

The Ages 631

Chapter 631: Tianming's Oddball Beast

It was the second day of the Deepstar Battle. Using Meow Meow's speed, Tianming managed to defeat three people during the first day, one of whom was a seventh-level empyrean saint while the other two were sixth level. He had even encountered disciples from the Heaven Branch, but he immediately turned tail upon seeing them. Lucky for him, all they could do was curse when they were unable to catch up to him.

The inverse sun of the Abyssal Battlefield rose from the east, somehow managing to darken the whole place. Countless spirits hazards flew across the skies, making for quite a mystical sight.

Right now, Tianming was only accompanied by Ying Huo. Meow Meow had seen a lot of action during the battles the day before and had requested lots of sleep time to make up for its efforts, threatening to strike if he didn't get it. Lan Huang, on the other hand, was too eager to come out, but the circumstances simply didn't allow for it. So all it could do was run about in the lifebound space, shaking it up significantly. Tianming was worried that he would stomp on the other seven eggs.

"A wildbeast?" Both he and Ying Huo could smell it as they advanced. "It seems like there's a nest near the cliff ahead."

"The temperature here is rather high. Even the mountains feel rather hot to the touch. It must be a fire-type wildbeast," Ying Huo said.

From yesterday to now, they had only encountered three wildbeasts, all of them eighth-order demon beasts, which were about as powerful as empyrean saints from the fourth to sixth levels. After killing them and refining their souls, no abilities were awakened.

"Let's give this one a try."

"Okay."

They stealthily snuck closer to it. Beneath the cliff was a sea of fire spirit hazards, deep within which was a crimson nest. Using his third eye, Tianming saw through the flaming ocean and spotted the wildbeast.

"This should be the ninth-order demon beast, trihead lifeflame vulture. It would definitely be among the most powerful demon beasts if it lives long enough. This one, however, still seems young. We should have a chance against it," Tianming said.

The bird he saw was entirely crimson and looked a little like a three-headed vulture. It was really huge and each of its heads looked like a burning red metal rod. Its beaks were unbelievably sharp, and its feathers seemed like a cluster of tiny blades that covered its entire body apart from its bald heads.

"Go!"

Both Tianming and Ying Huo's bodies were far too small for the vulture.

"Lan Huang, it's time for you to come out and play!" Tianming said as he approached. Lan Huang was already close to ripping the whole lifebound space apart. When Tianming let it out, it fell into the ocean of flames. Thanks to its starry hide, though, even those spirit hazards were no longer able to harm it.

Lan Huang didn't care how much of a fuss it made and immediately unleashed its Primordial Soundwave. At the same time, it used Azure Oceanic Purgatory, turning the flaming terrain around it into an ocean and dragging the vulture in.

Now, there were two gigantic beasts in the ocean, but Lan Huang was the larger of the two. Both of its heads bit the wings of the vulture as it used its claws to strike the vulture's heads and its sword-like tail to slash at the vulture's body. In return, the vulture desperately tried to burn it, but to no avail, thanks to the two-headed dragon's increased defensive capabilities. The stars on Lan Huang's body quickly assembled to deflect any attacks it received. Soon, the two were locked in combat with one another.

"Your grandfather is here, bald vulture! Submit to me!" Ying Huo said as it used its Infernal Haze and gathered an impressive force in its wings.

"Is Ying Huo practicing the Hexapath Samsara Sword?" Tianming could tell. It even seemed to resemble the correct form. He decided he would let Ying Huo practice it more, for if it really managed to match his level, the chick would be far stronger.

With Lan Huang keeping the vulture occupied, Ying Huo's strike immediately pierced through its feathers and struck its flesh, causing Invincible Sword Ki to blast into its body. The vulture shrieked in pain and gathered a terrifying force into its heads, causing them to appear redder and redder from the heat.

"This is its awakened ability, Fatal Flare. It gathers the flames into one part before allowing it to explode!"

However, neither Ying Huo nor Lan Huang cared about that ability. Lan Huang could afford to take it with its humongous body, not to mention it wasn't even in the target range as it pressed the vulture deep into the water. Ying Huo, on the other hand, was hidden amongst its many clones, continuing to poke many holes into the vulture. By now, Fatal Flare was charged to its limit and burst out like a tiny meteor with impressive power.

"Watch out!" Tianming cried as it approached Lan Huang and Ying Huo. The blazing meteor was so tiny that it was easy to miss as it zipped its way to Lan Huang. All of a sudden, the stars scattered all over its body gathered at the point of impact right before a loud explosion sounded out and powerful flames engulfed the area.

"It's so powerful!" There was no doubt that it was only achievable by condensing the power of the flames into such a small point. Lan Huang was sent flying and even managed to spin a few times in the air.

"Are you alright?" Tianming asked as he approached.

"It hurts!" Lan Huang groaned loudly. It was almost ironic how it was so afraid of pain, despite its tough and huge body, to the point that it cried so loud it made his ears hurt.

He inspected Lan Huang's wound and saw some damaged scales and charred flesh, but it didn't cover a huge area. The injury was relatively light, but the vulture's attack was definitely impressive enough to pierce Lan Huang's starry defense.

"Stop whining and go avenge yourself," Tianming said.

"Now I'm mad!" Lan Huang charged back in like a rabid dog. The vulture was still engaging Ying Huo in combat, only to be rammed and pressed into the water once more as Lan Huang pummeled it nonstop.

"Eat my sword, stupid bird!" Ying Huo shone brightly as it used its Skypiercing Diablos Feathers to execute the Hexapath Samsara Sword, this time with more fidelity than the last. With both its wings, it could simultaneously execute both the Life Sword and Death Sword.

The impressive Skypiercer Ki tore its opponent's flesh apart. Thanks to their teamwork, the trihead lifeflame vulture was now on the brink of death. Tianming refined its soul and handed it to Ying Huo. "Don't waste it!"

"You think refining abilities is easy? Luck plays a role!" Ying Huo said. Fatal Flare wasn't its ability; it only needed it as a guide to unlock its bloodline chains and awaken its own ability.

After Ying Huo returned to his lifebound space, Tianming said, "You, go back too."

"I don't wanna!" Lan Huang said stubbornly.

Tianming's head was starting to hurt; now, Meow Meow wouldn't come out and Lan Huang wouldn't go in. "If you don't do as I say, I won't let you play with your favorite Sister Youyou again."

"Fine... I'll go back in, all right?"

"Say it like you mean it."

"I'll go back in!" it yelled loudly with both its heads right next to Tianming.

"Dammit!" He felt like his eardrums were about to shatter. Right after he managed to get Lan Huang back in, he felt an incoming threat and dodged. There was a blood colored petal embedded where he was standing just before. It was a hidden weapon with tribulation patterns and it had almost pierced the back of his head. Someone had definitely come after detecting Lan Huang's commotion.

"Who is it?!" The moment he said that, a young man in brown robes appeared above the cliff, looking at Tianming coldly.

"Li Tianming, the heavens must want to get rid of you by allowing you to encounter me." The young man was tall and lanky, like a wooden pole. In his hand was a flower with eight other petals like the one from before. The one he had thrown automatically returned to the flower, making it the ninth. Behind him was a wood-colored dragon. It made for quite an odd sight, for its body resembled a rather rough, towering tree. The many claws of the dragon branched out from its body like roots that grew into the ground.

Tianming immediately felt that something was amiss and hurriedly dodged. The next instant, many dragon claws came bursting out of the ground where he stood. He immediately used the Grand-Orient Sword to cut them, but even more popped out, totaling up to about a thousand.

"Meow Meow!" Tianming immediately called. This foe was too powerful for him to deal with right now.

"Ah, we're escaping again? Watch me!" Meow Meow said sleepily as it turned into a Regal Chaosfiend and dragged Tianming along.

"Hey, you're running the wrong way!" Tianming was speechless. He was actually being dragged into the direction of the youth.

"Huh?" Meow Meow widened its eyes in surprise and hurriedly turned around. Countless wooden dragon claws burst out from the ground, but Meow Meow was able to evade them all.

"Who are you?" Tianming asked.

"Xuanyuan Cangcang," he said coldly as he gave chase, riding on his dragon.

"Is there a grudge between us?"

"My younger brother is Xuanyuan Ganggang."

"Ah, I see." Tianming ignored him and kept running. Given that person's speed, he was probably more powerful than an eighth-level empyrean saint. There was no need for him to fight him to the death, it simply wasn't time.

"So long." Tianming zipped away as Meow Meow sped up. He looked back and saw no one. "We're safe now."

Right after they stopped, the little colorful egg in the lifebound space jumped around.

"What's going on?" Tianming asked as he took it out.

The egg jumped onto Meow Meow and pointed to a spot. Tianming looked closer and saw a little green bean and picked it up.

"What's this?" Meow Meow asked.

"A seed. Xuanyuan Cangcang can probably use this to track us."

"Wow, Fourth is amazing. It even found this." Meow Meow shrank and lovingly stroked the egg.

"I've got it," Tianming said as he smiled.

"Got what?"

He picked up the egg and said, "This fellow has a close affinity to plants. It might be a wood type, or even a life type."

Chapter 632 - Hibiscus Spiritwine

Ying Huo was done refining a brief moment later. Tianming asked, "Was it successful?"

"I failed!" Ying Huo sighed.

"You spicy chicken. You're so useless that I can't even look at you," Tianming said with disdain.

"Haha! Look at that stupid face of yours! I can't wait to see you slapping your own face!" Ying Huo laughed while holding its belly.

"What do you mean?"

"I succeeded! Haha!"

“Screw you, idiot!” Tianming slapped Ying Huo’s head and sent it into the mud. Ying Huo had awakened a new ability, Infernal Blaze. Tianming tried getting the bird to give it a try, but the ability couldn’t be used for the time being; it needed time to acc.u.mulate. But it could gather all the saint ki in its body into a spark and gather it on the tip of its feather.

“I can tear their bodies apart with Skypiercer Ki and inject a spark of Infernal Blaze into their body before igniting it from inside the body. It’s definitely a one hit kill!” Ying Huo placed its wings on its waist and laughed, “Tianming, can you imagine me injecting the Infernal Blaze into your balls and igniting it? Just how wonderful would that be? Ling’er would wash her face with tears daily if she saw that.”

“Haha. I want to eat fried chicken wings,” Tianming sneered. But he had to admit that Ying Huo’s new ability was terrifying. The only downside was that it needed time to acc.u.mulate. They continued on their journey.

Not long later, the stars began gathering on the Deepstar Formation and formed words.

“What’s that?”

“That’s the top hundred rankings in the Battle of Astral, and it’ll show once a day. In the last three days, it can always be seen.” Tianming raised his head. He had defeated three people, so he should have three points now.

The hundredth rank had five points, which belonged to Xuanyuan Cangcang. He got five points together with many others, but they were ranked in sequential order. Then again, this was only the first day.

“The first rank, Xuanyuan Muxue, has forty-one points? The second only has fourteen points? How can anyone catch up to her?” Ying Huo was speechless.

“Maybe she just happened to defeat opponents on the ranking,” said Tianming.

“What about Fang Xingque?”

“Thirty-eight.” Tianming found Fang Xingque’s ranking. He and Ying Huo exchanged a glance before they laughed. The number fitted him well, as thirty-eight also meant bitch.

“No rush. Let’s go cultivate in the Old Deepstar Path.” Tianming triggered his Deepstar Formation and a middle-aged man appeared roughly thirty breaths later. “Do you want to leave the battlefield for the time being?”

“Yes, senior.”

The middle-aged man waved the Star Hooking Rod in his hand and wrapped it around Tianming, then pulled him out of the Deepstar Formation. His voice then echoed out by Tianming’s ears, “You’re not allowed to leave for more than four hours. Furthermore, you’ll be randomly teleported the next time you enter.”

Tianming appeared in the sky of the Deepstar Formation and returned to the Archaion Sect. After he returned, he headed to the Old Deepstar Path right away. The Number One Pavilion was right along the route to the Earth Branch’s Old Deepstar Path, so he went to take a look at his home. But he couldn’t find anyone when he returned home.

“Why isn’t she cleaning up the place? Where’d she go?” Tianming looked around before he found someone in the hot spring. A woman was showering, and she was naturally Lin Xiaoxiao.

“Arggh!!” a girl yelled out.

“What the hell are you screaming for? Aren’t you wearing clothes?” Tianming stared at her. She was wearing clothes, but not much.

