

The Ages 721

Chapter 721 - Fight to the Death

"Brother Zhao," Tianming said.

"Tell me why you came here," Zhao Tianxing said.

"Did you see me kill the Biritual disciples on this layer?"

"Yes. I also followed you when you went up to the darkness layer to kill Heptastar's disciples. I also got two of them while I was there."

"Most of your comrades died because of Heptastar, right?"

"You can say that. They weren't strong enough."

"The remaining disciples from those sects have gathered together. They also know the location of my sect's hell tree on the swamp layer. Once they go down, they'll start a slaughter. After they wipe us out, I figure it wouldn't be hard for them to use the remaining time to get rid of you, too."

"You're bluffing. We don't have a goddess, so they won't be that merciless. Isn't not fighting an option for us?!" Jiang Qingqing snapped.

"If it were, you wouldn't have suffered any casualties at all. Normally, wouldn't being eliminated be all that happens in the Nether Battlefield? There was never a need to go so far as killing opponents. Do you think they'll let the rest of you live after killing a dozen of you?" Tianming asked.

Jiang Qingqing grimaced. Her father had actually wanted to stop her from participating, but she insisted on it. Perhaps not even her seniors had expected that those five divine realms would go so far as to kill anyone not standing on their side. The Nether Battle couldn't be stopped midway. The three sects hadn't made their choice to side with the aggressive five before the Number One Summit, so the five were intentionally trying to kill some of their disciples and make examples out of them. That would force them to join their alliance.

"I understand that the presence of the goddess is causing lots of anxiety to manifest in the other divine realms. However, many others are also trying to benefit from it. Perhaps the delicate balance between the Nine Divine Realms will be no more and the Archaion Sect won't be the only one to be destroyed. I recall that the Pentaphase Earth Sect neighbors the Nonahall Ghost Sect, with you occupying a territory only a third the size of theirs, but your territory spans half their border. I doubt it's easy to defend such a huge border, eh?" Tianming said. He had learned the geopolitics of the Nine Divine Realms for Feiling's sake, and Xuanyuan Dao had told him some details as well.

There was no doubt that there were many who would try toppling the others during the chaos caused by the return of the goddess. The reason the Pentaphase Sect didn't dare to join an alliance with the other five divine realms was because they were wary of Nonahall backstabbing them during the chaos. They stood to lose everything. The moment the conflict was brought up, Zhao Tianxing turned silent.

"And Heptastar's realm neighbors yours to the east. Do you remember how easy it was for their disciples to kill your comrades?"

Zhao Tianxing had no words to argue against that.

"Everyone, before we came, our seniors didn't tell us about this because we were too weak. All we could do was wait by our hell tree and leave the rest to fate. Now I'm offering you the chance to fight for your own divine realm. Don't blame the goddess for your misfortunes. She's only an excuse others are using to start their own wars."

"You're mistaken, Tianming," Zhao Tianxing said.

"What am I wrong about?" He had thought about the matter quite a lot lately and asked Xuanyuan Dao for lots of clarification, so he knew the conflicts weren't so simple as to only center around Feiling. The Hexapath Sword Sect wanted revenge for their humiliation, and the reclamation of the Sword Insight Rock. The Biritual Demon Sect wanted Taiji Peak Lake. As for Nonahall and Heptastar, they wanted to split the rest of the territory up.

"You were wrong about our seniors."

"What did they tell you then?"

"They said that if there was hope, we should fight bravely to the end. If the enemy is too ruthless, it wouldn't hurt for us to get closer to your sect," he said with a smile.

Tianming's eyes brightened. "Based on those words alone, I'll gladly call you my brother in arms."

There was no better time to make an offer than when they were in desperate need of help. Tianming had been waiting for those exact words in his time of crisis.

"I could say that with confidence because you have proven yourself when you killed so many of their disciples," Zhao Tianxing said.

"Brother Tianxing..." Jiang Qingqing mumbled.

"Qingqing, you're still young, so you don't have a choice in this matter. But if you ever get the chance to choose, make a choice that you can live with!" he said as he gave her shoulder a pat.

"I... I..."

"Tianqiong was killed. I want to kill them to avenge my little brother." When he said that, he seemed determined to fight to his death.

"Okay!" Jiang Qingqing recalled the peaceful days when she had played around with the young boy that liked to tease her, then the moment of his death and despair as he struggled to tell her that he loved her. Her tears started flowing once more.

"Let's go," Zhao Tianxing said.

"Alright." Tianming met his gaze with confidence. Now they would fight to the death as sworn comrades!

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Tianming and the Pentaphase disciples went to the seventh layer of the battlefield. The Triflair disciples seemed to be in good shape, as they were quite far away from the top layers, not to mention that the Quadform disciples had been wiped out by Tianming. Beigong Mengmeng and Ximen Xuanzi were still there, along with a guy who just returned: Dongfang Zichong.

"Li Tianming? Oh, aren't those the Pentaphase disciples? Why are you traveling with them?" Beigong Mengmeng said, her eyes bright with joy from the reunion.

"There's something I want to discuss with you," Tianming said.

"Ah, you'd better talk to our leader, then. This is Dongfang Zichong," she said as she pulled the youth forward.

"Brother Tianming, I told him in full detail about how you saved us, as well as how you killed Long Xiaofan!" Ximen Xuanzi said.

Dongfang Zichong looked at Tianming, then at Zhao Tianxing, then said, "Gentlemen, do you expect my sect to give our lives for you?"

"No, far from it." Tianming calmly explained the situation to them. When they heard about how he had ruthlessly killed so many from the four sects, the Triflair disciples were stunned.

"Is... is that true?" Beigong Mengmeng asked.

"I can attest to that. He's telling the truth. Currently, the five sects are joining together. Soon, they'll descend to the swamp layer. If you're willing to join forces with us, we'll have around ninety people in total and will be able to stand a chance against them," Zhao Tianxing said.

"Of course we'll fight together! If they wipe you out, those heartless bastards will no doubt come for us next," Beigong Mengmeng said.

"Mengmeng, your uncle is a sect master of the Monorigin Sect. You're definitely biased in your decision," Dongfang Zichong said.

"This isn't about bias, it's about survival," Ximen Xuanzi said.

"Does that mean your mind is set?" he asked. "What else?"

"I believe negotiating with Nonahall is a possibility."

"You're free to think that, but I doubt your seniors will agree with you. You can negotiate all you want, but your words count for nothing. Their aim is to kill you to shock your seniors into joining their side. If they were planning to negotiate at all, they wouldn't have waited till the start of the Number One Summit. It's one thing if you have a death wish, but don't drag your fellow disciples down with you," Tianming said.

"Stop being naive. If that worked, I would've done so long ago myself. They don't treat us like humans at all. While their numbers are still low, they'll try to appease you. But once we're gone, there'll be nothing

you can do if they decide to turn against you. The Coral Fairy is the wife of the Monorigin Sect's Human Branch sect master. Do you think she'd leave the decision in your hands?" Zhao Tianxing said.

Dongfang Zichong lowered his head and said, "I'll discuss it with my comrades then."

After some argument, they decided to stand with Tianming for strength in numbers. The ones who had been in the battle with the Quadform disciples were fervently in favor of the decision.

"I'll respect the will of the majority," Dongfang Zichong said as he turned to Tianming. "The issue still remains. Even if we can match up to them in terms of numbers, we don't have a single one of us who's fifth-level life phase or above. How will we be able to take care of Chu Xiaoqi and the three minor ghouls of Nonahall?"

"If I had a way, would I have come asking for your help?" Tianming said.

"Stop wasting time! If we go down right away, we'll still have time to prepare! Otherwise we'll be gone for good!" Beigong Mengmeng snapped.

"Fine, let's go," Dongfang Zichong decided.

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Tianming had been away from the ninth layer for quite some time, during which the swamp layer was rather quiet. Nobody had come down at all.

"I wonder if Tianming found Jiang Wuxin," Beigong Qianyu said with a look of concern.

"It's taking a little long, and there's still no word from him," Xuanyuan Yucheng said.

"Why don't I go up to check on him?"

After giving it some thought, Xuanyuan Yucheng shook his head. "Trust in him." The forty of them had been waiting right next to the hell tree, with Fang Yuewei and Fang Chenjing not far away.

"It feels a little like we're waiting for our demise. It's the first time that ten days has felt like years," Fang Yuewei said.

"That's right. If only they would end us swiftly and painlessly. Jiang Wuxin must've found enough helpers already, and they'll be descending soon. Try to guess how many people will be here to take our lives?" Fang Chenjing said with a resigned smile.

Fang Yuewei shook her head.

"Why don't we leave first? Even if our hell tree is destroyed, we might be able to make it through if we hide far enough away," he said.

"Enough," she said, shaking her head.

"Why aren't you listening to me anymore?"

"Li Tianming is back," she said.

"So what if he is?" He turned to look, only to be shocked at the sight of the Triflair and Pentaphase disciples. They added up to around fifty people. Now, they had a total of ninety on their side.

"Tianming!"

Xuanyuan Yucheng and the rest quickly welcomed them back.

Chapter 722 - The Only Opportunity

The number of people Tianming had brought surpassed the number of Archaion Sect disciples. The large group exchanged greetings.

"Big Sister! Beigong Mengmeng ran and hugged Beigong Qianyu. Although they were from different sects, they were cousins with the same surname; Beigong Mengmeng had spent most of her years in the Triflair Celestial Sect.

"Mengmeng, why are you with Tianming? Where's your hell tree? Why aren't you guarding it?" Beigong Qianyu asked.

The Archaion Sect disciples had some misgivings. Beigong Mengmeng quickly recounted what had happened in the upper layers of the Nether Battlefield. The details she added made it seem as if she had personally witnessed Tianming slaughtering the Biritual and Heptastar disciples.

"Big Sister, it's all thanks to your goddess' disciple. He's great. If it weren't for him, we would've been killed by Long Xiaofan. That guy's determined. Now that Quadform has submitted to Nonahall, they're using their connections to intimidate us. Their deaths were well-deserved!" Beigong Mengmeng droned on and on.

