables around!” Dongyang Yun exclaimed.

“Then let’s start. Fifteenth is still in the Grand-Orient Realm, get him to contact the Dazzling Pavilion and capture some ants from there,” Autarch Qian instructed.

“Father, how many are we going to capture? A million?” Dongyang Ling asked.

“Only one million? How is that enough?” Autarch Qian glared and continued, “At least ten million! Furthermore, we’ll carry on as long as the dao palace continues to hole themselves up.”

Dongyang Ling and Dongyang Yun trembled when they heard that.

“What’s the matter?” Autarch Qian asked.

“Father’s courage is unparalleled!” The two brothers emotionally fell to their knees.

“That’s enough. Stop flattering me. The Grand-Orient Realm might be a little far, but they have a huge population. Using those fish to feed the Cyclic Mirror, there’s no way the dao palace can stay inside.” Autarch Qian drank a cup of wine and laid on the ground.

He continued, “Go away. I’ll be taking my rest now. Prepare the kitchenware tomorrow, I’ll let you guys have a taste of my culinary skills. You guys should nourish your bodies. It’s too tiring to fight every day.”

“Understood!” Both Dongyang Yun and Dongyang Ling were emotional from the goodwill they felt from their father.

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In the Astral General Manor, Tianming’s upper clothes were open and Feiling was seated before him, staring at his chest. She sounded curious as she mentioned, “So your chest hair is also white.”

“What the hell are you talking about? Take a look at it!” Tianming smiled bitterly.

“Wow, you have muscles!”

“Focus here....”

“Hehe, you’re feeling shy?” Feiling laughed.

“No messing around.”

“Fine.”

She was now the fusion between innate and acquired godchild. Her gaze was on the nine red dots left on Tianming’s chest by the soul servants.

“Are the soul servants somehow related to the sovereigns? Or are they related to Perpetia?” Tianming asked curiously.

“I have no idea. Let me ponder about it.” Feiling’s god physique was unique. Her cultivation had reached the Heavenly Will stage and she could now protect herself, not to mention that she had tons of unusual means. Suddenly, she started tapping the red dots on Tianming’s chest.

“It doesn’t seem to be working.” Feiling smiled innocently.

“Then why the hell are you tapping my chest?”

“I’m messing with you. Hahaha!”

“You’re becoming more naughty. Here, take my claws!” Tianming pinned Feiling and started tickling her.

“I was wrong! Big Brother, please let me off!” Feiling’s hair was in a mess and she was breathing heavily.

“No way! I can bear teasing. You must be punished for provoking me,” Tianming said in a heavy tone. But just when he was about to resume the tickle torture, he felt a warm surge rising from his chest.

“What’s going on?” He lowered his head and saw one of the red dots starting to disappear. Shortly after, it seemed to have burrowed into his body, moving toward his consciousness and appearing beside the Imperial Will.

“What’s this?” Tianming discovered that the red dot started to change, transforming into a smaller Grand-Orient Sword before merging into his Imperial Will.

His body suddenly trembled. In that instant, many pictures started flashing before his eyes. Among them, he saw the Primordial God-Emperor. Tianming bypassed that thousand-meter-tall figure and saw

nine others standing before trillions of lifeforms. Those nine figures came in different forms, and Tianming was suddenly reminded of the nine soul servants.

Suddenly, one of them stepped forth and flew toward Tianming, who heard a voice echoing in his mind, "Primordial God Race's soul servant pays respects to the new sovereign!" But shortly after, that figure disappeared.

"Where are you?" Tianming asked, but there wasn't any reply. Suddenly, Tianming could sense his Imperial Will growing after the miniature Grand-Orient Sword merged into it. The Imperial Will had the shape of a Grand-Orient Sword to begin with. So when the two Grand-Orient Swords merged, his Imperial Will suddenly rose to a whole new level. When Tianming sensed the changes, his eyes lit up.

"The soul servant seems to have been released, but where the hell is he? Speaking of which, his appearance boosted the growth of my Imperial Will?" That was a piece of good news to him. After all, he still had eight more red dots. But right now, the most important thing to do was to cultivate and make a breakthrough.

"Cultivating just like that?" Feiling was dumbfounded. She leaned over and plucked a hair from Tianming's chest, then ran off. "Hmph! How dare you bully me!"

"Holy shit!" Tianming grimaced from the pain. But he was at a crucial moment and could only let her off. "Ling'er, just you wait!"

Taking the opportunity, he cultivated for the next three days. After absorbing enough saint crystals, he made a breakthrough to the third level of the sky saint stage.

The breakthrough this time around was unexpected. There's still eight dots remaining. It would be terrifying if they could assist me in making a breakthrough in my cultivation. Now that he was done with his cultivation, he immediately ran out and caught Feiling.

"What're you trying to do?" Feiling panicked.

"Press them for me. That's not it, do it harder!" In the end, Feiling could only comply with his manly request and start tapping on the eight remaining dots.

"Eeny, meeny, miny, moe, whoever I stop on will be the bastard Li Tianming," Feiling muttered in a low voice.

In the blink of an eye, half an hour had passed. By now, Tianming was certain that the soul servant's appearance had had nothing to do with Feiling. What happened previously was just a coincidence.

"Now you're finished!" Tianming chuckled. But right before he could make a move, the door suddenly opened. Li Qingyu was standing by the door, looking at the two.

"Y-y-y-you guys...."

"Don't you know how to knock?" Tianming raged.

"Big Brother, there's something urgent. Master has come from the Grand-Orient Realm, and there's trouble!" Li Qingyu replied.

Chapter 552 - Azure River, Skyreach River

Tianming rushed to the Decimo Sacred Hall. When he ran over, he saw a man in azure clothes with his back facing him. Li Wudi, Ye Yi, and Bai Mo were also there, along with Qin Jiufu, the South Hall King.

“Old Ye!” Tianming shouted. It had been some time since Tianming had seen Ye Shaoqing, so he missed him a bit.

“Tianming?” Ye Shaoqing turned around. Upon seeing Tianming, he furrowed his brows slightly and replied, “It’s been a long time. Your temperament has changed.”

Ye Shaoqing had been receiving tons of benefits from the Decimo Dao Palace, and his cultivation had reached the sky saint stage.

“You’re still handsome!” Tianming smiled. But sensing the grave atmosphere, he immediately wiped the smile off his face and stepped forth.

“Let’s not waste time. There’s trouble,” said Ye Shaoqing.

“What’s the matter?”

“After Autarch Qian was defeated, he disregarded his reputation, instructing Dongyang An and the Dazzling Pavilion to start capturing people in the Grand-Orient Realm and bringing them over. They’re clearly trying to use the fate souls of those commoners to force us out of the Evil Suppression Formation!” Bai Mo replied on Ye Shaoqing’s behalf.

“How despicable!” Ye Yi snapped.

“That’s not despicable, it’s cruel and mad!” Li Wudi squinted his eyes.

“How many people are they going to capture?”

“Judging from the commotion they’re causing right now, they’re aiming for at least ten million. Moreover, they’re very scattered. With the dao palace trapped here, it’s hard for us to go to the Grand-Orient Realm to stop them.”

Ten million, that was even more ruthless than Jun Shengxiao. Compared to Autarch Qian, Jun Shengxiao’s action seemed insignificant. Tianming now knew why the atmosphere here was so tense.

“Tianming, you still have no idea about something even more troublesome...” Ye Shaoqing gnashed his teeth.

“What is it?”

“After Li Wudi left the sect, I brought your relatives and hid them in a small kingdom in the south. But I never expected that we would be so unlucky. We ran into Dongyang An’s group, and all of them were caught. Only I managed to escape,” replied Ye Shaoqing.

“What?!” Tianming’s face changed. Li Wudi was afraid that Autarch Qian would use them to threaten them, and it just so turned out that their luck was indeed that bad.

“Calm down for now. The strongest among the group is your grandmother, and she’s only in the Heavenly Will stage. Dongyang An and the rest might not recognize them, and there’s a possibility that they’re hidden in the crowd,” Ye Shaoqing continued. Wei Tiancang and Jiang Chen were at the Vermillion Bird’s standard, while Li Jingyu wasn’t strong. So they shouldn’t be conspicuous.

“Do you know where they are right now?” Tianming asked. Li Jingyu was Li Wudi’s mother-in-law. But seeing how calm Li Wudi was, Tianming knew that they must’ve already come up with a solution before he came there.

“Before I came, I saw them packing hundreds of thousands of people into ten warships. They’re probably trying to travel by sea. Many people are escorting them, and traveling by sea is the most efficient method. They’ll probably take the two rivers, the Skyreach River and Azure River. I’m planning to intercept them there,” Ye Shaoqing spoke in a hurry, but he gave a clear account of what he had seen.

“The Dazzling Pavilion will probably take the same route as Dongyang An’s team, as well. That meant that Autarch Qian had given them orders to ship people from the Grand-Orient Realm as soon as possible!” Bai Mo added.

“The situation might seem bad, but isn’t it fine if we intercept them and save the people?” Tianming knew that he had to calm down. Ye Shaoqing had already come here, which had taken some time. That meant Li Jingyu and Wei Tiancang should be en route to the Divine Capital by now.

In the past, Autarch Qian had had to take a long detour to transport people over secretly, and it usually took a month. But now that he had been freed from those constraints, it would only take a few days!

“Tianming.” Li Wudi’s gaze blazed. “Hall King Bai will need to stay around to help Feng. Hall Master Ye has to command the Astral Legions to prevent them from sneaking an attack at us. So it’s down to a few Hall Kings and me. I’ll be going to the Azure River. As for you, you’ll head to the Skyreach River with the South Hall King.”

“What happens if Autarch Qian attacks the dao palace when we leave the Divine Capital?” Tianming asked.

“Autarch Qian has left the Divine Capital. He headed northwest, deep into the Desolate Realm. That’s the territory of wildbeasts, and there’s many ancient saintly spirit herbs there. I’m guessing they must be looking for something to reconnect the autarch beast’s head. If he comes back, I’ll have to rush back immediately as well,” said Li Wudi.

“So let’s take the opportunity while Autarch Qian is away and see if we can kill Dongyang An and the person in charge of the Dazzling Pavilion. The Ye brothers have seen them on the sea route, so we might still be able to intercept them if we go now. We should be able to save your relatives,” Bai Mo added.

“Okay, then I’ll be going with South Hall King.” Tianming nodded.

“If you encounter Dongyang An, just get someone to inform me. We’ll come and meet up with you guys. Dongyang An is the fifteenth prince, and he’s only weaker than Dongyang Ling and Dongyang Yun. The few of you won’t be able to defeat him,” said Li Wudi.

“Alright!” Qin Jiufu replied.

There was a high possibility that their enemies would take the sea routes, so they had to head over immediately.

“The Dazzling Pavilion began with commerce, their reach spreading all over the Theocracy. They have tons of outer members, with firm roots planted in many realms. It’s too late for us to return to the Grand-Orient Realm now. Let’s just hope that they’ll be going by the sea routes for efficiency,” Li Wudi said sternly.

“Those bastards. Are they going as insane as Autarch Qian?!” Tianming said furiously.

“Some time ago, didn’t he ask their entire army to think of a way to destroy us? Using the Cyclic Mirror to kill people of the Grand-Orient Realm came from them. However, I’m guessing that that must be a guise. This is something that only the Theocrats would do. Autarch Qian has already started losing his patience after suffering a loss,” Ye Yi sneered.