Lin Xiaoxiao fiddled around before she came out with her clothes on and looked at him furiously, “Didn’t you say that you weren’t coming back for a month? What’s the matter? You were eliminated?”

“Nope.” Tianming glared at her. “You’re here as a maid, but you’re staying in my house and even bathing in my hot spring. I’m outside risking my life, yet you’re enjoying your life here....”

“You also didn’t say that I’m not allowed to do that!”

Tianming had only come to take a look, and he no longer cared about it, seeing that she had settled down. “I’ll be leaving now.”

“You coming back?”

“No. I’m heartbroken that my maid is taking a bath in my hot spring as she wishes!”

“Oh.”

Tianming left in the blink of an eye.

“He’s concerned about you. He must be after your body,” the Archaionfiend suggested.

“You’re only saying that because you have no idea how beautiful his lover is.” Lin Xiaoxiao curled her lips. She then suddenly thought of someone and asked, “By the way, where’s Feiling?”

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Tianming came to Oldwind Street after he came out of the Old Deepstar Path.

“Big Sister, I’ll sell back Brightnight. I need money,” Tianming said when he found Jian Xueyi in the Snowrites Sword Pavilion.

“Oh? It was seven hundred tribulation crystals, right?” Jian Xueyi was absentminded as she counted seven hundred tribulation crystals.

“Five hundred will do.” Tianming returned two hundred tribulation crystals to her.

“At least you’re sensible!” Jian Xueyi winked, then continued, “Hope you get a good result in the Deepstar Battlefield.”

Jian Xueyi then put Brightnight away. After all, she still had to rely on this wealthy husband.

“Thank you, Big Sister.” Tianming observed Jian Xueyi and asked, “Why do you seem unhappy?”

“My uncle passed away, and his murderer still hasn’t been found,” Jian Xueyi lamented.

“Senior Jian Binghe?” Tianming asked.

“Yeah. You even met him that day. His corpse was found after the faction battle ended. His life was instantly taken, along with his lifebound beasts. There aren’t any clues pointing to the murderer at all,” said Jian Xueyi.

“The murderer is powerful?”

“Yeah. Most importantly, my uncle didn’t have any enemies, and he never offended anyone,” Jian Xueyi said with watery eyes.

“The Archaion Sect is so dangerous? Even someone as powerful as your uncle was killed?”

“Yeah.” Jian Xueyi bit her lip and continued, “Tianming, my parents said that the other eight divine realms were stirring when Her Eminence returned. Chaos might unfold soon, and we should be concerned about it.”

“What do you mean?”

“The other divine realms were afraid of her when she returned but when they heard she would need to cultivate again to become a god, a war might unfold to kill her to prevent it,” said Jian Xueyi.

“Oh, got it.” Tianming pursed his lips together and said, “Big Sister, I’ll be leaving now. I have something else to do.”

“Be careful.”

“Alright!”

Tianming looked at the sky after leaving the Snowrites Sword Pavilion. He closed his eyes and took a deep breath before quickening his pace. “I’ll kill anyone who wants to touch Ling’er. If the world wants to kill her, I’ll butcher the entire world for her!”

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At the Heaven Cauldron in the Heaven Branch, Tianming spent five hundred tribulation crystals on a bottle of Hibiscus Spiritwine.

The wine was expensive, and it was definitely the best since he paid five hundred tribulation crystals for it. But it was only a small bottle.

“Senior Ouyang, I’m here to show respect to you.” Tianming climbed up the Heaven Cauldron and stood before Ouyang Jianwang.

“Don’t call me that. You’re making me seem old. Just call me Big Brother Ouyang.” Ouyang Jianwang’s eyes lit up when he saw the bottle of wine. He naturally knew what kind of wine it was.

“Big Brother Ouyang...”

“Haha, the Hibiscus Spiritwine! Come, let’s enjoy it together,” said Ouyang Jianwang.

“Alright. I’ll pour you a cup.”

“Brat, you really know your manners.” Ouyang Jianwang was floating when he saw the wine. With that, Tianming and Ouyang Jianwang sat on the Heaven Cauldron, drinking.

“Great wine! How can there not be any good poems? This is a good scene here, so why don’t we have a poetry battle?” Ouyang Jianwang chuckled.

“Please enlighten me.” Tianming cupped his hands together.

Ouyang Jianwang pondered briefly, then recited, “Listen carefully. A thousand cups of wine isn’t too much when friends meet, drinking as much as you possibly can!”

“Good one!” Tianming started clapping.

“I apologize for embarrassing myself. Come, it’s your turn now,” Ouyang Jianwang said humbly.

“It’s difficult.” Tianming scratched his head and pondered for a long time, then recited, “Seeking him hundreds and thousands of times, try taking two steps if you’re fine.”

“Brilliant! Absolutely brilliant! It looks like you’re pretty talented yourself.” Ouyang Jianwang gulped down a cup of wine. He felt the pressure and swayed his head for a long time before slapping his thigh.

“Asking the world what love is, love is when two apes are weeping on two cliffs!”

“Brilliant! That’s a brilliant one too!” Tianming exclaimed.

“Thank you. It’s your turn now,” Ouyang Jianwang said proudly.

“Then I’ll be embarrassing myself once more. The birds flying in the sky, flying in their own direction when danger approaches!”

“Not bad. Here’s one from me: Heaven has aged if it has love, humans die faster if they’re too affectionate!” Ouyang Jianwang produced poems while shaking his head.

“The emperor and his mistress remove their war robes, spending the night with hibiscus warming the bed!” Tianming threw out an ultimate poem.

“Asking the emperor about his worries, going to the brothel with eunuchs!” Ouyang Jianwang gave the final one.

“Haha, Big Brother Ouyang is simply a genius. I don’t have any more poems that can match yours!” Tianming raised his hands in defeat.

“Haha, you’re pretty talented yourself. It’s good that you almost tied with me. You’ll surpass me in time!” Ouyang Jianwang said happily and clinked glasses with Tianming again. “Go ahead. What do you need me to do?”

“Big Brother Ouyang, I wish to visit the Archaionfiend Trial.” Tianming raised his head with his eyes blazing.

“The Archaionfiend Trial? That’s where the Trioptic True Dragon Branch tempers their third eye and practices their eye art. Ordinary people won’t be able to endure the Archaionfiend Eye’s impact,” said Ouyang Jianwang.

“I also have a third eye,” Tianming said, stretching out his left hand. His third eye was mysterious, but there were many mysteries in the nine divine realms. He believed that there was no need for him to keep his third eye a secret with Feiling backing him up.

“Holy shit!” Ouyang Jianwang widened his eyes. “You scared me there. I thought your anus grew on your hand there.”

His words left Tianming speechless.

“Alright. Seeing that you’re a poetry friend of mine, I’ll submit an application for you to the Tribulation Peak. But you’ll probably have to wait some time for the approval. I’ll get Old Yi to inform you when the time comes,” Ouyang Jianwang said with a smile.

Tribulation Peak was an organization that could contend with the three sect masters, and they also supervised the three sect masters.

“Thank you, Senior.”

“Call me Big Brother.”

“Alrighty, Big Brother....”

Chapter 633 - Number One Summit

Disciples participating in the Deepstar Battle could leave the Deepstar Battlefield once a day for four hours. Tianming had already spent two hours in the Old Deepstar Path, and some time together with Ouyang Jianwang. Now, he was rushing back to the Deepstar Battlefield.

But just when he was about to leave, Tianming lowered his head and saw a bronze gaze suddenly opening in the belly of the mountain under the Heaven Cauldron. A young man walked out, staggering as he raised his head to look at the sky. He didn’t see Tianming on the Heaven Cauldron, but Tianming clearly saw his three bloodshot eyes. He was Xuanyuan Yuheng, who merely glanced around before leaving.

“He’s cultivating before the Archaionfiend Eye?” Tianming asked.

“That’s right. He’s been trying to make a breakthrough recently, and he’s been cultivating insanely without any rest,” said Ouyang Jianwang.

“Why? Is there something he’s going to do?” Tianming asked, looking at Xuanyuan Yuheng’s silhouette.

“The Number One Summit,” said Ouyang Jianwang.

“Number One Summit?” Tianming had just named his Earth Pavilion the Number One Pavilion.

“That’s right. It’s almost time for that, and it’s our Archaion Sect’s turn to host it this time round. It’ll be lively at that time. The other eight divine realms’ powerhouses will bring their elite disciples to seize the ‘Number One’ title. As hosts, we naturally can’t embarrass ourselves and get trampled on, so the Heaven Branch disciples have been under great pressure recently—especially those over the age of twenty. They’ll be responsible for defending our dignity and honor,” Ouyang Jianwang lamented.

“So they’re going to compete for the title of Number One Genius?” Tianming asked.

“Not only that, but this is a gambling game between the divine realms. The gamble includes resources and territories, so we can only put our faith in the younger generations. The so-called ‘Number One’ is

just a title. After all, which youngster doesn't want honor and fame? It might not seem like much, but it can rouse the youngsters' blood.

"I also had a similar dream when I was young. But to seniors, they place more importance on the confrontation between the future forces of the divine realms and the ownership of resources and territories," said Ouyang Jianwang.

"The younger generations are the future of the divine realms. If they can suppress their peers to obtain the title of 'Number One,' it'll also lead their clan and divine realm to glory in the future, right?" Tianming asked.

"That's roughly the case. But we can't rule out that some might mature late," said Ouyang Jianwang. But Tianming wasn't concerned about it since it had nothing to do with the Archaionfiend Eye.

Ouyang Jianwang gulped down a cup of wine and sighed. "The eight divine realms will naturally come hard at us with Her Eminence's return. I'll flip my name around if they don't try to do something during the Number One Summit. The sect masters can't bring down their faces to cower, and there's never been a time where the host didn't dare to host the summit in history."

"Oh." Tianming's gaze became deep. Who knew if the eight divine realms were here for Feiling.

"These people are insane if they even dare to covet Her Eminence. Haha...." Ouyang Jianwang sneered. "Why am I telling you all that? This is something that we're all having a headache over. You can return to the Deepstar Battlefield now."

"Okay, then I'll be leaving first."

"Come again when you're free. I'll show you my stock of poems next time!" Ouyang Jianwang said while narcissistically fluffing his hair. "Haha!"

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Half an hour later, Tianming returned to the Deepstar Battlefield. As the Deepstar Formation revolved, he was sucked into the battlefield. He had no idea where he was in the Myriadbeast Abyss.

He raised his head and looked at the towering black mountain in front of him. Water was rushing down the mountain, with demon beasts of all sizes concealed there. There were even small poisonous bugs that could pose a threat even with the Astral Formation. So everyone had to be careful in the Deepstar Battlefield.

"Let's continue based on our previous tempo. The Deepstar Battle is time-consuming, and I should focus on cultivating in the early game. The ranking doesn't matter until the last three days, and on the last day, we can reach the top even if we don't have any points." Tianming wasn't in a hurry.

His focus was on two aspects: comprehending Heavenly Will and the Hexapath Samsara Sword. He would practice his sword whenever he saw someone. When there wasn't anyone, he would digest and absorb the Astral Will. At the same time, he would enrich his Imperial Will with the Grand-Orient Sword and Prime Tower.

With that, Tianming lived a simple lifestyle. But for everyone else, the Deepstar Battlefield was constantly filled with battles. In the blink of an eye, ten days had passed.

“I’m now in the third level of the Empyrean Saint stage.” Tianming was finally repaid for his bitter cultivation. “It’s so much better in the Earth Branch’s Old Deepstar Path with an additional four hours to cultivate. My cultivation speed is actually still the same even after reaching the Empyrean Saint stage.”

It was common sense that cultivating would become harder the higher your cultivation. After all, your comprehension of Heavenly Will would slow down the further you go. There wasn’t anyone like Tianming, who had maintained the same cultivation speed since the Beast Vein stage.

He could only say that while he cultivated, his talent and resources were simultaneously growing. He mainly depended on the Grand-Orient Sword when he was in the Earth and Sky Saint stages.

Now that he was in the Empyrean Saint stage, he had the Old Deepstar Path. He could absorb the ancestors’ Heavenly Wills every day for two hours, merging them into his Imperial Will.

“If it wasn’t for the Old Deepstar Path, I’d reach a bottleneck, and my cultivation would slow down by relying only on my own talent and the Grand-Orient Sword.” It wasn’t that he was abnormal, but he accumulated his talent to maintain his cultivating speed. For example, he had crossed the Sky Saint stage so quickly.