After she was done speaking, Xuanyuan Yucheng and the others looked confused.

"Are there only thirty or so left of the four sects' disciples? So most of the Hexapath Sword Sect and Quadform Oceanic Sect are dead?" Fang Yuewei sounded dazed.

They had to believe it. If it weren't true, the disciples of the Triflair Celestial Sect and Pentaphase Earth Sect wouldn't have been convinced by Tianming.

Fang Yuewei turned around, only to catch Fang Chenjing biting his lip. In truth, he felt ashamed. The Archaion Sect disciples, whose original options were reduced to one: waiting around for death, were suddenly filled with excitement. They stared at Tianming with fiery gazes.

"As expected of the goddess' disciple!"

"Li Tianming, I've never admired anyone, but I do admire you!"

"You've made a great contribution by slaughtering the Hexapath Sword Sect, and now you've inflicted heavy losses on three other sects."

At the moment, all they felt was amazement. However, Tianming didn't need marvel; what he wanted was to prepare for battle. He had worked so hard to create an opportunity just so they had the right to confront the five divine realms.

"Please quiet down. Li Tianming created a chance for us to live, but we're short on time. Our opponents from the five divine realms will soon be down. Before this, all we could do was wait for death, but now we have a chance to fight. This is our only opportunity." Xuanyuan Yucheng shouted, his eyes red.

"That's right!

Their hearts burned with passion.

"Let's fight to the death!"

"We now have our friends from Triflair and Pentaphase. Our enemies only have about a hundred or so on their side."

"If they want to kill us, we have to return the favor. We must take out as many as we can."

Tianming had reversed the situation. The disciples got together and discussed their battle preparations.

"By the way, where's Octagram?" Xuanyuan Yucheng.

"They're in the first layer, the metalstar layer. Prior to this, the Nonahall Ghost Sect disciples were looking for their hell tree. I don't think their hell tree has been exposed, but I heard that many of their disciples have been killed. Time is running out, so I didn't go up to look for them," said Tianming.

They exchanged a meaningful look. Dongfang Zichong, Zhao Tianxing, and the others seemed to have a certain idea.

"The swamp layer is very suitable for the Nonahall Ghost Sect disciples. If we were to fight here and guard the hell tree, it'd be easy for our enemies to attack and difficult for us to defend ourselves. Additionally, they have many talented disciples. We're likely to suffer heavy casualties," said Xuanyuan Yucheng.

"That's right. Since we have the numbers and have decided to fight an uphill battle, it doesn't matter whether or not your hell barrier formation is exposed. We should abandon the place and find a suitable battlefield," said Zhao Tianxing.

"In that case, let's get the Octagram Heart Sect to join us. Tianming is able to quickly find their hell tree, isn't he?" Dongfang Zichong looked at him.

"So they come down here to find us, but we head up the other way. And all of us venture into the metalstar layer to meet the Octagram disciples?" Tianming asked.

"That's right. At present, our hell tree hasn't been destroyed yet. We might come across our opponent in the middle of our journey, but we can see them and they can't see us. We can use this period of time to look for our friends from Octagram and prepare for battle at the same time. We don't have much time, so we have to act now," said Xuanyuan Yucheng.

With the expansion of their team came ideas. They certainly knew more about the other sects than Tianming did. They were right; giving up the Archaion Sect's hell tree wasn't an issue.

"Alright then!"

"Let's set out now."

More than ninety people left the hell tree and headed up.

"Attention everyone. Don't make a sound. If our opponents realize our plan, it'll be hard for us to defeat them in an unfortunate encounter. This isn't a fight between disciples, it's a battle of life and death. One wrong step will lead to death!" Xuanyuan Yucheng said solemnly.

"Yes!"

As Tianming followed the crowd, he glanced back at the hell tree below.

"They don't know that we've left. But when they get here, they'll destroy the hell tree and our hell barrier formations will glow. The decisive battle will commence the moment they find us."

In truth, if it weren't for him, this group of people wouldn't have the qualifications to fight a decisive battle with the disciples of the five divine realms. Out of the Nine Divine Realms, if the forces of the Nonahall Ghost Sect were considered the first echelon, then the second echelon consisted of three sects—Monorigin, Biritual, and Hexapath. The rest were basically part of the third echelon.

Among those in the third echelon, Heptastar was the strongest. The Triflair, Quadform, Pentaphase and Octagram Sects were rather weak. Pentaphase, in particular, was shaped like a long strip that lay right in the middle of Nonahall territory. The Octagram Heart Sect also shared borders with Nonahall.

"The Octagram Heart Sect is located on the Octagram Mountain, which is rich in spiritual energy. Apparently, Nonahall has coveted the mountain for quite some time. Like Pentaphase, they're attractive and easy marks in the eyes of the Nonahall Ghost Sect," Xuanyuan Yucheng whispered to Tianming.

"Do you mean they're all trustworthy?" asked Tianming.

"That's right. The house king would also like to see what the real situation is like. Right now, it seems his conjectures were correct. Although these three sects haven't expressed their full support of us, at least there's still room for negotiation. This time, the other five divine realms have ruthlessly oppressed them. If we can unite them in the Nether Battlefield and win, even if our casualties are heavy, and as long as the friendship exists, as long as our enemies pay the price, this can be an opening for our elders to get in touch with each other," said Xuanyuan Yucheng.

"I understand."

"You've done great. Tianming, I truly admire you. You mustn't die. If this battle requires a sacrifice, then let me be the one. I'll do anything if it means the sect survives," said Xuanyuan Yucheng.

"Stop talking nonsense. You won't die." Tianming chided.

He had always been under the impression that the chaos between the Nine Divine Realms was caused by Feiling. But looking at it now, it seemed the situation wasn't that simple.

"The great forces of the world, long divided, must unite; long united, must divide. Now that we've been divided for a hundred thousand years, many can no longer bear it, especially the powerful Nonahall Ghost Sect. Throughout the recent years, they've been annexing the bordering divine realms. Even if Her Eminence didn't exist, sooner or later, chaos would ensue," said Xuanyuan Yucheng.

They chatted as they quickly traveled upward. Just as they entered the fourth layer, Tianming and the others noticed hell barrier formations glowing in the distance.

About thirty people were heading down.

The Nonahall Ghost Sect's hell tree was still standing. Near the thirty glowing barrier formations were about eighty more disciples. They were fast and continuously looked for the passage leading down.

"Don't move."

On Tianming's side, everyone held their breath.

An abrupt meeting like this had their hearts beating in their throats. Once the disciples of the five divine realms left, they were on the move again.

"Hurry up. Once they reach the swamp layer and destroy our hell tree, they'll head up and start searching."

The near-miss of the two teams was watched through the Flameyellow continent's Skyeeye Formation. None of them had ever imagined that the chaotic Nether Battle would develop into a decisive battle between two groups.

This was a microcosm of the current situation in the Flameyellow continent, and it was thought-provoking indeed. Thus, the upcoming battle would certainly affect the hearts of the Nine Divine Realms.

In front of the Skyeeye Formation, countless people awaited with bated breath.

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In order to save time, Tianming didn't bother venturing into the second layer to destroy the Nonahall Ghost Sect's hell tree. After all, it would be meaningless.

The metalstar layer was completely enveloped in a golden luster. There were gold mountains, and rivers made of molten gold. Except for the hell tree, everything here was gold. The glare from the gold blocked his vision. Some of the mountains were extremely sharp and shaped like sharp cones. If a large beast fell on them, it would be covered in bloody wounds.

"Just shout!"

In order to locate the Octagram Heart Sect disciples as soon as possible, they shouted for them at the top of their lungs. Once again, Tianming used Xian Xian to look for them. Obviously, the Octagram disciples had concealed themselves well. They wouldn't appear that easily in order to avoid traps.

Half an hour later, Xian Xian finally located the hell tree. In front of them was a mountain range, and the hell tree was located within one of the huge, gold mountains. There were two entrances into the heart of the mountains; however, they were rather small, so some of the larger lifebound beasts might need to squeeze in.

But upon entering the cave, they realized it was enormous inside. The hell tree was located in the depths of this hollow mountain.

"Friends from the Octagram Heart Sect, I am Xuanyuan Yucheng. Dongfang Zichong and Zhao Tianxing are both here as well. Our three sects have already united. In order to survive, we've come to hold a meeting with you," said Xuanyuan Yucheng.

Dongfang Zichong and Zhao Tianxing both spoke up after him.

"Please come down," a cold voice sounded.

They all descended together.

There was a tree deep in the heart of the mountain, which was very well-concealed indeed. About twenty Octagram Heart Sect disciples surrounded it, gathered in groups of two or three, their faces solemn and their eyes grim.

Chapter 723 - Gray, White, Black

"Why are you together?"

The one who spoke was a woman in white. She was beautiful, with a tinge of sadness visible under her cold expression.

"Lin Xixi, the Pentaphase Earth Sect has also lost more than a dozen of our brothers and sisters. We want revenge," said Zhao Tianxing.

Of the thirty-five Octagram disciples who had entered the Nether Battlefield, only twenty-two remained. The rest had most likely died in battle.

"In order to lure away those Nonahall Ghost Sect beasts, they went out one by one, but none of them came back." Lin Xixi looked dim.

Glancing at Zhao Tianxing, she said, "So you want revenge? Our people aren't enough to deal with just the Nonahall Ghost Sect alone, let alone five divine realms combined. They said that after they dealt with the Monorigin Divine Sect, they'd use the rest of the time to sweep the other layers. None of us will live."

"The situation has changed." Xuanyuan Yucheng explained briefly, then asked, "Rather than sitting here and waiting for death, it's better to fight."

Lin Xixi looked at Tianming, a little startled. After a while, she looked up, her eyes colliding with the fiery gazes of the Octagram disciples.

Laughing coldly, she said, "What gives them the right to be so cruel? Aren't they afraid of forcing our sect to stand with the Monorigin Divine Sect?"

"They aren't afraid. First of all, even if we die, we're nothing compared to the entire sect. Secondly, our divine realm is declining. They're strong and powerful, and are trying to force us to submit. The sect can't protect us. In the Nether Battlefield, whether we live or die depends entirely on ourselves," said Zhao Tianxing.