“People like him are hard to deal with, but they’re also easy to kill!” Li Wudi commented. He swiftly made his preparations to head over; he could manage an entire route by himself. “Old Ye, come with me.”

“Alright.”

Ye Shaoqing patted Tianming’s shoulder and said, “Don’t worry, they’ll be fine.”

He then started examining Tianming and continued, “I heard you can even kill a seventh-level sky saint. You’ve left me far behind, now. If you still call me master in the future, it’ll be embarrassing for me.”

“Let’s cut it short here. I have to get going as well,” said Tianming. He paused briefly, then continued, “Taking a master is a lifetime commitment, so you can’t get rid of me.”

“Well, fine. I can’t teach you anything about cultivation, so I’ll just teach you some kinky bed techniques....”

“Get lost.”

It was fortunate that Feiling wasn’t around, otherwise he would surely have his hair plucked again.

“Hall King Qin, please wait for me briefly. I’ll return shortly,” said Tianming.

“Go ahead. I still have to call a few more people to come along with us,” said Qin Jiufu.

Time waits for no one, and Tianming swiftly returned to the Astral General Manor and brought Feiling along.

“Big Brother, did something happen to granny?”

“Yeah. My grandfather, father-in-law, and Qingluan are together with them,” said Tianming. They were the most important people to both Feiling and Li Qingyu. When they heard what had happened, they were more nervous than anyone else.

Ye Shaoqing took them away to hide, but they had been unlucky enough to run into Dongyang An. With Ye Shaoqing’s strength, there was no way he could contend with those groups of people. So he had

immediately fled to find helpers. Otherwise, with his low strength, he would definitely drag Li Jingyu and the others down with him.

“What’re we going to do then? Are you and father going to intercept one river each?” Li Qingyu asked nervously.

“Yeah, don’t worry about it and wait for our good news.” Tianming couldn’t put an end to her worries. He was in a hurry and brought Feiling over to meet up with Qin Jiufu. Qin Jiufu also brought two people along with him—Bai Mo’s children, Bai Zifeng and Bai Zijun.

“Let’s go.” The group left the Decimo Dao Palace and quietly went out, heading toward the Skyreach River.

“They won’t deliberately detour, right?” Tianming asked.

“There’s only two routes that are the fastest. Otherwise, the time they’ll spend in transit will be longer than taking the land route. As long as Dongyang An is taking the sea route, there’s a high possibility that he’ll take one of the rivers,” Qin Jiufu explained.

Dongyang An used to be Jiang An, the Death Hall King, so Tianming was still familiar with him. He was sinister and ruthless.

Jiang An, you’re dead if you dare to hurt any one of them! There was a fire burning in Tianming’s heart.

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The stars were shining dimly that night, and the sea was calm. The waves couldn’t pose any threat to the ten Dazzling Warships. The Dazzling Warships were the most expensive sea transportation tool that the Dazzling Pavilion had. Not counting the cargo, it wouldn’t be a problem to accommodate fifty thousand people at the same time. If they squeezed them a little, they could even contain a hundred thousand people.

But the ten Dazzling Warships were wallowing low in the water, which showed that they were fully loaded. Surging through the sea, the huge warships broke through the wind and waves, heading north.

Chapter 553 - Dazzling Pavilion’s Pavilion Lord, Meng Yifeng

The Dazzling Warships were silent. Only heavy breathing could be heard, along with occasional sobbing and whimpering. But the voices were soft and filled with fear.

“No one’s allowed to make a sound. Throw anyone who makes a sound to the bottom of the sea to feed the fish! There’re many wildbeasts in the ocean, and they can easily gobble all of you up,” a rough voice rang out from the tenth warship.

Instantly, the whimpering died down. Amid the darkness, the warships could be seen filled with people. Many people were squeezed together. They didn’t even have any room to move about. With all the stench combined, the storage cabin was heavily polluted.

Many people had tears rolling down their cheeks, but they had to cover their mouths because they would face death if they made a single noise. To them, the sky saints from the Dazzling Pavilion were like gods who could easily determine their fate.

Their eyes were trembling with despair. All of them had fear written on their faces, not knowing what was awaiting them. They also had no idea who these people were, or why they captured them. The melancholy atmosphere had been growing for the past several days.

Suddenly, a burst of laughter rang out and someone shouted, "Open the cabin!"

"Yes, pavilion lord!" The overhead deck opened and light penetrated the storage cabin. Everyone in the hold had despair on their faces. A middle-aged man stood outside. He wore luxurious clothing decorated with jewels and jades. He was fat, with beady eyes and a wretched expression. At first glance, anyone could tell that he wasn't a good person.

His name was Meng Yifeng, the elder brother of Meng Tingyu, and he was the new pavilion lord of the Dazzling Pavilion.

"Hello everyone," Meng Yifeng said, eating a roasted chicken drumstick in his hand.

The cabin was shrouded in dead silence. Everyone was trembling with fear and looking at Meng Yifeng as though he was a demon.

"Relax. I'm bringing you guys to experience life in the Theocracy and broaden your horizons," Meng Yifeng said with a smile. However, no one answered him.

"Ugh, you guys are boring." Meng Yifeng flung his drumstick aside. His expression grew cold, and he glanced at everyone. He raised his voice and announced, "Then I'll say something honest to you guys. My real purpose is to escort you to His Majesty. They'll be cooking you to reward the whole army. So you guys will all be cooked in the capital."

His words had thoroughly frightened everyone. When the first person started crying, everyone else also had their emotions infected.

"Is that true?"

"Why? Where is the Divine Capital? Are these people gods?"

"Any one of them could kill the king of our Northern Kingdom...."

"Stew us? Are they cannibal monsters?"

Everyone started crying.

"I'll count to three. If I still hear a noise coming from you after I reach three, I'll throw them into the sea." Meng Yifeng smiled. His voice then echoed through the hold, "One! Two! Three!"

After he counted to three, there was dead silence. "Haha!" Meng Yifeng laughed. "Listen well. If you know any core figures of the Grand-Orient or Southsky Sect, report them immediately. Not only will I release you, but you'll also be rewarded. I promise that you'll enjoy a lifetime of riches. How is it? Is it tempting? This is your only chance not to be stewed!"

For a while, everyone was looking around, trying to find an opportunity. In front of death and fear, this might only be their opportunity. So who wouldn't try and grab it?

Suddenly, an ecstatic voice sounded out, "Lord! I know! I'm here!"

“Make way,” said Meng Yifeng. When he stepped into the cabin, the crowd immediately made way for him. Everyone looked at Meng Yifeng in a panic with fear in their eyes.

Meng Yifeng noticed a woman with messy hair and ragged clothes in a corner. He walked forth and brushed her hair aside. “Not bad. With your appearance, you can be a whore in Romance Street. What’s your name?”

“Reporting to the lord, my name is Su Wuyou.” The woman’s voice trembled.

“Not bad. You were able to reach the Heavenly Will stage in the Grand-Orient Realm at such a young age. In the future, after I pamper you, you might even become a sky saint. Not bad. Not bad. I never expected to find a gem like you here.”

The woman looked at Meng Yifeng’s plump body and felt disgusted.

“Come, stand up.” Meng Yifeng grabbed her arm and lifted her. Rubbing the dirt off her face, he was even more satisfied with her appearance and smiled. “Not bad. You’re truly a gem with that figure of yours. If you manage to grasp this opportunity and point out the Grand-Orient Sect’s core figures, I’ll take you as my concubine.

The woman trembled and blankly looked at the person before her. Her heart sank into the abyss when she heard what he said.

“May I ask about your status in the Divine Capital and your cultivation...” she lowered her head and asked in a trembling voice.

Meng Yifeng laughed. “Did you guys hear that? This beauty is pretty smart. She’s even asking about my identity before following me. It looks like she’s pretty prideful.” Meng Yifeng laughed, then continued, “However, I like clever little vixens like you!”

He grabbed her chin and said, “You’re looking at Meng Yifeng, the pavilion lord of the Dazzling Pavilion, one of the three major powers under the Ancient Theocrats. My cultivation is in the sixth level of the sky saint stage. How is it? Am I worthy of you now?”

Meng Yifeng didn’t care about the dirt on her and wrapped his arm around her waist. When the woman heard what he said, she completely relaxed. With a smile, she made up her mind. This person was two levels higher than Jun Shexiao, not to mention that he even had such a high position in the Divine Capital—so what if he was ugly?

From facing death to sudden prosperity, it wasn’t an opportunity that everyone would have. When she was young, she loved a youth deeply, but he had already died. She had also long forgotten those matters. The world was a mire, where the strong prey on the weak.

“My lord, I used to be a disciple of the Grand-Orient Sect, and my clan was also from the Grand-Orient Sect. I know everyone around Li Wudi and Li Tianming. Before Li Wudi left for the Divine Capital, he dismissed the Grand-Orient Sect. His relatives and I headed in the same direction, and when I was captured, I saw them coming aboard the same warship as me. That means they’re here! I know them, and can point them out to you!” Su Wuyou said while gnashing her teeth. Her gaze gradually turned fanatical.

“Such a coincidence? Who are they?”

“Li Wudi’s mother and Li Tianming’s grandfather,” said Su Wuyou.

“Li Wudi’s mother?!” Meng Yifeng hadn’t expected to find such a big fish. He was already satisfied with finding such a beauty, so he wasn’t expecting someone like Li Wudi’s mother to be there, too!

“Quick, find those two for me right away! You’re really my lucky star! I like you even more now!” Meng Yifeng laughed so hard the fat on his chin jiggled.

“Okay.” Su Wuyou narrowed her eyes.

“Let’s start immediately! Men, come and assist her!” Meng Yifeng said. There were a hundred thousand people here, and it wouldn’t be easy to find two people among the crowd. However, Meng Yifeng had plenty of time.

“My lord, this here is the elder sister of Li Tianming’s woman, Jiang Qingluan,” Su Wuyou said with an indifferent voice.

“Bring her out.”

In the end, a woman was brought out. When she came out, Su Wuyou slapped her.

“You bitch!” Jiang Qingluan glared at her, trembling with anger.

“Go to hell!” Su Wuyou sneered and continued identifying others.

“My lord, this is Li Tianming’s father-in-law.... This is Li Jingyu, Li Wudi’s mother.... This old man is Li Tianming’s grandfather. Their entire family is here too! This is his uncle, younger brother, and sister.” Su Wuyou didn’t let any of them off.

“My lord, this is my younger sister, Su Yiran.” Su Wuyou then brought out an even more bewitching woman.

“Your sister?” Meng Yifeng’s eyes lit up instantly. “Very well. Your younger sister doesn’t have to die. I’ll take both of you with me!”

He then glanced at the crowd Su Wuyou had identified before his eyes fixed on Li Jingyu. The old woman was looking at him and Su Wuyou furiously.

“The cheapskate of the Su Clan hasn’t disappointed us indeed...” Li Jingyu said with bloodshot eyes.

“Cheapskate? I get to live, but you’re going to die. Who’ll know what I’ve done after you die?” Su Wuyou smiled.

“You dirty whore. You know it yourself. Do you still need others to know about it?” Jiang Qingluan asked. When she was following Ye Yuxi, she had encountered Su Wuyou several times.

“I’m dirty?” Su Wuyou smiled coldly. “My lord, she has no place in Li Tianming’s eyes. Do you want to keep her for yourself?”

“Presumptuous! Do you think that I’ll accept any woman?” Meng Yifeng said solemnly.