But it was terrifying that he could maintain the same cultivation speed in the Empyrean Saint stage. But it would be too late if they reacted after Tianming reached the Samsara stage. At that time, he would have a certain capital.

“Now that I’m in the third level of the Empyrean Saint stage, it’s time for me to earn some points.” There were only twenty days left in the Deepstar Battle. He still had to lay the foundation for the last three days, or he wouldn’t have enough time to do anything.

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The ranking appeared once more at noon. Xuanyuan Muxue was first with a thousand and eight points, Fang Xingque was in second with six hundred and thirty-one points, while the hundredth place only had thirty-six points.

“Fang Xingque is rising so quickly?” Tianming frowned. He had been paying attention to the ranking over the past few days. Fang Xingque was ranked thirty-eighth on the first day, but his ranking was improving faster and faster. He was rising up in the ranking daily, and much faster than Xuanyuan Muxue.

“This fellow likes to be in the limelight, and he’s probably unhappy being in second place. He’s probably trying to get into first place,” Tianming sneered. He was together with Ying Huo, hunting and practicing their swords at the same time.

He now had thirty-one points and was approaching hundredth place. But his luck had been bad, since he had only encountered opponents that gave him one point.

Right at that moment, Tianming saw a large group up ahead with his third eye.

“There’s at least twenty people.” Tianming gave a rough look at them. They didn’t bother hiding, probably because they had more people, and they were probably looking for prey in the wilderness.

Tianming approached and took a look at them, which he instantly recognized. “Disciples of the Sterling House of Fang?” But there weren’t any Heaven Branch disciples among them, so he felt he would have a chance fighting them.

“Fang Xingque threatened me before the battle began, and now they’re traveling in groups. Who can defeat them? Did Fang Xingque rise so quickly in the rankings because he has the Sterling House of Fang with him to increase his efficiency?” Tianming speculated.

“Is that considered cheating? Everyone else is fighting on their own, while they’re fighting with hundreds,” Ying Huo said with disdain.

“There aren’t any rules against that,” said Tianming.

“How shameless. Or perhaps this is a form of rapport to take care of disciples from the three clans. After all, no one can gather such a large number of people aside from them, turning the Deepstar Battle into a faction battle.” Tianming smiled.

Then again, they were only guessing. He wasn’t sure, but Tianming felt that he had guessed correctly.

“What’re we going to do now? Are we going to beat them up?” Ying Huo asked.

“Why not? They’re a bunch of walking points.” Tianming smiled.

“Are we going to chase them?”

“No, we’ll make a detour, pretend to bump into them accidentally, and run for our lives,” Tianming snickered.

“So complicated? What for?”

“Are you stupid? That’s so they feel superior and won’t run away. I don’t want any of them to escape,” said Tianming.

“You’re cunning!” Ying Huo said with disdain. The other party wasn’t moving quickly, and they had been looking around for people. Tianming made a detour and stopped in the path that they would walk past.

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“Fang Xingying, are you dead? Why are you walking so slow?” a blue-robed youth by the name of Fang Chenhuan turned around and yelled at a young man behind.

“Fang Xingying, why don’t you get lost? You’re annoying!” a young lady said. Her name was Fang Shuyu. She wasn’t old, and she had an adorable appearance with all of her pink pieces of jewelry and clothing. Even her stockings were pink.

Chapter 634 - Ultimate: Infernal Blaze

Fang Xingying raised his dull eyes and said, “Alright, I’ll leave then.”

He was a direct descendant of the Sterling House of Fang and should have a high status, but it was pathetic how he was today. Fang Chenhuan and Fang Shuyu were the leaders of this team. He had originally gathered this team, but everyone abandoned him for the two of them when they came.

“Get lost then. We’ll look for Junior Master Xingque ourselves.”

“Junior Master Xingque’s ranking is rising, but he hasn’t reached first place yet. He probably doesn’t have many people around him, and we have to gather with him quickly. It’s already been ten days,” Fang Shuyu said anxiously.

“No problem!” Fang Chenhuan smiled and strode forth happily after getting rid of Fang Xingying.

“That guy is ridiculous. It’s better to die than live like a lazy worm.” Fang Shuyu turned back to look at Fang Xingying’s figure with contempt in his eyes.

“He’s a direct descendant, after all,” said Fang Chenhuan.

“Junior Brother Xingque is keeping him around for fun. That person is an oddball. I have no idea how he endures being humiliated every single time.”

“I bet you don’t know about that. Even an animal has the urge to live.”

“Haha!”

Just when the group of nineteen were laughing, someone suddenly said, “There seems to be someone in front!”

“Quick, it’s prey! Don’t let him escape!”

“We’ll gather more points and give them to Junior Master Xingque before the Deepstar Battle ends.”

“Chase after him!”

The commotion created by the group was large, and the prey in their eyes seemed to be walking, then ran when he saw them.

“It’s that Li Tianming!” someone yelled.

“Quick, capture him! It’s a huge merit!” Fang Shuyu rejoiced.

“Capture him and give him to Junior Master Xingque. He’ll be happy!”

“Everyone, be careful. Don’t accidentally activate his Astral Formation!” Fang Shuyu warned.

“His lifebound beast is fast. Quick, encircle him!”

Fang Xingying, who was far away, heard their conversation. “Li Tianming?” He was briefly stunned as he quickly chased the group. He raised his head and saw a white-haired youth being encircled by nineteen disciples from the Sterling House of Fang. They were afraid of Tianming’s lifebound beast’s speed, so they encircled him to block his escape. Nineteen of them, including their lifebound beasts, practically sealed off all of Tianming’s routes.

He’s finished. He can’t even escape, Fang Xingying thought. He was feeling conflicted as to whether he should save him. “Forget it. I’ll take a look at the situation first. It’s fine if they accidentally activate his Astral Formation and eliminate him.”

Right at that moment, Tianming summoned his lifebound beasts, which caused everyone, including Fang Chenhuan and Fang Shuyu, to be shocked. "So many stars?!"

"How in the...." Fang Xingying was speechless. This battle was interesting, so the Deepstar Hall shifted to Fang Xingying's vision. From Fang Xingying's perspective, they could see the entire battle.

"Three lifebound beasts with over three hundred and ninety stars! One with three hundred and ninety-four stars, one with three hundred and ninety-seven stars, and one with four hundred and eighteen stars!"

"Who the hell is he?"

"I think he's called Li Tianming."

Tianming's name was being discussed, and many people were looking at him. He finally made his move. After a brief exchange, Tianming had a rough evaluation of their strength, "Two in the eighth level, ten in the seventh level, and the remaining in the sixth level of the Emyrean Saint stage."

Even the weakest among them could be a faction lord in the Human Branch, and they all had various types of phoenix lifebound beasts. All of them were tribulation beasts with at least a hundred and fifty stars. The highest was Fang Chenhuan's lifebound beast, the vajra radiant phoenix, with two hundred and forty stars.

It was a golden phoenix, with claws and beaks that could be used as weapons. Furthermore, there was also Fang Shuyu in the eighth level of the Emyrean Saint stage, whose lifebound beast, a whitejade phoenix, wasn't any weaker. Whitejade was considered a variant earth-type, and it had a body like white jade that looked like a living statue. The phoenix was gorgeous, which instantly attracted Ying Huo's attention.

"Leave those two phoenixes to me." Ying Huo patted its chest.

"What are you going to do?"

"Steal her from him!" Ying Huo turned into a fiery streak and disappeared. The lifebound beasts in the surroundings were all phoenixes, which made for a spectacular scene. But being besieged by so many beastmasters under the lead of two eighth-level empyrean saints wasn't a simple matter.

Tianming could be eliminated if he wasn't careful. He had no idea how many people were watching his fight, but he knew it was time to show his strength to the Archaion Sect.

"The stronger I show myself to be, the more resources Feiling can give me. Tribulation crystals are only a beginning!" Who knows, maybe Feiling could even decide the Deepstar Pool's places.

"Lan Huang!" Lan Huang had three hundred and ninety-four stars with the Infinite Stardragon Diagram dr.a.p.ed over his body. There was a lake nearby, and Lan Huang didn't even need to use his Azure Oceanic Purgatory. It jumped into the water and a bunch of lifebound beasts followed it in.

Meow Meow remained beside Tianming in its original form. Its Ninefold Chaos Thunderscape had been greatly boosted. It might be small, but the power it could put on display was terrifying. Chaos Disaster swept over and punished anyone who dared to approach. Then the cat shuttled around like a bolt of lightning, leaving lightning in its wake.

“So fast!” The Sterling House of Fang’s disciples were dumbfounded. Nineteen of them were ganging up on Tianming, but why did their opponent look full of fighting spirit?

Fang Chenhuan smiled when he saw the scene. “He must have a screw loose in his head to clash with us. This is our chance.”

“Quick, go up!” Fang Shuyu said.

“Shuyu, watch closely!” Fang Chenhuan was excited and charged at Tianming. He even instructed the others to hold their attacks. “Li Tianming, I saw your battle with Xuanyuan Yufeng, and you’re pretty good. But are you even worthy of having such lifebound beasts with your pitiful cultivation?”

Fang Chenhuan held a long spear that shot forth like a bolt of lightning. His cultivation was in the eighth level of the Empyrean Saint stage, five complete levels above Tianming.

“Oh?” Tianming smiled indifferently and separated the Grand-Orient Sword into two. He executed the Mortal Dao Sword with both swords, one life, and one death. His attacks were fast, and it seemed like the entire world was suppressing Fang Chenhuan when he brandished his swords.

The golden Grand-Orient Sword’s tip pierced through the spear, shattering the tribulation weapon. Fang Chenhuan watched with his eyes wide, dumbfounded. “What?!”

Tianming’s sword pierced Fang Chenhuan’s chest. The Astral Formation was around anyways, so he could use his full strength to fight. And it was just as he had expected; the Astral Formation was activated and switched to the protection state.

Starlight began radiating out and enveloped Fang Chenhuang. He was spared from death, but eliminated.

“You! How are you so strong?!” Fang Chehuan’s face twisted in the Astral Formation. Most importantly, he felt greatly humiliated for being defeated.

“We have the advantage in numbers. You’re still finished!” Fang Chenhuan said with a sinister expression. But what made him feel even worse was the fact that Tianming paid no attention to him and went after another opponent.

Right at that moment, the Astral Formation dragged the Vajra Radiant Phoenix into the formation as well. The formation was designed to expand until it enveloped the entire lifebound beast and waited for it to return to its lifebound space before shrinking back down.

“Hey, be careful with it!” Ying Huo yelled.

Tianming turned his gaze over and saw a spark exploding in the Vajra Radiant Phoenix’s body. Ying Huo had planted the Infernal Blaze into its body earlier, and it exploded when it entered the Astral Formation.

Everyone was shocked by that, because the explosive power was intense. Furthermore, the flames also devoured Fang Chenhuan alongside his beast. When the Astral Formation finally stabilized, Fang Chenhuan and his lifebound beast were missing.

“Chenhuan!” Fang Shuyi and other disciples from the Sterling House of Fang yelled. They were dumbstruck, and in disbelief over Fang Chenhuan’s death.

They belonged to the Sterling House of Fang, and they also had Astral Formations to protect them. So they didn’t believe that they could be killed in the Deepstar Battlefield.

But now, not even Fang Chenhuan himself could react and was killed by the Infernal Blaze. They suddenly realized that despite being in the third level of the Empyrean Saint stage, Tianming was unbelievably strong.

“Kill him!”

“Take revenge for Chenhuan!”

None of them escaped. On the contrary, they charged at Tianming together. But Tianming could even kill Fang Chenhuan with a sword, so why would he be afraid of them?

His lifebound beasts had already divided up the enemies, and wherever Tianming went, Astral Formations were being activated. In the end, he was surrounded by eighteen Astral Formations.

“Where’s the last one?” Ying Huo asked.

“Ran,” said Tianming.

The one who ran was the other eighth-level empyrean saint, Fang Shuyu. When she discovered that they couldn’t defeat Tianming, she ran away while Tianming was dealing with the rest. The seventeen people were dumbfounded while they looked at Tianming in their Astral Formations.

“Is his cultivation rising?”

“How can he possibly possess that speed in the Empyrean Saint stage?!”

“Even Chenhuan was defeated by him!”

