

The Ages 701

Chapter 701 - Oceanwind Swordsong

The two fourth-level life phase samsarans from the Tai'e House of Jian that had swordbeasts were working together to attack the hell tree's heavenly pattern formation. It might just shatter after a few more strikes. The hell tree was the lifeline of the disciples of the Archaion Sect during the Number One Summit. As a result, the disciples of the Sterling House of Fang went all out. Their opponents were double their number, but only third-level life phase samsarans and above, so not too far off from their own level. Even if Fang Yuewei and Fang Chenjing could each hold off three or four of them, they still wouldn't be able to adequately protect the tree.

"It's over!"

Seeing the barrier formation around the hell tree shake, they despaired. At that moment, a black chain of eyeballs came striking from far away. The whip seemed to zip around like an angry black dragon. Almost in an instant, it came crashing down toward Feng Lingyin and Feng Shuoyu's heads. The two of them were ecstatic as they were almost done breaking the barrier formation, but quickly reacted when they felt the incoming danger.

"Who is it?!" Feng Lingyin cried as a windstorm manifested around her, causing her clothes to flutter. Butterfly wings manifested at the tip of the rainbow-colored sword she wielded, around four pairs of them. With each flap of the wings, a windstorm that made a special sound was created and rampaged through the battlefield. The storm and the sound were launched toward the direction the black whip had come from.

Tianming had used Eight Desolation Fienddragon Whip, Centurius Dragonslay!

Feng Lingyin's swordbeasts were butterflies, all four of which had near four hundred stars. She was now twenty-seven and was a fourth-level life phase samsaran. She was a good match for Jiang Wuxin in terms of both looks and talent. The technique she used was known as the Swordsong Way, which utilized her sword and swordbeasts to make damaging soundwaves that would first devastate an opponent's ears, then their body.

She changed her sword stance and went in for a thrust using Windlift Song. The moment that strike was unleashed, the roar of the wind, the flapping of the butterfly wings, and the whoosh of the sword piercing air combined and formed thousands of sword ki strands that came piercing toward the incoming attack. However, the chain was so fast that it managed to deflect all of them. Even more terrifying was the fact that the chain looked like a string of countless eyes that sent chills down her spine. Her head hurt merely from looking at them, and her body shook. The chain crushed her sword ki and came rushing back once more.

"Who is this? It can't be someone from the Monorigin Sect!" She knew all the Archaion Sect disciples who could put up a fight with her, and it was clear that she wasn't fighting Xuanyuan Yucheng or Beigong Qianyu.

"Sis, I'll hold them back. You just keep attacking the hell tree!"

"Alright!"

The moment she said that, the chain began slowly pushing her back, much to her dismay. Soon, Tianming arrived before her while on the back of Meow Meow, having swapped Archfiend for the Grand-Orient Sword and splitting it into two. The white-haired youth had both swords raised up high, the black and gold colors paralleling those of his own eyes. It was an unmistakable look.

"Li Tianming?!" Feng Lingyin and Feng Shuoyu couldn't believe their eyes.

"Did I imagine how powerful those strikes were?" Feng Lingyin remembered feeling pressured by the chain attacks from before. Her swordbeasts were already within her sword; she thought she was fighting someone a level higher than her.

She didn't have any time to think it through, though. Tianming's four lifebound beasts had begun their assault. The moment he got off Meow Meow, it shrank in size and began deploying nets of lightning with Ninefold Chaos Thunderscape before pouncing toward Feng Shuoyu. A loud explosion of electricity followed, forcing her to back off from the sudden onslaught.

Then the Radix World Tree came bursting out of Tianming's lifebound space and took root in the swamp right next to the hell tree, defending the place with its long, black roots that spread out to a thousand meters. Wherever its roots spread, red and white flowers bloomed brilliantly. In almost an instant, it had surrounded the hell tree within its roots, as if it was swallowing it whole. Now, others would have to destroy it first before they could get to the hell tree. Xian Xian was basically a mobile bunker.

For now, the hell tree was no longer in danger, much to the others' relief. Then Lan Huang came charging in, turning the entire area around the hell tree into an ocean with its Azure Oceanic Purgatory, allowing it to move about far more easily than most other lifebound beasts. This was it and Xian Xian's home ground. With them protecting the tree, Ying Huo and Meow Meow engaged Feng Shuoyu, but they weren't alone. Lan Huang had already submerged Feng Shuoyu with its ability, and Xian Xian's Radiant Vines and Bloodrain Swords were all over the battlefield. It wasn't just the Feng sisters; all thirty of the Hexapath Sword Sect disciples and their lifebound beasts were busy fending off the vines and leaves that had appeared out of nowhere. Xian Xian alone was controlling the whole battlefield.

"Li Tianming, you're the one who killed Daoyi! The Hexapath Sword Sect shall claim your life for that!" Feng Shuoyu said the moment she burst out of the water, only to be met with Meow Meow's Misty Hellthunder. The water all around them only helped the lightning bolts spread around much faster.

Grimacing, she raised her sword high up toward the sky. The sword was made of a beautiful, pearlescent material that almost seemed transparent to the eye. The glow it radiated suggested the presence of swordbeasts; however, she seemed a little pressured by the Azure Oceanic Purgatory.

At that moment, four lifebound beasts emerged from her sword; she also had Quadrasword Talent, something that was far more prevalent in the Tai'e House of Jian than the Draconis House of Jian. They were four large shelled creatures, each about a hundred meters in length. Their shells were thick and lustrous as their name, jadesea tonneshell, suggested. Beasts of this species were rare, to say the least. They surrounded Feng Shuoyu and used their abilities all at once, blocking Meow Meow's attacks like four shields and deploying a defensive layer on Feng Shuoyu herself. Her defense would soon be impenetrable. She had decided she needed the swordbeasts to fight in their normal states, letting them

hold Tianming back while she turned to attack the hell tree. "That plant beast is annoying, but I can just cut it down."

The hell tree was right before her. Apart from Tianming, the other disciples of the Archaion Sect were occupied, so she couldn't give this chance up. She would never let them have their way. But right as she was heading toward the Radix World Tree, she noticed that she had severely underestimated it.

The two-headed dragon was far more agile than her clamshells could ever be, causing them all to be stopped by the dragon and Radiant Vines. Xian Xian's black roots, in particular, dug their way into the grooves in their armor before piercing through their flesh. When the roots started sucking them dry, they let out a piercing cry underwater.

Feng Shuoyu's Oceansong Way was just as mystical; it was a combination of the sound of the waves. It was like a siren's song that could bewilder many, but it was nothing before Lan Huang's even louder Primordial Soundwave. The sheer volume was enough to overwhelm the song of confusion sung by the clamshells.

Lan Huang and the clamshells were beasts with immense defensive power, but the dragon was able to work with Xian Xian to trap the four of them underwater. As for Feng Shuoyu, her hands were busy fending off Ying Huo and Meow Meow. Without her swordbeasts in her sword, her combat capabilities had severely decreased and she wasn't able to break through their defenses at all. Even with the defensive layer around her, Ying Huo's Skypiercer Ki still managed to hurt her badly. Not even her Oceansong Sword was able to do much to the two critters, despite it being suited to the oceanic terrain.

"How could Li Tianming be so powerful?!"

While she was being ganged up on by Tianming's lifebound beasts, Tianming had engaged her sister in combat with both his swords. Though Feng Lingyin had a mischievous personality, her attacks were no less fierce. She always struck to kill, and not for petty points.

"You fools who don't know what's good for yourselves... I shall take your head with my sword as a sacrifice for my dead junior brother!" Feng Lingyin cried. Using Windlift Song, her sword wailed each time it pierced the air, sending soundwaves targeted at his eardrums. Her four swordbeasts' enchanting radiance made her sword even harder to follow by sight.

Chapter 702 - Pay Back Three Times Over

"Your junior brother? Are you talking about Feng Daoyi? Then do you remember how your sect's disciples killed eleven of mine?" Tianming said angrily. Even though he had managed to defend the hell tree, he hadn't reined in his killing intent at all.

"Eleven? They were just fools who didn't know their limits, like you! You can't even protect yourselves, let alone your goddess! Get real! It's a shame you won't get to see your precious goddess quartered twice by the eight divine realms!" Feng Lingyin snapped.

"You come across as a pretty girl. Why do you have to be so heartless?" Tianming said.

"Heartless? You're wrong! You are so naive. In the fight between the divine realms, countless geniuses are killed. Don't you know how much a reborn goddess can change the tides? As long as someone like her exists, there can be no peace! You have started the chains of violence and you shall die for it!"

"Oh, really?" Tianming had clashed with her multiple times throughout the conversation. All eight of their beasts were already going all out elsewhere. "Then I'll send all of you to the next life before it's my turn!"

Tianming didn't necessarily want to kill them in cold blood, but this situation was do or die. He couldn't afford to let them have a chance to kill his own comrades if he could end it first. He didn't want to disappoint Xuanyuan Dao and had known from the beginning that his path would be filled with bloodshed. Only once he had soaked the divine realms in their own blood would Feiling stand a chance to survive. The moment he had stepped into the Nether Battlefield, his rage boiled to its peak and he was about to vent it all out.

Suddenly, he moved so quickly that it was hard to track him. "Feng Lingyin!"

Tianming had heard about her and knew her status. Even so, he didn't hold back and used his Soulshaker Eye. It was the third level of Godsoul Canon. The third eye on his palm caused Feng Lingyin's world to fall into darkness, leaving nothing but a gigantic eye that hung in the dark sky like a brilliant sun.

"Ugh!" Her soul felt prickling pain when she stared at the eye. It was absolute agony. She lashed out in a panic to fend off the fear, the whirlwinds her sword unleashed attempting to tear apart the eye and the dark veil. But before she succeeded, countless sword-shaped petals descended from the skies. She wasn't able to block them at all, no matter how quickly she could react. A number of them pierced into her flesh and dug deep before they began sucking her blood out.

Her face contorted from the agonizing pain. She swiftly tried to cut off the Bloodrain Swords that had pierced her before forcing the rest of it out with her life tribulation force.