Walking forward, he looked at Jiang Qingluan and smiled. "But this one is alright. Men, bring the three of them to my room!"

"You?!" Jiang Qingluan said with despair on her face.

"Do you understand now? Don't pretend to be noble before me. Since I'm in this state, how can I possibly let you live comfortably?" Su Wuyou bit her tongue, stimulating herself with the taste of blood in her mouth. Under her triumphant gaze, Jiang Qingluan was forcibly escorted away. Not even Li Jingyu could do anything about it.

"Wash yourself clean. I'll come see you after I send them to the fifteenth prince." Meng Yifeng smiled.

"Okay." Su Wuyou left. She didn't feel anything anymore, as this was simply her life now.

Chapter 554: Realm of Despair

At the top level of the first Dazzling Warship...

"Are you done washing yourself?" Meng Yifeng said as he pushed those around him aside. His pudgy lips curved into a smile as he pushed his door open and entered his room.

"We're done. She isn't cooperating, though," Su Wuyou said, trying her best to sound coquettish. The two women were ready and waiting for their honored guest.

"You look wonderful, like a lotus out of water. Amazing, amazing!" Meng Yifeng stared them down, relishing the beautiful sight. It wasn't that he hadn't seen his fair share of beauties before, but these two had a special air about them.

His refined taste allowed him to immediately spot how awkward Su Wuyou was. He then turned to the side and saw a nervous girl standing there silently the entire time.

"Just watch for today. You need to learn how to serve," Meng Yifeng said.

The girl shriveled up in the corner upon hearing that. Su Wuyou had been stroking his neck as he spoke. She hugged the man from one side, and her sister, Su Yiran, did the same on the other.

"Jiang Qingluan, it's your turn. I'd like to see if you're able to endure it without crying out for help," Su Wuyou said as she bit her lip. She didn't have any grudges with Jiang Qingluan, but she decided she would hate her for her innocence. She wanted to drag everyone down to her level.

Jiang Qingluan didn't reply. She had secretly taken out a small dagger from her spatial ring. That was her answer to Su Wuyou's question. Just like that, they exchanged glances. Before she started serving the man, Su Wuyou pulled down the curtain.

Jiang Qingluan closed her eyes as she resolved herself to die. The security outside was too strict, so there was no way she would be able to escape. The only way out for her was by taking her own life. Placing the dagger against her neck, she was about to pull it across.

All of a sudden, someone appeared beside her and grabbed the dagger. She started and turned back, only to see a face she would never even have dreamed of seeing here. She hadn't seen the black and gold irises before, but his white hair was unmistakable.

"Shh!" he said as he put a finger to her lip.

"Mmhm!" She felt her tears flow and dared not say a single word. All she did was furiously nod. Tianming then snuck his way inside. Though she had wanted to warn Tianming that Meng Yifeng was incredibly powerful, she couldn't do a thing lest she alarm the man. All she could do was to trust Tianming.

Right then, Tianming's figure flashed as he charged inside. The two enchanting women within were currently helping Meng Yifeng disrobe, much to his enjoyment.

Without saying a word, Tianming split the Invincible Sword Ki-infused Grand-Orient Sword into two. He had moved so quickly that the moment his black sword flashed out, it had come thrusting toward Meng Yifeng.

In an instant, his saint palace was shattered. With an audible schlick, Tianming pulled the black sword out before thrusting the gold one into his mouth.

"You'd not let your lifebound beast out, or this will go through your head," he threatened as he pushed the fat man's head tightly against the wall.

"Mmmwwahhh! Whhh!" Meng Yifeng's mind was completely blank. He was in so much pain that he teared up. Even without looking, he knew that his saint palace had been ruptured, causing his saint springs to completely collapse. The spiritual energy he had gathered seeped out toward the two beauties as he ended up crippled. The pain in his mouth mingled with the despair he now suffered.

"Li..." He widened his eyes in disbelief and thought his eyes were playing tricks on him. At the very least, Tianming should have been someone he could fight on even ground, yet he had been crippled in a single instant. That wasn't something he could accept at all.

"So you're the one who calls the shots at Dazzling Pavillion?" Tianming asked.

"Yweah!" Meng Yifeng was crying nonstop. His body shook with the fear of death as his bowels and bladder gave out.

"What's your relationship with Meng Tingyu?"

"Brwotha." With the blade in his mouth, all he could do was answer the questions as best he could.

"I didn't think someone as amazing as Meng Tingyu would have an ugly and weak elder brother like you. How unbelievable," Tianming mocked.

"Mmmhh..." Meng Yifeng's eyes were filled with despair.

Jiang Qingluan watched everything from the entrance. She was all sorts of shocked, with her eyes wide and mouth agape. Her mouth was wide enough to stuff a whole toad in.

The godlike pig in her eyes had been crippled with a single strike. Only when she heard Tianming and Meng Yifeng's conversation was she convinced that she was truly safe. Just as she was about to celebrate, however, she recalled something even more crucial.

"Tianming, my dad, Li Jingyu, your grandfather, and the rest have been brought to someone they call Fifteenth!"

"Dongyang An?" Tianming's gaze turned even colder. He had been quite lucky to find the warship right after reaching the delta where the Skyreach River connected to the sea. Bai Zijun had gone looking for Li Wudi and Tianming had decided to infiltrate the first warship, only to find Su Wuyou, Su Yiran, and Jian Qingluan in these chambers. After some waiting, he saw Meng Yifeng return and soon got a rough grasp on what was happening, based on their conversation.

Even though Li Wudi had asked him to seek him out immediately if he spotted Dongyang An, this case was different. If even Jiang Qingluan had noticed it, the others had definitely been exposed. There was no time to wait for Li Wudi, so he decided he would cripple Meng Yifeng for good first, before doing anything else.

"Which ship is Dongyang An on?" Tianming asked as he held his sword against the man's throat.

Meng Yifeng couldn't speak, so he showed two fingers.

"I'll take you with me while I go looking for him. If you lied, I'll kill you on the spot," he said.

"Mmmwwh!" Meng Yifeng changed his hand to show five fingers. It appeared that he had lied. Tianming wrapped him up with the Three-Thousand Starfield.

"If you want to live, work with me."

"Understood!" Meng Yifeng spat out fresh blood and knelt. All that had happened as Su Wuyou and Su Yiran watched. They had lost hope long ago, and were blankly staring at Tianming. The youth that had defeated the two of them had actually managed to defeat someone powerful enough to force them to relinquish all the dignity they had. Seeing Meng Yifeng kneeling and shivering like a weak little chick before them, their worldview collapsed.

"Su Wuyou," Tianming said as he approached the two with his sword. "Ever since Yuwen Taiji died, my godfather allowed the Su Clan to live on account of the contributions your family had made to the sect. I didn't think the two of you would repeat your mistakes. There's no third chance after your second, you know."

"Got it. Kill me then. Since Shendu died, I've already lost all hope for this world." Su Wuyou closed her eyes as tears of blood flowed from them.

"Oh? Do you think I'll forgive you just because you sound like you figured life out? Su Wuyou, your worldview is too shallow. All you see is cruelty and ruthlessness, and you think the whole world out there is like you. At the end of the day, you're just using that as an excuse to justify your own bad behavior. You must pay the price for your mistakes. Had you not made this choice, I would've saved you today, but since you have, you must accept the consequences."

She shook and continued bawling. "You're too terrifying! I don't ever want to see you again! You destroyed everything I had!"

"Goodbye, then."

Though others would pity those two, Tianming didn't. However, he did end their suffering.

.....

Tianming quietly left with Jiang Qingluan and Meng Yifeng before meeting up with Qin Jiufu and Bai Zifeng after getting off the warship.

"Hall Kings, our family has been sent to Dongyang An on the fifth warship," Tianming said bloodthirstily.

"If their identities were exposed, they're in danger. Li Wudi still needs some time before he can come," Qin Jiufu said.

"I have a plan, Hall King Qin."

"Let's hear it."

"Dongyang An's the only one who poses a real threat. The others are fifth level and below sky saints, so they won't be able to take you two on. Once I lure Dongyang An away, you can charge in to save the hostages. Does that work?"

"You'd be in too much danger that way. Why don't I do the luring?" Qin Jiufu said.

"No, let me. Dongyang An won't bother chasing you down," Tianming said, knowing full well how much the Theocrats wanted to kill him.

"Are you sure, Tianming?"

"Most certainly. Please don't worry."

When Qin Jiufu and Bai Zifeng recalled that Tianming was even able to kill Zhao Chenhong, they knew he was the strongest among them.

"Alright, let's not waste time," Qin Jiufu said.

Tianming left Meng Yifeng and Jiang Qingluan with them. "If Dongyang An isn't on the fifth warship, kill Meng Yifeng immediately."

"Alright."

Meng Yifeng shuddered again. He didn't dare to lie under these circumstances. Though Feiling wanted to talk with Jiang Qingluan, they didn't have time, so they quickly parted.

"It's the second time you got caught! Why are you so unlucky?" Tianming said.

"How would I know? Must be all the bad luck you're giving off!" Jiang Qingluan said. Last time, she had been Jun Nianchang's hostage.

"Well, I'll make it up to you with some treasures."

"That's more like it!" It seemed she had recovered from her harrowing experience.

After that, Tianming dove into the water and snuck his way onto the fifth Dazzling Warship. "Theocrats... once Dongyang An is dead, it'll soon be your turn!"

Tianming hadn't come to save lives.

He had come to take them.

.....

The fifth warship's security detail was comprised of nobody but Theocrats. Once Tianming made sure of it, he returned to Qin Jiufu. "Hand me this man," he said as he approached Meng Yifeng.

"What... what are you doing?! I didn't lie!"

"It no longer matters." Tianming killed him immediately.

.....

At midnight, the body of a person and a lifebound beast fell on the deck of the fifth Dazzling Warship.

"Li Tianming!" The yell shook the whole ship.

Chapter 555 - I Only Need One Move to Kill You

Everyone near Dongyang An on the fifth warship was a Theocrat, and they easily identified Tianming based on his white hair and oddly-colored eyes. They were at the delta where the Skyreach River met the ocean and were shocked to see their archenemy there.

"It's the corpse of the Dazzling Pavilion Lord!"

"He killed Meng Yifeng!"

Frightened cries rang out all over the place.

"Who's in there? Come out and die!" Tianming yelled as he struck out with his chain the moment he got on the deck. The sparkling chain pierced through tens of Theocrats at a time. With a heavy swing, the corpses were flung away. "Come out!"

Right at that moment, the door blasted open as Dongyang An, clad in a black robe, appeared before him. "Li Tianming... the path to heaven is wide, but you kicked in the gates of hell instead...." Back when Dongyang An was the Death Hall King, he was only inferior to Bai Mo alone. Now, he was an eighth-level sky saint and still had a decade or more to improve.

"It's you?" Tianming immediately turned and left when he saw him, though it was but an act. Tianming was far too important to the Theocrats, so Dongyang An didn't even stop to think about the details. If he caught Tianming, he would be able to force the Decimo Dao Palace to their knees. There was no way he would let him leave. Without another word, he immediately gave chase.

Two figures whooshed through the sea at blinding speed. Dongyang An seemed like a storm as waves formed wherever he flew past. When Tianming turned back, he saw that Qin Jiufu and Bai Zifeng had taken the chance to board the fifth warship. They immediately launched into a slaughter. The Theocrats didn't have many elites remaining, and couldn't hold up against them at all.