Chapter 635: Three-Faced House Pets

Perhaps Tianming wasn’t anything much to the really powerful elites. But after this battle, his foundation in the Earth Branch would definitely be cemented, and he might even stand a chance to join the Heaven Branch.

"I recall that not even Young Master Xingque made breakthroughs at such speeds when he was at the Empyrean Saint stage."

"What is wrong with this guy?"

More and more people among the audience began recognizing Tianming, but the fact that he was brought to the sect by the eminent was still not so well-known yet.

"He managed to defeat nineteen disciples of the Sterling House of Fang alone!"

When the battle ended, the viewpoints around the Starlord Formation changed, but people still talked nonstop about the previous battle.

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"That fast, huh?" Xuanyuan Yuheng didn't expect he would be seeing something like this when he just wanted to relax and watch the show. "To think that he can even refine fourth-grade tribulation manna...."

He squinted and felt really disturbed. "It seems that I'll no longer be able to kill him with a lift of my finger."

Closing his eyes, he thought back at how Tianming had risen to the top in such a short time within the sect. "How could he, how could he?! I am the one with the Xuanyuan name! I can't let this go on. I have to do something."

His eyes were bloodshot.

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"I didn't think we'd meet again so soon," Tianming said, wielding the Grand-Orient Sword as he approached Fang Xingying with his three lifebound beasts.

"What a coincidence," Fang Xingying said as he took a few steps back.

"Don't worry. You gave me so much useful information that I used to join the Deepstar Battle, and I even became Fang Xingque's prey. I wouldn't eliminate you like that," Tianming said.

"I only said that so I would survive."

"The fact that you're trying to explain yourself means you're just trying to hide it," Tianming said with a smile, then turned serious. "I was just joking around, don't mind me. Let me ask you another question."

"Ask away," Fang Xingying said as he looked at Tianming's three lifebound beasts, confused.

"Do all members of the Sterling House of Fang that entered the Deepstar Battle have to stay right by Fang Xingque's side?"

"Of course. The few hundred of them have come with the sole purpose of protecting him."

"That doesn't sound fair." Currently, Fang Xingque was ranked in second place. In other words, he would only have to defeat a few hundred others to take first place.

"What's unfair about that? The fact that you were able to join is already fair in itself. The only unfair thing was how Xuanyuan Muxue and Fang Xingque managed to gain their spots in the Deepstar Battle without doing anything."

"How is sending a few hundred bodyguards to protect him different from making Fang Xingque the victor of the battle?"

"It is different. At least the Xuanyuans aren't doing the same."

"It's just because of their pride, isn't it? The Sterling House of Fang, in comparison, just looks like unreasonable bullies in comparison," Tianming mocked.

"You don't understand. The Sterling House of Fang was originally from the Biritual Divine Realm. We were chased out of it like dogs, and our ancestors had to suffer a lot of hardship for us to achieve what we have now. Naturally, they won't take any chances and let something like that repeat again."

"Biritual Divine Realm? So, the Yinyang Demon Sect?"

"That's right."

"Isn't that a little like the Draconis House of Jian?"

"That's the difference. The Draconis House of Jian was the original house and the Hexapath Sword Sect's Tai'e House of Jian branched off from them. They were chased out by their own branch family while we were completely exiled!"

"I see. It's really boring. I'm not too interested in your family history," Tianming said as he rolled his eyes. "So, since you have so many people together, does that mean you can't go out to train at the Old Deepstar Path?"

Returning to the Deepstar Battlefield would place one in a random location, so it would be hard to gather together again.

"Yeah. They just can't leave. It's only one month, so how much would they be losing out on?"

"Quite a lot, it seems."

Fang Xingying clicked his tongue. As far as he was considered, Tianming was a monster. "Back then, I could've assassinated you, but now I'm no longer your match," he said, downcast.

"Just get used to it."

"Where'd you get that tribulation manna from?"

"It has nothing to do with you."

"Since you use a sword, are you the son of the Human Branch's sect master?"

"Haha, goodbye." Tianming no longer cared about chatting with Fang Xingying. He had better things to do, like going to the Old Deepstar Path.

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The rankings revealed themselves again the next day. Now, Tianming could find his name on it. He was in seventieth place with seventy-three points. Defeating those eighteen had earned him more than forty points.

"It seems I'm rather lucky." Even though he was still very far off from the top, he wasn't in that much of a rush. He would go about it at his own pace. After all, he could just make it up during the last three days.

With this name getting on the rankings for the first time, someone was bound to notice. As expected, Fang Xingque did.

On a tall, black mountain in the battlefield were close to two hundred people huddled together. They all belonged to the Sterling House of Fang. A group like them was almost invincible on the battlefield and could do whatever they want. No matter who they ran into, they always scurried away. Even though Fang Xingque wasn't the strongest among them, there was no doubt that he held the most authority.

"Did you see that? Li Tianming is in seventieth place!" he said.

"I believe he'll be able to defeat another sixty or seventy people given his abilities. He seems to have rather good luck," said a youth clad in black standing beside Fang Xingque. He was about the same age and his hair was red, blue, and green. It wasn't dyed, but rather his natural hair color. That was a sign of his talent in the Sterling House of Fang, inferior only to Fang Xingque's rainbow colored hair.

"Let's ignore him for now and focus on surpassing Xuanyuan Muxue. It displeases me that a woman like her is above me."

Fang Xingque looked into the distance at his cohort of two hundred. If he couldn't defeat Xuanyuan Muxue like that, he would be a laughingstock. He felt humiliated every time he saw the rankings board appear.

"The point gap is only three hundred now, and will only continue decreasing. We only need a few days to pass her," said the youth.

"Chenyu, do you know why Xuanyuan Muxue is so impressive?" Fang Xingque asked.

"I don't."

Nobody dared to approach as they were speaking. They all knew that even though they weren't siblings, they were actually much closer than that.

"Whatever. We'll talk after we pass her. Our group here just grows bigger by the day. Let's see who dares to touch us during the last three days."

"Don't worry. The spots in the Deepstar Pool will definitely belong to you. I'll kill anyone that dares take them from you."

"Chenyu, has your father returned from trying to recruit the other divine realms?"

"He has, but it doesn't seem to have worked out well. The Quadform Divine Realm ignored him," Fang Chenyu said coldly.

"It's good enough that he's back. To be honest, I didn't think it'd work out either. Your dad is one of the 'three hands' of the Sterling House of Fang and controls the Judgment Hall. He's the chief inquisitor of the sect. As someone from the Sterling House of Fang, he shouldn't be risking his life for the Archaion Sect."

"You mean to say...."

"That's just my personal opinion. I don't know what my father and the rest think about it."

"The Sterling House of Fang originated in the Quadform Divine Realm, rose to prominence in the Birtual Divine Realm, and dominates in the Archaion Divine Realm. But do you know what those from the Quadform Divine Realm called us?" Fang Chenyu asked angrily.

"What?"

"The three-faced house pets!"

"Damn it!" Fang Xingque's eyes were burning with anger. "What house pets? The Archaion Divine Realm is ours! Even the Xuanyuans have to step aside for us!"

"I want to wipe out the Quadform Divine Realm one day!"

"Let's do it together!"

After some venting, they calmed down. "Let's proceed on our hunt!"

They split up, but kept in touch, allowing them to spread out wider for more frequent encounters.

"Xingque, we ran into Fang Shuyu. She wants to see you," Fang Chenyu said.

"Her?" Fang Xingque waved for the girl in pink to be brought over.

"Young Master Xingque, all of us were wiped out by Li Tianming. He even killed Fang Chenhuan!" Fang Shuyu said with teary eyes.

"What?" Many of them turned grim when they heard it.

"Aren't you an eighth-level empyrean saint?" Fang Xingque asked.

"Yes, but he managed to defeat Chenhuan with a single strike," she said, pale with fear.

"That's impossible! He wasn't nearly as powerful two weeks ago during the faction battles!" Fang Chenyu exclaimed.

"It's probably due to his lifebound beasts evolving," Fang Xingque said.

"He's really troublesome. We have to kill him as soon as possible. By the way, he isn't a samsaran, so how was he able to breach the Astral Formation and kill Fang Chenhuan?" Fang Chenyu asked.

"It seemed to be some kind of ability of his lifebound beast. It pierced the Astral Formation and exploded," she said.

"Ability?" Everyone grew furious. Li Tianming was really getting on their nerves.

"I didn't think he'd even dare to kill someone from the Sterling House of Fang... hehehe...." Fang Xingque bit his lip.

"Young Master, I have a plan," she said.

"Elaborate."

"I had Fenfen scatter some jade powder onto Li Tianming's lifebound beast. That bird of his likes to perch on his shoulder, so some of it is bound to have gotten on him. The powder of the Whitejade Phoenix is hard to detect. Only my phoenix can track it."

"You mean to say we can track him down?" Fang Xingque asked.

"That should be the case."

"His lifebound beast is really fast. Even finding him might be pointless," Fang Chenyu said.

"Not necessarily. We can lay in ambush and instantly kill him when he lets his guard down. He won't even have the time to summon his lifebound beasts!" Fang Xingque said deviously.

"So should we head out now?"

"Of course."

Chapter 636: Blizzard Girl

Dark clouds covered the lands as hundreds of people silently crossed. Only the Sterling House of Fang was able to gather so many people in the Deepstar Battlefield. More and more people joined their group, and eventually, quite a number of Heaven Branch disciples were among them.

"Fang Shuyu, how much farther is it?" Fang Xingque asked as he looked at the dark river ahead of him. They had been pursuing Tianming for close to four hours.

"Young Master Xingque, we're almost there. He's right ahead. I suggest we split our group up to encircle him and cut off his escape route," she said a little nervously from the back of her Whitejade Phoenix.

"Sure. I'll leave the details to you," he said.

"Understood," she nodded with delighted surprise as she thought about how she would be accepted into Fang Xingque's circle for her contribution. The group of hundreds continued stealthily tracking Tianming.

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Back in the Dimensional Battlefield, the audience was able to see what they were doing through the hundred plus viewpoints that were provided. It was almost as if Deepstar Hall was trying to shame the Sterling House of Fang for their tactics and behavior.

"Are they chasing someone down?"

"Looks like it."

"Fang Xingque and Fang Shuyu are conspiring together. The girl just escaped from Li Tianming, so she probably has him tagged."

"That means Fang Xingque is chasing Li Tianming down!"

"The upcoming show will be interesting. Tianming killed Fang Chenhuan, and Fang Xingque isn't someone who would let something like that go."

Once more, the audience grew excited as Fang Xingque began smiling as he encroached upon his prey.

Eventually....

"Xuanyuan Muxue!"

"Young Master Xingque, we've spotted her!"

"She's trying to escape!"

This had happened just as Fang Xingque was considering how he would humiliate Tianming. "Give chase!"

The group immediately deviated from their course.

"Chase her down! Anyone that manages to catch her will be rewarded with a tribulation artifact with three tribulation patterns!" he yelled. He himself gave chase at the very front with the other Heaven Branch disciples.

"Young Master!" Fang Shuyu cried, before she turned to Fang Chenyu. "Aren't we going to hunt Li Tianming down?"

"What are you thinking?" Fang Chenyu said as he gave the back of her head a smack. "Li Tianming is an annoying mutt at most. He's all bark and no bite. Xuanyuan Muxue is the real rival for Xingque. If we defeat her, not only will we humiliate the Archaic House of Xuanyuan, we'll also be able to secure a spot for Xingque at the Deepstar Pool. The Xuanyuans can't be given that spot no matter what."

"Understood," Fang Shuyu said, nodding and cutely poking her tongue out.

The youths of the three great houses had always competed with each other, both openly and secretly. The stronger they were compared to their compatriots, the better their future would be. The Sterling House of Fang had only managed to rise to the top of the Archaic Sect through competition like that among their younger generations, after all.

Not only did Fang Xingque have to get first place in the Deepstar Battle, but he also had to suppress Xuanyuan Muxue and not even give her a chance. The sight of a few hundred members of the Sterling House of Fang chasing down a lone Xuanyuan Muxue was a sight to behold. Even so, only the Heaven Branch disciples among them were truly able to keep up.

The girl dressed in snow white was covered in ice as she threaded through the storm with countless pursuers on her tail, but her expression never changed one bit the entire time.

"Careful!" Fang Xingque called out as a snowstorm came their way. In an instant, ice covered the area around them. When the cold breeze swept by, at least a dozen of them were turned into ice sculptures. When they broke themselves free, they were freezing and covered in ice.