"Enjoy your trip to the next life!" Tianming wore a cold expression as his swords glowed brilliantly, manifesting five hundred astral sources and a thousand strands of tribulation sword ki as he executed the Mortal Dao Sword. The pieces were in place and the game was set; it only took an instant.

Tianming bore down on her like the emperor of the world, his first sword coming down with the second trailing behind, each leaving a trail of explosive sword ki that formed magnificent pillars of swords that pierced through everything with absolute dominance.

The first sword shattered Feng Lingyin's rainbow sword and the second pierced toward her heart, only to be blocked by the black hell barrier formation. She had been eliminated right before the fatal strike connected. Her four swordbeasts were also fatally wounded and sealed up within their own hell barrier formations. As long as nobody attempted to break the barrier formations, she would be trapped within until the end of the Nether Battle.

But before she could say more, Tianming's sword pierced into the hell barrier formation and a thousand strands of tribulation sword ki blasted out. With the power of all eight of his life and death springs surging at the tip of the sword, he immediately broke the hell barrier formation, causing the barrier formations around her four beasts to shatter as well. Everyone knew what Tianming was trying to do. Feng Lingyin paled as she felt her imminent death approaching.

'You wouldn't dare!' she cried before immediately attempting her escape. She had rather amazing speed and could reach her peak velocity within an instant, but she was stopped before she could go far by a black root that coiled around her. The next moment, a black chain came wrapping around her neck!

"Husband!" Feng Lingyin cried as she attempted to tear the chain apart, only for her cry to suddenly be silenced.

Tianming pulled her severed head back to him, leaving the headless corpse powerlessly flopping down into the swamp.

"Lingyin!" Feng Shuoyu was at a loss for words as she stood there with her eyes puffy from unshed silent tears. She had never expected a fourth-level life phase samsaran like Feng Lingyin with her four swordbeasts would lose to Tianming. Her regret swelled the same moment as her rage and fury. They had been blinded by the appearance of the hell tree and attacked without considering that this was the Archaion Sect's home turf.

"Lingyin! Lingyin!" The sisters had been raised together since their childhood and shared everything. But now, they were separated by life and death. Death had come swiftly and without warning. The world was a cruel one. Feng Shuoyu felt her heart being torn apart and found it hard to breathe. All of a sudden, she caught something that had been thrown her way: Feng Lingyin's head, complete with an expression of terror. She immediately went mad and looked up to see the white-haired youth before her, smiling.

"Hexapath Sword Sect, let me ask you again. Are you ready to accept the consequences of your cruel ways?"

"Retreat!" Feng Shuoyu announced. She was scared for real now.

"You won't be able to. All of you will die here. You killed eleven of us, so I will kill all thirty of you. We'll pay you back three times over!"

Tianming immediately continued the assault with his four beasts. Xian Xian's Radiant Vines continued whipping, draining so much from the four clamshells that they could barely stay conscious, so Tianming didn't have to deal with them. He could focus on avenging the dead disciples of his sect.

He, Meow Meow, Ying Huo, and Xian Xian unleashed an onslaught of Bloodrain Swords, Skyscorch Featherblasts, and Myriad Thundernets. Meanwhile, Tianming used the Prime Tower to push Feng Shuoyu underwater as countless black roots stretched out toward her.

"Husband, save me! Save me!" she cried, her tears indistinguishable from the water around her. Ying Huo and the others' abilities aside, she couldn't even deal with Xian Xian's countless roots, still shaken from her sister's abrupt death.

"Is your husband the top disciple of your sect? Jiang Wuxin, was it?" Tianming coldly asked.

"That's right! Scared now? Let me go and he'll spare you!" she hurriedly said.

"You think he'd spare me even though your sister is already dead?"

"He will! Just let me go!"

"Deal. I'll let you go back to him along with your sister as bare heads! Your sister was right. Since this conflict was destined to occur, there's no need for pointless talk of mercy. I'll just be doing what you did to us." The cacophony of attacks would spell the end of her.

"You wouldn't—" Before she could finish, she was already dead. Never could she have imagined that the Number One Summit would be so dangerous. Tianming alone was far more terrifying than even Xuanyuan Yucheng, who wouldn't have dared to touch those two at all. But as far as Tianming was concerned, those two beauties wouldn't stop coming after them, so he could only put a stop to it by killing them.

"This is only the start. There's still much more fun to be had in the Nether battle!"

Tianming tossed the two heads to the ground. Now, there were only twenty-seven disciples from Hexapath Sword Sect left. The Sterling House of Fang would soon kill two more, and three others had been eliminated. Despite their relatively minor casualties so far, seeing the two sisters killed had caused quite a commotion.

"He killed Jiang Wuxin's women!"

"Both of them, too! They're the daughters of the vice sect master!"

"Kill him!"

"Nonsense, we should go to Senior Brother Jiang first!"

The tables had been completely turned. Fang Chenjing, Fang Yuewei, and the rest were dumbfounded by what had happened. Tianming's true terror had finally dawned on them. Fang Chenjing felt his eyelids twitch as he subconsciously bowed his head, finally understanding why Tianming had been made a vice leader.

Almost immediately, most of the Hexapath Sword Sect disciples chose to retreat as Beigong Qianyu was returning with several others. Tianming hadn't spent too much time killing the two sisters, so the speed at which the reinforcements had arrived could be considered rather quick.

"Retreat now!" Their operation had completely failed.

"I said that none of you will be able to escape," Tianming said coldly. There was no way he would let them bring disciples from other sects to wipe out the Archaion Sect together. He was far from naive and wouldn't let something like mercy hold him back. Being merciful to the enemy was being cruel to oneself; everyone there understood this principle.

"Stop them from leaving!" Fang Chenjing and Beigong Qianyu ordered in unison.

The roots of the Radix World Tree immediately formed a cage around the disciples of the Hexapath Sword Sect. Countless Radiant Vines crept all around, filling any gaps that remained with Scarlet Lilies.

"Why are they the only ones allowed to kill?"

"Brothers, exterminate the Hexapath Sword Sect! End their lineage here!"

"Avenge our fallen comrades!"

"Die!"

Chapter 703 - Targeted for Extermination

The disciples of the Archaion Sect had been suffering too much pressure from all sides. They had witnessed the deaths of their friends and the mockery from the other sects as the outsiders from the eight divine realms arrogantly pranced about at Taiji Peak Lake. Nobody had taken them seriously and had chanted for their deaths. Now, it was time for their revenge with Tianming leading the way! If they were afraid of death, they wouldn't have been there in the first place.

"Comrades, it's our time to shake the whole continent!"

That cry roused their bloodlust and fighting spirit. They were fighting for the pride of the first divine realm.

With the Radix World Tree controlling the entire battlefield, the disciples of Hexapath Sword Sect were in huge trouble. Not only had they suffered considerable casualties, they didn't have many fourth-level samsarans to lead their way. The Archaion Sect, on the other hand, had four, including Tianming.

Tianming and his lifebound beasts charged in for the kill whenever they saw a chance. No corpse would be left intact as long as the Grand-Orient Sword found its way into it! He was on a mad killing spree.

"You want to kill Ling'er too, huh?!" Tianming asked a random fellow.

"Who's Ling'er?!" That person paled and immediately stumbled away after his hell barrier formation had been shattered by Tianming, only to collapse when Tianming rushed past him, his sword pierced through his head. The body simply sank into the depths of the swamp.

Tianming immediately turned to the next one and said, "Let me ask you: do you want to kill Ling'er?"

"Die, Li Tianming! Do you really think you can scare me?!"

With three sword strikes, Tianming triggered the hell barrier formation with the first, broke it with the second, and pierced his opponent's heart with the third.

"Who's next? Answer my question!" He was rampaging like an unstoppable demon.

"Aaaah!"

"Run! He's crazy!"

"Monorigin Sect, you'll be wiped out! Your divine realm will crumble!"

Before they could even finish, the ones who lost their hell barrier formations were pierced through by Ying Huo's Skypiercer Ki or Xian Xian's Bloodrain Swords, instantly dying. Corpses of beastmasters and lifebound beasts stained the swamp red, and the entire area was littered with incomplete body parts.

As Xuanyuan Yucheng returned with aid, they killed whoever they saw. Now the disciples of Hexapath Sword Sect would be facing off against the full force of the Archaion Sect. They were on the brink of their demise!

The Archaion Sect's disciples stopped attacking after triggering the hell barrier formations of their enemies, since they wouldn't be able to move afterward. They would only finish them off one by one once all of them were secured. Soon, the battle ended in a bloodbath.

Tianming had contributed the lion's share, especially with Xian Xian controlling the entire battlefield with its vines and helping out many of his allies. The corpses of Hexapath Sword Sect disciples were strewn all across the swamp.

Since Tianming had joined the battle, only a few Archaion Sect disciples' lifebound beasts' hell barrier formations had been triggered, but no points were lost as a result. Additionally, he was the one to deliver the finishing blow to trigger the enemies' hell barrier formations, so he was no doubt among the top scorers.

Once Beigong Qianyu and Xuanyuan Yucheng had returned, the tide of battle had turned completely. The Hexapath Sword Sect had started with forty-five disciples, but only had fifteen remaining, making them the weakest of all nine sects. It was a suicidal mistake, though Feng Lingyin and Feng Shuoyu had almost gotten their way. Had they gotten to the hell tree in time, the Archaion Sect would have been devastated.

"Check to see if anyone managed to slip away!" Xuanyuan Yucheng said as he watched Tianming from the corner of his eye with shock. Tianming had Lan Huang spray water to wash the blood from his swords as if nothing had happened. His expression was blank, without a trace of fear or elation.

"Brother Yucheng, one is missing. There's only twenty-nine corpses. It seems that Feng Xiaoli escaped. He's a fourth-level life phase samsaran who fought Sis Yuewei at the start. Perhaps he ran when the situation turned for the worse. Given that his lifebound beast is an earth type, he probably escaped underground."

If even one escaped, the location of their hell tree would be compromised and more foes would come their way in the days to come. The angered disciples of the Hexapath Sword Sect might work with the other sects to crush them. The impending gloom overshadowed the joy they felt from winning the battle just moments ago.