Soon, Tianming spotted Li Jingyu and Wei Tiancang and breathed a sigh of relief when he saw that they were fine. However, that didn't quell the rage he felt in the slightest, having had his loved ones taken from him.

Dongyang An was flying across the ocean so quickly that the waves splashed all over him. "What in the world are you up to...." Something immediately occurred to him and he turned back and saw the hostages being rescued. He couldn't help but laugh as he turned back to Tianming. "A bait and switch, eh? Tianming, don't you know that one of you alone is worth far more than a million of them?"

"Of course I do. But I bet there's something you don't know, Fifteenth Highness." Tianming wielded the Grand-Orient Sword in one hand as he spoke. All of a sudden, a gigantic beast surfaced from the ocean and propped Tianming up and a fiery phoenix landed on his shoulder. When Dongyang An turned back, he even saw a little black cat standing on the surface of the ocean with black lightning surrounding it, sealing off his escape route.

Dongyang An chuckled and said, "Is that all?"

Back during the battle for the Decimo Sky and Earth Ranking, Tianming was only on the same level as Dongyang An's grandson, Jiang Chengfeng. Yet here he was, coming right for him a few months later. "I know you progress really quickly. You even defeated Wei Ji with Ye Lingfeng. If you really did break through to the eighth level of Sky Saint, I'd mistake you for a god."

Dongyang An took out his saint beastial weapon from his spatial ring. It was a trident called the Onyxfiend Seagod. Like its namesake, it was pitch black all over. Its prongs were razor sharp, and it bore eighty-three saintly heavenly patterns. Wielding the impressive trident, Dongyang An seemed like a demonic ocean spirit.

With a loud splash, an eight-headed hydra fell onto the ocean surface. It was covered entirely in black scales that were adorned with spiky bones that poked out from its body. The number of heads it had meant that Dongyang An was exceedingly talented. But the most terrifying part about this hydra was its tails—not only were they thin and long, they had stingers and numbered in the hundreds. The spearlike tips also sported barbs that could easily allow the tails to tear out chunks of flesh. The tails looked like they could function like Tianming's Three-Thousand Starfield; each of them were twenty meters long, and they spread out like the hair of a demon.

The beast was called a Hundred-Tailed Blackhell Hydra and had eighty-one stars. It was an eighth-order saint beast and was rare even in the Divine Capital. As it had attributes of water and poison, it was quite adept at fighting at sea. Its wide paws allowed it to efficiently paddle through the water and its tails were functionally like torpedos, striking from the hidden ocean depths.

"You'll know if I'm a god if you test me out." Tianming flapped Celestial Wings and Feiling controlled the whole region with Temporal Field. His white hair fluttered from the ocean breeze as he charged toward Dongyang An, all three of his lifebound beasts joining in the attack in unison.

"Don't you know how to spell the word 'death'?" Dongyang An said with a smile.

"Of course. I used Dongyang Fengchen's corpse to spell that word, after all. He didn't know how to spell it, so I taught him by example."

Dongyang An felt his head begin to ache. "For the Decimo Dao Palace to produce such a cruel father and son... I see that they've gone against their principles."

"You're wrong. We're not cruel. We just don't regret meting out heaven's judgment! The Nineshades Clan deserves to be exterminated for the evil deeds you refuse to stop committing! Dongyang An, I'm not the one here to claim your life—the heavens will it!"

A fierce battle erupted at sea. Dongyang An's hydra roared and dove underwater to execute Blacksea Hell, causing the waters around them to swirl into a black vortex. The hydra let its venom seep into the water, causing it to bubble, emit black smoke, and even burn with poisonous black flames that began surrounding Tianming.

With a great roar, Lan Huang also dove into the ocean with its huge body. Its Mountainsea World allowed it to temporarily stave off the effects of the venom, but that didn't stop the hydra from sending its hundreds of tails coursing toward Lan Huang, Tianming, and the rest.

An explosion rippled underwater, sending countless waves rising up toward the skies. Lan Huang struck out with Annihilation Godsword and cut off one of the hydra's tails, causing it to shriek in pain. However, the tails still managed to break through the Mountainsea World and pierce Lan Huang's abdomen. The nine kui seas around its abdomen spun rapidly to disperse the fearsome piercing power of the tails, however. Lan Huang had a shell into which it withdrew its heads, talons, and tail, thus avoiding most of the damage.

At the same time, Ying Huo's Sixpath Infernal Lotus set Dongyang An's body alight, forcing him to separate from his hydra. As he and his beast were only two fighters, ganging up on them was the best tactic.

Misty Hellthunder then came thundering down on the Blacksea Hell vortex, surrounding the hydra and giving it a good fry. Meow Meow went in again with its venomous fangs, causing it to shriek even harder.

Being besieged by a triple beastmaster was a truly unique nightmare.

The hydra unleashed a few abilities in succession when it hit its limit, but to no avail. Its hundreds of tails weren't able to do much damage to Lan Huang, and Dongyang An fared even worse, as he was the one bearing the brunt of Tianming and Ying Huo's attacks, one from the front and the other from behind.

"I only need one move to kill you!"

The sea rumbled as Tianming wielded the split Grand-Orient Sword in his hands. Strands of his hair began to float as more than seven thousand strands of Invincible Sword Ki burst out of him like a colorful rainbow, giving him a godly halo. The Grand-Orient Sword triggered his Imperealm Sword Formation, which expanded to a range of fifty plus meters and instantly enveloped Dongyang An within. Tens of thousands of strands of black and gold sword ki rampaged about within the formation.

"Die!" With a roar, he executed the fourth strike of the Shenxiao Sword Art, a combination of Olympos Imperius, Pyros Imperius, Fulgueros Imperius, and Oceanos Imperius, coupled with Invincible Sword Ki of corresponding types and the sword ki from the Imperealm Sword Formation.

That sheer sight caused Dongyang An's scalp to tingle. He grit his teeth and stabilized his mental state, a skill he had picked up after years of experience in battle. However, he still couldn't help but feel a primal fear. Why was a kid in his twenties making him feel true fear? Did the heavens really send a messenger

to wipe out the sinful existence of the Theocrats? He was filled with despair at the thought. "The heavens aren't fair! I shan't yield to them today! What's so wrong about taking back control of my own fate from heaven? So what if the heavens kill me? That doesn't amount to anything at all!"

He was so fueled by rage that his body was about to explode. He mustered boundless fighting spirit and managed to reach a peak fighting condition he had never before attained throughout his entire life. The trident in his hand shimmered in a dance-like manner as he attacked with Oceanfiend Rampage, Encroaching Demon! He fought like a rampaging berserker, roiling up the waves like a gigantic beast as he charged toward Tianming. Amidst the seas, he reigned supreme with his trident.

Yet....

"Damn it! How dare you ignore this chicken?!" Ying Huo charged at Dongyang An like a mad fowl. It had tasted the bitterness of being ignored and wouldn't allow it to continue, instantly lashing out with Infernal Haze.

Then, using its Wings of Agni, it shot out more than three thousand strands of Invincible Sword Ki. No amount of defensive gear could help Dongyang An block that strike. Countless holes were punched through his body, out of which leaked blood and piss. His expression was utterly contorted as his face was flushed white by the sudden leakage of blood.

Chapter 556: Am I a God?

Dongyang An had been paying Tianming too much attention and ignored the little Ying Huo, only to be dealt a fatal blow by it.

"Aaagh!" It was hard to describe to others the extent of the pain he felt. What was worse was that he had been slashed by the Grand-Orient Sword at almost the same time. As he vomited blood, his eyes shook; his will had completely crumbled.

"Die!" He thrust with Onyxfiend Seagod, only for it to be parried by the Grand-Orient Sword. The sword struck between the prongs of the trident, slashing one prong completely off.

"You're the one who's dying, Dongyang An!" Tianming roared with rage. He slashed downward, emitting so much sword ki that it swallowed Dongyang An whole, tearing him into pieces and scattering them across the ocean.

"Congratulations, Dongyang An. You're not even cremated, but your ashes are already scattered in the sea."

Before Dongyang An had died, he seemed utterly shocked and fearful. By then, his mental state had completely collapsed from sheer terror and fear of the end of the Theocracy's reign.

With a flick of his wrist, Tianming caught Dongyang An's eyeball on his sword. It was still looking at Tianming with fear.

"Well, am I a god?" Tianming asked as the glow from the eye gradually faded. "Treat others better in your next life. We're all born equal as living things, after all."

The 'others' Tianming was referring to were the despairing denizens of the Grand-Orient Realm who had been stuffed into the warships. While it was a 'sin' to be weak, there was nothing inherently wrong with

being alive in and of itself. Tianming had climbed to where he was despite being weak once. He knew better than anyone how horrible it was to be weak and powerless.

"Life proliferates and prospers under a just ruler!" The birth and rise of will was the most powerful thing in the universe. This was the creed he lived by that fueled his struggle against the Theocracy.

.....

With Dongyang An dying to Tianming and his beasts, his hydra had attempted to flee, only to be hunted down and killed all the same. Even a gigantic beast like it disappeared when its corpse was swallowed by the boundless sea. Once that was dealt with, Tianming got back on Lan Huang's back and looked back.

"It's a god!" cried millions of people from the decks of the warships. Tianming saw the fervent gazes they shot him. Some people even bowed or knelt in worship.

"What's this?" Tianming was flabbergasted. He saw an ethereal form of energy gather around his body. It resembled a kind of white mist, but it wasn't souls. Every person had a bit of this white mist in their bodies, which gathered into a large concentration of mist and entered his sea of consciousness.

After that, something even more wondrous happened. His Imperial Will grew even further, as if nourished by the white mist. The rate of growth was unbelievable, and much faster than his usual cultivation. Throughout the whole process, he also felt each and every one of their feelings. They had fallen to the pits of despair and were awaiting death on the warships, yet Tianming had shown up and became their icon of hope. The sight of him dominating Dongyang An with his sword ki had been engraved in the hearts of many.

Tianming heard countless voices in his heart; the feelings of parting and joyous reunion he saw in their souls caused him to tear up. Each and every one of them was a living being, just like him. They all had people they loved, aspirations in life, strong passions, responsibilities, and a desire to protect their families.

"They're all living beings. Just because someone is stronger, does it give them the right to see them as little fish? No matter what, one day, one of these fish will grow big enough to swallow you whole!"

His black and gold eyes shone as he realized that the third eye on his arm couldn't see the white mist coming from these million people. It also meant that other people had no idea that kind of mist existed, either. Only the eyes of the Primordial God-Emperor allowed him to see it.

"Tianming, this is called Omnisentient Will. Only with it supporting Imperial Will can you embark upon the most righteous path! Only by forging the most prosperous empire the world has ever seen can you become the ultimate sovereign! But just as the waves can carry a ship across the sea, they can also flip it over. You have to commit this to memory!" said a voice that rang loudly in his head. At that moment, Tianming had an epiphany.

"Sovereign!" His tears flowed nonstop, even though the voice of the Primordial God-Emperor was long gone. However, Tianming knew that it marked the moment he had truly unlocked the legacy of the sovereign.

He was able to absorb Omnisentient Will and convert it to his own Imperial Will without harming the sentient beings from which he absorbed it one bit. It wasn't like using the Cyclic Mirror, which required

the sacrifice of millions. In fact, Tianming's heavenly will could also trigger a spark of comprehension in the sentient lifeforms, resulting in their eventual transformation. However, this was only the start, and the effects weren't obvious.

This was the true imperial path.