"Give chase!" Fang Xingque urged. The ones behind them that hadn't been frozen had caught up and he ordered them to bombard the area ahead with their lifebound beasts' abilities. "Dammit, that f.u.c.k.i.n.g s.l.u.t's still trying to look superior to me. I'll see where that bitch can run to!"

Even though his behavior lacked class, the disciples of the Archaion Sect were long used to it and didn't dare to say a word about it. After all, an arrogant piece of trash was a fool, but an arrogant genius was a nightmare. Fang Xingque was a nightmare for many disciples in the sect. No matter how badly he insulted anyone, nobody had ever called him out on it.

"Fight me if you dare! Don't run! Or are all members of the Archaic House of Xuanyuan cowards like you?!" he mocked.

However, Xuanyuan Muxue simply ignored him. After all, who knew whether he meant he would fight her one on one or as a group?

They didn't manage to catch up, almost causing Fang Xingque to freak out. He had even derailed their original plan. "Xuanyuan Muxue, one day, I'll make sure you kneel before me and lick my feet!"

He was desperate to do anything to anger her. The disciples around him laughed when he said that, and, as expected, Xuanyuan Muxue paused for a moment and caused the snow to grow even colder.

However, she was not one bit weaker. She had only stopped for a split second before choosing to leave immediately, ignoring any further insults Fang Xingque threw her way. He wasn't afraid of any blowback from his insults, since the Deepstar Formation blocked off all voices. Even if the seniors heard it and chided him for it, all was fair in love and war. He could justify it as a tactic to anger his rival.

"Does Young Master Xingque like Xuanyuan Muxue?" Fang Shuyu asked.

"I don't know. However, there was talk of their engagement in their childhood," Fang Chenyu said.

"Why haven't I heard this before?" she said with a puckered mouth.

"The relationship between the houses has been sullied in recent years, so the matter was no longer brought up."

"Thank goodness! How could a Xuanyuan be worthy of Young Master?"

Right then, they heard Fang Xingque calling out to them from ahead. "Chenyu, take Fang Shuyu with you and capture Li Tianming for me. Break his limbs but don't kill him and activate his Astral Formation. I'll keep chasing Xuanyuan Muxue!"

"Understood. Come," he said when he turned to Fang Shuyu.

"Understood, Young Master Chenyu." She finally had a chance to be alone with Fang Chenyu. She felt her heart skip a beat when she saw the handsome youth beside her. The two then proceeded to hunt down Tianming with the Whitejade Phoenix.

"By the way, Young Master Chenyu, Li Tianming is rather capable. We'll have to sneak attack him. Like Young Master Xingque said, we'll break his limbs first so he can't escape. Otherwise, we can also kill his lifebound beasts."

"I don't need you to tell me that."

"I... it seems that I've spoken out of my station. But don't get at me.... We have to focus on completing our task," she said coquettishly.

"Don't put up that cutesy act in front of me. I'll at most do it once with women like you before forgetting about it entirely."

Fang Shuyu stood there speechless for a moment. "Young Master Chenyu...."

"What is it?"

"So what if it's only once? I'll give you a night you'll never forget," she said with a shy look.

Stunned, Fang Chenyu hurriedly changed the topic. "I'll have you know that nobody beneath the Samsara stage is a match for me."

"A match in what? If you're talking about intercourse, you have yet to meet your match."

"I'm talking about combat!"

"I see...."

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The ground rumbled as Tianming fought a ninth-order empyrean saint beast with Lan Huang. The ground in front of them cracked open as the mountains shook and rivers spilled over their banks. A huge beast surfaced from the cracks and charged at Lan Huang with the single horn on its head.

It was an armored beast with a long, tough body. The scales covering it were at least a meter thick. Its claws and teeth were just as sharp as the tens of bladed spikes on its back, and the tip of its tail was razor sharp. Its unique figure allowed it to course about underground unimpeded. It was known as a worldbore wyrm.

"Press it down!" Even without Tianming ordering it, Lan Huang already engaged the beast. It turned the ground into an ocean using Azure Oceanic Purgatory to force the wyrm out from underneath before slamming into it with its humongous body; it was at least three times the wyrm's mass. However, the wyrm was small and agile, making it a rather hard target to hit. The clash between the two gigantic beasts thus began.

The wyrm was an a.d.u.l.t ninth-order empyrean saint beast and undoubtedly the ruler of the surrounding area. Then Tianming came descending from the skies as he executed the Ninenether Fiendgod Claw, which was further enhanced by his soul servant. Even though his black arm was too small to tear off the flesh of the wyrm, the soul servant more than made up for it.

The wyrm's cry of pain spread throughout the area, then Lan Huang pinned it down and used Primordial Soundwave. The wyrm struggled and managed to wrestle free, then used its ability, Tectonic Grinder. The next instant, dirt and rock gathered around its body. It coiled its body up, pointing its tail in front and exposing its tough, bladed back, turning into a meat grinder. The material that it gathered increased its size even further.

The mountain-sized grinder fell toward Lan Huang from the skies as the wyrm spun rapidly, causing its back blades to spin like a saw and scr.a.p.e against Lan Huang's claws, sending sparks flying. The countless stars on Lan Huang's body gathered at one point to block the attack as Tianming came flying down with the Grand-Orient Sword.

Chapter 637: Beasts with Tails Between Their Legs

Strands of Invincible Sword Ki gathered at the tip of Tianming's sword as the Impereal Sword Formation expanded outward. However, he could also choose to not spread it so wide out and instead concentrate the countless strands of sword ki around him to amplify its raw power. Just like that, his sword pierced the back of the wyrm's head, going straight through and turning its brains to mush.

The wyrm roared and slowly collapsed. Tianming then withdrew his sword and hurriedly refined the soul of the beast before handing it to Lan Huang.

"This is your seventh. If you fail, there won't be any more for you," Tianming said.

"I'm not satisfied with this!" Lan Huang said.

"Damn, are you in your rebellious phase too? You don't have a choice!" Tianming hurried it back into his lifebound space. So far, only Ying Huo had managed to get a new ability, whereas Lan Huang and Meow Meow hadn't made any progress. While Tianming was focused on gaining points and cultivating during the Deepstar Battle, he would also kill the wildbeasts he came across. After all, his lifebound beasts' improvement would also make him stronger.

"I'm now only one level away from getting an empyrean gold body at the fourth level of the Empyrean Saint stage. Once I succeed, I still won't get much stronger until I get a body-refining technique. Those three, however, will grow much stronger physically every level after that." He truly did envy how lifebound beasts could grow powerful so easily. Once they were past the awkward stunted growth phase of Heavenly Will, their power would skyrocket.

"If I can reach the fourth level, I might be unmatched among all empyrean saints. Time truly flies. It feels like it was only yesterday when I was fighting the second-level empyrean saint, Autarch Qian. Even though the Nine Divine Realms are dangerous, I probably wouldn't have reached Empyrean Saint if I hadn't come."

While Lan Huang refined the wildbeast soul, he decided to leave the battlefield and head to the Old Deepstar Path to continue training his heavenly will, so he touched the Astral Formation on his skin. However, there was no reaction.

"Why isn't it working?" He recalled the last few times, the senior of the Deepstar Hall was able to take him away quite quickly. However, something immediately occurred to him. "Someone must be within three thousand meters of me. My fight with the wyrm probably drew them in."

He looked around alertly as he pointed his left arm behind him and suddenly saw a cold youth flying rapidly in his direction.

"It's someone from Fang Xingque's camp."

That youth had tricolored hair, and didn't seem too old. He was obviously talented. Tianming turned back suddenly and startled the youth, who was trying to ambush him. Now that he had been discovered, his surprise attack had failed. Fortunately for him, Tianming didn't immediately summon the black cat.

Turning to Fang Chenyu, Tianming asked, "Who are you?"

Fang Chenyu slowed down. There was no longer any point in charging in after losing the element of surprise. "Fang Chenyu," he said as he approached.

"What are you planning?"

"You dared to kill someone from the Sterling House of Fang and have antagonized us. I've been tasked to break your limbs and take you to Fang Xingque for judgment."

"But none of you died though, or perhaps it was just so insignificant I forgot."

"No, you went too far. We have to make an example out of you, or others will start getting ideas. Nobody can make Xingque lose face and walk away fine."

Tianming laughed and said, "He's just a teenage brat. What face does he have to speak of?"

"You're truly brave.... I hope you'll still be able to smile and talk like that once tragedy befalls you."

"Sure."

Fang Chenyu shook with anger at Tianming's casual demeanor, though he tried to suppress it and sneak closer to him.

"Are we going to fight?" Ying Huo asked.

Observing closely, Tianming said, "This guy's a little weird. He feels just like an empyrean saint, but there's traces of samsaran power in him. I suspect that he'll be a full-fledged samsaran soon. It is really tiring fighting someone like that, and it's hard to say whether we'll win, especially with Lan Huang not able to join the fight right now."

"No need to justify it. Just run like you always do."

"You don't need to be that direct about it!"

As they bickered, Fang Chenyu was already right in front of him.

"Watch out!" Tianming yelled and turned tail to run.

"How dare you—" Fang Chenyu was about to defend against whatever move Tianming was going to attack with, only to see him mount his lightning beast and attempt an escape, much to his ire. "Li Tianming, you spineless coward! Is running all you know how to do? Softie! Pathetic! You're only a coward that knows how to run!"

He tried his best to insult him as he gave chase. "Your whole family is nothing but beasts that only know how to run with their tails between their legs!"

However, Meow Meow easily left him in the dust. "I didn't think you'd be able to endure insults like that," Meow Meow said, fanning the flames.

"I can't."

"Then why aren't you going back to beat him up?"

Tianming knocked on its head and said, "Young one, you have to be more patient. Good wine tastes best when it's left to age for a while."

After facing one powerful foe after another, he had considerably matured mentally.

"I don't know anything about how wine is made. All I know is that I want to beat him up."

"What are you so pissed for? It's not like you're the one being insulted. It's just like that saying."

"What saying?"

"The eunuchs are always more anxious than the emperor himself."

"Hey!" Meow Meow nervously touched its balls, only to be relieved to find them still there.

.....

Tianming didn't really think that he would end up tangled up with Fang Chenyu. Even after leaving the Deepstar Battlefield to go to the Old Deepstar Path, he would still be located by him after returning, chasing him down despite knowing it to be a vain effort. "I wonder why that's the case.... He's definitely tracking me one way or another."

So he began looking up and down across his body. He wasn't wearing any kind of tribulation armor, preferring normal clothes instead. Soon, he found a really small amount of fine powder on him.

"This must be it."

"Just take a bath and get changed then," Ying Huo said.

"No."

"Why not?"

"I ought to pull his tongue out for all the insults."

"You've really been putting up with it, huh?"

"There's no shame in a strategic retreat, you know."

"You mean running like a coward?"

"Shut up!"

.....

Meanwhile, in Snowsword Pavilion on Oldwind Street....

"Sis, I want to ask about someone," Tianming said. He came to visit from time to time.

"Who is it?" Ever since that incident, they still hadn't managed to find the culprit. Jian Xueyi still seemed rather downcast, in contrast to her usual optimistic self.

"Fang Chenyu."

"That guy you keep running away from?"

"Even you know about it?"

"Of course. The whole sect does. Everyone's going to see you run into him in anticipation of the day when he catches up! The Deepstar Hall even set up a special viewpoint to focus on you and broadcast your shameful retreat to everyone."

"Darn it! They're heartless!"

"They now call you Tianming the Coward. Someone even wrote a poem and hung it up at the entrance of Number One Pavilion."

"What poem?!" He was fuming with rage. Since when was poetry a bullying tactic?

"I swing my two fists with

"Bravado in

"The faction battles;

"I hide my tail betwixt

"My two legs in

"The Deepstar Battle."

"That's slanderous!" Tianming spat, though he had to admit that it was a rather good poem.

"Don't be sad. There's nothing you can do about it. The Sterling House of Fang has always been this unabashed with their tactics. Nobody asked you to kill one of them, after all. They're all saying you don't have long left to live," Jian Xueyi said, before pausing in thought. "Tianming, Big Sis here suggests that you leave the Deepstar Battle and hide within your residence in the Earth Branch for a few years. I'll bring you whatever you need, so you won't even need to go out."

"That won't do. I don't want to be your pet."

"That doesn't sound so bad, to be honest."