"Fine then! Since the goddess' disciple has killed so many of them, then so be it. Since our meeting is fated, we'll join hands, no matter how the divine realm behind us decides. We'll put everything else aside, just for revenge, just to survive! Even if our divine realms meet on the battlefield in the future, we'll fight alongside you to the death in the Nether Battlefield."

Lin Xixi stretched out her hand. Her red eyes were hazy with tears. Too many of them had died. Who said the vulnerable deserved to be trampled by others?!

"You're right! What gives them the right to be arrogant? Aren't we human beings?" Zhao Tianxing grasped Lin Xixi's hand in his.

They were indignant over the loss of so many brothers and friends.

"Since it's all fated, then count us in. No matter what the elders decide or what the future situation is like, I, Dongfang Zichong, am your friend, in life and death." Impassioned, he stretched out his hand, finally revealing his true temperament.

Only the Archaion Sect was left. Of course, Xuanyuan Yucheng's decision went without saying.

Standing next to them, he said, "Thank you all. My life has always been ordinary, without any brilliance or glory. To be able to stand with all of you today, I'll have no regrets even if I die."

Right now, their numbers could almost match the other five divine realms. However, the situation wasn't optimistic because their enemies were rather strong. The Yinyang and Heptastar disciples who had managed to survive were all fighters.

Just as Xuanyuan Yucheng was shaking hands with the others, the hell barrier formations on the more than forty Archaion Sect disciples suddenly glowed, including Tianming.

"They've destroyed the hell tree."

"They'll come for us next."

They all looked at each other with fiery eyes.

"We must quickly find a battlefield that suits us. Most of our opponents are disciples of the Nonahall Ghost Sect, so the swamp and blood pool layers aren't appropriate," said Xuanyuan Yucheng.

"There's no need to look. We'll fight here," said Lin Xixi.

Everyone looked up.

"You're right! This mountain is a natural defense. There's only two entrances, and the walls are strong enough to remain standing for a while. As long as we defend the entrances, we can take on fewer opponents at a time. They can only enter one after another!" Realization dawned upon Xuanyuan Yucheng.

"Yes!"

"The metalstar layer is made entirely of metal. The Nonahall Ghost Sect disciples would have no advantage here."

"They should be on their way up, so we don't have time to pick another battleground. We'll fight here."

Having made their decision, they separated and headed to the two entrances.

"One entrance is bigger than the other. The Archaion Sect disciples will guard the smaller entrance. The rest of you add up to more than seventy. You can defend the bigger entrance. Watch the situation and protect each other when the time comes," said Xuanyuan Yucheng.

The Archaion Sect currently had the most disciples, so their overall strength was greater. They had to shoulder heavier responsibilities.

"Alright."

"Get into position. I'll look for them," said Tianming.

"Be careful."

"I will."

His gaze met Xuanyuan Yucheng's. This was the calm before the storm, and they were all breathing heavily. But they knew this would be a desperate battle. At the very least, they possessed an unparalleled will to fight. Many had even disregarded death.

Leaving the mountain, Tianming dashed across the layer like the wind.

"Will they live?" Ying Huo asked solemnly.

"I don't know." Tianming shook his head.

Their numbers were equal, but even having the terrain advantage didn't necessarily mean they were all competent.

"Then what do you think?" asked Ying Huo.

Tianming had always been able to strategize. But this time, he chose to remain silent on the matter.

"Everything I can do has already been done. Next up, I'll kill as many of them as I can!" said Tianming.

He had personally contributed to the union of these four sects, but the disparity in strength between them was irreparable. He was currently glowing and had nowhere to hide.

Mounting Meow Meow, they headed all the way down.

"What are you doing?"

"I'm giving them more time to prepare!"

Soon, Tianming came across their enemies on the fourth layer. They had found no one despite combing through the layers below.

"It's the goddess' disciple, Li Tianming!"

Upon noticing him, they shouted and raged. Many of the glowing spots were about to chase after Tianming.

"Stop!" someone ordered.

Having suffered at Tianming's hands, these disciples composed themselves.

"Leave him alone. Look for the other disciples of the Archaiion Sect first!"

"Yes!"

Ignoring Tianming, they went on their way. If that was the case, Tianming wouldn't be able to buy some time for the others.

"It's not that easy to ignore me."

Since they wouldn't make a move, Tianming would. He quickly approached the large group.

About a kilometer away, countless death stares shot toward Tianming as he struck out at them with Archfiend.

Eight Desolation Fienddragon Whip—Centurius Dragonslay! The long whip turned into a hundred dragons, aimed directly at his opponents. In the darkness, Archfiend remained well-hidden. Once unleashed, it resembled a hundred dragons ambushing the enemy.

The screams of several people suddenly filled the air. Tianming's whip had left bloody streaks across their bodies.

"You're courting death!"

The crowd was furious.

"Don't just stand there barking. Chase me if you dare, but don't bark if you're all useless bastards," Tianming's cold voice sounded, provoking them into rage.

However, they continued heading up. Tianming's whip flew out, instantly soaring over a kilometer. Eight Desolation Fienddragon Whip—Eight Desolate Demon Dragon Whip! Eight fienddragons darted from eight different directions. Hell was coming, and they were completely surrounded.

Three strikes in a row! The first strike hit one of the disciples, exposing his hell barrier formation. The second strike shattered said hell barrier formation. During the third strike, the whip wrapped itself around the disciple's neck. With a sudden pull, the man was dragged over. His neck broke at once and his head flew out. The corpse hit the ground, still warm.

"He's dead. Are you still going to run? What's so great about Nonahall, Hexapath, and Biritual? Sooner or later, you'll all be killed, just like those from Quadform. You're cowards, every last one of you!"

Tianming laughed mercilessly. All hundred of them were boiling with anger.

"Kill him first!"

"Why are we hesitating?"

"This bastard's out of control!"

Most of them were Nonahall disciples. The disciple Tianming had killed was also one of them. Therefore, the ones in charge were the minor ghouls of the Nonahall Ghost Sect.

Enveloped in a ghostly mist, the three wore robes of different colors that shrouded their entire being. The robes were gray, white, and black. The white- and black-robed ones wore tall hats, giving them an extremely eerie and terrifying feel, like grim reapers who extracted souls.

The white-robed one was wrapped in chains, while the man in black robes carried a club, bursting with killing intent. The one in gray robes, who stood in the middle, was extremely thin and petite. The robe hung so loosely over his body it seemed as if he wasn't made of much flesh and blood.

In front of them, not even Jiang Wuxin or Chu Xiaoqi could say much, not to mention Changsun Xingyue. At that exact moment, the gazes of all the Nonahall disciples fell upon the three of them.

"Yama, let me teach him a lesson." From the minor ghouls' voice, it was evident she was a girl. She had a white chain that resembled the spine of some sort of creature wrapped around her body.

"Jiang Wuxin, you go." The gray-robed minor ghouls turned to Jiang Wuxin.

"Yes." Jiang Wuxin nodded. Without another word, he went after Tianming.

"The rest of you follow me to the metalstar layer. I'm guessing that's where they're hiding." Yama raised his head, his gray eyes spinning like whirlpools of death. Narrowing his eyes, he added, "It seems they've gathered together. Perfect, we'll kill them all in one go."

"Yes!"

The team of more than a hundred people suddenly accelerated.

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Seeing that Jiang Wuxin was hot on his tail, Tianming gave up on provoking them.

"Jiang Wuxin is already at the fifth-level life phase and the Wuxin Art is very difficult to deal with. I don't have to fight him here." If he returned and used the terrain to his advantage, he might have a chance.

Meow Meow immediately turned and ran, but Jiang Wuxin still chased after them.

"Li Tianming, they promised me," his cold voice sounded from behind.

"Promised you what?"

"Your life is mine to take."

Chapter 724 - Only One Side Will Live

Jiang Wuxin's Kiloflash Sword Body glimmered like a blade as he shot out like a sword. He remained close behind Tianming, his eyes surging with killing intent and hatred. At this moment, he had become a desperate villain.

"Don't bother escaping. I'm destined to kill you."

His cold voice pierced Tianming's eardrums like the edge of a sword, deeply disconcerting.

Meow Meow turned its head around and attacked with Misty Hellthunder. Vortex-like lightning smashed down, blocking Jiang Wuxin's path. Meow Meow galloped into the sky and ascended through the hell passage, successfully throwing off more than a hundred opponents and heading straight to the metalstar layer.

Only Jiang Wuxin remained hot on his tail. It seemed that he wouldn't stop until he killed Tianming. That was how deep his hatred was.

In the blink of an eye, Tianming had returned to the metalstar layer and arrived at the hell tree.

"They're coming."

There were two entrances into the heart of the mountain. By the time Tianming returned, the disciples were already on guard.

"Get ready!"

Xuanyuan Yucheng and Zhao Tianxing shouldered the responsibility of commanders and took their positions by the entrances. All of their lifebound beasts were released to block the entrance. Except for Tianming, anyone else trying to enter would be attacked.

During the period when Tianming was away, they had decided on certain arrangements based on the type of lifebound beasts and the combat characteristics of the beastmasters. The tactics they had practiced before the Nether Battle were finally coming in handy.

There were more than seventy people at the other entrance, so Tianming remained with Xuanyuan Yucheng and the others. As soon as Tianming entered the cave, Jiang Wuxin appeared before them.

He stood on a golden mountain, his cold eyes narrowed as he stared at the Archaion Sect disciples within the heart of the mountain. Perhaps, in the eyes of a fierce beast, a lamb's stubborn resistance was a meaningless and pathetic struggle. Jiang Wuxin showed that exact expression.

Soon, more than thirty disciples whose hell barrier formations were glowing arrived at the metalstar layer. With the addition of the Nonahall disciples, more than a hundred people instantly locked on to their position and swarmed in.

Chaos ensued.

"Kill them!!" the disciples of the five divine realms yelled, charging out in anger and crossing a kilometer with each step. Their lifebound beasts appeared one after the other, most of them ghost beasts of the Nonahall Ghost Sect.