"Everyone, hear me out," Xuanyuan Yucheng said, "What did we come for? Revenge! The Hexapath Sword Sect has paid their debt after losing twenty-nine of their own. We took it back with interest. What's left to be afraid of now? No matter how many come, we will kill them all! We would've sought them out either way. Any additional one we get to kill is already a bonus! The Flameyellow Continent shall never forget our glorious victory!"

"Brother Yucheng is right!"

"We already paid them back! This time around, the Sterling House of Fang suffered the brunt of the blows. Next time, the Archaic House of Xuanyuan shall do the same! If anyone's to die, we will be the ones!"

Sometimes, that was all it took to satisfy the young folks. Xuanyuan Yucheng soon got briefed on the situation.

"Everyone, we were able to turn this around and protect the hell tree, thanks to Li Tianming. He even killed the Feng sisters, which is a contribution to be in awe of. I'm proud to call him my sworn brother! I'll be willing to die for him a million times over if that's what it takes!"

"Me too! We'll be together in life and in death!" Beigong Qianyu said, stretching her hand out.

Everyone put their palms on top of each others'. There were more than forty of them and it was quite stuffy.

"Amazing. I'm convinced," Fang Chenjing said with resignation.

"What do you plan to do now?"

"Let's fight with them and see what we can achieve. That aside, I heard Jiang Wuxin loves his wives. If he doesn't go mad after finding out about this, I'll relinquish my Fang surname," Fang Chenjing said.

"That isn't much. Everyone has someone that's precious to them for whom they'll fight, whether it be Jiang Wuxin, Li Tianming, or us," Fang Yuewei said.

"You're right. Good and evil has nothing to do with this. It's all a fight for our own loved ones' survival."

"Do you think he's capable of that?"

"We'll see!"

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"Jiang Wuxin?" Tianming stroked his Grand-Orient Sword before putting it away. "There are around four to five others here who are like him, but they all have to die!"

He knew that the outside world was no doubt in shock after witnessing the deaths of the Hexapath Sword Sect disciples. The entire continent had the Skyeeye Formations broadcasting the battles, so they had doubtless watched Tianming killing the Feng sisters and having the highest kill count among the rest. This blow was far more debilitating to the Hexapath Sword Sect than Feng Daoyi's death.

How would the other elites from the sect react? How would the other disciples at the Swordsoul Mountains rage? The mere thought of that was anxiety-inducing, to say the least. However, Tianming couldn't see it, nor would he care about it if he could. He was only here to fight and kill.

"This is only the beginning!" He would see to it himself that those who desired Feiling's death would burn from his wrath.

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The area where the hell tree was in the frost layer of Nether Battlefield was covered in ice. The temperature there was near subzero, enough to freeze a normal person dead. There, Jiang Wuxin stood with his sword in hand as he tried to find insight into the sword.

"Shuoyu and Lingyin have gone to the ninth layer to scout. Why aren't they back yet?" someone asked.

Jiang Wuxin didn't speak at all, his attention completely focused on his sword. In time, someone came stumbling from the distance, pale and covered in blood.

"Feng Xiaoli?" The dozen people around the tree stood up. Jiang Wuxin put down his sword upon hearing the name, though he was blindfolded and his ears were muffled. He had sensed the sound with his mind and heart.

"Why are you the only one to return? Where's the rest of you?" Jiang Wuxin casually asked, still half-focused on cultivation.

"Senior Brother Jiang!" Feng Xiaoli knelt and shivered on the icy ground.

"What happened?"

Feng Xiaoli's mouth chattered, but no words came out.

"Stop putting up an act, Feng Xiaoli."

"You make it seem like something serious happened. Our sect didn't offend anyone else, so that doesn't sound plausible."

"Yeah, stop messing around."

The others were getting fed up.

"Senior Brother Jiang, I'll speak, but you must remain calm," Feng Xiaoli said in a hoarse voice.

"Huh?!" the others gasped. It did sound like something serious happened. How could it be?

"Speak," Jiang Wuxin said as he caressed his sword.

"We went to scout out the ninth layer and discovered the hell tree right away. The disciples of the Monorigin Sect were there. Most of them were from the Sterling House of Fang, and there were only fifteen of them. Shuoyu and Lingyin immediately launched an attack to try destroying their hell tree. After all, we had twice their number. They were almost about to succeed when Li Tianming showed up and...."

"Out with it!" Jiang Wuxin said, lifting Feng Xiaoli into the air.

"Li Tianming defeated and killed them! Then, reinforcements came and we were slaughtered by around forty of them. All of us were wiped out save for me, all twenty-nine of us!" He broke out in tears right away.

Jiang Wuxin tossed him to the ground. Feng Xiaoli looked at him and felt boundless sword ki flowing out of him. The whole place was dead silent.

"Feng Xiaoli, that's impossible. Stop joking. Where's my brother?"

"That's right! How could you joke about this? There's no way Li Tianming could beat the sisters at his level!"

"He's just an empyrean saint! Even if he broke through, he can only deal with third-level death phase samсарans at most!"

The others were starting to panic.

"It's true, I swear!" He was flat on the ground crying, having lost all his fighting spirit. "The disciple of the goddess is really powerful...."

The whole crowd fell silent once more. Everyone turned to Jiang Wuxin, then back to Feng Xiaoli. Jiang Wuxin's eyes were covered and his expression was hard to discern; however, his body shook as it radiated a chilling killing intent.

"Feng Xiaoli, take me there," he said.

"Senior Brother, since we know where their hell tree is, I suggest we go seek out the other sects and work with them to eradicate the Monorigin Sect!" someone suggested.

However, Jiang Wuxin ignored them. He grabbed Feng Xiaoli and said, "Take me to them, now."

"Senior Brother Jiang, there's more than forty of them—"

"Not even they can stop me from killing anyone I please. Now, lead the way!" he snapped as he tightened his grip. A deathly aura came spreading from his palm to Feng Xiaoli's neck.

The poor sod knew better than to anger him further when he was at his scariest. "Yes...."

Chapter 704 - Wuxin Sword Art

The Swordsoul Mountain range in the Sixpath Divine Realm was enveloped in complete silence for a long time. When the thirty Hexapath Sword Sect disciples almost destroyed the hell tree, they were cheering and whistling. But when Tianming killed Feng Linyin, they shouted and cursed in rage.

Then, when twenty-nine disciples of the Hexapath Sword Sect died in the ensuing battle, the entire Sixpath Divine Realm fell into dead silence. They looked terrible, their faces pale and awkward. When the anger finally bubbled over, they suddenly realized they were just cowards at heart, showing false bravado and unable to do anything. They looked ridiculous.

The twenty-nine weren't ordinary people, but amazing talents of the Hexapath Sword Sect, elites selected from hundreds of millions. They were the embodiment of dreams for many. People of the same age were earth or sky saints, but those were samsarans! Few in the Sixpath Divine Realm would ever enter samsara.

Those twenty-nine "sure wins" had decided to take the risk for revenge, hoping to deal with the Archaion Sect disciples in one go. However, they had underestimated their hatred and courage, as well as Tianming's ferocity. Instead, they were ruthlessly stabbed by those so-called weaklings. The Sixpath Divine Realm was stunned.

There was pin drop silence throughout the entire sect as disciples and elders looked at each other in dismay. Those who were previously yelling insults shut their mouths, their faces purple.

"I-isn't this too...."

"Is there a point in continuing? Let's go to war! We'll get our legions to attack the Monorigin Divine Sect and destroy their realm at once!"

"Slay those bastards and avenge our disciples!"

All kinds of cursing broke the deathly silence—an expression of the young people's rage. In fact, their words meant nothing because attacking the Archaion Divine Realm wasn't a decision they could make alone. At present, the signs from the divine realms were obvious.

The Number One Summit was an opportunity. If the Archaion Divine Realm was willing to execute the goddess, the matter would be resolved. If not, then five divine realms would join forces to attack shortly after the end of the Number One Summit, which meant the attitude of the remaining three divine realms was very important.

Regardless, the Sixpath Divine Realm would have to fight, otherwise they would never forget this enmity. At that moment, everyone in the Sixpath Divine Realm committed Tianming to memory.

"Fortunately, Feng Xiaoli returned."

"Jiang Wuxin must be furious. He hasn't fought in a long time. Let's see how he kills Li Tianming while surrounded by the enemy!"

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In the swamp layer, Xian Xian's Radix World Tree was entwined protectively around the hell tree while its spiritform hung from Tianming's arm, looking out with its big eyes. Xuanyuan Yucheng and Beigong Qianyu had also both narrowed their defense range. Tianming was stationed in the outermost position.

"They aren't afraid of dying." When Tianming looked behind him, Xuanyuan Yucheng and Beigong Qianyu were talking in low voices—their last exchange before the end.

"What are you going to do? Enter death phase and fight to the death?" Ying Huo asked.

"I can enter death tribulation any time; it's easy. But getting out is difficult. It's better to wait until we leave the Nether Battlefield. After all, cultivating here isn't exactly convenient. Once I enter the death phase, I'll age at a hundred times the usual speed. It hurts to think of growing old. Oh, my youth! Stupid lifesbane," Tianming grumbled.

"Why act all pitiful when it's clearly benefited you! Without the Aeonian Grandbane, you'd still be a weakling stuck in the Grand-Orient Sect." Ying Huo pursed its beak.

"Bullshit. At the very least, I would've reached the Divine Capital." Tianming smiled.

Nestling comfortably in Meow Meow's fur, Tianming stared at the darkness in front of him.

"Now that our position has been exposed, what can we do besides enter the death phase?" Meow Meow asked seriously.

"That's it. Jiang Wuxin will certainly unite with the others. If he finds them, we can only fight to the death. After all, our hell tree is here. However, I have the Prime Tower. With your speed, I won't die. As long as I'm alive, I'll get them back ten times for each Archaion Sect disciple they kill. I might not be able to save our people, but I can certainly kill our enemies."

Tianming gritted his teeth, gloomily spitting out that last sentence. Then he narrowed his eyes as two people appeared in front of him.