"No! I refuse! I'm not someone who mooches off women! I'll one day rise to the top of the Deepstar Battle!"

"Hahaha!" Everyone in the pavilion laughed.

"Work hard, friend. I can see the potential in you," Zhao Yijue said as he patted Tianming's shoulder.

"I don't need you to see anything in me!" Tianming smiled and gave his hand a twist, causing Zhao Yijue to wince in pain. The pavilion then quieted down. "Leave now, and don't be buddy buddy with me."

"Alright, fine," Zhao Yijue said before he angrily left. "So, Sis, what status does Fang Chenyu have anyway?"

"Well, he's the son of one of the nine palace lords, specifically the lord of Judgment Hall, Fang Shenyu, who's third in charge of the Sterling House of Fang. He controls the Judgment Hall, which doles out punishments for transgressions in the sect. They're all savage and cruel people."

"That's a rather high status. I have a good idea of what to do now."

"Tianming, it's not like I'm trying to belittle you. I'm just worried," she said with a concerned look.

"I know."

"Then just now...."

"I was only being mean to Zhao Yijue alone. I couldn't stand his eerie tone."

"I see...." She placed her hands on Tianming's shoulders and gave them a squeeze. "Just... try not to die."

"I'll be fine. Alright, I'll take my leave now."

"Be on your way then."

"Make sure to go to the Dimensional Battlefield in the next three days," he said at the entrance.

"Why?"

"Just do it."

Chapter 638 - World Tree

The Hexapath Sword Palace was empty today. Feiling was probably cultivating in the Soulburn Hall and hadn't come there today, nor would anyone inform her of his arrival. They could only depend on luck to meet each other.

There were so many people watching, so they hadn't had an opportunity to fix a time. Tianming only had one hour after coming out of Old Deepstar Path. But he could only comprehend the sword, since she wasn't there. Using his black arm, he opened the seven Sword Barriers and appeared before the 'Hexapath Sword God.'

"Senior, I'm here to comprehend the sword again," Tianming said respectfully.

"Yeah, you can go now," said the 'Hexapath Sword God.'

"Can I remove your pants?"

"Yeah, you can go now."

"Then I'll be removing it now?"

"Yeah, you can go now."

"You're really lazy. Couldn't you leave a few more replies before you went?"

"Yeah, you can go now."

Tianming was bored, and he could only comprehend the Hexapath Samsara Sword. The Hexapath Sword God told him that he would give Tianming the second move after Tianming was fully proficient with the first. Time passed in the blink of an eye, and Tianming had to rush back to the Deepstar Battlefield.

"Ling'er didn't come...." He looked at the Hexapath Sword Palace's entrance with disappointment.

"I wonder if she was touched by my love poem? I believe it should be fine, with my talent." He had no idea that Feiling had cried. But she had only cried because of how cheesy it was.

.....

It was the nineteenth day of the Deepstar Battle. Tianming laid on a downstream creek with Ying Huo swimming the backstroke. "I boasted to Senior Sister Xueyi, and this is already the third day."

"Oh Fourth, we've come to the Deepstar Battlefield to suffer because of you, and we've even been humiliated by others. You have to treat us well when you hatch. Don't be as heartless as your three big brothers." Tianming caressed the fourth egg in his hand.

Ying Huo chuckled. Tianming couldn't be bothered with it and jumped out of the creek. He found a hole in the mountain and sealed it off to cultivate.

"This powder is something. It can't even be washed away," said Tianming.

"That means Fang Chenyu will be here soon," said Ying Huo.

Tianming didn't say anything, just continued caressing the fourth egg while he recalled the Astral Will he had observed that day. He was swiftly growing by absorbing dozens of Astral Wills daily, and his efficiency in the Old Deepstar Path was faster than everyone else. He entered into a meditative state and closed his eyes.

"Dao might seem little, but there are trillions of them. Heavenly Wills are just the roots of Dao, the beginning of everything." The thoughts of one or two seniors didn't matter in the Old Deepstar Path, but after receiving enlightenment from tens of thousands of them, he could always come up with something. His was the Imperial Will, the strongest will since ancient times.

"I wonder what your Dao will be?" Tianming smiled as he looked at the fourth egg. With an amicable, fatherly smile, Tianming continued, "As the saying goes, the elder brother is like the father. I can be considered your half-father, and you can be considered my half-daughter."

The egg in his hand spun, seemingly happy. As time passed, various insights appeared in Tianming's heart. The egg might not have hatched yet, but Tianming could sense the connection he had with it. He could vaguely sense the little fellow's mood. Although he couldn't communicate with it, he could at least sense its emotion.

He could sense that it was different from Ying Huo, Meow Meow, and Lan Huang. It should be a little fellow with many emotions.

It's really a girl, so unfathomable. Tianming pondered inwardly. Simultaneously, he was sensing what it was feeling. Suddenly, the world before him shook as he felt like he was being dragged into a dreamland.

"What the hell?" The scenery before his eyes began changing. Tianming couldn't move, and he stood in the air. He only had his consciousness, but no body. Suddenly, the world began taking form. Countless worlds appeared before Tianming's eyes, and every single one was larger than the Flameyellow continent. There were tens of thousands of them, which made for an impactful sight.

“The dream of the Primordial Chaos Beast?” Tianming already guessed what was going on. He knew he would soon see the ‘fourth,’ just like how he’d seen the Aeternal Infernal Phoenix, Genesis Chaos Thunderfiend, and Primordial Terraqua Dragon. Tianming couldn’t help feeling curious about what he would be seeing.

He opened his eyes wide, and the mist started disappearing. He saw a colossal tree. The tree seemed to be connected to the countless worlds that covered the skies of those worlds. The roots spread millions and millions of miles out.

This tree was so massive that even the sun was overshadowed. It was even larger than the Primordial Mountains and Seas World because it was the emperor of all plants. All the plants in the world were part of it, and it alone was comparable to trillions of lifeforms.

Tianming saw a terrifying scene: the tree’s roots were divided into finer hairs and pierced through countless lifeforms, including humans, demon beasts, and even insects!

The roots dissolved in their bodies like a second nervous system, absorbing the host’s life essence and turning every lifeform into dry corpses. There wasn’t a lifeform alive under its roots, and everything was used as nutrients for the tree. The scene made Tianming take a cold breath.

“This tree is a demon that destroys worlds and lifeforms?” Honestly speaking, it seemed like a flower instead, because the tree trunk wasn’t thick. Starting from the roots, the tree separated into nine forks that formed nine different flowers.

Every flower had a color—the one nearest to Tianming was pure white. The flower was enveloped in a white mist, and Tianming could feel his heart being purified when he took a deep breath. It seemed like a narcissus.

In Tianming’s eyes, it was a sacred flower that represented purity and vitality, but it was filled with blood. When the blood spread out, Tianming saw a crimson flower. It seemed as though it had grown out of a blood ocean that was as bewitching as a woman’s lips. But within the stamen were venomous crimson fangs.

The petals looked like blades, and Tianming could see countless aggrieved souls wandering in the petals. They were all souls that the tree’s roots had absorbed for this crimson flower to grow.

“This must be the legendary Red Spider Lily.” Tianming felt his scalp go numb.

“The Aeternal Infernal Phoenix devoured the sun, the Genesis Chaos Thunderfiend refined the world with lightning, and the Primordial Terraqua Dragon doesn’t seem to have anything. But this tree grows by absorbing lifeforms’ life essences and souls. So are the Primordial Chaos Beasts good or evil?” Li Muyang hadn’t told him the answer to that question, and it threw Tianming’s heart into chaos.

But the dream was still ongoing. The tree had nine flowers, and there were seven other flowers aside from the white and crimson ones. But Tianming was certain that every flower was a fearsome existence, and they were growing on this tree, which was the fourth egg in his hand.

“All along, I’d thought that the fourth would be small, but it’s actually bigger than Lan Huang. Perhaps it’s only small now because it’s an egg!” Who would’ve thought that a thumb-sized seed could grow into such a colossal being?

“Is it finally coming to an end?” Tianming realized that his vision was changing, and he sank into the world tree.

“What’s that?” Tianming saw a figure. As he continued descending, he finally caught a clearer view of the figure. It was a spiritual body, not a physical body, and it looked like a young girl of five or six years old.

She had a strange appearance. She had a humanoid figure, limbs, and face, but there were petal-like wings and vines wrapping around her body, with leaves forming her clothes. Tianming had to admit that she was adorable, like a spirit of flowers.

“Who’s that?” Tianming was dumbfounded. Right then, the little girl stretched her hand out, and a flower began revolving around the tree. Pollen drifted down like rain and took root in the world.

Tianming finally understood. This little girl was the world tree, or rather the world tree’s spirit. His gaze continued descending, passing through the girl. The girl was playing with the leaves and didn’t notice him. But right at that moment, a voice sounded out, “Xianxian, come back quickly.”

Tianming’s body froze and he felt like he was struck by a bolt of lightning. “Ling’er’s voice?”

How did he hear Feiling’s voice in Fourth’s dream?

Chapter 639 - A Hundred Thousand Eyes

Tianming was dumbstruck and continued looking down. He saw a city amidst the fog where the nine forks separated. The voice was coming from the city, and he was shocked. “How is that possible?”

Tianming looked at the city like a fool. He had a strange feeling, although he couldn’t see it clearly. It felt like he had been to the city before—it was Perpetia City!

“The Divine Tomb? The Demon City?” While Tianming’s heart was in chaos, he saw a vague figure appear in the city down below. Tianming couldn’t see her, but her figure was similar to the girl’s silhouette in his heart. Suddenly, that figure yelled, “Who dares invade my Perpetia City!”

Tianming felt sweat drip from his forehead. Had he been discovered? Right at that moment, the little girl called Xianxian appeared before the figure and the world tree started trembling. The nine flowers gathered together.

Feeling shocked, Tianming turned and saw a black arm descend from the sky and grab the tree’s roots, then pluck it out from the myriad worlds. The city trembled, and he saw the massive Archaionfiend Eye at the center of the black arm when it passed by Tianming’s eyes. It wasn’t just one eye, but a hundred thousand of them that looked like worms tightly packed together.

“A hundred thousand eyes? A hundred thousand Archaionfiends?!” Tianming didn’t dare to breathe. Just what the hell was that? Having one Archaionfiend Eye was powerful enough. Would having a hundred thousand still be considered human? Tianming still thought that this arm came from his father’s first reincarnation. But it didn’t look like that was the case; if it was, it would be too terrifying.

“You’re the fourth.” It was a deep and powerful voice. “From hereafter, I will control the chaotic cycles of reincarnation!”

That voice alone was enough to cause the entire world to tremble. Tianming's vision shook before everything returned to normal. He was back in the cave with the egg in his hand. But right at that moment, his heart was rippling with waves and he couldn't calm himself down for a long time.

"What are the Primordial Chaos Beasts, and why are they trying to destroy the world? How are Ling'er, Xuanyuan Xi, and Perpetia City connected to the person who was speaking?" The questions plagued him greatly. But fortunately, he wasn't someone who would bury himself in a hole.

"I don't have to care about the past. They're my brothers now, and I only look at the present. As for Ling'er and Perpetia City's secrets, let's leave that for the future. Xuanyuan Xi's descent with the Demon City must be related to this matter."

But the greatest puzzlement was the black arm with a hundred thousand Archaionfiend Eyes. Who did that arm belong to?

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"What are you doing? Are you trying to make yourself look cool before my younger sister?" Ying Huo questioned with contempt in its voice.

"I know what it is," Tianming smiled.

"What?" Ying Huo immediately became curious.

"A female phoenix," Tianming smiled.

"HAHAHA! I KNEW IT! MY SPRING DAY IS COMING!" Ying Huo danced around.

"Holy shit!" Tianming slapped its forehead. "What the hell are you thinking about? It's your younger sister!"

"Oh, yeah." Ying Huo then remembered that fact. But a moment later, it continued laughing, "Great! At least now I'll have a younger sister serving me!"

"Haha!" Tianming laughed. Wait till she crushes your balls with her branches, leaves, and petals.

He tried to recall what the fourth looked like. It was a tree with nine flowers and a spiritual body, the emperor of all plants in the world. He had initially thought that the fourth beast wouldn't be strong, but the vision had changed his mind. He still vividly remembered how terrifying the dream was, and he couldn't help tremble when he saw the tree devour trillions of lifeforms.