"They're hiding here? They're making it easy for us!"

"The tortoises are hiding in the heart of the mountain. None of them can escape."

"They're so stupid!"

The fact that the four divine sects had chosen a defensive terrain seemed so ridiculous to the attackers. Whether it was a defensive advantage or an easy target depended entirely on their ability to fight. If

they couldn't hold on and allowed their enemies to seal the entrances, it would be the perfect situation for their enemies to kill them in one fell swoop, saving a lot of effort. Thus, both sides appreciated the location.

"Everyone, we've been putting up with them for so many days. Let's kill them!" the black-robed minor ghoulish king shouted.

Under his stern command, the beastmasters and the lifebound beasts alike roared, feverishly charging forth. As powerhouses, they possessed a great psychological advantage. When their ferociousness was unleashed, they pounced on their enemies like hungry wolves.

"There's two entrances. Should we focus on one or...."

"There's people defending on both sides, so let's concentrate on the entrance with fewer people."

"It doesn't matter, they'll be defending anyway. It's better to have people on both sides, to prevent them from fleeing via the other entrance."

The team quickly split up. Not only were they planning on breaking the defense, but they would also trap their opponents in the heart of the mountain and kill them all.

"Hei An, I'll leave that side to you!"

"Alright!"

A third of the Nonahall disciples, as well as the remaining disciples of Biritual and Heptastar all flocked to the entrance where the Archaion Sect was defending. The rest marched to the entrance protected by the disciples of Octagram, Pentaphase and Triflair.

Jiang Wuxin, Chu Xiaoqi, Changsun Xingyue, and the minor ghoulish king named Hei An gathered on the Archaion Sect's side. Many of them were eyeing Tianming.

"This entrance is rather small."

"It's fine. As long as we charge in, they won't be able to stop us."

"They've been hiding for so long. Are they all scared witless?"

"They might have the numbers, but their overall strength certainly can't compare to ours!"

While others were still hesitating, a black-clad man riding a sunscourge fiendwolf blasted into the entrance. Launching a black flame that turned into a blazing torrent, the giant wolf rammed into the entrance.

"Fight!!"

Xuanyuan Yucheng and the others knew very well that this cave was their natural advantage.

The walls of the mountains in the metalstar layer were very thick; there was no way they would be broken in such a short period of time. With the size of the attacking lifebound beasts, their opponents had no way of entering the cave at the same time. Although Jiang Wuxin's sunscourge fiendwolf had terrifying abilities, there were more than forty disciples here, including Xuanyuan Yucheng, joining hands

to resist them. Their lifebound beasts attacked at once, the combination of abilities all blasting through the entrance at the same time nearly tearing the wolf apart.

"Attack together!" Jiang Wuxin shouted, his eyes blood-red.

Needless to say, at least forty people squeezed into the entrance simultaneously. Because their lifebound beasts were too big, they had to place them back in their lifebound spaces first, then release them after passing through the entrance. However, this meant that these disciples were faced with the attack of more than forty beastmasters and seventy or eighty lifebound beasts.

The narrow entrance seemed useless, but was in fact the key to their survival. Once the entrance of the cave fell, they were finished.

"Everyone, you must keep fighting if you don't want to die!"

They were all filled with vigor, their blood boiling.

The Biritual, Heptastar, and Nonahall disciples surged with killing intent upon noticing Tianming. Both Chu Xiaoqi and Jiang Wuxin exploded in rage and stormed toward him.

As soon as they arrived at the entrance of the cave, the Archaion Sect disciples and their lifebound beasts attacked with their abilities and battle arts. This was the time to set their opponents quaking; they wouldn't go easy.

They would fight until their enemies were dead. Only one side would survive. In this case, the merciless ones were most likely to live.

"This is life and death!"

It was a fact they all knew. Thus, they gave it their all.

As the top disciples of the Archaion Sect, none of them were cowards frightened by their opponents. The situation was clear to them. It was exactly this threat of death that unleashed their endless fighting spirit.

"Brothers and sisters! Let them know that this is our territory!"

"They want to slaughter us here? We'll kill them and leave nothing behind!"

"We'll hack them to death!"

Everyone wanted to live. As long as there was a desire to survive, they would have the strength of a madman. It was the same for both beastmaster and lifebound beast.

The fierce battle at the two entrances instantly entered a white-hot stage. Tianming swept across the battlefield, slaughtering the enemy with Archfiend, a weapon that possessed a terrifying lethality.

As soon as certain disciples of the five divine realms entered the cave, Tianming immediately struck them with the Eight Desolation Fienddragon Whip. The frightening death tribulation energy and tribulation sword ki lashed across their bodies, splattering their flesh and blood.

Soulshaker Eye! Whenever someone approached, Tianming would use the eye on them. The destructive power of this move was immense. As long as his opponents were frightened, it would be easy for Tianming to attack them and expose their hell barrier formation, even if they only hesitated for an instant.

Ying Huo, Meow Meow, Lan Huang, and Xian Xian fought beside Tianming. Having recuperated for a period of time, Xian Xian was now at its strongest. Once its Bloodrain Sword struck, it would suck its target's blood.

Everyone present were samsaran geniuses, qualified to stand at the peak in the future. This life and death battle was a tragedy indeed. When the battle began, the disciples of the five divine realms had finally understood how naive their idea of trapping and killing them was. Before entering the cave, they had to withstand the attacks from their targets. Not even Jiang Wuxin and Chu Xiaoqi could enter, despite trying several times.

Without an opening, they were forced to be continuously drained. Some had even lost their lives. Once their hell barrier formations were exposed, the Archaion Sect disciples ignored them. As long as they had no external assistance, their opponent would have lost a portion of their combat strength within a short period of time. All they had to do was hold on. They could take their time killing their enemies later.

"Let's attack together!" Jiang Wuxin, Chu Xiaoqi, and Hei An were all super geniuses at the fifth-life phase, and were among the top five talents in the entire continent.

Together, they formed a sharp blade that locked on to Tianming.

"Kill him!"

They came to lead the attack. Although they were powerful, the three of them got stuck at the entrance of the cave and were forced to put away their lifebound beasts. For a period of time, they withstood the joint attacks of the Archaion Sect disciples.

Tianming lashed at the sunscourge fiendwolf's front leg with the Eight Desolation Fienddragon Whip, leaving a bloody gash. Meow Meow's Chaos Disaster rained down on the wolf several times in a row.

"Die!!"

Jiang Wuxin zeroed in on Tianming's position. His sunscourge fiendwolf tore its way out of the encirclement, gunning for Tianming.

Having been injured, the wolf was covered in blood with deep wounds that exposed the bone. However, the injuries only served to fuel the wolf and Jiang Wuxin's ferociousness.

"Li Tianming, where the hell are you trying to run to? Die!!" Jiang Wuxin roared hoarsely.

"Stop him!" Xuanyuan Yucheng ordered.

If Jiang Wuxin were to approach Tianming, the latter would be in grave danger.

"No! Stay where you are!" Tianming shouted.

If they split up to deal with Jiang Wuxin, thus destroying their formation, it would be easy for their opponents to break through. Jiang Wuxin had come for Tianming. Although he was in danger, he chose to deal with it alone and quickly retreated.

After a moment's hesitation, Xuanyuan Yucheng chose to trust in Tianming. A man so desperate that he was unafraid of death was most difficult to tackle. Allowing him to enter the cave would ease the strain on Xuanyuan Yucheng and the others.

The blood-soaked Jiang Wuxin entered the heart of the mountain and stood before Tianming.

Chapter 725: Fiendgodmorphize

"Li Tianming, you really are brave to let me in. Once I kill you, your whole army will fall! I wonder if you'll be able to escape this time!" Jiang Wuxin's face was covered in blood, but he smiled as though he didn't have a care in the world. The black sword in his hand had been stained by blood as its seven tribulation patterns glowed and swam around it. It was called the Skywolfsbane.

"That's beyond your capabilities." Tianming was wielding both his swords. Since the last time he had clashed with the Hexapath disciple, Jiang Wuxin had broken through once more. But Tianming had no other choice than to face Jiang Wuxin, or the latter would pursue him to the ends of the world. Even if all he could do was hold him back, that would still relieve a huge pressure on Xuanyuan Yucheng and the rest. That would be the limit of what he could do in this battle, and the rest would be left to fate.

"Hehe!" Jiang Wuxin began snickering all of a sudden as blood trailed into his eyes.

Tianming noticed something different about him. It had taken a while, but it finally occurred to him that Jiang Wuxin should be blind. After all, didn't he boast about practicing his sword blindfolded? Yet the person before him now had complete eyes, though each of them had two irises. They were distinct, rather than fused, making it look really eerie. Even Tianming only had three eyes himself, while Jiang Wuxin had 'four'.

"Little Yu, Little Yin, I'll be sending him to hell today. Don't worry, I'll make sure to execute him in front of the whole audience! The whole continent!" His killing intent swelled like a mad demon's in the chaotic battlefield as he stood on the back of his sunscourge fiendwolf, his blood dripping onto it. "Li Tianming, this is the first time I'm showing my Fiendgodmorphize. I'll turn into the incarnation of the god of fiends. You should be honored to be sent to hell this way!"

All of a sudden, his body began morphing. He and his wolf turned into black balls of light before fusing together.

"I know the Heptastar Aerial Sect's starbeasts can fuse, but Jiang Wuxin is fusing with his lifebound beast! A man-beast fusion?" Tianming was utterly shocked. He hadn't heard of any similar abilities, aside from the Infernal Soul Race, but they didn't just fuse with their beasts during combat. Though he wasn't sure if his seniors had seen anything similar, he could tell from the flabbergasted looks on the faces of the other disciples that this definitely wasn't normal.

"What's going on?" many asked.

"A beastmaster is fusing with a beast?"

What kind of background did Jiang Wuxin have for him to have such a mystical ability? As they watched, the two black balls of light overlaid each other and became one. When the light finally died out, a black-haired werewolf was all that remained in front of Tianming. He was three meters in height, much taller than Jiang Wuxin had originally been, but still incomparably small compared to the Sunscourge Fiendwolf. What was terrifying was the hair that had grown all over his body, not to mention the wolf's head with two eyes and four irises. His hands were now claws, but that didn't seem to affect his ability to hold his sword at all. Even Skywolfsbane seemed to have doubled in size. Jiang Wuxin now contained the explosive force of both man and beast.