A battered young man led the way, his expression flustered. The other young man had a slight build and appeared rather ordinary. His eyes were covered with a black cloth.

A terrifying killing intent enveloped the man so he resembled a demonic sword. The turbulent sword ki, combined with that gloomy, ungodly aura, made them all uncomfortable. The breath of death phase pervaded his body. Despite being separated by a thousand meters, the man's death tribulation energy and killing intent seemed to shoot toward Tianming.

The man rode on the back of a gigantic black wolf that was larger than Meow Meow's Regal Chaosfiend form. The most terrifying thing about the wolf was the fact that it had more than five hundred stars in its eyes, which proved that it was a fifth order tribulation beast and a whole level higher than Ying Huo and Xian Xian.

"A sunscourge fiendwolf? Jiang Wuxin?" Tianming immediately recognized them.

Among the disciples of the Archaion Sect, Tianming's lifebound beasts had the most stars.

Although Jiang Wuxin was the most common type of beastmaster and only had one lifebound beast, his sunscourge fiendwolf had the most stars out of all the participants in the Number One Summit. Ordinary beastmasters didn't require as much manna, as they only possessed one lifebound beast. But even so, the sunscourge fiendwolf with five hundred stars in its eyes was considered quite rare. Most importantly, it was able to evolve on its own.

"He's here alone?"

Upon scanning the area, he realized Jiang Wuxin and the battered young man were the only visitors. The battered young man was most likely Feng Xiaoli, who had escaped earlier.

Narrowing his eyes, Tianming immediately came to a realization.

First of all, killing these two meant concealing the location of the hell tree. Secondly, Jiang Wuxin was extremely daring. His purpose was to avenge his wives by killing Tianming. Moreover, there was a high probability that he was strong enough to accomplish his goal.

Xuanyuan Yucheng had once mentioned that Jiang Wuxin was one of the strongest disciples of the nine great sects; he was certainly stronger than Xuanyuan Yucheng.

At that moment, Jiang Wuxin finally recognized Tianming. Although he was blind, his lifebound beast could see. Xuanyuan Yucheng and the others spotted Jiang Wuxin as well.

"Come back!" Xuanyuan Yucheng shouted.

The next moment, the sunscourge fiendwolf roared and charged toward Tianming with Jiang Wuxin on its back. The power it exhibited was truly amazing, worthy of a fifth order tribulation beast. As soon as its power was released, it frightened the other lifebound beasts.

Tianming had yet to retreat, however. Meanwhile, Xuanyuan Yucheng and at least thirty other people raced to support him. Tianming's gaze was icy; he noticed Feng Xiaoli next to Jiang Wuxin. Afraid to fight, the man quickly hid behind Jiang Wuxin.

"Big Sister Qianyu, why don't you take a few people with you and kill Feng Xiaoli?" Tianming said decisively.

"Alright!" Beigong Qianyu shouted for Fang Yuewei. Without the slightest hesitation, the two withdrew from the team and went after Feng Xiaoli.

Jiang Wuxin and the sunscourge fiendwolf arrived in front of Tianming. That said, Tianming hadn't had much of an opportunity to act because Xuanyuan Yucheng and the others had already surrounded Jiang Wuxin.

"Kill them!"

"Be careful!"

As long as the two were killed, their current crisis was likely to be lifted. This was of great significance to the disciples of the Archaion Sect.

"We'll join them."

Calling for Ying Huo and Meow Meow, Tianming left Lan Huang and Xian Xian behind to guard the hell tree in case of a sneak attack. Tianming didn't need to do anything. Jiang Wuxin stared him down like a ghost. The dark- and fire-type wolf unleashed a blazing vortex that tore open a gap.

Fast as lightning, Jiang Wuxin appeared in front of Tianming. It was obvious he cultivated a powerful body-refining art.

"No need for eyes, the heart discerns with precision!"

Tianming watched in surprise as Jiang Wuxin skillfully avoided their attacks in the encirclement, nimble as a cat. He cleverly dodged the attacks, all the while darting back and forth, even successfully avoiding Ying Huo's tribulation sword ki.

"Be careful, Li Tianming!" Xuanyuan Yucheng and Fang Chenjing quickly chased after them accompanied by the cries of a dragon and phoenix. However, they couldn't keep up with Jiang Wuxin.

Their expressions turned ugly. In fact, none of them had ever fought Jiang Wuxin head-on. All of the information they had on him would make no difference without any experience. The blind man had a better understanding of his surroundings than anyone else.

At this moment, all his anger and killing intent condensed within the black sword in his hand. The weapon had at least seven tribulation patterns.

"Li Tianming, you will become one of the dead souls under my sword. Your heart will be pierced by a thousand swords each day. You'll atone for my wives' deaths for a thousand years!!"

Although he was blind, Jiang Wuxin's sad, trembling voice perfectly expressed the hatred and anger in his heart. The enmity between them was irreconcilable. Without any hesitation, he attacked at once, aiming his sword at Tianming's eyes.

"The Wuxin Sword Art?"

It seemed Jiang Wuxin cultivated the Hexapath Swordfiend's Wuxin Sword Art. The Wuxin Sword Art wasn't a battle art, but a way of cultivating the sword. Jiang Wuxin wasn't previously known by this name; Feng Qingyu had named him after the art.

Tianming had to admit it was very profound. He couldn't predict the trajectory of Jiang Wuxin's sword or grasp his true moves. The sword seemed directed elsewhere, and at the same, appeared as if it could land in any direction. It was constantly changing as boundless sword ki surged within the sword.

"Die!"

With Jiang Wuxin's roar, Tianming was engulfed by the magnificent sword ki. Although Jiang Wuxin was a fourth-level death phase samsaran, his power far surpassed that. In the face of this lethal attack, Tianming immediately summoned the Prime Tower and darted inside.

At that instant, Jiang Wuxin's sword struck the Prime Tower.

Chapter 705 - A Drop Of Black Blood

The Prime Tower managed to block Jiang Wuxin's fatal blow. There were too many people around Jiang Wuxin, including Xuanyuan Yucheng, who was in the same cultivation realm.

All Tianming had to do was resist Jiang Wuxin's attack. Xuanyuan Yucheng led the others in encircling and attacking Jiang Wuxin. They didn't dare to get too close to him, but their lifebound beasts could continue using their abilities to bombard the enemy, Tianming's beasts included. Jiang Wuxin's sunscourge fiendwolf made for a huge target and had to resist dozens of abilities.

Wind, fire, thunder, and other forces swept across the swamp. The sunscourge fiendwolf was amazing; using its abilities, it formed a black flame shield. The surface of the shield resembled a vortex that absorbed its opponents' abilities, devouring or dispelling them. However, the Archaion Sect's attacks were too powerful, resulting in the shield exploding.

"You dare charge in all by yourself? Don't you consider us people?" With a black dragon halberd in his hand, Xuanyuan Yucheng roared, angrily overtaking Jiang Wuxin.

There were more than twenty people attacking, including Fang Chenjing, who was at the fourth life phase. He sat on a phoenix, bow and arrow in his hand, and shot nine arrows that attacked from all directions with each pluck of his bowstring. Jiang Wuxin was still seething with rage, all of anger focused on Tianming.

Tianming had already left the Prime Tower, having decided to make his move while Xuanyuan Yucheng and the others besieged Jiang Wuxin, his eyes icy-cold.

Tianming, Ying Huo, and Meow Meow shot in the same direction. A thousand tribulation strands of tribulation sword ki condensed within the Grand-Orient Sword, which had been divided into two.

When Jiang Wuxin was covered in blood and beaten into a miserable state, Tianming's Mortal Dao Sword descended from the sky.

Amidst the whistling sword ki, Tianming exploded with Mortal Dao sword intent that possessed terrifying lethality. His sword intent was far more destructive than Jiang Wuxin's, suppressing his sword intent to a certain extent.

Like an afterimage, Jiang Wuxin quickly moved, blocking Tianming's Mortal Dao Sword. At that moment, the black Grand-Orient Sword came slashing down and the Archaion Sect disciples launched their attacks at Jiang Wuxin.

He had almost hit Tianming with his first blow, but was blocked by the Prime Tower. Now, the opportunity was gone and Jiang Wuxin was trapped in their encirclement. There was no way he could aim for Tianming. Once again, Jiang Wuxin deflected the black sword, but this time, Xuanyuan Yucheng's halberd struck him in the back. Due to his hardy flesh, the attack failed to tear him in half; however, his hell barrier formation was almost exposed.

On the other side, the sunscourge fiendwolf was covered in blood from the joint attacks of more than twenty beastmasters and lifebound beasts. Now that it was trapped, roaring was useless.

"Jiang Wuxin, have you gone mad and started dreaming?" Xuanyuan Yucheng's words were ruthless.

Smashed to the ground, Jiang Wuxin's entire body was stained with blood, yet he threw his head back in laughter.

The sunscourge fiendwolf quickly returned to his side. After returning the beast to his lifebound space, Jiang Wuxin turned around and fled.

"Get him!"

They chased after him. In an instant, Tianming and Meow Meow charged out, intercepting Jiang Wuxin. He was the one Jiang Wuxin wanted to kill. Without a doubt, the latter had hoped that Tianming would stop him.

Tianming didn't think there was anything wrong with Jiang Wuxin seeking revenge. That meant he had truly loved his two wives and had thus fallen into madness. His desire to kill had even surpassed the importance of his own life.

His performance was astonishing. However, he was still a little short of killing Tianming. In the case of failure, he had chosen to flee, indicating that he still had some sense. If something happened to Ling'er, Tianming believed he wouldn't even possess that last bit of reason.

"Li Tianming, if I, Jiang Wuxin, fail to kill you in this life, then I'm not a man. One day, I will destroy the Monorigin Divine Realm and bury you all with my wives."

When Jiang Wuxin swung the black sword in his hand, the glint from the blade seemed to dazzle the eye. The strange trajectory of the Wuxin Sword Art didn't make any sense, but his words sounded familiar.

"Yes, you have the right to do so, and so do I. Your revenge is justified. But then again, we'll have to see if you make it out of here alive today!" Tianming dodged his attack.