"Let's focus on cultivating and let it hatch as soon as possible."

.....

The dream was too majestic, and Tianming couldn't help being affected by it. He was smoothly progressing through the Emyrean Saint stage with the Old Deepstar Path, Grand-Orient Sword, and Prime Tower. This time, the fluctuation in his mood made him even more resolute. "Disregard the past and look only at the present."

After some time, Tianming was finally in the fourth level of the Emyrean Saint stage. "Emyrean gold body, here I come."

Tianming stood before a river with Ying Huo and Meow Meow beside him, while Lan Huang tumbled in the water.

After becoming a fourth-level empyrean saint, Tianming could sense that his body had transformed. He still had a mortal body, and the transformation wouldn't be all that until he cultivated a body-refining battle art. But because he had the Primordial Chaos Beasts' physique, he could sense his bloodline's growth.

Bloodline represented a person's talent, and it was equivalent to a tiger cub reaching a.d.u.l.thood. So he would naturally undergo a transformation when he reached this stage. Tianming could sense the transformation right from the foundation; he was becoming more like a Primordial Chaos Beast.

"It must be related to the Primordial Chaos Beasts' physique that I can absorb so many strands of Invincible Sword Ki. I wonder how strong my body will become after the empyrean gold body transformation. My talent in cultivating a body-refining battle art must be terrifying, right? Everyone has a limit in absorbing astral source, and I wonder where mine is."

If his limit was too high, he might be able to create an unprecedented Ancient Deepstar Godbody. He took out a saint beastial weapon with about ninety saintly heavenly patterns that was comparable to Weisheng Yunxi's Radiant Astral Chain. He had taken it during the faction battle, along with many other things.

Holding it in both hands, Tianming gently bent it, relying on his physical strength alone, and snapped it into two.

"I can actually achieve this with my physical strength alone!" Tianming was shocked. "I can try going down the Heaven Cauldron tomorrow and see if I can reach the bottom without cultivating a body-refining battle art!"

His vitality was vigorous and he seemed like a wild beast. He asked, "How do you guys feel?"

He couldn't tell any difference in the three from their appearance. Ying Huo replied, "It's just like you said. There's a transformation from the depths of our bodies. Mine's lesser, and Turtle Bro's is stronger."

As for Meow Meow, it was ranked in the middle. Lan Huang was flying around. Although Ying Huo said that its transformation was weaker, it was still a lot stronger than Tianming. In addition to having over four hundred stars, Ying Huo's strength had been raised to a whole new level.

"I can finally show off my body now!" Ying Huo raised his wings and flexed.

The fourth level of the Empyrean Saint stage is the beginning of the empyrean gold body, and every breakthrough will strengthen the body and saint ki at the same time. Starting from today, the fighting prowess of their physique was like their abilities, becoming their signature.

The empyrean gold body would continue being strengthened, and as his lifebound beasts were Primordial Chaos Beasts, they would only become even more powerful. Just when Tianming was speaking, Lan Huang burrowed out from the ground and knocked him flying away.

“Up, up, and away!” Tianming felt like he was being lifted like a three-year-old child. Lan Huang might only be a fourth-level empyrean saint, but the Infinite Stardragon Diagram further empowered its physique. It was unparalleled in terms of close combat.

“Let’s go! I’m going to retaliate now!” Tianming was waiting for today. When his voice fell, danger suddenly arrived. “What?”

Ying Huo appeared behind Tianming and used the Skypiercing Diablos Feather, blocking the incoming attacks for Tianming.

Tianming asked, “Are you alright?”

“It tickles,” Ying Huo replied with disdain. It lowered its head and looked at its trembling wings.

Tianming saw the newcomer. That person had an azure wooddragon beside him, with two hundred and sixty stars. They were holding a flower with nine petals that were all hidden weapons. They were none other than Xuanyuan Cangcang, a ninth-level empyrean saint, one of the strongest disciples in the Earth Branch.

“Li Tianming, you dare to create such a huge commotion when your life is being threatened?” Xuanyuan Cangcang held the hidden weapon and looked at the little bird on Tianming’s shoulder. He didn’t see how Ying Huo had managed to block his hidden weapons.

“Didn’t you catch the bait?” Tianming smiled.

“That’s called courting death, you piece of garbage,” replied Xuanyuan Cangcang.

“I’m a piece of garbage?” Tianming shrugged. He was actually waiting for Fang Chenyu, not Xuanyuan Cangcang. “Then again, Fang Chenyu must be coming over soon. Let’s deal with this fellow first.”

Tianming exchanged a glance with his lifebound beasts and yelled, “Attack!”

Tianming had always been straightforward when it came to attacking. If he wasn’t provoking the other party on purpose, he wouldn’t even bother speaking. He knew that the Deepstar Hall was observing him, and the audience must be waiting for him to embarrass himself.

Disciples of the Sterling House of Fang were all arrogant, and they were fond of looking at others making a joke out of themselves.

“Watch closely then.” Tianming finally moved. With two Grand-Orient Swords in his hands and three Primordial Chaos Beasts, who could contend with him?

Wooden dragon claws burst from the ground below. It was the Azure Wooddragon’s ability, Greatwood Cage. It wasn’t ordinary wood, but the azure wooddragon’s empyrean gold body!

Chapter 640 - Make You Admit Your Sins

“After reaching the seventh level of the Empyrean Saint stage, lifebound beasts have 50% more saint ki in their saint springs, compared to their beastmasters,” Tianming said. “At the eighth level, their saint springs will have twice as much as their beastmaster. At the ninth level, it’s three times.

“Lifebound beasts exhaust their saint ki to execute their abilities, unlike beastmasters who use exquisite battle arts. So the more saint ki a lifebound beast has, the more powerful their abilities will become. Xuanyuan Cangcang is in the ninth level of the Empyrean Saint stage, and the strength of his lifebound beast’s ability must be near the limit.” Tianming lowered his head and looked at the Greatwood Cage’s power.

Ying Huo breathed out the Sixpath Infernal Lotus into the sky, unleashing a wave of flames toward the wooden claws headed toward Tianming and the others, instantly incinerating the wood into ashes. But hundreds of dragon claws converged into a huge tree that bound Lan Huang and slowly stretched out, expanding into a wooden cage.

Lan Huang grew furious and tore the cage apart with brute strength. That left Xuanyuan Cangcang briefly stunned and his face changed drastically.

“That’s impossible! How can it possibly destroy the Greatwood Cage with brute strength? Didn’t you just become an Empyrean Saint during the faction battle?” But the reality before him proved that his eyes weren’t messing with him.

“Kneel down, you ant!” Ying Huo disappeared in a flash and suddenly appeared before Xuanyuan Cangcang.

“Leave!” Just as Xuanyuan Cangcang made up his mind to escape, he turned around and saw a black cat hanging on a tree, yawning and looking at him. That made Xuanyuan Cangcang’s face turn dark, and he had a feeling that he couldn’t defeat Tianming.

“He has a growth speed that can shock the entire Archaion Sect!” Xuanyuan Cangcang had guessed correctly. Tianming and his lifebound beasts had already caused an uproar outside the battlefield when the audience saw them. However, something even more exciting took place when Fang Chenyu showed up.

The scene looked even more breathtaking when the point of view changed to Fang Shuyu, who was hidden somewhere nearby. From her perspective, the audience could see Fang Chenyu charging toward Tianming right away when he saw him engaging in a battle with Xuanyuan Cangcang.

“Capture any of his lifebound beasts, and he won’t be able to leave!” That was Fang Chenyu’s only opportunity today. He even felt like giving up if he failed to catch Tianming today.

As Tianming was engaging Xuanyuan Cangcang, he suddenly felt a threat looming over from his rear. It was Meow Meow who warned him of an incoming enemy. When Tianming turned around, he saw Fang Chenyu charging at him.

“I’ve been waiting for you!” Tianming’s eyes blazed with rage when he saw Fang Chenyu.

“You’ve been waiting for me?” Fang Chenyu’s eyes lit up. He had been insulting Tianming over the past few days; it was futile even if he insulted Tianming’s family. Tianming finally couldn’t take it anymore?

“Has my luck finally turned around?” Fang Chenyu felt that happiness came too quickly for him. He took a deep breath to calm himself down and immediately summoned his three lifebound beasts; he was also a triple beastmaster.

Three phoenixes of different colors appeared above his head. The one on the left was a fiery phoenix, with an astonishing sixteen wings. It was shrouded in flames, and aside from having several pairs of wings, it looked exactly like an enlarged version of Ying Huo.

But it naturally didn't have as many stars as Ying Huo. The fiery phoenix only had two hundred and ninety-nine stars, which was already the highest in the Earth Branch.

Fang Chenyu was the strongest disciple in the Earth Branch. Although Xuanyuan Cangcang's cultivation was the same as his, there was no way Xuanyuan Cangcang could be compared to him.

Fang Chenyu was only seventeen, and was someone who had hope of becoming a Heaven Branch disciple this year. Aside from the sixteen-winged infernal phoenix, he also had two other phoenixes, both with more than two hundred and ninety stars.

One was a deepsea nether phoenix. It was a rare ice-type phoenix lifebound beast. A phoenix was an aerial beast, but this was also an overlord of the ocean. The other was an eight-clawed gale phoenix. It was a phoenix with eight claws and its body decorated with azure feathers.

With the addition of Xuanyuan Cangcang and his lifebound beasts, it was now a six to four battle. Xuanyuan Cangcang was smart. When he saw Fang Chenyu, he immediately retreated and focused on launching sneak attacks with his hidden weapons.

The flower in his hand was called the Bloodsob Rose, a hidden weapon with two tribulation patterns. He was using the Bloodrain Flowerburial Art to match the weapon. The nine petals manifested a storm of blood, which swept up a great hurricane and caused great troubles for Tianming. His lifebound beast, the azure wooddragon, had gone into hiding in the earth and was launching sneak attacks together with Xuanyuan Cangcang from time to time when there was an opportunity.

"Get lost!" Fang Chenyu yelled at Xuanyuan Cangcang. However, Xuanyuan Cangcang didn't pay any attention to him.

"I'll deal with you after I'm done with him!" Fang Chenyu sneered and took out his weapon. It was a tribulation weapon with three tribulation patterns, the Firestorm Sword. It was a longsword shrouded in flames and storm. The sword body was beautiful crystal blue.

Among the Earth Branch disciples, only Fang Chenyu, who was halfway into the Samsara stage and possessed some life-tribulation energy, could use a tribulation weapon with three tribulation patterns. After all, each tribulation pattern was created from a combination of hundreds of saintly heavenly patterns. When he swung the Firestorm Sword, it created a hurricane that looked even more powerful than that held in Tianming's Grand-Orient Sword.

"Li Tianming, die!" Fang Chenyu's face was cold. It was his style to go for the kill right from the start.

However, Tianming chuckled and used the Grand-Orient Sword to block Xuanyuan Cangcang's Bloodrain Flowerburial Art. However, his gaze was firmly set on Fang Chenyu.

Tianming summoned the Prime Tower, and the soul servant entered the tower. The Prime Tower swiftly started expanding in the sky.

Tianming yelled, "Suppress that person over there!"

A loud rumble rang out and the Prime Tower headed toward Xuanyuan Cangcang, hiding in the distance using hidden weapons. The Prime Tower was also part of Tianming's strength!

"His three phoenixes possess a certain life-tribulation strength. They're on a higher cultivation level than you guys. Are you confident in dealing with them?" Tianming asked.

"Beat them up!"

"Alright, let's have a competition then. Let's see who can take out their opponent the quickest! I'll call the winner 'Big Brother' for the next three days!" Tianming smiled coldly.

"Ah?!" Ying Huo, Meow Meow, and Lan Huang became excited. They weren't the kind who could take stimulation, and they became excited by the thought that they could enjoy being called 'Big Brother' by Tianming for the next three days.

"Kill!" Ying Huo was clever and targeted the sixteen-winged infernal phoenix right from the start. There were many phoenixes here, but Ying Huo was a fire-type lifebound beast, so it was immune to all fire-type attacks and abilities.

"Who the hell are you? Are you a chicken, or are you a mixed feather bird?" The sixteen-winged infernal phoenix was aloof and enveloped in a noble air. It was looking at Ying Huo with contempt in its eyes. It couldn't figure out where this little thing got its courage from to fight.

"You dare call me a mixed feather bird? You're so finished!" Ying Huo completely lost it and executed its Infernal Haze, dividing into tens of thousands of illusions and filling the sky.