Tianming wasn't aware of it, but Jiang Wuxin's transformation had shocked the entire continent and attracted lots of curious stares. He knew that he definitely shouldn't take Jiang Wuxin lightly now, especially with how determined the latter was to kill him.

"Are you afraid?!" he said in a rough, bestial growl.

Tianming immediately calmed himself; he had seen much throughout his life, and wouldn't be that easily taken aback. Though they were in a hopeless, passive situation, it was no excuse to stop fighting! If they didn't resist at all, they would die for sure.

"Let's go!" Tianming's cry caused Xian Xian to spread its main body across the battlefield. Ying Huo, Meow Meow, and Lan Huang were all by his side, facing his archnemesis together with him. Even the Prime Tower was being controlled by the soul servant, appearing above his head and expanding to its maximum size.

"Hehehehe!" Jiang Wuxin howled as he thrust his sword, immediately closing the distance with Tianming using the formless sword art. Despite the number of irises he had, he closed his eyes when he fought, utilizing his mind's eye and rendering him immune to Tianming's ocular arts. Other peoples' fighting capabilities would be hampered by a lack of vision, but his became stronger. His moves were formless, for forms he did not see. His void mind state, his empty heart state, was the culmination of his mind's eye techniques. If even he himself couldn't perceive the form of his moves, how could his opponent?

The sword art he truly used was a second-origin samsaran art like Tianming's Eight Desolation Fienddragon Whip, called Heartslayer. Taught by the Hexapath Swordfiend himself, it was a technique that extinguished the heart and mind. The first move: Heartgorge. Shadowy forms of his sword manifested as his sword intent attempted to corrode Tianming's heart. The sword stance was only the surface of the technique, while his sword intent was guided by his will. It was extremely hard to block.

His fused beast form was indeed terrifying and unprecedented, but Tianming had many lifebound beasts. Before Jiang Wuxin had even arrived, Tianming's beasts began barraging him. Ying Huo and Meow Meow each took a flank, sending sparks of flame and lightning at him that turned into a vortex of flame and electricity that covered the entire battlefield. Ying Huo kept using Skyscorch Featherblast from beside Jiang Wuxin. However, flaming swirls appeared all over his body with great suction power, preventing the feathers from piercing it. It seemed that Jiang Wuxin could also use beast abilities.

Lan Huang roared with its Primordial Soundwave and that seemed to disorient Jiang Wuxin for a moment, causing him to lose his hearing and his sword stance to waver for a moment. He swatted away Lan Huang's charge with his sword and turned to Tianming. "Die!" he roared.

Then Xian Xian's Radiant Vines came, but they couldn't stop him in its tracks. His power as a fifth-level life samsaran was much higher than many of his seniors'. His current form made the pride in the disciples of his sect swell. One day, he would become yet another Hexapath Swordfiend and rock the world. At the very least, he was now among the top three strongest disciples of the continent.

Tianming, however, refused to be a sitting duck and had launched his own attack as his beasts were intercepting their foe. A thousand strands of tribulation sword ki appeared in his body. There was another technique he hadn't used for a long while: the Imperealm Sword Formation. The ungodly power of the Grand-Orient Sword burst forth once more. With his current level of power, the range of his formation covered the entire mountain!

Countless threads of black and gold sword ki surged around him, making it his personal battlefield. Surrounded by tribulation sword ki, and that from the formation, his white hair fluttered from the turbulence. Now, he belonged to the Archaion Divine Realm. He knew that many in the realm were desperately hoping that he would survive.

All of a sudden, this microcosm of a battlefield began flooding with Omniscient Will that poured into his own Imperial Will. The disciples of the sect who were watching through Skyeye Formations had placed their pride and hopes on him, wishing desperately for him to win. The Human Branch alone had more than three hundred thousand disciples, which in turn produced quite a huge amount of Omniscient Will. Tianming had known all along that ever since he got the legacy of the Primordial God-Emperor, he was someone who made huge gains during wartime, and this was a war like no other. A sovereign was chosen by the will of the sentient beings he ruled over, and currently, their Omniscient Will was flooding into him as they wished for him to overturn his fate.

"Even though Archaion isn't as impressive as it was in the days of yore, we will allow nobody to cause trouble in our turf!" Hexapath Samsara Sword, Mortal Dao Sword. This was a move that contained the essence of Omniscient Will. Even though Tianming's realm was much lower than Jiang Wuxin's, his sword intent surpassed the Hexapath disciple's! This was the fundamental difference between them—the root of their will! Tianming was one who walked the grand and bright path, while Jiang Wuxin was a dastardly fiendgod. It was no contest of good and evil, only whose will was stronger!

As he struck, the Prime Tower came crashing down with the force of an entire mountain, causing Jiang Wuxin to have no choice but to block it. The next instant, the tips of the gold Grand-Orient Sword and Skywolfsbane clashed, letting out a mind-numbing hum.

People watched as Tianming was sent flying and crashed into a mountain of metal. In terms of the power behind his sword, he couldn't match up. However, he had other ways to make up for it; before Jiang Wuxin could follow up with another attack, the Prime Tower rammed into his head, causing him to bleed. Ying Huo also used the Mortal Dao Sword from behind him, stabbing him near his scapula and causing blood to spill.

"You're so hard!" Ying Huo chirped in shock. It had thought that its thrust would take Jiang Wuxin's whole arm off, not just leave a bloody hole. Fiendgodmorphize had truly strengthened his body to a terrifying degree. That was why Tianming hadn't been able to resist his sword blow.

Though Jiang Wuxin had won out in their first bout, Tianming's lifebound beasts were giving him a run for his money. He had narrowly avoided many dangerous blows and cut off countless vines from the Radix World Tree before he could get back up and focus on Tianming once more. He saw the blood that flowed from the corner of Tianming's mouth and right hand. His Ancient Deepstar Godbody seemed torn up.

"One more time and you'll be done for."

"I beg to differ. You're the one who'll be out cold." Tianming waved, causing his four lifebound beasts to reenter his lifebound space. What was he trying to achieve by decreasing his own fighting prowess?

Chapter 726: Second-level Life Phase

Tianming was actually trying to make a breakthrough! Even though he hadn't managed to refine his Ancient Deepstar Godbody, nor had he gotten Omniscient Will, he had been using the lifesteal ability of his Aeon Grandbane to siphon off life tribulation force for himself. The many beastmasters and lifebound beasts he had slain had given him lots of it, causing his life springs to swell to the point of forming samsara rings.

"It should've taken more time than this, but thanks to the sudden influx of Omniscient Will...." He could feel his Imperial Will swelling far beyond his Ancient Deepstar Godbody at a staggering rate. Using the eyes that were granted to him as part of the Primordial God-Emperor's legacy, he saw the Omniscient Will gathering into white mist from all across Nether Battlefield. It was the wish of all sentient life, and powerful enough that even the formation around the battlefield couldn't stop it from seeping in. The Grand-Orient Sword in his sea of consciousness was constantly being strengthened.

"This Omniscient Will is different from the one from the Divine Capital. Back then, it was feelings of faith and worship. Here, it's filled with hope and entrustment." The disciples of the Archaion Sect had entrusted their hopes and dreams to him. They watched through the Skyeeye Formations with reddened eyes and heavy breaths, holding their strongest desires and wills in their hearts. That instant, their survival was intertwined with those of the forty-odd Archaion disciples in the battlefield, Tianming's especially!

He had done so much, and had borne most of the burden. Too many disciples were hoping that he would lead the rest to survival. It wasn't just about the lives of the disciples, but the pride of the first divine realm, Archaion. This was their turf!

"Live on!"

"Don't lose, don't die!"

The strong wishes blossomed in their hearts and gathered to form Omniscient Will. The combined wishes of more than three hundred thousand people from sky saints and beyond was nothing to scoff

at. The Omniscient Will entered Tianming's sea of consciousness through his eyes, greatly swelling his Imperial Will and life tribulation force.

"It's time to transcend death and return to the world of the living! Form the second samsara rings on your lifesprings and step into the second-level life phase!" he hollered at his lifebound beasts within the lifebound space. They immediately engaged in symbiotic cultivation with him.

Tianming knew that he was being far too passive given the current situation. The disciples of the four temporarily allied sects could do nothing but struggle and had suffered quite a few casualties as their opponents' attacks intensified. The onslaught of all those peak geniuses was hard to resist. Tianming had taken the brunt of the assault by holding Jiang Wuxin back, but if this went on, Xuanyuan Yucheng, Beigong Qianyu, Beigong Mengmeng, Zhao Tianxing, Lin Xixi, and the rest would no doubt die. Such a tragic result would only cause Triflair and the other sects even more fear. Being forced into a corner, they might even join the side of Nonahall and Feiling's life would be forfeit.

I can't lose, I can't die! he yelled desperately in his mind. He had never craved power more than he did now. With him and his beasts having more than enough life tribulation force to form samsara rings, they no longer needed to absorb any surrounding spiritual energy.

The formation of the rings was unbelievably rapid. If it weren't for the unique nature of his Aeonic Grandbane, there was no way he could make a mid-battle breakthrough at all. His opponent naturally wouldn't give him enough time to absorb spiritual energy to form his samsara rings. Breaking through mid battle was incredibly risky, as the slightest delay in his movements could cost him his life. Yet it only took one moment when Jiang Wuxin was taken aback as he felt the death tribulation force in Tianming recede to allow life tribulation force to take its place. His death-god-like presence was replaced with the renewed vigor of life, restoring luster to his skin, eyes, and hair.

"I've achieved the second-level life phase!" Now, his gaze was as bright as ever. His beasts had transcended death with him, forming samsara rings that greatly boosted their power. His little feat had completely floored everyone across the continent who was watching. Nobody knew how in the world he had managed to absorb enough spiritual energy to form new samsara rings.