"Just as the waves can carry a ship across the sea, they can also flip it over." He remembered the words well. Now, he felt really lucky. The Li Saint Clan had taught him to defy fate and change his destiny, and Imperial Will allowed him to not stray from the righteous path. These two factors formed the core of his being. Now he could see the path he would have to tread to reach sovereignty with the eyes that were given to him.

"The most important thing to a cultivator is an eternal will!" His actions were powered by his soul. This night, he had saved a million people, who in turn had taught him much. "My Imperial Will alone grew so much. I suppose I'll be able to break through to the fourth level now, right?"

The key to breaking through usually resided in heavenly will, so now that he had enough of it, it wouldn't take long before he advanced to the next level. However, he had to settle the million people down first.

"Now that Dongyang An and Meng Yifeng are dead, Autarch Qian's plan has failed. However, they captured at least ten million hostages. My mission is still not over yet."

Even so, his mission could be said to be a success. The deaths of Dongyang An, Huang Chonghuan, Zhao Shenhong, Wei Ji, and Chong Yang meant that, apart from the autarch's two ninth-level sky saint sons, he no longer had any top-tier experts he could count on.

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Qin Jiufu and Bai Zifeng were settling the million people down on the shore. Then, they took over the warships so they could use them to ship the people back home.

"Hall King, are they all dead?" Tianming asked when he returned.

"Yes. We can't afford to let any of them escape just in case," Qin Jiufu said. That was a sign that the Decimo Dao Palace's seniors were no longer as even-tempered as they used to be.

"I will go see my family first." Tianming then flew to where they were.

"It's the god! God!" Many people who didn't know him watched him with a passionate gaze, some kneeling and shedding tears of gratitude.

"I'm not who you think I am, I'm just a normal cultivator. I was the junior sect master of the Grand-Orient Sect. I wonder if you've heard of it before?"

"We have!"

"You're amazing, Big Brother!"

Tianming was completely satisfied at seeing their smiles. Feiling then manifested beside him and the two of them headed to Li Jingyu.

"Grandmother, Grandfather!" Tianming said as he approached. No matter how amazing he was, he acted no different than a child before the two of them.

"Oh, grandson of mine, I'm so proud of you! Give granny a hug!" Li Jingyu said as she teared up from the emotions she felt.

"I should be the first, right? He's my biological grandson!" Wei Tiancang said.

"Don't you know ladies come first?" she said, rolling her eyes.

"Fine..." Wei Tiancang was already rather moved to be able to see him at all. Tianming and Li Jingyu hugged each other tightly.

"Let go, let go you little runt! You're going to squeeze the air out of my lungs!"

"Does that mean you're the big runt?" Tianming asked, causing the rest to laugh.

Meanwhile, Feiling reunited with Jiang Cheng and Jiang Qingluan. They were also crying from the pent-up emotions. Tianming saw that Sage Chen and Xue Lan were there, too.

"Uncle Chen," Tianming greeted with a smile.

Sage Chen shot him a thumbs up. "Tianming when are you going to return the heavenly pattern crystals you owe me?"

"Uncle, they're worth too much. I'll give you a few celestial manna later," Tianming said.

"I see. Then you can pay it back in full another time. I'll make do with celestial manna for now."

Sage Chen then continued, "Tianming, even though you've experienced all kinds of dangers, you're still that good child deep inside. Never forget who you originally were. If you can do that, your future path will be bright."

"Wow, keep that up and I'll blush," Tianming said.

"Don't make me beat you up!"

Beside Sage Chen, Xue Lan stood like a silent fool. "Tianming... I never found the chance to apologize to you...."

"Auntie, don't worry. After all I've experienced, I've learned that there are people who are far more infuriating than you."

"Is that supposed to be a compliment?"

"You can take it as such."

Xue Lan then turned to her own two sons. She felt so bad that she wanted to cry.

Apart from her, Wei Guohao and Wei Lingxuan also felt rather horrible.

"Cousin!" they cried, lowering their heads.

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Meanwhile, Qin Jiufu had the dao palace send more people over to move the denizens of the Grand-Orient Realm back to the Skyreach River. Tianming also began breaking through to the fourth level. He had gained far more than he expected, but it was bound to come sooner or later. As the successor of the Primordial God-Emperor, it was only a matter of time before he embarked on the path of Omniscient Will. Right after he broke through, Li Wudi came to him.

"Did you break through?" he asked. While others saw him as a monster, the true monster in his eyes was Tianming.

"So what? Are you convinced yet, Mister Runner-up Genius of the Grand-Orient Realm?" Tianming asked.

"Dammit... Do you wanna bet that I'll eventually grow powerful enough to beat you up?"

"Then you'd better prepare to be bedridden for the rest of your life."

"Wow, somebody's grown arrogant. Would you really dare to beat up your godfather? You wouldn't, would you my wubby bubby?" he said as one would to a baby.

"To hell with you! Don't tell me this is what you were doing with Ye Shaoqing the whole time I was at the Divine Capital!"

"Shut up! I'm a ramrod straight man!"

"So you claim."

The two grumbled for quite a while before Li Wudi got to the point.

"Tianming, before we left, you didn't tell me you broke through. Let me ask you now how powerful you really are. The dao palace needs to know, so we can plan for the future," he solemnly said.

"I've broken through quite a lot lately. If not for your Bloodfiend Transformation, I'd be able to fight on the same level as you now."

"What in the world... How will I be able to stand tall and proud with you around now?" Li Wudi was as disappointed as he was glad.

"Just get used to it."

"Monster! Oh well, that's good news too. The Theocrats have their sights on me, but I bet they wouldn't expect you to grow so quickly. Now that you've killed Dongyang An and Meng Yifeng, almost all the elites from the Divine Capital have been wiped out. They won't have many people left to do their bidding, and they don't know I'm here since I haven't fought yet. That should mean that the fact I know the autarch's location hasn't been revealed yet."

Autarch Qian had secretly left. If Li Wudi dared to show up at Skyreach River to kill Dongyang An, it would tip the autarch off. It was different from the time they had killed Huang Chonghuan, who'd left the army in a suicidal attempt to have a different kind of 'fight'.

Normally, there was no way Li Wudi would leave the Divine Capital if he thought the autarch would still be there; after all, he was the autarch's prime target. He was worth far more to the Theocrats than the million-man army of the dao palace.

Chapter 557 - Disciples Of The Dao Palace, Brothers In Life And Death

The Theocrats hadn't expected the dao palace to intercept the citizens of the Grand-Orient Realm due to two reasons. First, Autarch Qian didn't know Li Wudi was aware of his whereabouts. And second, they didn't think Tianming possessed the strength to kill Dongyang An and Meng Yifeng.

In the eyes of the Theocrats, Li Wudi, Bai Mo, and Ye Yi wouldn't dare leave the Dao Palace. Hence, no one could stop Dongyang An.

"Godfather, has Autarch Qian returned?" asked Tianming.

"Not yet. He's currently somewhere near the first of the Nine Divine Realms, the Archaion Divine Realm. Since I chopped off the autarch beast's heads, he requires a saintly spirit herb that's not found within the Theocracy to restore the beast to its original state. However, Autarch Qian has remained in one place for some time, so I'm guessing he already has a target. Once he obtains the herb he needs, he'll definitely return. Before that, we must intercept those being escorted out of the Grand-Orient Realm," Li Wudi said in all seriousness.

"Godfather, since you haven't taken any action, you might as well go back. Just leave everything to me," said Tianming.

The ability to determine Autarch Qian's position might seem like a trivial matter, but was in fact a crucial detail. If they could, they should keep it a secret.

"That's what I thought, too. You stay here. I'll send Qin Jiufu and the others to the Azure River. Once they find the enemy's ships, they'll assassinate everyone so not a word of this leaks out. Their people are fourth-level sky saints at best," said Li Wudi.

"Yes, I understand." Tianming nodded.

With that, Li Wudi went on his way. However, just after a few steps, he turned around and looked at Tianming, his gaze fiery.

"What's the matter?" asked Tianming.

"Tianming, can you really take on a ninth-level sky saint?"

"Yes," Tianming replied with certainty.

"I'll discuss with Bai Mo and Ye Yi once I get back. Before Autarch Qian returns, we must kill Dongyang Yun and Dongyang Ling," Li Wudi said coldly.

"Let Autarch Qian become a marshal without an army?" Tianming's eyes lit up.

"Yes, if we aren't bold, there'll be no end to this. Your strength is a huge support to us. Without Autarch Qian, the dao palace's powerhouses are far ahead in terms of strength. "

"Godfather, to be honest, I can't wait," said Tianming.

"Yes, I'll send someone over to replace you as soon as we make a decision."

Li Wudi disappeared into the night.

Rising to his feet, Tianming stared in the direction of the Divine Capital.

"The decisive moment is here!"

.....

At night, thirteen Dazzling Warships prominently sailed, returning from a rewarding journey. In the darkness, a black sword flickered and a masked man in black armor passed through the masses.

Corpse after corpse fell to the deck. Silence prevailed, from the first ship to the last.

"Who are you?" A fourth-level sky saint chief of the Dazzling Pavilion noticed the abnormality.

"I won't give my name, but you can call me a good Samaritan."

With a flick of a sword, the man was beheaded. In less than fifteen minutes, the Theocrats and people of the Dazzling Pavilion were all dead.

"It's done. Come and save them," Tianming shouted at the shore.

Sage Chen, Jiang Cheng, and the others came to help.

"Tianming, you're like a hero, a chivalrous man," said Jiang Cheng.

"Father-in-law, since I received your compliments, can I save on the betrothal gifts?" asked Tianming.

"No, the rules must be followed," said the Vermillion Bird King.

They were on the second ship. After rescuing the people, Tianming sat and waited to acquire Omniscient Will. Unfortunately, he waited for a long time.

"Come on, worship me!" he said to them.

"Who is this man?"

"I don't know. With all that yelling, he's probably a fool."

"Who on earth saved us?"

Everyone seemed at a loss.

On the other hand, Tianming appeared distant.

"Where's my Omniscient Will?"

Obviously, it wasn't there. Realization dawned upon him.

"Damn it! It turns out acting pretentious is required!"

What a miscalculation!

He had to remain calm and rescue all these people. If the Theocrats were to learn of their failure, they might execute other plans aimed at the citizens of the Grand-Orient Realm. For example, slaughtering them in the Grand-Orient Realm. That would be a tragedy. But right now, the enemy seemed to have decided on the Skyreach River. In the silence, Tianming killed all of their people across seven ships.

He had managed to save eight million people so far. Although the victims on the first ship were the only ones who gifted him with Omniscient Will, Tianming was satisfied. Witnessing their heartfelt joy at being rescued made Tianming just as happy.

Right then, Tianming stared into the distance, only to find that Situ Qinghe and Weisheng Yumo had arrived.

"Tianming, your godfather asks that you return. Autarch Qian is on his way back. We don't have many opportunities, so they decided to take the risk," said Weisheng Yumo.

"Alright. What about all this?"

"We'll deal with it."

"My family's here. I'll place them in your hands," said Tianming.

"No problem. Two ships have yet to show up, but they're probably on the way. Judging from the time, Dongyang An should have been reaching the Divine Capital soon, if he hadn't been killed by you. Our enemy will be suspicious, you must hurry back," said Situ Qinghe.

"I understand!"

Lan Huang had already entered the Azure Sea, while Tianming and Feiling sat on each dragon head respectively. Ying Huo and Meow Meow stood on top of Lan Huang's heads, full of mettle.