Jiang Wuxin's strength mainly lay in his unpredictability. That was something beyond the level of his battle art, and Tianming felt that fighting him came with great risks. He was still chasing after Jiang Wuxin, but there was quite a distance between Tianming and the people behind him. The entire Archaion Sect team had dispersed, which was a very dangerous sign. Xuanyuan Yucheng and Fang Chenjing were the only ones who were close and there was probably no one left at the hell tree.

"It seems only a death phase samsaran can stop him. But it's still uncertain whether or not we can intercept and kill him!" Tianming remained on Jiang Wuxin's tail.

After a moment's hesitation, he was about to make the risky decision of entering the death phase when he was suddenly stopped.

"Damn it. Xian Xian and Lan Huang are still near the hell tree. They're too far away for symbiotic cultivation!" If the lifesbane's ten characters entered his death springs, they could accelerate the process of entering the death phase. However, that required both beastmaster and lifebound beasts to cultivate at the same time for it to be truly effective.

He was so preoccupied with chasing Jiang Wuxin that he had forgotten about Xian Xian and the others.

However, Tianming's reaction was normal. He wasn't given any time to think, but had left as soon as Jiang Wuxin made his quick escape. Jiang Wuxin was hoping Tianming would chase after him. Not even Xuanyuan Yucheng could keep up with his speed, much less Fang Chenjing, who was already out of sight.

"Tianming, come back!" Xuanyuan Yucheng shouted from behind.

Right now, they were too far away from the hell tree. They wouldn't even know if they were ambushed. If they continued pursuing Jiang Wuxin, there might be trouble when someone snuck an attack on the hell tree. Thus, Tianming was forced to stop.

"Li Tianming, you avoided my fatal blow. You're very strong, I'll give you that. But when I return, I will kill you. There's no doubt about that." Jiang Wuxin's cold, beast-like voice echoed throughout the swamp layer. Then, he disappeared.

In an instant, Xuanyuan Yucheng arrived beside Tianming.

"Jiang Wuxin's body-refining art is very powerful. He is said to have cultivated a type of Kiloflash Sword Body, which is designed for speed. Only your lifebound beast can catch up to him. He's strong, and the Wuxin Sword Art is brilliant. Tianming, we have to quickly return. If this was a diversion, we're finished," said Xuanyuan Yucheng.

"Alright."

"Under the influence of anger, Jiang Wuxin originally assumed he could kill you on his own. After all, we aren't familiar with him. He never imagined you would possess such a tower that could block his attack and deprive him of the opportunity to kill you. With so many of us besieging him, it's a testament to his power that he was able to escape. I can't help but feel ashamed of myself," said Xuanyuan Yucheng.

Although they stood on equal cultivation levels, Xuanyuan Yucheng's self-reproach showed that he was truly convinced by his opponent's strength.

"Now that he's escaped, he'll certainly return with others next time," Tianming said.

"You're right," said Xuanyuan Yucheng.

Tianming rather regretted his actions. If he had thought about it before, he would immediately enter the death phase and kill Jiang Wuxin despite everything. But he had hesitated because of how terrifying it would feel when his flesh and bones started rapidly aging.

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They soon returned to the hell tree. Fortunately, there had been no attacks while they were gone. However, Beigong Qianyu and Fang Yuewei were a little dejected.

"Is Feng Xiaoli dead?" Tianming asked.

"No. He was aware of our intention to kill him and escaped very quickly. His lifebound beast is able to drill into the swamp, so it's difficult to locate him. That was exactly how he escaped last time," said Beigong Qianyu.

In other words, even if Tianming had entered the death phase and killed Jiang Wuxin, the crisis would still remain. However, Tianming had strengthened his resolve.

"Death phase it is! If I have to age a hundred times faster than I do now, then so be it! Why should I hesitate if I'm not afraid of death!" Tianming shouted.

"I know you're afraid of aging too quickly and becoming a disgusting, middle-aged man who can't get it up!" Ying Huo laughed.

"Dammit! I'll kill you!"

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Somewhere in the swamp layer, Jiang Wuxin slowly staggered, dazed and desperate. Fresh blood dripped from his body; the wound on his back was so deep his bones were visible, yet he didn't seem to notice it.

"Xiaoyu, Xiaoyin... I'm sorry I failed to protect you.... It's all my fault. I deserve to die. I made so many promises to you, but I've yet to fulfill any of them. It was I who arranged for you to investigate the swamp layer, resulting in such an accident.... The future we once imagined, traveling the world, bearing children... that's all gone. Yet I've failed to avenge you. I'm so useless. I'm sorry. Forgive me...."

He lay in the swamp, face buried in the mud, crying miserably. In this deserted place, he rolled around, like a helpless child, crying his heart out. In the end, the blood and mud mixed together.

He recalled his childhood—being bullied, stepped on, and even having his head urinated on. Wasn't he just as miserable now? The nightmare of watching as his entire clan was killed still made him tremble with fear.

"Master says that the Heavenly Dao is indifferent. He says I need to be heartless and ruthless in order to understand the great dao of the sword and embark on the path of godhood. Only now do I know how painful it is to have loved and lost. It seems Master is wise... but I'm nowhere as good as him. I'm grateful for Yu and Yin's respect, their commitment, and all they've done for me to achieve all I have today. Monorigin Divine Sect! If I don't kill every last one of you, I'm worse than a pig. I don't even deserve to die!" he roared, pulling out an ordinary wooden box from his spatial ring.

Inside the wooden box was a transparent bottle. There was a drop of unremarkable black blood in it, without any sort of breath. Jiang Wuxin resembled a madman.

"You changed my destiny and gave me the opportunity to grow from a tiny speck of dust to everything I am today. But now I've lost everything! I was afraid and only dared absorb a tenth of you, because I know how terrifying you are. But now that I have nothing, why should I fear? Make me the kind of man that even I'm afraid of!"

Without another word, he opened the bottle and swallowed the black blood.

Chapter 706 - Master Of His Own Destiny

After drinking down the blood, Jiang Wuxin started foaming at the mouth, his body convulsing. Black miasma emanated from his abdomen, quickly spreading throughout his body and covering his entire skin. His flesh and blood began rotting. Amidst the rotten flesh, the blood in his body turned completely black.

Jiang Wuxin retched over and over again. He squeezed his throat, trying to vomit up the contents in his stomach, but it was too late. All that came out was black blood. His skin took on a black sheen as black blood vessels spread on the surface.

"Jiang Wuxin, Jiang Wuxin..." he whispered his name.

"Father, Mother, you said that life is a sea of hardships, but I didn't believe you. I thought I could change my fate and have a perfect life. But you were right after all. It seems I'm the one who's wrong. Only by being heartless and devoid of emotions can we escape from the sea of suffering. Only by indifference and being cold-blooded can we escape the pain."

He struggled weakly and gradually sank into the swamp, finally disappearing. Silence pervaded, as if no one had ever been here.

An hour later, a black young man crawled out from the swamp, his body dirty, full of mud, and his face barely visible. He was none other than Jiang Wuxin.

However, his temperament seemed to have drastically changed. His death tribulation energy had disappeared, replaced with life tribulation energy instead. He was full of vitality, which meant he had passed from the death phase to the life phase.

It was merely a change in appearance. The change in his temperament was caused by the black blood circulating in his body. Jiang Wuxin's flesh and blood possessed a tenacious vitality. He was both pale and black, and black blood vessels extended all over his body like a huge network.

Jiang Wuxin fell to his knees. Head lowered and his lips curled in a smile.

"So that's how it is! I should've absorbed this black blood a long time ago."

Clutching his forehead, he laughed like a madman.

"I'm so powerful! From now on, I have nothing to worry about. I am the master of my own destiny!"

As he spoke, he stretched out his hand and slowly untied the cloth from around his eyes. His eyelashes trembled lightly when the cloth fell away. Raising his head, he turned and faced the direction of the hell tree on this level of the Nether Battlefield.

He opened his eyes. His pupils shook violently, like black beads being shaken in a glass.

Finally, his pupils fell into position. Jiang Wuxin had two pupils in each eye, one on the left and the other on the right, with only a small part overlapping. It made him look extremely weird.

"My turn," Jiang Wuxin said.

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In the swamp layer, next to the hell tree.

"I'm taking a break to cultivate. Call me if something comes up," Tianming said to Xuanyuan Yucheng.

"Sure, you can go," Xuanyuan Yucheng replied.

Tianming returned with Ying Huo and Meow Meow. Jumping onto Xian Xian's Radix Word Tree, he sat on top of the petals of the Radiant Daffodil. The sensible Xian Xian turned the daffodil petals into the shape of a chair so he could sit comfortably.

"Half-daddy, I'll give you a massage." As soon as the words left Xian Xian's lips, the branches, leaves, and vines began beating his back and kneading his legs, thoughtfully serving Tianming.

"What are you doing?" Tianming asked.

"I'm so hungry after fighting. I want to eat meat." Its little spiritform appeared in front of him, clutching its belly and pitifully blinking its big eyes.

As soon as it spoke, tears pattered down.

"But the fight had nothing to do with you." Tianming was dumbfounded.

"During the last fight, I lost a lot of arms and legs. They were all chopped off. Oh, poor me...." Xian Xian shook its arms.

"Didn't you eat after the last fight?"

"I'm hungry again! Tianming, you meanie! Are you going to let me go hungry? You're so cruel!" It sat down and started rolling all over the ground.

"Stop, I'll let you eat," Tianming said with a headache.

"Awesome! Thank you, Half-daddy." Xian Xian immediately jumped up, beaming with joy.

What a drama queen! After it had successfully guilt-tripped Tianming, he cooked up a delicious barbecue and it began eating delightedly. Watching the entire process, Meow Meow was struck with inspiration—it dashed toward Tianming and began rolling around and crying.

"What are you doing?"

"I'm sleepy and I want to sleep," it said in a soft voice.

"Go away."

"Meow?"

A dejected Meow Meow attracted the roaring laughter of Ying Huo and Lan Huang.

"Stop making a fuss. Come, I'm ready to enter the death phase," said Tianming.

"Does that mean I can no longer sleep once you do?" Meow Meow said vigilantly. After all, the body aged a hundredfold, so one day of sleep would be equivalent to a hundred days of napping.