Behold, my Aeonic Grandbane! With his life force returned, he began aging in reverse. He clearly felt his life force and lifespan return explosively as his flesh, bones, organs, face, and even his hair began turning younger just like when his mother, Wei Jing, had turned young again after overcoming her Lifesbane.

"Isn't my body around the age of sixteen or seventeen now? I'm even younger than Ling'er!" He touched his face and found it to be baby's-bottom smooth. He was a youth once more!

"Additionally..." There was no way Aeonic Grandbane would be that simple. Something even more mystical than entering his death phase had happened: the ten ancient characters that had entered his deathsprings reappeared and transferred over to his lifesprings. The lifesprings that took in his Aeonic Grandbane had undergone a change completely different from his deathsprings': the samsara rings expanded!

Tianming clearly saw the two samsara rings on each of his lifesprings expand to double their size, greatly boosting his life tribulation force far beyond those of his peers. His combined life and tribulation force was equal to that of a fourth-level death samsaran. "In other words, I can steal life force during my

death phase to speed up my breakthroughs. I can speed past the tribulations of the death phase! Even though I can't steal life tribulation force during my life phase, my tribulation rings will be expanded, granting me even more of it! If this cycle repeats itself...."

All those changes had occurred in the shortest of instants. Jiang Wuxin quickly snapped out of his stupor, only to face a much more terrifying and younger Tianming. Now, he seemed like a piece of polished jade.

At the same time, his lifebound beasts appeared once more, now much younger, as Tianming was—Ying Huo and Meow Meow in particular. As for Xian Xian, she was a tree that thrived on life force! In the life phase, its powers reached their peak. It was now taller and wider than ever, and its vines and leaves spanned the entire battlefield.

"Lan Huang, Xian Xian, go help the others out!" Tianming said as he turned to face Jiang Wuxin.

Chapter 727 - My Sacred Blood Makes Me Unparalleled

Lan Huang and Xian Xian, both humongous beasts, expertly controlled the crowd—one charging in to intercept and the other controlling the battlefield from the sidelines. They weren't much of a threat to Jiang Wuxin in his combined form, so Tianming had them support the rest of his comrades instead. Now, only a little bird and cat remained by his side as they glared at Jiang Wuxin.

"Hmph." Jiang Wuxin smirked. "Struggling to survive, are you?!"

His werewolf form was much more terrifying than before. In but an instant, Skywolfsbane was right in front of Tianming's face. Heartslayer, Wisp of the Night! Jiang Wuxin flicked his sword, causing sword ki to surge and darken the world around him. A fiery green wisp appeared then instantly multiplied to thousands, blocking off Tianming's sight. Each wisp looked to be fatal. Jiang Wuxin closed his eyes once more and moved the way his heart told him to. All he wanted was to kill; he spoke not a single word more. His expression contorted as his mind honed its savagery.

Despite facing such killing intent, Tianming seemed much calmer than before; however, it didn't mean he lacked burning passion. His power was now coming from the Omniscient Will generated by the three hundred thousand plus disciples of the Archaion Sect. Their burning wills had been assimilated into his.

"Die!"

That word alone contained the echoes of the killing intent of all those disciples.

Moments before, Meow Meow had deployed an enhanced Myriad Thundernet on Jiang Wuxin, followed by Chaos Disaster, Misty Hellthunder, Soulchasing Hellthunder, and its other abilities, swallowing him in lightning. The fire vortices around Jiang Wuxin were still absorbing the impact of the lightning, but were easily overwhelmed!

"This chicken here is sick of your persistence! I'll mess you up!" Ying Huo's countless Infernal Haze clones unleashed Infernal Blaze containing Skypiercer Ki on Jiang Wuxin, followed by another bombardment of other abilities from behind. Then came the Mortal Dao Sword! Even though it was a sword art

performed by a lifebound beast, it had surpassed many seniors' techniques. Only Jiang Wuxin alone knew how much of a threat the little chicken posed.

With Ying Huo behind him, Meow Meow to his left, and the Prime Tower crashing down from above, Tianming's swords came striking from the front with the combined power of the Impereal Sword Formation and countless strands of tribulation sword ki. Now, his Mortal Dao Sword was even more horrifying than before.

The first strike of the Hexapath Samsara Sword art wasn't at all weaker than the second; they just contained different kinds of intent. While Animacorpus Eradication was far more damaging, the Mortal Dao Sword now possessed an unprecedented amount of power.

Sword ki surged as the black and gold swords pierced through the wisps and appeared in front of Jiang Wuxin, causing him to start in fear. He could feel that Tianming was completely different from the time he had fought him a few days ago. Even though he himself had grown quite a lot, Tianming had outpaced him.

Before the Mortal Dao Sword, the wisps were nothing. Meow Meow's lightning finally overwhelmed the fiendwolf's ability and crashed directly against Jiang Wuxin's body, though his enhanced defense, thanks to the fur, helped him survive. But the fur didn't stop Ying Huo's Skypiercer Ki at all! When Ying Huo's strike pierced his waist, the flames blew apart a chunk of his flesh, dealing significant damage to him for the first time. If it weren't for Fiendgodmorphize, the blow would have taken his life.

"Li Tianming!" Jiang Wuxin's primal drive to survive bubbled to a froth. He ignored Meow Meow and Ying Huo, focusing only on Tianming as he charged in with a howl. His sword was for Tianming alone! "I want you to die! Your death is my desire!"

His voice was growing hoarser and wilder. Heartslayer, Ninesword Heartslay! It was the ultimate killing move of his second-origin samsara art. Skywolfsbane split into nine heavy swords with ultimate penetrative power, each of them stronger than the last.

Tianming welcomed his foe with his own strike. "Jiang Wuxin, you weren't wrong to do what you did from your point of view! But if you can kill the disciples of my sect, I can avenge them! Between the two of us, there is no good or evil! The loser simply submits to the winner! It's a shame that I'm stronger than you!"

Since good and evil played no part, only their strength would decide their fates. Tianming's Mortal Dao Sword came rushing in, his gold sword breaking Jiang Wuxin's stance and reducing the nine swords to nothing.

The same instant Jiang Wuxin had charged in without a care, Meow Meow's lightning attacks charred him to no end while Ying Huo made countless bloody holes in his back. He was utterly crushed. Even though Tianming had only broken through once, his life tribulation force was far too oppressive.

"Fellow comrades, help me kill our enemies!"

The sword of life broke through the Ninesword Heartslay, while the sword of death pierced through everything like a poisonous dragon. The black Grand-Orient Sword contained the rage of a monarch as it exploded with power.

Jiang Wuxin bled all over as Meow Meow's Myriad Thundernet froze him in place, allowing the black sword to find its way into his heart right before his hell barrier formation sprang up. Even with his current strength, Tianming's strike was completely neutralized by the barrier formation. Even so, that was enough. Jiang Wuxin had been eliminated.

"Impossible! My sacred blood makes me unparalleled! How could I lose?!" He could never have imagined that the sacred blood he'd refined wasn't the only thing that could overturn fate. The mental blow Jiang Wuxin took from his defeat was far too heavy, but that wasn't the last of it.

Tianming wanted to kill him. He would never pity his enemies. No matter how good a person his foe was, as long as they weren't on his side, they were to die without exception! Tianming raised his sword and slashed the hell barrier formation and shattered it, the force of which shook Jiang Wuxin and caused him to spit out a mouthful of blood. Now he felt the threat of death.

"I have sacred blood! I won't die, I won't lose!" His mind crumbled from the mounting pressure as his body grew numb, but the only thing that answered his cries were Tianming's cold gaze and surging sword.

"I'll reunite you with your wives in the next life. No need to thank me!"

Jiang Wuxin wasn't afraid of death; he was afraid he wouldn't get his revenge. "I don't yield!"

"I don't care!"

Now undefended by the hell barrier formation, Jiang Wuxin barely escaped the strike. Tianming, Ying Huo, and Meow Meow came charging in to take his life.

Chapter 728 - Death of the Sunscourge Fiendwolf

Jiang Wuxin's body glowed black like before and split into two; the smaller black ball was sent flying away while the larger one, the Sunscourge Fiendwolf, charged toward Tianming as it spewed fire. They had undone their Fiendgodmorphize fusion! It wasn't that Jiang Wuxin wanted to escape; the fiendwolf had undone it on its own accord to attack Tianming, turning its own body into a fiery vortex!

With a loud roar, the black flames burned brightly. Tianming watched it coldly, then unleashed a tribulation sword ki-filled strike at it. The fiendwolf was already bleeding from the thousands of holes in its body that had been received during its initial strike, so Tianming didn't hold back and cut straight at its head.

The fiendwolf's head audibly exploded into a bloody mess as the tribulation sword ki went wild. Tianming's sword had cut it in half, killing it before it could even howl in pain. The carcass of the beast collapsed, blood still spouting from its wounds.

"The sunscourge fiendwolf is dead!"

"Did Tianming just kill it?!"

Many disciples had taken note of what just happened.

"The disciple of the Hexapath Swordfiend is crippled!"

Word of that immediately spread all over. The disciples from the five-sect alliance that had the upper hand felt a bad fate coming. Jiang Wuxin was a fifth-level life samsaran and ranked among the three strongest disciples on the entire continent, but he only had one lifebound beast. Now that it was dead, it was over for him! Everyone had been waiting for him to avenge his wives, only for him to end up defeated. The worst part was, he couldn't even defend his life right now!

When he was flung away, he watched as his fiendwolf died trying to save him and felt his heart shatter. Tears of blood flowed from his eyes, though he merely watched Tianming with a blank expression.

"You must die... you must die!" he repeated nonstop. "You must die now!"

Tianming swung Archfiend toward the back of his chest. The instant it was about to pierce through, a dark figure appeared behind Jiang Wuxin and used a short stick to stop Tianming's fatal blow. It was one of the three minor ghoulish kings, Hei An. He had saved Jiang Wuxin and immediately took him away. Behind him stood his lifebound beast, a rakshasa, guarding them as they dashed out of the cave.