"Tianming!" Weisheng Yumo shouted.

"Hall King." Tianming turned around.

"The palace lord is still sleeping. I hope she wakes up to a peaceful world and sees how indomitable you are." Tears blurred Weisheng Yumo's eyes.

"That's for sure!" said Tianming.

He vowed not to let Weisheng Yunxi down.

"Fight, young man!" Situ Qinghe sighed, stroking his long beard.

Let's go!"

Lan Huang roared, traveling along the waterway of the Skyreach River toward the Divine Capital.

"Theocrats!" Wings akimbo, Ying Huo stared in the direction of the Divine Capital with a fierce grin.

"You'll all lose your balls!"

.....

The Evil Suppression Formation.

All Seven Astral Legions were assembled. Tianming, Li Wudi, Ye Yi, and Bai Mo stood in front of the troops. At present, the command to attack the Theocrats had yet to be issued. This was to prevent any informants from revealing intelligence. Most of those present were unaware of the reason the army had been convened. Bai Mo's presence meant that the Evil Suppression Formation had been left to Ye Lingfeng.

"Tianming, they are already suspicious that Dongyang An's army has yet to reach the Divine Capital. Additionally, at Autarch Qian's speed, we still have eight days before he returns to the capital. Our goal is to completely defeat the opponent during this period of time," said Li Wudi.

"I understand." Tianming nodded.

"This time, the Dazzling Pavilion's warships were successfully intercepted and we managed to rescue the people of the Grand-Orient Realm. However, Autarch Qian has gone completely mad. Now that he's embarked on this path, he'll only keep trying once he's suffered a setback. He'll even head directly to the Grand-Orient Realm to kill the innocent. There's no way we can withdraw. This time, we'll wound the enemy and gain the upper hand, so Autarch Qian loses everyone," said Li Wudi.

"An immoral man is capable of anything. If he goes mad, he might kill everyone in the Divine Capital and the surrounding cities." Tianming sneered.

A crazy man that becomes a demon must be destroyed. This wasn't kindness on the Decimo Dao Palace's part; they wanted to protect their homeland, annihilate the Nineshades Clan, and place the fate of the nation in the hands of a benevolent ruler. To put it bluntly, the Nineshades Clan were invaders who had occupied the Theocracy for tens of thousands of years, seizing the land and sucking its blood and life.

"This will be a tough battle. The two armies have about the same numbers, and we don't have the support of a formation. However, we have two advantages. First, our legions are well established and unified. On the other hand, Dongyang Ling and Dongyang Yun's armies are now allied. Although Dongyang Yun's army possesses strong combat capabilities, they're weak without Huang Chonghuan, who understands military strategy. The second point bears upon the key to our foray, that is, the number of powerhouses on our side. And Tianming is the focus of all this. This advantage is vital to our strategy. The three of us have discussed and made arrangements for you." Li Wudi turned to Tianming.

"Do tell," said Tianming.

"Using the Bloodfiend Transformation, I'll increase my combat power to the peak and lead the way for the Astral Legions. I won't deal with their powerhouses. That way, I alone can kill at least a hundred thousand people! Hall Master Ye Yi will command the legions. Having him controlling the battlefield is the foundation of our combat effectiveness. So there'll only be two people left—Hall King Bai Mo and you. Both of you will have to stop Dongyang Ling and Dongyang Yun from interfering with Ye Yi and me," said Li Wudi.

"I understand! I can do it," said Tianming.

When used to slaughter on the battlefield, Li Wudi's Bloodfiend Transformation could certainly demonstrate a most terrifying effect, and would likely become the key to defeating the opponent.

Tianming's progress meant he could block the opponent's powerhouses, so Li Wudi could give full play to his lethality!

"Choose one: Dongyang Yun or Dongyang Ling," said Li Wudi.

"I'll deal with Dongyang Yun. He's more troublesome," said Bai Mo.

"Hall King, I'll do it," said Tianming, his gaze fiery.

"Are you sure?" Bai Mo asked.

"Yes."

"How much Invincible Sword Ki have you integrated?"

"I took out the voidspace stone and I've now reached more than eight thousand," said Tianming.

Bai Mo stared at him blankly. Smiling wryly, he said, "When we first took you out of the Ancient Qilin Clan, I never dreamed that you'd catch up to me in less than a year. Both you and your father must've been sent by the heavens to annihilate the Nineshades Clan! "

"Tianming, your time of glory is here. You'll be an unrivaled hero," added Ye Yi.

Tianming nodded.

"Get ready!"

Ye Yi turned to face the warriors.

"Astral Legions, hear my command!"

"Yes, sir!" they all shouted.

"The first attack formation!"

The battle formation of the Astral Legions corresponded to the attributes of their lifebound beasts, their abilities, and the range of their attack. These warriors wouldn't just thoughtlessly charge into battle.

The formation changed, resembling a sharp blade, at the forefront of which stood Li Wudi. Today, he would tear apart the heart of the Theocrats.

The Astral Legions were ready! Eyes grim, Ye Yi roared, "Disciples of the dao palace, brothers in life and death, come with me! Eradicate the Nineshades Clan!"

Chapter 558 - The End of The Nineshades Clan

Under Ye Yi's command, more than two million beastmasters and lifebound beasts combined marched away in a neat, structured battle formation. The Seven Astral Legions were originally divided according to the different types of lifebound beasts. Among them, the Skycore Legion led the four-footed land beasts. Hence, most of the warriors and beasts of the Skycore Legion went on foot. The lifebound beasts of the Skyjade Legion were mainly avian. On the other hand, the beasts of the Shimmerglow Legion were mainly water types that could travel along the waterway and were responsible for cutting off the enemy's escape route along the Divine Capital's rivers and canals.

The legions all came out, their battlecry resounding across the sky. In front of the army, Li Wudi and Ye Yi rode their lifebound beasts, the Primordial Bloodbane Kunpeng and Evernight Eagle, respectively. The two gigantic eighth-order empyrean beasts opened a path, charging out of the Evil Suppression Formation.

Immediately afterward, a million-strong army followed behind, covering the land, water, and sky. Under Ye Yi's arrangement, the entire army moved in order. There were warriors responsible for a frontal attack, some to outflank the enemy, and the rest were to attack from the rear. Having undergone his Bloodfiend Transformation, Li Wudi resembled a bloodthirsty beast. With the Firstbane Saber in hand, he surged with killing intent.

"Nineshades Clan, your end is here!"

Li Wudi had already seen the Theocrats' temporary barracks. They were stationed here without any other arrangements until Autarch Qian and the people of the Grand-Orient Realm arrived. After what had happened to Huang Chonghuan last time, Dongyang Yun had garrisoned the entire army and forbade anyone from leaving.

When the Decimo Dao Palace's army came for them, some of them were on guard, but most of them were idling their time away. Some were constantly observing the Decimo Dao Palace's movements, whereas others were relaxed and preoccupied with other matters. Under such circumstances, the Astral Legions' sudden attack was absolutely lethal.

"They're making such a big move. What's going on?"

Some people were suddenly disturbed during a nap or cultivation.

"Everyone, get ready!"

"The dao palace is attacking!"

"Look alive! Get ready to fight!"

All of a sudden, there was chaos in the camp. Due to Huang Chonghuan and Zhao Shenhong's deaths, as well as Dongyang Yun's high status that distanced him from the soldiers, no one stood out to preside over the situation. The sky above the attacking army was filled with smoke and dust and the army of flying lifebound beasts were about to swoop down.

"How dare they leave the Evil Suppression Formation and launch an attack with His Majesty here?"

Many were dumbfounded. On their side, the only people who knew of Autarch Qian's absence were Dongyang Yun and Dongyang Ling. How could they have known that Autarch Qian had quietly snuck away to restore the autarch beast's former strength as soon as possible?

"Who cares! Since they're here, they must die! Brothers, the time to trample the Decimo Dao Palace has arrived! Kill!!!"

In a short time, the Theocrats quickly formed a defense.

.....

In the center of the temporary barracks.

"Ling!" shouted Dongyang Yun. Shocked in the midst of cultivation, Dongyang Ling furrowed his brows.

"What's the matter?"

"The Dao Palace attacked us!" Dongyang Yun said in a daze.

"How dare they! If they leave, no one can stop Father. Could it be—" Dongyang Ling had a bad premonition.

"They know father isn't here!" Dongyang Yu glared.

"That's impossible. Only the two of us know that father has left. There's no trace of him. How could the dao palace know?" said Dongyang Ling.

"Who cares about that? Let's fight!" With that, Dongyang Yun began assembling the army to resist the enemy's attack.

Rising to his feet, Dongyang Ling quickly chased after Dongyang Yun. He looked up and glanced at the gigantic beasts ahead, his eyelid twitching.

"The dao palace has come to die. Brothers, let's give them what they want. Come with me and trample them. Slaughter these dogs!"

Without Huang Chonghuan, Dongyang Yun had to take command as prince. Of course, he knew how to lead an army.

"Kill!"

At Dongyang Yun's roar, the army quickly assembled. All they had to do was stay out of the Evil Suppression Formation and they were confident of victory. After all, they believed Autarch Qian was still somewhere in the camp.

At that moment, the Astral Legions met the Theocrats head on. Just as the battle began, the situation immediately turned chaotic, with blood splattering everywhere. A red light flickered through the masses. Wherever it went, corpses fell to the ground in pieces. As soon as the Primordial Bloodbane Kunpeng opened its mouth, hundreds of beastmasters and lifebound beasts fell under the blood-red torrent.

Before the Theocrats could assemble, the dao palace had already made a breach in their defense. The armored warriors of the Seven Astral Legions charged in through the breach, crushing and killing along the way.

"It's Li Wudi!"

"He's courting death. His Majesty will deal with him soon."

"What a fool! Last time, he barely managed to escape. Does he think he's suddenly grown strong enough?"

As they spoke, the red gleam flashed across and more people perished at Li Wudi's hands. With his Bloodfiend Transformation, their abilities were ineffective against him. Behind Li Wudi, the million-strong army charged in. With Li Wudi's momentum and Ye Yi leading the way, their weapons were aimed at the enemy.

Carnage ensued.

Yet to react, the Theocrats were dazed and unable to resist the attack. They were overconfident. The sudden chaos and lack of unification left them at a loss and unsure of whose commands they should be listening to. It was utter mayhem. Like a sharp bayonet, the Seven Astral Legions pierced their uncoordinated opponent.

"Kill!!!"

Battle cries resounded in the air. The dao palace disciples witnessed the collapse of their opponent's battle formation. This was the worst thing that could happen on the battlefield!

"Skycore Legion, cover the sky with flames! Skyjade Legion, turn southeast and rain down a meteor shower!"

The Evernight Eagle's unique call quickly spread Ye Yi's commands. Of course, the enemy couldn't understand what they heard. When the well-trained legions met the headless army, the disparity in their strengths was immediately revealed.

Faced with the might of the Seven Astral Legions' integrated abilities, the Theocrats couldn't resist at all. As the flames swept across the battlefield, countless people were burned to ashes. The ground forces of the Skycore Legion marched through the sea of fire towards the Theocrats.

Under their unified attacks, head after head flew away.

"Kill them all!"

"Kill the Nineshades Clan!"

There was no mercy on the battlefield, only a bloody hell. Wherever the Seven Astral Legions attacked, no living person remained. Li Wudi and Ye Yi's combined powers broke the balance between the Seven Astral Legions and the Theocrats.