"Don't worry, you can sleep. You might as well prepare a coffin, you can sleep and fart all you want. In fact, you can sleep until you rise up to the heavens." Ying Huo snickered.

"Dammit! I refuse!" Meow Meow looked depressed.

"Your refusal is invalid."

"I'm going to cry!"

"Cry all you want. I'll get Lan Huang to accompany you," said Tianming.

"What? I can sing?" Hearing their conversation, Lan Huang immediately rushed over, its huge head slamming into Meow Meow's face. "Cat Bro, I'm going to start singing!"

"Don't.... Oh shit! These loonies!"

Except for Xian Xian's Radix World Tree, Tianming quickly tossed the beasts back into his lifebound space.

"Let's sing.... No, I mean let's enter the death phase!"

Meow Meow cried and howled in the lifebound space, rolling all over the ground. In the end, he was forced to enter symbiotic cultivation anyway.

"Farewell, my sleep. Starting today, I'm going to be a diligent cat," Meow Meow said helplessly.

"Stop being so dramatic. Even aging a thousand times faster wouldn't be able to stop you from sleeping." Tianming could see through him.

"How dare you underestimate me! I'll work so hard you'll be ashamed of yourself...."

The more it talked, the quieter it became. Clearly, even Meow Meow doubted itself.

Tianming led them in symbiotic cultivation, using the death tribulation energy from his deathsprings to engulf the text on his tribulation rings. The last time they had merely touched, yet the force of death was so terrifying.

"Stop hesitating. Just take the plunge!"

"Alright!"

Almost at once, the ten ancient characters were swept up by the majestic force of death and descended into the deathsprings. When the death tribulation energy came into contact with the Lifesbane, the ancient characters separated and quickly merged with the death tribulation energy.

At that moment, Tianming's death tribulation energy underwent earth-shattering changes. A terrifying force of death exploded from the Radix World Tree. This movement attracted the attention of many, who all stared blankly in his direction. Because they were close by, the sensation was exceptionally obvious.

"What is this? Has he entered the death phase?"

"Didn't he just reach life phase? Yet now he's about to enter death phase?"

"The key isn't his speed, but how frightening his force of death is! When we first entered death phase, it didn't feel like this," said Xuanyuan Yucheng.

"Yes, I wonder what he ate to grow so strong so fast. Whatever it is seems terrifying," said Beigong Qianyu.

Chapter 707 - Ancestor of the Hell Tree

Everyone could feel the entire area covered by the Radix World Tree radiating death tribulation force, as well as a feeling of aging. It was as if that power was draining their life force away.

"Aging and degeneration?" Xuanyuan Yucheng looked at his arm and saw the death tribulation force generated by Tianming wrapping around it.

"It's really the case! Damn, I feel my face getting old. Can you tell? Are there wrinkles? Black spots? Did my skin worsen? Is it still glossy?" Beigong Qianyu anxiously asked.

"No, you're still as beautiful as ever," Xuanyuan Yucheng said after looking for a good while.

"I used a tribulation spirit herb as a face mask lately. Did you notice that my skin got better than before?"

"Not really. Haven't you looked the same the entire time I've known you?"

Her efforts were completely wasted.

"Let's leave now. It's fine if my skin loses a little bit of bounce, but you women should stay away."

"At least you're considerate!" Beigong Qianyu immediately left. It wasn't that she was fearful for her skin, but Tianming was just too much like a vortex of death right now. The tree also wasn't helping.

"The death tribulation force is growing more and more fierce. Looks like he's really entering the death phase. Once he does, not even I will be his match," Xuanyuan Yucheng said. "I hope he'll lead our sect out of the shadows and be able to pay Her Eminence back."

Their sect was currently on the chopping board of the others. The butchers were watching them and could end their lives at any moment. Yet Tianming alone had managed to give them hope once more.

Soon, he successfully entered the death phase. A death samsara ring could be seen on all of his and his beasts' deathsprings, allowing the force of death to overpower life. It only took one glance to see that he was in his death phase. The newfound power would surely be very useful in combat, but he found something really odd about it.

"What's going on?"

After fusing Lifesbane into the death phase, he noticed a distinct change in his death tribulation force. Whenever the death tribulation force circulated in his body, it would wash some life force off him to fuel the power. As a result, him aging more than a hundred times than usual was only a conservative estimate, with the true figure being around two hundred times. Meow Meow was shivering from the sensation of its life draining away thanks to the Aeonian Grandbane's effects.

"I urgently need to take a nap to relieve my anxiety," it said with an awkward laugh.

"Be my guest. I hope you don't wake up and find yourself a rotting corpse," Tianming said.

"Waaah!" Meow Meow cried. It was truly tragic, but there was no arguing with the results of compounding his Lifesbane and Primordial Chaos Beast talent. However, he did notice something even more terrifying about his death tribulation force.

"Lifesteal?" When his death tribulation force touched Xuanyuan Yucheng, it drained away some of his life force. He could also convert it into life tribulation force to fill his lifesprings. "So my death tribulation force automatically drains my enemies' life force, which will fill my lifesprings and help the second samsaran ring to form for my lifesprings.... That way I can enter the second-level life phase sooner?"

That was merely a conjecture, but he was correct; it was all thanks to his Aeonian Grandbane. He wouldn't just be draining his lifespan in his death phase, but could also drain others' to eventually regain his vitality!

"So that is an inherent property of my death tribulation force. As long as I make use of it, I can steal life force! I can't avoid using it, either, unless I fight with only life tribulation force. But that isn't possible in the death phase."

For instance, if Ying Huo used only life tribulation force for its abilities, it would only have a third of its power. Though, he still had to test out the lifesteal ability to know how effective it would be.

"Since there aren't any wildbeasts here, I'll have to look for some enemies." He felt that the power the Aeonian Grandbane had given him was terrifying, but he couldn't resist its allure. "I'll plunder my way back to the life phase!"

Now he was a true terror, the likes of which had never before been seen. He didn't think that it would be a blessing in disguise. Now, even if he tried, he wouldn't be able to easily hide his deathly aura. The

moment he descended from the Radix World Tree, he was like a dead man. He noticed weird looks when he turned to the people around him.

"What's wrong?"

"You look a little terrifying," Beigong Qianyu said.

"The kind of terror that keeps you awake at night?" Tianming joked.

"No, terrifyingly handsome and dangerous. A tempting mixture, to say the least," she said, then turned to glance at Xuanyuan Yucheng.

"Hey, I don't want Brother Yucheng to beat me up over it," Tianming said.

"What does it have to do with me?" Xuanyuan Yucheng asked.

Tianming was flabbergasted. There was being dense, and there was being dense. It was painfully obvious to him that she was trying to get a rise out of Xuanyuan Yucheng.

"Hmph!" Beigong Qianyu snorted at Xuanyuan Yucheng before leaving.

"What'd I do to make her mad this time?" Xuanyuan Yucheng groaned.

"Some things have to be seen to be believed," Tianming lamented. Xuanyuan Yucheng was so dense a neutron star would even turn away in shame.

Either way, he was more confident he could protect Feiling and himself now. He was no longer an ant that could be crushed at the whims of others.

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It had been three days since then, and Tianming was hanging on one of the Radix World Tree's branches as he thought about how he would break out of his predicament. So far, Jiang Wuxin hadn't returned with reinforcements from the other sects yet. "Waiting here feels too passive. We're not too powerful, and we don't have any trump cards left to use. Jiang Wuxin will no doubt resort to shameless tricks for his revenge."

"There's nothing we can do. We have to protect the hell tree or we'll be wiped out," Ying Huo said, perched on his shoulder.

"If only there was a way we could find the hell tree in the frost layer of the Nether Battlefield, or figure out where Jiang Wuxin and Feng Xiaoli are. We'd be able to play a more active role."

"Are you worried that Jiang Wuxin will bring a whole force over while we're looking for their hell tree?"

"That's right." He thought the enemy would come fast, but nothing had happened for the past three days. "How troublesome!"

Xian Xian flew about their heads as they were busy figuring things out. Then, it turned to them and said in a haughty voice, "So you want to find a tree, right?"

"Yeah," Ying Huo said.

"I can find it. If the hell tree is the only tree on the whole frost layer of the Nether Battlefield, it'd be far too easy. I am the ancestor of all trees, after all," it proudly said.

Tianming and Ying Huo looked at each other. "Dammit!"

Tianming grabbed Xian Xian's spiritform and asked, "Are you serious? Can you really find the hell trees?"

"I can try. Trees are lifeforms too. If there's too many, they're harder to find, but if it's only one, that's much easier."

"Why didn't you say that earlier?" Ying Huo asked.

"You didn't ask! Half-daddy asked me to take root here and protect this tree. I'm just doing as I was told!"

"Then why didn't you help us find this hell tree when we first started?" Ying Huo asked.

"You didn't say it was the hell tree, you just said it was a random tree."

"What other tree could we be looking for?!"

"Chicken Bro, are you a chicken?" Xian Xian asked.

Ying Huo was absolutely stumped. "Of course not!"

"Then why does everyone call you Chicken Bro?"

"You and your smartass logic!"

"Enough of that. Xian Xian, come with me." Tianming decided he would take the risk of exposing the hell tree. The Radix World Tree revealed the hell tree as Tianming came to Xuanyuan Yucheng. "Brother Yucheng, I wish to seek out the Hexapath Sword Sect's hell tree to expose Jiang Wuxin's whereabouts."

"Alright. We shouldn't be waiting for them to come to us, either. I also wanted to do the same thing and was wondering who I should send to do it. If Jiang Wuxin and Feng Xiaoli aren't beside the tree, it's as good as undefended. You're the best candidate to send there."

"What about here?"

"No worries, we can defend this place for now. If too many of them come, you wouldn't be able to do much here anyway, and if they don't send too many, we'll be able to hold on. Even though I'm no match for Jiang Wuxin, it's not like I'm so weak I can't put up a fight against him at all."

Not to mention, Beigong Qianyu, Fang Yuewei, and Fang Chenjing were there, too. They hadn't lost too many fighters so far as they were on the ninth layer of the battlefield, far further from the core battle zones.