Tianming gave up on the chase, figuring they were gone for good. His allies still needed help to deal with the rest of their enemies, so he couldn't just leave. But now that he was at the second-level life phase, there was even more he could do for them. He could still turn the situation around, so he hurried to aid them with the rest of his beasts.

"Li Tianming is here!" The disciples who were struggling to defend the cave were suddenly filled with hope.

"He almost killed Jiang Wuxin!"

"To think that we have a powerful fighter of his level here...."

"If it weren't for him, there's no way we would've survived till now...."

They'd thought they would be fighting to the death, yet hope had come through at their moment of despair. Before, all they had wanted was to put up a good fight before dying, but now they wanted to wipe their foes out, and even win!

"What're we waiting for?"

"It's a free for all! Kill them!"

"Does Nonahall think they're so strong they can treat us like animals?!"

"They shall die!"

Now, the four sects were rising up against the alliance and turning the tide of battle.

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There was a huge commotion on the Swordsoul Mountains within the Hexapath Divine Realm, no doubt due to the death of the Sunscourge Fiendwolf and Jiang Wuxin's haggard escape. Their disciples were almost all dead, but they couldn't even get angry at Jiang Wuxin for losing. There was only one thing on

their seething minds: "We must exterminate the Archaion Divine Realm, kill their goddess, and torture Li Tianming to death!"

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The peak experts watching from the Dimensional Battlefield were all at a loss for words. In the Hexapath Sword Sect's viewing section, the others turned and looked at Feng Qingyu without daring to say a word. They had noticed the odd change undergone by Jiang Wuxin, but they didn't dare to mention 'Fiendgodmorphize'. They had thought that the impressive technique was thanks to Feng Qingyu, but now there was nothing to be proud about, especially with Jiang Wuxin's sole lifebound beast dead.

"We'll pay back the humiliation of our sect tens of thousands of times over during the coming war!"

They all knew that the Hexapath Swordfiend was given that title because of his fiendish methods. Jiang Wuxin was his favorite disciple, and he had spent no time on anything other than cultivating and teaching his disciple. He didn't even have a romantic partner. Though he must have been seething with anger, he didn't seem to be moving an inch.

"The trees wish to stop rustling, yet the wind won't stop blowing...."

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The viewing sector at the very end of the Dimensional Battlefield was Nonahall's. The sect had a different hierarchy from the others, with most of their decisions made by the Council of Ghoulish Kings.

There were nine ghoulish kings in the council, all of whom had equal status, and they had sent the most experts here to the summit. But even then, the three ghoulish kings stood out and seemed like beings from hell itself.

"Now that his lifebound beast is dead, it's perfect. He's now crippled, so Feng Qingyu should no longer care about him. Bring him to us if there's an opportunity. As he has the sacred blood, he can Fiendgodmorphize. We can use him to create a nightmarish god of slaughter to serve our sect," said one of the ghoulish kings.

"Does he really match the requirements?" asked another.

"I believe he does," said the third ghoulish king.

"Did Li Tianming get all of his treasures from Xuanyuan Xi?"

"Who else could it be? Maybe it's the legacy of Great Emperor Xuanyuan? But everything the emperor had was stolen from them, apart from the Heaven Cauldron we're aiming to take for ourselves, right?"

"Let's observe the situation first. If it becomes necessary, we'll make his treasures our third priority, after Xuanyuan Xi and the Heaven Cauldron."

"That sword and tower might be beyond tribulation artifacts. It could be something like Feng Qingyu's divine artifacts, the Hexafirmament Eradicators. We must take it."

"Agreed."

"The ultimate tribulation manna in the Kilostar Domain is also really valuable. The Yama can definitely get them and even split them among Hei An and Bai Rao. But this disciple of the goddess will be a threat to them, won't he?"

"He might be. After the Nether Battle, we'll have the three of them fight him during the final battle."

"That's right. The Kilostar Domain doesn't just have powerful manna, it also has the key to our ultimate domination. It is imperative that we retrieve them."

"The five ultimate tribulation manna might be the key to the domain!"

The three ghoulish kings' eyes glowed brightly.

"Let me be in charge of strengthening them," said one of the ghoulish kings.

They continued their discussion in hushed voices without anyone hearing what they were talking about.

Chapter 729 - Obsessive Familial Love

The elites and seniors of the Archaion Sect watched things unfold in shock. The white-haired youth had created all those miracles that rocked the whole of the realm. The disciples watching from the Human and Earth Branches were already incredibly touched by what they saw through the Skyeye Formations. Loud cries rang out all over Taiji Peak Lake.

"Kill them all!"

"We won't lose! We won't die!"

"Send them away!"

Despite being the picture of doom and gloom moments ago, their attitudes quickly turned to joy and a desire for revenge. But even then, they knew that the battle had yet to be decided. There was only so much Tianming could do alone, and the rest would still have to struggle to survive to the end.

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Xian Xian's Radiant Vines had basically sealed up the entirety of the largest cavern. However, people still kept charging at Tianming, unleashing one explosive attack after another. Xian Xian's recent growth had given it a huge power boost, allowing so much vine growth that Tianming had to feed it all the beasts he kept in storage. It even used its roots in addition to its vines to squeeze out every last bit of advantage. As for Lan Huang, it alone was blocking more than ten enemy lifebound beasts at any given time, working with Xian Xian with perfect synergy to support their side.

On the other hand, the Nonahall disciples all had incredibly weirdly shaped lifebound beasts. The two minor ghoulish kings in particular had almost breached their defensive line as they led their forces toward them. Fortunately, Tianming and Xian Xian intercepted them in time. While they hadn't clashed with the minor ghoulish kings yet, they did manage to hold the defense line, with Tianming killing dozens of Nonahall disciples at a time with Archfiend.

Zhao Tianxing, Dongfang Zichong, and Lin Xixi were overjoyed at the turn of events. They were all giving it their best, turning the tables and stunning their enemies. Many of them weren't able to tear through the defense line and were ganged up upon before being torn to shreds. Naturally, some from Tianming's side also suffered horrible fates. War was never kinder to one side than the other.

"Tianming, go help Xuanyuan Yucheng! We have this side covered!" Zhao Tianxing cried.

"Alright!" Tianming wiped the blood from his eyes and did as he was told, leaving Lan Huang and Xian Xian behind to support them.

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Chu Xiaoqi's umbrella made a bloody hole in Xuanyuan Yuchang's chest. It was a weapon with seven tribulation patterns called an Accusation Dream Shade. The umbrella had seven spines with an eye on each that was said to have come from a fifth-order tribulation wildbeast, a Deepsea Demon, making the umbrella really versatile. It could be used as a lance as well as a weapon that charmed the soul.

When she broke through the defense line and charged into the fray, Xuanyuan Yucheng and Beigong Qianyu intercepted her to stop her from hurting the disciples behind them, but they still failed. Even working together, they weren't Chu Xiaoqi's match. In their short battle, their hell barrier formations had been triggered and smashed and their lifebound beasts were heavily wounded.

Chu Xiaoqi wore a cold smile; she had initially intended to kill Beigong Qianyu with her Accusation Dream Shade, only for Xuanyuan Yucheng to butt in at the last moment and take the blow. The umbrella's tip pierced his chest and spilled blood.

As the light in Xuanyuan Yucheng's eyes dimmed, he tightly gripped the umbrella and glared at Chu Xiaoqi.

"Want to play hero for the damsel in distress, eh? Want me to do you a favor? I reckon killing both of you by skewering you together would make your death an interesting one," she said, licking her lips with a smile.

"Why bother going so far just to look like a villain? Don't forget that our fight isn't over yet. Even if I die now, you won't live for long," Xuanyuan Yucheng said, holding strong despite the blood bubbling in his mouth. He had sacrificed himself in hopes that Beigong Qianyu could escape.

"You think your little Xuanyuan house can take care of me? Don't be so naive. You are nothing but dogs to be beaten!"

"Haha, it won't happen just because you say it will. History shall prove you wrong."

"Shame you won't be here to see it!" Chu Xiaoqi pushed the umbrella in deeper, forcing him back toward Beigong Qianyu.

"Run!" he cried.

Beigong Qianyu stood up.

"Go, now!" he said once more, his voice shaking.

"Stop yelling. I won't let you go to the Yellow Springs alone," she said, not running and instead charging in with her sword and her tattered body.

"I..." Tears filled his eyes when he heard her words.

"You make me sick!" Chu Xiaoqi spat. There really weren't many men that would save others at the cost of their own lives. She couldn't stand having all of that virtue brandished in front of her and wanted to end the two of them as quickly as she could.

Right at that instant, she felt a threat to her life coming from behind. She knew that if she didn't turn around and defend herself, her hell barrier formation would instantly be triggered. So she could do nothing but draw her umbrella back out, then open it and use it like a shield to block that strike.

With a loud boom, she was sent flying. Beigong Qianyu used the chance to take Xuanyuan Yuchang away from the battlefield and use some spirit herbs to heal him. Even though he was heavily injured, it wasn't a fatal wound so he could still be saved. Her hair was all messed up and her face was covered in blood. As she applied the medicine, her tears dropped onto his wound. He hurriedly held her hand tight and said with the last of his energy, "I love you!"

Flowery language wasn't his forte, so he opted for those three simple words to show his sincerity.

"Aren't you supposed to be dense?! Idiot... stupid! I've sent so many signals, and you only tell me that now when you're half-dead?" She felt both agonized and happy at the same time.

"I knew it all along. But I was afraid."

"Afraid of what?"

"Afraid I wouldn't survive this battle. I'm someone who is fated to die, so I didn't want to make you suffer. I'm sorry...."

"Then why did you say it now?!"

"I think... I might be able to survive, so I've decided to become your man. I'll protect you with my life!" He gripped her hand tight in his. Now that their crisis seemed to be averted, there was only bliss ahead.

"Then you better not die. Otherwise, I'll...." Her shoulders began shaking.

"You'll what?"

"I'll find new men. One a month at least," she joked as her tears continued falling.

"Hey, don't scare me like that. I'm afraid to die now."

Their passionate gazes met, emotions fueled even more by their desperate plight in a time of chaos.

"Guess it's up to the fate of the heavens.... It's up to Tianming now."