The demonic Li Wudi descended upon the enemy. No matter their defenses, man, beast, and sword swung into action, causing confusion and madness and turning the battlefield into a massacre.

"Where's His Majesty?"

"Why hasn't His Majesty dealt with him yet?!"

"Run! Run!!"

Just the sight of Li Wudi had them rooted to the spot in fear. Not even hundreds of them could handle one of him. No one could break his Bloodfiend Transformation armor.

"You can't run. You'll all die here!!" Li Wudi's laughter echoed across the battlefield, giving them goosebumps.

The sharp blade that was the Seven Astral Legions had completely penetrated the enemy's chest, so the two armies were entangled in battle. There were corpses and rivers of blood everywhere.

"Shimmerglow Legion, attack! Stilljade Legion, go around the rear and slaughter them!"

Ye Yi hovered in the sky and controlled the overall situation, his commands organized. If any of the legions failed to breach the enemy, he would immediately swoop in and open up a bloody path.

"If this continues, they're finished! Without Huang Chonghuan and proper precautions, their combat power has dropped several levels entirely." Ye Yi narrowed his eyes.

This time, the dao palace's main purpose was to catch their opponent by surprise. Judging by the present situation, their two major advantages had been fully utilized. Li Wudi alone could kill a hundred thousand of the enemy's troops, as no one could stop him.

However, if someone managed to obstruct him and prevent him from establishing a numerical advantage for the Decimo Dao Palace in the early part of the battle, the Seven Astral Legions would fall to the inevitable counterattack. Even if they won, they would have suffered a monumental loss. After all, there wasn't a large difference between the two sides in terms of combat effectiveness. Time was fleeting. This wasn't considered a victory yet.

"We must strike with one blow and kill them all. We can't give them any respite." Ye Yi understood that very well.

While the enemy was still shaken from the shock, they might start fighting back after they had taken a breath.

In fact, in the short time since the battle had begun, Li Wudi had already killed at least ten thousand people. Covered in blood, Li Wudi was every bit the image of the god of slaughter. Wherever he went, the Theocrats could only run. And as soon as they escaped, the Seven Astral Legions could continue their march into the space that had just been vacated.

Countless lifebound beasts collided, a terrifying scene indeed. They had certainly crushed the enemy in terms of momentum.

"Li Wudi! You're courting death!"

A roar sounded from the center of the enemy's position as two figures dashed out—Dongyang Ling and Dongyang Yun. They came united, eyes ablaze.

"Oh, it's the infighting dogs! Where's your old man? Is he dead? What'd he die of this time? Alzheimer's?" Li Wudi continued to kill, coordinating with Ye Yi's arrangement to break up the enemy's battle formation without so much as glancing at the two of them.

"What impudence! Treasonous rebels, we'll exterminate your entire clan!" The two princes were afraid to face Li Wudi alone.

"What do you mean? Why hasn't Autarch Qian shown himself? Is he not in the Divine Capital?" Li Wudi laughed.

Dongyang Yun and Dongyang Ling's expressions changed drastically.

"He knows!"

They couldn't figure out how Li Wudi could be so certain of such a hidden secret. As long as there was any deviation in intelligence, the Decimo Dao Palace would be ruined. Unless they were certain, they wouldn't go to war. Now that the Theocrat's warriors had overheard the news of Autarch Qian's departure, they despaired all the more.

Their entire army collapsed!

"Dongyang Yun, did you betray our father?!" Dongyang Ling seemed to exhale fire as he glared at his brother.

"Bullshit! What benefit would that bring me? If Father falls, the dao palace will be the first to kill me!" shouted Dongyang Yun.

Upon further thought, Dongyang Ling thought that Dongyang Yun's words made sense. Hence, he no longer pursued the issue.

"We must work together to stop Li Wudi and hold on until Father returns. Get the army to withdraw to the Sun-Moon Imperial Formation first!" said Dongyang Ling.

Chapter 559 - I'm Going To Send You To Hell!

The reason the Theocrats had encountered such a dilemma was mainly due to arrogance, Autarch Qian included. Hadn't he boldly left for the sake of the autarch beast's recovery because he was sure of victory?

"Retreat! Return to the Sun-Moon Imperial Formation!"

"Fall back!"

Under Dongyang Yun's command, the imperial army finally withdrew.

However, the Decimo Dao Palace chased the routed army from behind. Li Wudi went deep into the enemy's forces, one man against thousands. Together with the Stilljade Legion, he intercepted the enemy's exit.

"Stop Li Wudi!"

The Dongyang brothers knew that Li Wudi was key. If they didn't get rid of him, there would be no retreat, and the disparity between the two sides would grow even greater. The two quickly approached Li Wudi.

"His transformation must consume a lot of saint ki. He's slaughtered too many—we have a chance to kill him!" Dongyang Yun said with eager eyes.

"Let's do it," said Dongyang Ling, his voice deep.

As they approached Li Wudi, two figures—one old and the other young—suddenly appeared in front of them.

"Bai Mo!" Dongyang Ling and Dongyang Yun's expression changed drastically.

"Have you completely given up on the Evil Suppression Formation?" Dongyang Yun realized that the dao palace would fight to win or die.

They glanced at Tianming, who stood next to Bai Mo.

"What should we do? With Bai Mo around, we can't deal with Li Wudi." Dongyang Ling frowned.

"Li Tianming is clearly courting death. Who cares about Li Wudi? This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to kill Li Tianming. His life will force the dao palace into retreat!" Dongyang Yun said solemnly.

"This is our only hope. Who would've thought the Dao Palace would expose such a weakness. I'll fight Bai Mo, you kill Li Tianming!" said Dongyang Ling.

"Alright!"

All they had to do was look at each other to know what the other was thinking. In an instant, Dongyang Ling dashed toward Bai Mo.

"Come on then!"

Moving to the left, Bai Mo divided the battlefield. Meanwhile, Dongyang Yun had already darted towards Tianming. Dongyang Yun abruptly stopped in front of Tianming and stared in disbelief. "Aren't you going to run?"

In his mind, this was simply outrageous. Tianming answered his question with the Grand-Orient Sword. Pulling out the sword, Tianming glared at Dongyang Yun, his gaze fiery. His gold and black eyes resembled two suns—the gold ablaze and the black gloomy. His three lifebound beasts killed their way to Tianming.

"What do you mean by this?" Dongyang Yun was taken aback.

"Autarch Yun."

Addressing him by that title was a sort of mockery. His lips curled in a sinister smile. "I must take your head today!"

"What did you say?!" Dongyang Yun couldn't believe his ears.

"I said I'm going to send you to hell!"

Amused, Dongyang Yun sneered, "Are you just spouting nonsense to buy yourself some time? It's a pity I won't be fooled. Just wait to be killed!"

Before his lifebound beast could make an appearance, he reached out to grab Tianming. But in that instant, a starry chain shot at him at a terrifying speed, transforming into a sky full of stars. It hit Dongyang Yun's arm before he could even see clearly what was happening.

A loud smack reverberated through the air.

"Ahh!"

Screaming, Dongyang Yun stumbled three steps backward and glanced at his hand. There was a bloody wound on his palm, through which the bone was visible. Two consecutive attacks followed, which Dongyang Yun was forced to dodge.

The Three-Thousand Starfield landed on the left side of his face, leaving a bloody gash in its wake. Even his teeth had fallen out. Dongyang Yun's eyes were completely bloodshot.

"How can you be an autarch with such little ability? Doesn't this mean that I, too, can be the Primeval Autarch?"

Tianming stood a distance away, his head raised slightly as he stared at Dongyang Yun with contempt. Now that a massacre was unfolding, the one who should have been most anxious was Dongyang Yun.

Wiping the blood from the corner of his mouth, Dongyang Yun broke out in mad laughter.

"How interesting. With your speed of progress, it almost seems like the heavens specifically created you to destroy the Theocrats. It feels fated." As he laughed, his three lifebound beasts, Bloodwinged Flamefiend Hydras, appeared beside him.

Each of his beasts was an eighth-order empyrean beast with three different attributes—blood, poison, and fire. They were mature, fierce, and evil, surging with murderous intent. When unfolded, their blood-red wings were astonishing.

"You're overthinking things. Why would I be created solely for the Nineshades Clan? You think too highly of me. I'll be honest, your entire clan isn't worthy," said Tianming.

"Oh, whether we're worthy or not doesn't matter. For tens of thousands of years, there's been hundreds of geniuses like you, claiming to punish us on behalf of the heavens, provoking us. People like Weisheng Yunxi and Li Muyang. You know better than me what their endings were," Dongyang Yun sneered.

"I don't know. All I need to know is, all of you will die here today! I, Li Tianming, will use your flesh and blood as sacrifice to the tens of billions of innocent souls under the Divine Capital!"

Eyes red, Tianming fought fearlessly with his three lifebound beasts.

"Tens of billions?!" Dongyang Yun looked at him in disbelief and mocked, "You're underestimating the Theocrats, aren't you? Over the past tens of thousands of years, we've slaughtered at least hundreds of billions!"

In the depths of Tianming's eyes, a murderous intent soared!

Lan Huang charged forth, its enormous body slamming into the ground. The ripples from its ability caused vibrations in the earth. The land under its feet turned into an Azure Oceanic Purgatory and the waters rushed toward Dongyang Yun. The sea waters broke, forming a huge wave that crashed into the former autarch. The majestic wave instantly swept one man and three beasts into the water. Dongyang Yun was different from Dongyang An; his lifebound beasts were fire and poison types that didn't work well with water.

"Trying to pull me into the water? Dream on!" Splitting the waves apart, Dongyang Yun and his three Bloodwinged Flamefiend Hydras were able to fly and fight in the air.

But just as they broke through the surface of the water, a starry chain suddenly appeared amidst the waves, entangling one of the Bloodwinged Flamefiend Hydras.

The Three-Thousand Starfield that could extend three kilometers was immediately wrapped around the Bloodwinged Flamefiend Hydra like a rice dumpling. The sharp chains sliced into its fiery red scales, drawing bloody gashes across its body. Furious, the gigantic beast was just about to smash the chain when a monstrous force emerged from the weapon.

"Get over here!"

Tianming and Lan Huang pulled the Three-Thousand Starfield toward the bottom of the sea. With the help of the oceanic energy, Lan Huang's nine kui seas roiled and exploded with great power. The Bloodwinged Flamefiend Hydra in the air couldn't even flap its wings. Naturally, it could no longer remain in flight and was instantly sucked into the water by the enormous force. The giant beast crashed into the sea and water splashed everywhere.

At the sound of all that movement, Dongyang Yun looked down and shook with anger. His goal was to capture Tianming. Faced with such a situation, he was forced to chase his opponent with the other two Bloodwinged Flamefiend Hydras. Even if they weren't on a favorable battlefield, there was no other way.

As soon as man and beasts headed down, yet another unexpected wave crashed into them. From the waters came countless blazing feathers that shot toward them. This was Ying Huo's ability, Skyscorch Featherblast.

The two Bloodwinged Flamefiend Hydras' large bodies were instantly pierced by the feathers, covering them in bloody wounds. The Infernal Blaze on the feathers quickly burned its way into them. The two giant beasts screamed in pain.

"You're asking for death!" Dongyang Yun locked on to Ying Huo.

Since Tianming had chosen to attack his lifebound beast, Dongyang Yun would hunt down Ying Huo. Besides, Ying Huo possessed fire properties, so it couldn't enter the depths of the sea.