However, Tianming didn't reveal that Xian Xian could possibly locate the hell tree directly. Its abilities still had to be thoroughly tested out first. After all, not even it knew the full extent of its capabilities, having only been born recently. Either way, going to the frost layer was really easy. They just had to take the path leading to the layer above them.

"Alright, see you later," Tianming said.

"Best of luck!" the others replied.

Leaving the group to operate alone required lots of courage. Tianming rose into the skies and zipped away. Given his samsaran cultivation, achieving an altitude of two thousand meters was no longer an issue. There were countless pathways surrounded by cold ice a thousand meters above the swamp battlefield. The temperature of the air there was chilly, to say the least. Tianming followed one of the pathways and continued ascending.

After traveling a few hundred meters, he emerged at the frost layer and saw nothing but blizzards and snow. The cold winds cut like the sharpest of blades. Finding the hell tree on this layer would be really difficult, but the terrain was rather good for defense.

Chapter 708 - The Hexapath Sword Sect's Grief

"We're counting on you, Xian Xian. If you succeed, I'll award you with a delicious roast pig," Tianming said.

"Yay! I'll give it my all!" The moment the tree emerged from his lifebound space, it embedded its roots into the icy ground. Even though it wasn't as tough as its three brothers yet, it was still pretty hardy.

The sound of the roots crushing the ice beneath was rather audible. Xian Xian had touched a hell tree before, so it should be familiar with its life signature. Tianming believed it wouldn't be a stretch to call her the ancestor of all plants.

"Over here!" Xian Xian immediately withdrew its roots and used them to pull itself in the direction of the tree. "Wheeee! I'm skating!"

The last thing Tianming had imagined he would see was an ice skating plant. It used its roots as a sled and could move even faster than Tianming.

"Let me out! Boss! I want out!" Lan Huang was being driven mad by how fun it seemed. Ying Huo had to protect the other six eggs in fear that they would be crushed by the giant beast's tantrum.

The moment it was let out, it immediately slid along the ice and chased after Xian Xian, oblivious to the commotion it was causing. "Haha! This is so much fun!"

"Tortoise Bro, watch out for icebergs. Don't get your balls caught between them," Meow Meow said sleazily.

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An hour later, Xian Xian pointed at a crack in the ice ahead and turned eagerly to Tianming. "Half-daddy, my treat! Where's my treat?"

"The hell tree..." Tianming's gaze turned cold. He had finally found it after searching for an hour. Back on the swamp layer, it took them a good six hours to find theirs. He might've taken ten whole days here if he hadn't had any help.

So, he gave Xian Xian a huge treat as promised. Meanwhile, Lan Huang was panting with its tongues out. It had its fill of ice skating after doing it for a whole hour.

"It's time to get to work!" Tianming declared as he drew the beasts back into his lifebound space. Time was running out and he had to sneak his way to the tree.

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The Hexapath Sword Sect seniors watching in the Dimensional Battlefield fell silent once more. The atmosphere there was dead silent. Veins were popping up on their faces as they watched the white-haired youth appear near the hell tree through the Skyeeye Formation.

All of them held positions at least as high as Yi Xingyin's. As far as they were concerned, the thirteen disciples, who were at most as powerful as third-level death samsarans, weren't Tianming's match at all, much to their absolute frustration. They watched as the white-haired youth slaughtered their disciples one by one after the large tree sealed off the battlefield with its glowing white vines. Many disciples and their lifebound beasts were slaughtered without being able to escape at all. It didn't take longer than fifteen minutes for the massacre to conclude, leaving nothing but corpses next to the tree. Then the youth slashed at the barrier around the hell tree five times in quick succession, breaking it.

"The Hexapath Sword Sect's hell tree is gone," someone said, breaking the silence.

Like a flaming phoenix, the hell tree was reduced to ashes. The one who cut it down stood beside it and basked in its flames with a sinister smile that contained a hint of mockery. The forty-five disciples they had sent to Nether Battlefield were the strongest of the two hundred or so Hexapath disciples that had come, yet now only two of them remained. Jiang Wuxin was a top genius, but it no longer mattered as he was on a suicidal quest for revenge.

What the Hexapath Sword Sect had wanted to do to the Archaion Sect had been completely turned back on them. It was hard to understate how severe the price they had paid was. Even so, the elites watching from the Dimensional Battlefield were masters of their craft and wouldn't lose their cool just because of that, but their suffering was no less real. The Hexapath Swordfiend Feng Qingyu's especially, to say nothing of the other observers in the Hexapath Divine Realm who were watching from their respective Skyeeye Formations. Not too long ago, they had been chanting for the deaths of the Archaion Sect, only for them to suffer from what they had wished on their enemies. It was now their turn to cry.

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The audience section of the Archaion Sect was just as shocked. Only one person could find it in him to laugh: Xuanyuan Dao.

"Hahahaha! Hahahahaha!"

Soon, Ouyang Jianwang and a few others began joining in on his laughter.

"Does anyone still feel Li Tianming isn't capable?" Xuanyuan Dao asked.

Nobody answered. They knew that he had made the right bet. But now they had something even more pressing on their minds: whether the Hexapath Sword Sect would just lose it.

The Nether Battle was still ongoing and Tianming had made sure that he would be remembered across the entire Flameyellow Continent.

"How merciless!"

"How could the Archaion Sect possibly produce someone as cruel as that?"

"He didn't even so much as blink when he killed."

Though, Tianming hadn't relished in the killing; he was merely collecting the debt they had owed.

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Tianming looked at the corpses strewn all over the frost layer of the battlefield. They had all perished from his death tribulation force. He could clearly see the life draining into him from their bodies; they seemed a little aged after they were killed in battle, and that was all thanks to his Aeonian Grandbane. All of the absorbed energy was now in Tianming's lifespings.

"Even I wouldn't be able to resist this deathly energy."

It was almost like a curse. Now, his power had grown so much that he was probably the strongest first-level death samsaran to ever live. Having destroyed the hell tree, his mission was complete.

"Now, only two of the forty-five remain. It's your turn next, Jiang Wuxin!"

As expected, Jiang Wuxin's hell barrier should be giving off a light now. As long as he was on the same layer, Tianming would be able to find him. However, he didn't see anything on the layer, which meant the two remaining Hexapath Sword Sect disciples were somewhere else. He hurried back to the swamp layer, only to notice that they weren't there either.

"He must've gone for reinforcements then."

At least he could be sure those two weren't on the eighth or ninth layers of the battlefield, so Xuanyuan Yucheng and the others were safe.

Chapter 709 - Brother Xiaofan

"I'm now on the eighth layer, so as long as the two of them come down from the higher layers, I'll be able to detect them. So, the ninth layer will be safe for sure. Maybe I can even head up to find them! Xian Xian might be able to track down more hell trees for me to crush."

Tianming didn't forget how the other sects had worked together to kill more than forty and cripple a dozen more disciples of his sect during the Skyorigin Battle, and the Hexapath Sword Sect was only one of them.

"They shall pay for their deeds." Without hesitating, he went up to the volcanic layer. Erupting volcanoes were spewing out magma everywhere. There was not a safe space to stand upon, and the skies were completely dyed red.

"They aren't on this floor either."

Before Tianming went up another layer, Xian Xian said, "Half-daddy, this layer's hell tree is really near to us, only fifteen minutes away. Want to go check it out?"

As the hell tree was doubtlessly the only one on this flaming layer as well, Xian Xian could easily sense it; all kinds of plant life were almost like extensions of its own body, which Tianming found to be really useful. The position of the hell tree was crucial to each sect's success, so Xian Xian's ability was far too helpful to him.

"Since we cleared the eighth layer already, let's see who's on the seventh layer." It would be even better if he could crush those on the seventh layer so that they wouldn't be able to go to the ninth. "After destroying one hell tree, I have at least around fifty points now. I'll definitely qualify for the final battle. However, there's something even more important to tend to here."

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The hell tree was situated atop a volcano that spewed magma all around it. The tree was rooted on the body of the volcano, but the barrier formation managed to keep the magma out, though it seemed red-hot to the touch. There were a dozen disciples hiding beside the tree to guard it, ten of whom were women. They seemed to be from the Triflair Celestial Sect, based on their outfits.

The Triflair Divine Realm was a mystical place. Perhaps because their ascendant was the first goddess on the entire continent, the more powerful among them were women as well. Many other divine realms believed that the Triflair Divine Realm was a place where women flourished while men didn't. However, the fact that the divine realm had persisted until the present day was a clear sign they weren't to be easily trifled with. Coupled with the fact that it was a land of beauties, many people traveled there to form families and serve the Triflair Celestial Sect, making it about as powerful as the Quadform Sea Set and Octagram Heart Sect at the bottom of the ladder.

The Octagram Heart Sect used to be really powerful, and had once dominated the whole continent, but when the Nonahall Specter rose to prominence, they were almost eliminated. It took them a hundred thousand years to claw their way back to the bottom of the ranking.

The hell tree on this layer belonged to the Triflair Celestial Sect that had only sent thirty-two participants into the Nether Battle. Now, fifteen of them were guarding the tree while the others were elsewhere, fighting and gaining points. They weren't the stars of this show, so they maintained a low profile and didn't really aim to join the final phase of the summit. However, that wouldn't spare them from the storm that was to come.

Soon, a group of twenty-five crossed the burning lands and discovered the hell tree.

"It's the Triflair Celestial Sect's hell tree!"

"Quick, surround it! Check how many people are defending it!"

The group spread out into two scouting groups, which drew out the defending Triflair disciples.

"Brother Xiaofan, there's only fifteen of them. Beigong Mengmeng and Ximen Xuanzi both aren't your match! Coupled with their hell tree, there's forty-five points waiting to be taken!" someone reported.

"Beigong Mengmeng? She's here too, I see." The one who said that cracked a smile as he stood on a piece of burning rock, clad in azure armor with his long, ocean-blue hair fluttering in the wind. There were also two draconic horns on his forehead. "I've been trying to ask her out lately, but she hasn't been indulging me. How fortunate for me to meet her here."