"That's right."

.....

Tianming had saved Xuanyuan Yucheng from Chu Xiaoqi, drawing quite a lot of attention to himself. Now he was fighting yet another fifth-level life samsaran. Before Jiang Wuxin had broken through, there were only four disciples on that level in the Nether Battlefield: Chu Xiaoqi and the three minor ghouls, with her the youngest of them.

She was a favored child of the heavens and filled with lots of potential. Many disciples outright saw her as their goddess. Her admirers spanned the entire continent, much like Li Caiwei in her heyday. But unlike her master, who'd had no backing of her own back then, she had her amazing master as a backing.

Her pink dress contrasted against the blood-red battlefield in a most alluring manner, much like her pink eyes. Her long hair and skirt fluttered in the wind as she defensively held her umbrella open. Beside her were two seven-tailed foxes, each with more than four hundred and fifty stars. Those who knew her and Li Caiwei would know that those who had seven-tailed demon foxes were among the most talented in their clan.

The purple-eyed hellthunder fox, with each hair of its fur shaped like lightning bolts, was really huge and had countless stars in its purple eyes, within which flashes of lightning could be seen. The other, a nightmare fox, had a cute aura, much like Chu Xiaoqi. It seemed like a harmless creature others couldn't help but approach and spoil.

Chapter 730 - Heads Flew Wherever His Sword Pointed

The two foxes were of different sexes, with the purple-eyed hellthunder fox a few times the size of the nightmare fox. It ran with great speed, pouncing with its claws bared like a monstrous demon as lightning like Meow Meow's own crackled menacingly near its seven tails.

Chu Xiaoqi hugged her umbrella tight and stood between her two foxes, the pink in her eyes intensifying and making her even more alluring. Nobody would question the claim that she was among the most famous beauties on the continent. She seemed pure, yet seductive at the same time, being able to enchant others with the slightest wink. However, the one who stood before her was Tianming.

His allies were suffering quite a few losses, so he had to hurry up and deal with his foes. Only then would they stand a chance of survival. As such, he bore nothing but killing intent for a beauty of her class, having seen her almost kill Xuanyuan Yucheng and Beigong Qianyu moments before. His decision to help out elsewhere had almost left the couple for dead. If he had come a moment later, he would definitely regret it.

"Jiang Wuxin managed to escape, but I won't let you leave with your life!" Tianming charged in with Ying Huo and Meow Meow.

"Do you think you're invincible?" she snickered. She only looked pure on the surface, and her true personality was just as cynical as anyone else's.

"I'm not invincible, but I am powerful enough to kill you."

"We'll see." Chu Xiaoqi was reminded of the infuriating experience of being toyed with by him on the windblade layer of the battlefield. "A blood debt is to be paid back in blood!"

"That's exactly what I plan on doing!"

"Just because you managed to defeat Jiang Wuxin, you dare to underestimate me?" She had reached the fifth-level life phase much earlier than Jiang Wuxin and had unique methods that weren't utilized by most beastmasters. Far too many people that were more powerful than her had fallen by her hand.

"That's right. Who do you think you are?"

She was smiling both from the impudence and how laughable the statement sounded.

"Kill him!" she shrieked. The sharp cry sent her two beasts into action at the same time as her. The purple fox raised its tails high, shooting a net of lightning at Tianming with its ability Violet Lightning Prison. It didn't seem much weaker than Meow Meow in its current form at all. At the same time, it also spat out a flash of lightning toward her, creating eight wings behind her. The ability was called Eightwing Electrofiend.

The attack clashed with Meow Meow's Misty Hellthunder and exploded into many lightning bolts that shot in all directions. Then Chu Xiaoqi flapped her wings and accelerated, closing her umbrella and couching it in her shoulder as if she were jousting.

A chilling sound was heard as a formless wave spread out across the battlefield when the nightmare fox disappeared in the thunderclouds and used its Sleep Vortex. While Tianming wasn't affected by it, Ying Huo said it was feeling a little drowsy. Tianming, with his soul protected by the Prime Tower, aside, the ability was actually quite formidable. Formless abilities were the most effective, after all, as they could affect others unimpeded, especially the other Archaiion disciples. Not only did they begin feeling drowsy, they were also having hallucinations of really weird things. Chu Xiaoqi looked even more alluring to them now, with a gentleness to her that made them forget what they had been doing.

"Isn't this basically my Bewildering Eye?" Tianming said. He had to admit that the enchantment of the nightmare fox was really similar to that of Dong Jingjing's lifebound beast, but it was even more powerful. Without another word, Tianming had Ying Huo and Meow Meow stand guard in front of him as Chu Xiaoqi's purple-eyed hellthunder fox charged them. Instead of bothering to defend against the incoming attack, he focused his attention on the nightmare fox in the distance that thought it was hiding rather well. Too bad the hunter was Tianming, who wouldn't let someone that could control the tide of battle like Xian Xian roam about unabated.

"You better hold on!" Tianming told Ying Huo.

"Don't worry. Do you think these females can enchant me? I'm not the least bit into women!" Ying Huo said as it intercepted Chu Xiaoqi with a sword art.

"That's right. Hens are more your thing, right?"

Meow Meow turned into the Regal Chaosfiend and clashed with the purple fox, causing their purple and black lightning to intertwine. While the nightmare fox's ability was having a significant effect on it and put it at a huge disadvantage, it wouldn't last for long. Tianming had made it to where the nightmare fox was.

"He isn't affected!" cried the smaller fox.

"What?!" Chu Xiaoqi snapped and turned back.

"It's too late." The nightmare fox immediately used another ability, Dream Mirror, by shaking its seven snow-white tails in a really eerie way. The next instant, an enchanting mirror appeared before Tianming, showing the visage of a smiling Feiling, looking more tempting than ever as she waved alluringly at him, dazzling him for a moment. "Come, come to me."

Her beauty was infinite, but Tianming didn't react too strongly, partly due to the Soul Tower blocking most of the effects, but mostly his familiarity with Feiling's beauty. He still had everything under control. "No way in hell will I come to you!"

Tianming raised his left hand and used the Soulshaker Eye, causing the nightmare fox's vision to darken. The next moment, Tianming pierced it with his sword, unleashing the combined power of his tribulation sword ki and the Imperealm Sword Formation at once. The hell barrier formation appeared and the fox had been eliminated, allowing Ying Huo and Meow Meow to regain their full fighting prowess.

Even so, Tianming wouldn't show any mercy. He immediately used the Mortal Dao Sword, destroying the barrier formation with the sword of life and unleashing a barrage of slashes with the sword of death, cutting the head off the nightmare fox.

The fox's head was sent flying and its seven-tailed body fell. It was bound to be defeated after gaining Tianming's full attention, though he would have been in trouble, if not for the Soul Tower, and might have fallen for the Dream Mirror if he wasn't so familiar with Feiling.

With the nightmare fox dead, the delicate balance was broken. When Chu Xiaoqi made her way to him, Tianming tossed the little fox's head to her, splattering its blood all over her. Her expression contorted to a frightening degree as the fox's shriek was still ringing in her ears. What was worse was that Meow Meow and Ying Huo had kept attacking her and weren't giving her any time to grieve! Meow Meow wasn't afraid of her lightning at all as it kept her busy, creating opportunities for Ying Huo to go in with its backstabs and causing her other lifebound beast to struggle to escape as well. Now, she was starting to panic.

"Aren't seven-tailed demon foxes supposed to be strong?" Tianming asked with a scathing look.

Chu Xiaoqi had acted so arrogantly and her face had contorted so much that her usual tricks of stoking sympathy and pity would no longer work. Now she was doused in nothing but killing intent. "Li Tianming, you deserve a thousand deaths!"

"As do you!"

If he didn't kill her, she would only join up with the rest to continue massacring the Archaion disciples. They had already lost quite a lot, thanks to Nonahall's participation, and still needed Tianming to hold the line at the two caves. They had placed all their hopes in him, and now he was getting ready to go in for the killing strike. "Since Jiang Wuxin didn't die, I'll make sure you do!"

He split his Grand-Orient sword in two, his death tribulation force rising once more as he focused on the killing intent aspect of his technique. When he executed the Animacorpus Eradication, a deathly aura filled the surroundings, causing her scalp to feel prickly and numb.

Though she wanted to escape, she held the pride and dignity of the Biritual Demon Sect. There was no other option for her but to resist to the end. "I must fight, or I won't be able to face Master ever again!"

As she thought of how amazing her master was, and how much she worshipped her, there was no longer any possibility for her to back down. "Li Tianming, you will die without question. After the Number One Summit, your divine realm and goddess shall only exist in the annals of history! I will exterminate everyone and anyone affiliated with you!"

"You think shouting like this will mask the fear you feel?" Tianming coldly said as his sword coursed toward her. The Accusation Dream Shade instantly morphed into many different forms, but to no avail. Animacorpus Eradication crushed it like bamboo and continued toward her.

"Die!"

It was absolute domination with an outburst of power. His first strike caused hungry ghosts to descend and howl, filling the area with intense sword ki that pierced through the umbrella and triggered her hell barrier formation. As her nightmare fox's barrier formation had already manifested before, her current barrier formation couldn't mitigate the force of the attack and shattered. Tianming's second strike was surrounded by the spirits of the accused as he struck with the sword of death.

"I—" Chu Xiaoqi finally broke down and turned to run.

"Farewell!" Sword ki burst out as the Grand-Orient Sword slashed horizontally. No matter how beautiful a headless corpse was, a headless corpse was a headless corpse. Her head flew to the highest point of the mountain, allowing her to see the entire battlefield and the white-haired youth that charged into it like a demon after beheading her.

"How terrifying...." Just like that, her soul scattered, mired in terror and despair. Countless people across the continent lamented at the death of such a top beauty and genius. She'd had the potential to dominate the realm like her master, becoming one of the most amazing women on the continent.

After her eradication, the audience turned to the white-haired youth as he charged into the fray with his Imperealm Sword Formation and tribulation sword ki. Heads flew wherever his swords pointed.

"Those who harm the Archaion Sect shall die!"