Using the Theocrat's most powerful empyrean sword art, the Nineoceanic Netherscape Sword, Dongyang Yun shot toward Ying Huo. This empyrean sword art had a total of nine moves, all of them lethal. With Firescape Sword, the power of Dongyang Yun's weapon was volatile as spirits burst forth, like a flame from hell that penetrated the huge waves. The force of the sword swept toward Ying Huo.

"Hmph, are you trying to kill me?" Ying Huo chuckled. With its Infernal Haze, Ying Huo instantly split itself into ten thousand clones. Then, with a swish, it escaped.

For a while, it wasn't clear which was its true body.

Dongyang Yun was stunned. Had he really been tricked by a chicken? Even if the little guy somewhat resembled a phoenix, its actions, expressions, and words made it a chicken!

"Your balls are already trembling before me!" All at once, ten thousand Ying Huos spoke in unison.

Of the two remaining Bloodwinged Flamefiend Hydras, one swooped into the water to rescue its companion while the other followed Dongyang Yun to intercept Ying Huo.

Nineshades Bloodflame!

Endless blood-red flames sprayed out of its eight heads and formed a huge sphere, enveloping all of Ying Huo's Infernal Haze clones. As long as one's flesh was contaminated with the Nineshades Bloodflame, they would be burned to ashes at once!

"You're dead!" Dongyang Yun darted into the bloodflames. As the flames shrank, he stabbed each and every figure with his sword.

"This chicken must be taken down as soon as possible. Li Tianming's false bravado is completely reliant on the sea. The two hydras should be able to deal with him."

Up to that point, Dongyang Yun still didn't believe Tianming possessed the strength to confront him. There was nothing to fear, even if his two hydras were submerged in water. Ying Huo didn't appear very strong, and could at most escape. But right now, it was toast.

"Using flames to trap me? So you look down on me?" Ying Huo laughed.

Protected within its Infernal Armor, Ying Huo opened a path through the bloodflames with four thousand strands of fire-type Invincible Sword Ki. Once again, it managed to escape.

Dongyang Yun vomited blood in fury.

"Arrogance will make you lose everything." Ying Huo turned around, revealing a polished smile.

Dongyang Yun felt his blood run cold.

Chapter 560 - Long Live

Dongyang Yun had been the Primeval Autarch for at least half a year. So was he going to treat a junior like Tianming as he did Bai Mo and Ye Yi? But he was answered by reality itself. Eight colossal items flew out from the Azure Oceanic Purgatory, pouncing at Dongyang Yun.

When the Bloodwinged Flamefiend Hydra beside him tried to obstruct those eight items, it suddenly realized those eight items were eight heads instead. The Bloodwinged Flamefiend Hydra immediately let out a mournful cry. Because those eight heads belonged to the first Bloodwinged Flamefiend Hydra that was dragged into the Azure Oceanic Purgatory, this meant that the Bloodwinged Flamefiend Hydra had died a miserable death.

While Dongyang Yun and the Bloodwinged Flamefiend Hydra were both in grief, a greater movement came from the Azure Oceanic Purgatory. Dongyang Yun no longer dared to put on airs as a senior and dived into the water with the remaining Bloodwinged Flamefiend Hydra.

But just as they entered the water, they saw the second Bloodwinged Flamefiend Hydra being tightly restrained by the Three-Thousand Starfield and two gigantic beasts ganging up on it. One of them was the Chaos Regalfiend, who was continually throwing Misty Hellthunder, Chaos Disaster, and Soulchasing Hellthunder at the hydra.

The Bloodwinged Flamefiend Hydra struggled, despite being restricted by Lan Huang and the Three-Thousand Starfield. At the same time, it was still executing all sorts of abilities, such as the Blood

Demonclaw—an ability that could transform its wings into claws—and attacked Lan Huang and Meow Meow with its heads.

“Die!” But just when Dongyang Yun charged forth, Ying Huo suddenly appeared from the side at a faster speed than him. In the next moment, Tianming’s Grand-Orient Sword stabbed into the second Bloodwinged Flamefiend Hydra’s abdomen.

Blood splattered when Tianming plunged his sword into the Bloodwinged Flamefiend Hydra and ground its internal organs to pieces with the Invincible Sword Ki.

“Gwrahhhhh...” The second Bloodwinged Flamefiend Hydra died a tragic death and collapsed on the spot.

Dongyang Yun stood as though he had been struck by lightning. He watched the white-haired youth suddenly turn around and lick the blood on the back of his hand.

Staring at Dongyang Yun, Tianming sneered, “Autarch Yun, you were led by me right from the start. So, where’s your arrogance from before? Do you still dare to underestimate me now?”

Dongyang Yun could feel his heart being torn after hearing Tianming’s words. Ying Huo was right. He had paid the price for being arrogant. Starting from the Azure Oceanic Purgatory, the Three-Thousand Starfield, and Ying Huo’s obstruction, he was led around by the nose.

This was the most significant blow he suffered. He never imagined that a young man would force him to such desperate straits and kill two of his lifebound beasts.

“LI TIANMING!” Dongyang Yun roared. His roar set off a huge wave and created a void zone.

“Come, I’ll play with you outside. I want to send you on your way in front of everyone from the Nineshades Clan!” Tianming soared into the sky and charged out of the Azure Oceanic Purgatory with his two lifebound beasts and the Three-Thousand Starfield dragging the two hydras. Tianming then tossed the two corpses a thousand meters into the sky, which naturally caught everyone’s attention.

“What’s that?”

“That seems to be the thirteenth prince’s lifebound beasts!”

“What?!”

Many people exclaimed in shock as the two corpses fell onto the ground, causing blood to splatter in all directions. Tianming stood between the two corpses with his clothes dyed red. This made him seem like a demon who had come straight out from hell in others’ eyes.

A flaming phoenix was standing on his shoulder, a black kitten beside his foot, and a two-headed dragon crawling out of the Azure Oceanic Purgatory. This scene’s visual impact made everyone from the Decimo Dao Palace boil with excitement while everyone from the Ancient Theocrats took a cold breath in.

“Dongyang Yun lost two of his lifebound beasts!”

“Dongyang Yun lost to Li Tianming!”

The good news spread throughout the battlefield, which drew excited cries from the Seven Astral Legions. This brought their already high morale to a whole new level.

“Autarch Qian isn’t in the capital, and today, his Nineshades Clan will be eradicated!” Tianming’s eyes didn’t miss anything. He knew that a victory would greatly affect a war of this scale. After all, it would also strike a blow to the Decimo Dao Palace’s morale if Dongyang Yun had captured him.

Right at this moment, Dongyang Yun charged out from the water and pounced at Tianming, “Die!” He had lost his rationale at this moment. The last remaining Bloodwinged Flamefiend Hydra also charged out but was sent flying by Lan Huang.

And as soon as the Bloodwinged Flamefiend Hydra got up, Ying Huo had already arrived with the Invincible Sword Ki directed at its eyes. Furthermore, Meow Meow also descended from the sky and unleashed bolts of lightning on it.

Dongyang Yun knew that he would lose all three lifebound beasts if this continued. He could only hope to kill Tianming as soon as possible. After all, at least he was fighting Tianming one-on-one. But it was a pity that he got it all wrong because Tianming still had Feiling by his side.

Using the Temporal Field, Celestial Wings, and Spatial Wall, they empowered Tianming with extraordinary speed and the ability to block Dongyang Yun’s sword.

“DIE! DIE! DIE! DIEEEE!” Dongyang Yun sobbed with blood rolling down his cheeks. His rationale was consumed by rage. He still couldn’t accept reality even now.

But all he got in response was Tianming’s indifference. With his sword, Tianming charged toward the figure, who once used to be majestic in his eyes. Dongyang Yun was known as Autarch Yun, but he was now Tianming’s prey.

“Palace lord, you can rest assured. I will repay the grace you’ve shown me!” Tianming would never forget the three empyrean manna the palace lord gave him during their meeting, pushing Ying Huo to be one of the three strongest lifebound beasts in the capital in terms of stars.

So much so that she even guided him to cultivate the Invincible Sword Body, and gave him the sword ki pool. He also wouldn’t forget the reluctance in her eyes when she saw the death of her lifebound beast.

“Dongyang Yun!” Tianming’s Imperial Will reached an unprecedented height at this moment. He could vaguely feel the billions of souls standing behind him.

They were the wills of those that died. They may be insignificant, but all of them were gathered on Tianming’s sword at this moment.

“The crimes that your Nineshades Clan has committed will be repaid with the slaughter of all your descendants! Today, I will use your blood to destroy the Nineshades Clan’s legacy!” Tianming had never felt so powerful before. Perhaps this power was given to him by those who died to the Cyclic Mirror.

He poured everything into the Grand-Orient Sword and executed an attack with three techniques combined: the Shenxiao Sword Art’s fourth move, Eight Thousand-Demise Sword, and Sword Imperealm Formation. His attack caused the clouds to change color, which looked like a deity had descended onto the mortal realm.

But Dongyang Yun didn't believe what was unfolding before his eyes and swung his sword out thrice, executing the Nineoceanic Netherscape Sword's Firescape Sword, Northernscape Sword, and Netherscape Sword. He layered the three swords together, one after another.

"Dream on!" Dongyang Yun roared.

Their swords' clash created a huge commotion in the sky, which attracted countless people's attention. They watched as the white-haired youth charged towards Dongyang Yun.

The friction produced by their collision echoed throughout the battlefield. Tianming's sword pierced into Dongyang Yun's chest, creating a huge, bloody crater while grabbing onto the Flameblood Nethersword with his black arm.

Dongyang Yun could only look at Tianming with his eyes widened in despair. He could only try and mutter his words while throwing out mouthfuls of blood at the same time, "Y-y-you...!"

Tianming seized the Flameblood Nethersword and placed it in Dongyang Yun's mouth. "Hush."

Then, Tianming gently pushed the sword hilt, and the sword pierced through. Dongyang Yun took a last glance at Tianming before he rolled his eyes and collapsed on the ground.

The battlefield instantly went silent as they watched this scene unfold. Many people had widened their eyes watching this scene. They looked at the white-haired youth picking Dongyang Yun up and throwing him into the sky. Then, he raised the Grand-Orient Sword in his hand and yelled, "Dongyang Yun has been judged today, and he will die without a complete corpse!"

When he finished making the declaration, Dongyang Yun's corpse fell onto the ground and splattered. This scene drove the Decimo Dao Palace's warriors insane.

"Extinguish the Nineshades Clan! Long live Li Tianming!" They yelled out in excitement. "Kill them! Kill them all!"

The battle broke out once more. The Decimo Dao Palace's morale was at the highest at this point, while the Ancient Theocrats' morale was at the lowest. When Dongyang Yun's corpse fell from the sky, it was a great blow to their morale. However, that was just the beginning.

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Dongyang Ling trembled at this scene. He suddenly felt a chill run down his spine and turned around to see Tianming standing behind, pointing the Grand-Orient Sword at him, while Bai Mo and the Astral Emperor Tiger stood before him.

Dongyang Ling despaired. He knew that the Ancient Theocrats might be slaughtered based on the current situation. Today, the Ancient Theocrats were utterly crushed by everyone's will.

"Y-y-you! Are you a devil?!" Dongyang Ling asked in a trembling tone.

"No." Tianming looked Dongyang Ling in the eyes with his left eye blazing like the bright sun, while his right eye so dark that it looked like a demonic sun. He replied, "I am Tianming!"