The sixteen-winged infernal phoenix sneered and used its ability, White Flare. Explosions echoed as the blazing flames swept out and formed into a huge white sun, devouring and absorbing Ying Huo's Infernal Haze along the way. The sixteen-winged infernal phoenix laughed, "Go and die!"

Suddenly, a tiny figure dashed out. Ying Huo's sword was like a bolt of lightning that exploded, "TAKE MY SWORD, YOU STUPID BIRD!"

The sword instantly pierced into the sixteen-winged infernal phoenix drew an earsplitting cry from it. Its abdomen had been penetrated, and the pain made its body tremble.

"H-h-how is this possible?!" After all, Yin Huo was only a mixed-feather bird in the phoenix's mind. It might have four hundred stars, but how powerful could it possibly be with its limited cultivation?

"Get lost!" The sixteen-winged infernal phoenix executed another one of its abilities, Incineration Array.

Four flaming vortexes swept over, and the sixteen-winged infernal phoenix soared into the sky. But Ying Huo was nowhere to be found when it gained a higher viewpoint. The sixteen-winged infernal phoenix was dumbfounded when it lowered its head. That mixed feather bird had actually burrowed into its body through the wound!

The phoenix suddenly felt something was amiss. Right at that moment, Ying Huo's voice echoed out from its stomach, "I hate people who look down on me the most. You're sooooo finished!"

In the next second, the Infernal Blaze exploded. The fiery impact coming from within its body, along with the skypiercer ki wreaking havoc, tore the sixteen-winged infernal phoenix into pieces that rained down from the sky.

The sixteen-winged infernal phoenix was blown into pieces without even an opportunity to cry out in pain. Ying Huo was simply a demon, and the sixteen-winged infernal phoenix had underestimated its opponent. That resulted in its death before it could even display its full strength. Even Tianming was dumbfounded by how quickly Ying Huo took out his opponent.

Ying Huo had already killed its opponent; the Primordial Chaos Beasts truly were brutal by nature. Tianming then observed the battlefield. The other two battlegrounds were still doing pretty well. The sixteen-winged infernal phoenix's death had scared the two other phoenixes, and they were also consumed by rage for the loss of their companion. When they became serious, they could fight well with Meow Meow and Lan Huang.

"Weak ass shit. That was booring! I'll go slaughter the dragon." Ying Huo's figure disappeared. That dumbfounded the azure wooddragon and Xuanyuan Cangcang, and they immediately fled in a panic.

Evidently, this 'mixed feather bird' with four hundred and eighteen stars had become the overlord in the battlefield that everyone feared.

As Ying Huo left the battlefield, Tianming was facing Fang Chengyu's rage by himself.

"The death of a lifebound beast was a huge drop in both my strength and talent. This was something that'll affect me for a lifetime. A lifetime!" Fang Chenyu's eyes were gushing with raging flames and he looked like a lunatic fiendgod.

"I think there's a mistake in your line of thinking. You should be paying attention to the loss of a family member instead of the decrease in your strength," replied Tianming.

"Are you trying to teach me to be a saint here? Trying to talk morals into me?!" Fang Chenyu's murderous aura was shooting through the roof.

"Oh, sorry about that. Perhaps I was a little too talkative." It was true that Tianming didn't have any qualifications to interfere in how others interacted with their lifebound beasts. He pointed his sword at Fang Chenyu and said, "If you think you can control the life and death of others, then you should've already made preparations to pay the same price. You previously claimed that you'd break my arms and butcher my lifebound beasts. So may I ask how you feel right now?"

"I'll be asking you that question when you lie crippled and trembling beneath my feet!" Fang Chenyu attacked furiously.

In that instant, when he attacked, Lan Huang executed its newly obtained ability on another battlefield, the Primordial Wheel. The nine mountains on its back became a wheel and knocked the deepsea nether phoenix into the water, then shredded it into pieces.

Fang Chenyu felt another knife stab into his heart when he saw the death of another lifebound beast. But it felt even more terrible when the eight-clawed gale phoenix on the other side was spouting white foam from its mouth due to Meow Meow's abilities. Its entire body was trembling and on the verge of death.

In the end, it was Tianming who stopped Meow Meow. He waved his hand and said, "Meow Meow, leave one alive for him. We can't take it too far, or it'll be awkward if we meet again in the future."

Meow Meow was feeling bored now that there weren't any more battles for it to fight. It let out a loud yawn before turning around and found a place to fall asleep. It was intending to let Tianming pick it up when he decided to leave. When things had come to that point, the battle had practically come to an end.

At the same time, the power of Tianming's lifebound beasts caused an uproar outside in the Deepstar Battlefield. However, Fang Chenyu had gone insane from the anger tearing him apart.

"I'll kill you! I'll kill you! I swear that I'll make you taste suffering worse than death and make you beg to die!" Fang Chenyu drew the energy from within his body and slammed it down on Tianming, trying to oppress him with his advantage in cultivation.

"You know, we don't actually have to do this. I'm just now realizing that you're thinking with your heart. Isn't it fair to taste having your lifebound beasts killed if you want to kill someone else's lifebound beasts?" Tianming actually didn't want Ying Huo and Lan Huang to kill the two phoenixes, but everything had taken place too quickly and he couldn't stop them in time.

Then again, Fang Chenyu had been chasing after him for the past nine days, and he definitely wasn't chasing him to chat over tea.

"Shut up!" Fang Chenyu let out a heartbreaking roar. He raised the sword in his hand and charged over, executing the samsara battle art Three Fatality Sword. The first sword was Flameslave Sword, the second was Extremewind Sword, and the third was Ripplesea Sword.

The attack possessed the intent of the samsara sword, and it was a sure kill strike. It was an attack born purely for killing. The essence of the Three Fatality Sword was to merge the three swords into one.

It was a sword art with three varieties, and brandishing a sword gave birth to three flowers created from the sword's afterimages that bloomed and came crashing down on Tianming's head. Fang Chenyu wasn't stupid, because he knew that Tianming had an Astral Formation. When he saw that Tianming's lifebound beasts weren't going to interfere in his fight, he decided to chop off Tianming's arms and legs.

"I'll make you admit your sins!" Fang Chenyu roared. He was truly worthy of being the son of Judgment Hall's palace lord; he had already deemed someone sinful the moment he opened his mouth. But it was a pity that it was Tianming he ran into.

With his powerful empyrean golden body, Tianming held onto a pair of Grand-Orient Swords. At that moment, his heart was calmer than anyone else's. "Strength is always the truth, and we will speak with our strength!"

He was able to accomplish this because he had been tirelessly pursuing strength. His swords were divided into life and death as he executed the strongest sword art in the Flameyellow Continent, the Hexapath Samsara Sword. He was already growing more and more familiar with the art.

The frightening sword intent made the Grand-Orient Swords tremble. At that moment, Tianming was no longer alone, but he was like an emperor with a troop of thousands that were sweeping through tens of thousands with their swords.

Three consecutive sword slashes were done with the golden Grand-Orient Sword, using the Life Sword to create an endless loop. The three attacks that Fang Chenyu gave his all to use were easily resolved by Tianming's Life Sword. Tianming was like a puddle of water that quenched Fang Chenyu's rage.

In the next second, Tianming stabbed forth with the black Grand-Orient Sword. The sword whistled and stopped all of a sudden just when it stabbed into his target's mouth, because Fang Chenyu's Astral Formation had been activated into the protection state.

But Tianming's Hexapath Samsara Sword was still going strong and ground Fang Chenyu's tongue to pieces. But the Astral Formation came into place just when his sword was about to pierce through Fang Chenyu's head and protected the latter's life.

Within his Astral Formation, Fang Chenyu took several steps back from the impact. Tianming finally withdrew his sword. He took a look around and saw that Ying Huo had activated Xuanyuan Cangcang's Astral Formation. Furthermore, the Azure Wooddragon was yelling out in pain from being burnt.

All of that meant that Fang Chenyu and Xuanyuan Cangcang had both been defeated. At the same time, it also meant that Tianming and his lifebound beasts were standing at the Earth Branch's summit after this battle.

The audience fell silent when they saw what had played out. After all, Fang Chenyu's prospects had been greatly affected with his tongue shredded into pieces and two of his lifebound beasts killed. It would greatly decrease his talent.

"How does it feel? Great?" Tianming looked at Fang Chenyu with a faint smile on his lips.

"Woooo.... Woooo...." Fang Chenyu couldn't pronounce a word with his tongue gone, so he was just hammering the Astral Formation with his fists and his eyes wide open. Tianming saw the pure hatred deep in his pupils, but it was a pity that he couldn't come out.

"Don't bother hitting it anymore. If it wasn't for the Astral Formation, you'll be a cold, hard corpse lying on the ground by now," said Tianming.

"Wooo! Woooo!" Fang Chenyu collapsed on the ground with despair on his face, but he was still looking at Tianming viciously.

"Mhm? Are you trying to say that your father will take revenge for you?" Tianming asked, and Fang Chenyu didn't reply. He had silently acknowledged what Tianming said.

"Let's wait and see then," Tianming replied with an indifferent tone. "Today is only the beginning. Let me give you a word of advice: don't provoke me."

Tianming then left, leaving behind Fang Chenyu, who felt as though he had been stabbed in the heart with a sword.

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The audience outside saw the white-haired youth walking toward the point of view that came from Fang Shuyu, so it meant that Tianming was approaching Fang Shuyu! In the blink of an eye, he was standing in front of her.

As they continued staring at the screen, they could tell that Fang Shuyu was trembling, because the point of view was trembling. The angle suddenly changed to looking up at Tianming, and it made everyone uncomfortable because that meant Fang Shuyu was kneeling to Tianming.

Then he engaged in a conversation with Fang Shuyu. But the audience couldn't hear what they were talking about; they could only roughly guess what Tianming was trying to say based on how his lips moved.

In the next second, everyone fell into silence because Tianming said: tell Fang Xingque on my behalf that he can dream about going to the Deepstar Pool with me around.

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In the highest secret chamber outside. Fang Taiqing had come again, but the person beside him had changed into another person. They were dressed in a black robe and had thick and sharp brows. They gave off pressure even though they were maintaining indifference without any expression on their face. Their posture was like a wild beast, and felt oppressive to others.

Their emperor aura was stronger than that of Fang Taiqing's. But even so, they still stood behind him, which was a sign that he had the higher status here.

"Shenyu, what do you think?" Fang Taiqing asked.

"Chenyu is half-crippled, and what we were expecting of him has gone down the drain." He was Fang Shenyu, the palace lord of the Judgment Hall. His gaze was indifferent, and no rage could be detected from him despite it being his son that was crippled.

"It's not easy bearing a kid after reaching the Samsara stage, not to mention that Chenyu was your hope. I can understand how you're feeling right now," said Fang Taiqing.

"This is life, and there's nothing we can do about it. Who could expect that Li Tianming would rise so quickly? Her Eminence's eyesight is truly impressive," replied Fang Shenyu.

"The key here is Xuanyuan Dao," said Fang Taiqing.

"Sect master, you're trying to say...?"

"Her Eminence instructed Xuanyuan Dao to give Tianming third-grade tribulation manna, but he gave him a fourth-grade tribulation manna instead. Do you think he found out about Xingque's conflict with Tianming and did it on purpose in order to make Tianming strong enough to face Xingque?" asked Fang Taiqing.

"That isn't far from the truth."

"So we're playing schemes right now?" Fang Taiqing snickered.

"Sect master, what do you intend to do next?"

"Get our men in the Deepstar Hall to tell Xingque to lead our men to kill all of Tianming's lifebound beasts," said Fang Taiqing.

“Oh, yeah.” Fang Taiqing’s eyes lit up. “Tianming belongs to Her Eminence, and the eminent even got Jian Wuyi to protect his safety. But I heard that Jian Wuyi didn’t enter the Deepstar Battlefield, due to the Deepstar Formation.”

“Since it’s a grudge between the younger generation, let them resolve it themselves. Since this brat started it by killing our disciple’s lifebound beasts, he should have a taste of his own medicine. Her Eminence can’t say anything if we kill all of his lifebound beasts, right?”

“That’s right.” Fang Taiqing looked at him and said, “Shenyu, you’re my brother. Xuanyuan Dao has caused trouble for me, and even implicated your son this time. I want to take revenge for you on this matter.”

“Thank you, Sect Master.”