"Brother Xiaofan, what do you have in mind? How dare that woman insult a member of the Quadform Seadragon Clan like that? Let's teach her a lesson and see if she dares to do something like that ever again."

"'Tis but a matter between man and woman, trivial and inconsequential. It's not like our clan doesn't have any beauties of our own, so we'll only be settling bigger matters today. Let's not be petty," Long Xiaofan, the blue-haired youth, said.

"What important matters are those?"

"My dad said that the Triflair Celestial Sect is on the fence and wishes to remain neutral. We have to force their hand to join our side! Otherwise the Archaion Sect will think they stand a chance, got it?"

"I see! So, we get them involved.... But how?"

"If they don't join us, they'll be our enemies. It just so happens that half of their disciples are here. So let's kill them and let their sect master understand that they stand to lose even more if they keep dallying."

"But if we do that, we might offend them and they won't join us all the same."

"Offend them? When our Quadform Seagod ascended, we almost wiped them out once. The grudge is already there. Not to mention, our divine realm is quite far from theirs. They'd have to cross a few others to reach where we are. Back then, my dad attended a meeting with those from Nonahall and the other sects. The other sects hinted that we should deal with them. As we're the weakest in the alliance, we have no choice but to lead the way."

"Alright. However, do we kill Beigong Mengmeng as well?"

"Of course. Beauties are only beautiful if they're alive. When they're dead and rotting, they're the same as the others. There's no point being sentimental about it." Long Xiaofan smirked. After the twenty-five of them scouted the situation out, they immediately encircled the defenders.

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Back at the Dimensional Battlefield, the Quadform and Triflair sects were seated right next to each other. They could clearly see one another and the tension between them was boiling to its peak.

"Sect Master, Dongfang Yu brought half the disciples away and they're at the fourth level of the Nether Battlefield. The disciples of the Quadform Sea Sect didn't even care about finding their hell tree and went looking for the Archaion Sect, but they ran into our disciples first. They have ten more people attacking than we have defending the tree..."

Only one of the three sect masters of Triflair was here to watch the summit. She was Beigong Linlan, Jian Wuyi's wife—also known as the Coral Fairy. The sect had three who bore the title of fairy, and she was naturally a beauty. Like Beigong Qianyu, she was beautiful and had a mature allure.

Beigong Linlan was furrowing her brows even without needing to hear that report. There were many crooks in the world, and the Quadform Seadragon Clan was among the most famous of them. There was no line they wouldn't cross, and thanks to that, they had earned the sobriquet of the Dogs of the Sea. Using all kinds of underhanded tactics, they were able to face off against many powers and survive to this day.

Beigong Linlan was all too aware of what they would be up to. As for the other two fairies, they didn't dare to come to the Archaion Sect, leaving her to face this huge pressure alone. Now, she was the one the five allied sects had to take down. Once the Triflair Celestial Sect caved to the pressure, the Pentaphase Earth Sect and Octagram Heart Sect would as well.

"This will be troublesome..." Beigong Linlan sighed. Their luck was just bad.

"Coral Fairy, make up your mind soon, or something like this will just keep on happening," someone said from her right. He was the sect master of the Quadform Sea Sect, Long Cangyuan. He was slender, handsome, and charismatic. The Quadform Divine Realm was ruled by an empire, and the sect master was the emperor. Their organization was basically an analogue of the Theocracy of the Ancients. "I already asked Xiaofan to play nice with the disciples of your sect, but young folk are often jumpy and reckless. I hope you'll forgive their childish mistake. Though, I should warn you that such things will become an inevitability so long as you keep wavering. Naturally, I hope you understand this isn't personal. This wasn't our intention, but that of Nonahall, Hexapath, Biritual, and Heptastar. Don't hate the player, hate the game."

The elites of the Quadform Sea Sect laughed after his 'sincere' declaration and Beigong Linlan's expression turned grim. The battle was already beginning and the Quadform disciples weren't holding back at all. With the strongest Triflair disciples elsewhere, nobody could stop Long Xiaofan, a fourth-level death samsaran.

Their fates were sealed.

"Sect Master..."

Beigong Linlan closed her eyes. Some things she just couldn't bear to witness, and this was definitely one of them. She felt endlessly perturbed. As it began devolving into chaos....

"Sect Master!" someone called out.

"What is it?" she asked.

"Someone's helping! It's Li Tianming from the Archaion Sect!"

Beigong Linlan turned to look and saw a white-haired youth beside the hell tree.

Chapter 710 - Quadform Seadragon King

Tianming no longer needed Xian Xian to guide his way, as the commotion of battle was hard to miss. "I wonder who's fighting?"

He rode Meow Meow across the flaming landscape, then crossed a mountain and immediately caught a glimpse of the battlefield before him. "The Quadform Sea Sect?"

His eyes immediately turned bloodshot. "You came at just the right time! Saved me the trouble of having to look. It's time to get them to pay for the seven lives they took in the Skyorigin Battlefield!"

The Archaion Sect and Quadform Sea Sect actually had a bit of a history. The Sterling House of Fang had actually come from the Quadform Sea Sect, and had left a long time ago, but they still maintained a good relationship with them and had helped them out over the past hundred thousand years. But before this recent chaos, the Archaion Sect had sent someone to the Quadform Sea Sect with gifts, and it was said that Long Cangyuan accepted the gifts but immediately chased them out. Then, he stood against the Archaion Sect by working with the Biritual Demon Sect and Hexapath Sword Sect during the Number One Summit. Even more cruel was how their disciples killed those of the Archaion Sect whenever they could, resulting in seven deaths, a number which Tianming clearly remembered.

"There are many that want to force Ling'er to her death, and the Quadform Sea Sect is the most dastardly of them all! They betrayed us and joined the other side."

Their clan had relied on methods like that to survive. It was almost shocking how that line of tradition had never been broken generation after generation.

"So, twenty-five, huh? Almost all of them are here. Perfect." They were no doubt looking for the Archaion Sect. They even left their base and their hell tree undefended. It just so happened that they had run into half the participants from Triflair here. Tianming was instantly able to tell that they weren't just going to break the hell tree's barrier formation, but they also wanted to kill all the Triflair disciples.

"Are they trying to force Triflair to join their camp?" It was a cruel, but effective method. "The situation still maintains a delicate balance, but if Triflair flips, Ling'er will be in even more danger."

With that in mind, he mentally sentenced every Quadform disciple to death.

"Die!"

He leaped out from the flank and circled in on the strongest of them all: the son of the Seadragon King, Long Xiaofan, also known as the little jade-faced blue dragon. Xiaofan was what he called himself, which meant 'mundane'. It was a superficial act of humility that fit the son of the ruler of a divine realm as well as a baby's diapers would an adult. It was said that his Quad Seadragon Bloodline was even more powerful than the Fangs' Rainbow Phoenix Bloodline.

Long Xiaofan was a quad beastmaster and the top disciple of Quadform. His Quad Seadragon Bloodline meant he had four lifebound beasts, all of which were currently by his side. Their lifebound beasts were actually rather similar to the Li Saint Clan's kumpengs. Each of their dragons had a base type of water along with an additional auxiliary type. Long Xiaofan's were fire-water, lightning-water, wind-water, and earth-water.

The two dragons on his left were known as a fiendwing blaze seadragon and greenthread bolt seadragon. The former had a pair of bat-like wings and intertwining scales of red and blue, representing fire and water. The latter's long body was covered in green lines, making it look like a lightning bolt.

As for the dragons on his right, there was a bladedge terra seadragon that had swords for horns and a huge, blue-brown body that looked like Lan Huang's. There was another one called a nineclaw gale seadragon that sported the highest number of claws and had the ability to fuse water and wind to create devastating waterspouts and rainstorms.

Unlike the dragons of the Xuanyuan house, these were masters of water and also larger, like Lan Huang, making them adept at aquatic combat. Long Xiaofan was unstoppable with his four dragons.

When Tianming arrived, the majority of Triflair disciples had their hell barrier formations activated. The Quadform disciples were planning on keeping them locked in their hell barrier formations before picking them out and killing them one by one; those locked in their barrier formations wouldn't be able to resist anyway.

Currently, only fourth-level life phase samsarans like Beigong Mengmeng and Ximen Xuanzi were still resisting to the best of their ability. Their lifebound beasts were storks and corals. The coral lifebound beasts were a little like Xian Xian, but they weren't really plant species beasts.

Tianming didn't pay too much heed to them as he charged toward Long Xiaofan while splitting his sword in two and unleashing all four of his lifebound beasts. Almost immediately, he became the center of attention.

"Li Tianming?" many cried in shock. They had heard that he had defeated Feng Daoyi as an empyrean saint, but what was he doing exposing himself like this during a huge battle?

"Long Yinfeng, take ten others to scout out the surroundings!" Long Xiaofan immediately ordered the instant he noticed Tianming. A black-clad disciple brought several others and split off. Long Xiaofan wasn't afraid of Tianming at all, but rather any potential allies Tianming had with him—especially Xuanyuan Yucheng. If there weren't many of them, they would fight. Otherwise, he would quickly retreat. He wasn't one who liked taking risks.

What he hadn't expected was for Tianming to suddenly unleash death tribulation force; he had underestimated him!

The Radix World Tree took root on the volcano and spread its roots out to protect the hell tree. Then Radiant Vines spread across the battlefield, turning it into Tianming's home turf. Even though Long Xiaofan's dragons were huge, Lan Huang could take on three alone on account of its huge size.

A chaotic battle ensued!

Xian Xian's Radiant Vines were covered with leaves of the Scarlet Lily, making them look like whips. Tianming had instructed it to learn the Eight Desolation Fienddragon Whip, and despite its lack of interest, it had managed to gain something from the technique. Now, each of the vine-whips could turn into fienddragons as they charged toward Long Xiaofan's dragons, either splitting their scales or causing them to doze off. Lan Huang used its Primordial Wheel and drew up some magma from the ground around it before ramming into the dragons, working in tandem with Xian Xian in a display of unbelievable power thanks to Lifesbane's death tribulation force, which heavily damaged the four dragons the moment it seeped into their bodies.