

The Heavens 1091

Chapter 1091: The Scheming of Jian Daozi

The world rumbled, colors flashed in the sky, and the wind screamed.... At the same time, the Echelon members in each of the Nine Nations sent their energy surging, something... that no one but they themselves could sense.

However, everyone on the altars in the various Nine Nations were clearly able to tell that the air of war had filled the world!

Declarations had been made, indicating that the Echelon battles were beginning!

This place... was the long-awaited battlefield for the Echelon. Everyone else would be relegated to mere supporting roles!

Although nobody wanted to admit it, Fan Dong'er, Bei Yu and the other cultivators knew so. They stood there silently, looking at Meng Hao standing at the edge of the altar, radiating an unmatched energy as he looked around at the people prostrating themselves down below.

All of a sudden they understood that this place... belonged to the Echelon!

If the options were to be either a bright flower or a dark, faded leaf, fate had given them no choice in the matter, and had relegated them all to be nothing more than leaves....

Fan Dong'er's eyes glittered with an unyielding light. Bei Yu had a similar reaction. She was a woman with the same position as the sect's Holy Daughter. She had high aspirations, and was not willing to be left in the dust by anyone.

After a while, the surging energy that were the declarations of war by the members of the Echelon located throughout the Windswept Realm... slowly faded away. Meng Hao flicked his sleeve and stepped off of the altar.

“Raise your heads, all of you!” he said immediately. His voice echoed out across the lands into the ears of all of the cultivators of the Windswept Realm, and into the minds of the tens of thousands of mortals off in the distance.

Without even thinking about it, everyone raised their heads and looked at him. As of this moment, all eyes were focused on Meng Hao. He hovered there in midair, his robes swirling, his hair floating around him. The will of an Immortal Emperor transformed into a unique aura.

It was an indescribable aura, but at the moment, it instilled everyone with the impulse to offer worship.

“Greetings, Grand Immortal!” A chorus of voices echoed out across the lands. As the powerful sound rolled out, Jian Daozi flew up into the air, swishing his sleeve and causing brilliant light to surround him.

“Form the Grand Carriage!” Immediately, a thousand cultivators flew out from the group below and organized into a formation that resembled a flying battleship!

They were followed by another eight thousand cultivators, who also formed flying battleships, making a total of nine. It was possible to see cultivators all packed together to form the battleships, their expressions fanatical, as if serving Immortals was an unmatched honor.

Each battleship also featured two groups of cultivators on the deck, organized in ranks, men and women. Of the male cultivators, each one was extremely handsome, the type that any woman in the mortal world would instantly fall in love with.

The female cultivators were incredibly beautiful and pure, and each one could be considered a consummate beauty.

All of them knelt there, apparently ready to fulfill any request without the slightest hesitation.

“Grand Immortals, please, after you!” cried Jian Daozi, dropping to his knees.

“Grand Immortals, please, after you!” the other old men cried, along with all the other cultivators.

Meng Hao stared in shock. Although he had enjoyed the feeling of being completely unrestrained in the Windswept Realm, he was still not used to situations like this.

Using people as a ship...?

“Jian Daozi, you lead the way. As for this ship... I don’t need it,” he said slowly, beginning to make his way forward. Jian Daozi stared in shock, and an almost imperceptible flicker passed by deep in his eyes. He looked at Meng Hao for a moment, then, without saying anything, flew to follow by his side.

The fact that Meng Hao refused to use the ship didn’t mean that the other cultivators had to refuse. In fact, the Demonic cultivators were currently staring in shock. Since they had been smuggled in, they hadn’t experienced the events from the initial entry. They transformed into beams of light which instantly flew over to the various ships formed from cultivators.

When they stepped onto the ships, they were immediately surrounded by the handsome men and beautiful women, who brought delicious alcohol and spirit fruits for them to enjoy. It was an indescribable feeling.

The young cultivator behind Fan Dong’er thought for a moment, then flew over to sit on one of the ships. Immediately, one of the beautiful servants stepped forward and bowed down in front of him.

The young man took a deep breath as he looked around blankly at the ship and everything else.

Eventually, even Fan Dong’er and Bei Yu boarded the ships under the fanatical gazes of the Windswept Realm cultivators. Rumbling sounds could be heard as the ships then flew up into the air.

Down below, the man who appeared to be the emperor of the Ninth Nation led the soldiers into motion. They moved slowly, but there were many of them, and they almost looked like Imperial escorts.

Meng Hao flew along at the front, silent and taciturn. Jian Daozi followed off to the side. The old man’s cultivation base was not in the Immortal Realm, so it took some effort for him to keep up with Meng Hao. Meng Hao looked over at him and waved his hand, causing a bright light to appear beneath the old man’s feet, which instantly increased his speed so that he could follow along closely.

“Many thanks, Grand Immortal!” Jian Daozi said, clasping his hands in appreciation.

“You can stop it with the false show of respect,” Meng Hao said slowly. “It pisses me off. Furthermore... I’m Meng Hao. My surname is not ‘Grand’ and my given name is not ‘Immortal.’” He spoke the words without the slightest bit of courtesy.

A strange expression appeared on the old man’s face. He clasped his hands and respectfully said, “I shall comply with your orders, Exalted Immortal.”

Meng Hao proceeded to ignore him. Perhaps because of how they were raised, all of the others from the Mountain and Sea Realm were probably not used to paying close attention to the people they deemed weaker, but Meng Hao, despite having such a high status, and even being the Crown Prince of the Fang Clan, had struggled up to that point from a weak and pitiful standing on Planet South Heaven. He had experienced numerous deadly circumstances, and had eventually developed extremely keen eyes. Therefore, he was easily able to detect that Jian Daozi had been scheming all along.

He could clearly see the various things the old man had done. He had never believed that the people of this world would willingly choose to be inferiors. In fact... the people of the Windswept Realm couldn’t even be called inferiors; they were more like slaves who didn’t even have control over their own lives or deaths. Their fate was completely under the control of the Mountain and Sea Realm.

The entire world was destined to flow with rivers of blood every thousand years, and the inhabitants were like nothing more than crops to be harvested. Their thousand years of rest was merely preparation... for another harvest!

“The natural laws did not change by chance!” thought Meng Hao, his eyes glittering. He would not be careless in his activities here. Furthermore, he knew many details of certain matters that Fan Dong’er and the others were unaware of.

“Exalted Immortal Meng,” Jian Daozi said ingratiatingly, “Mount Whiteseal is the Ninth Nation’s Mountain of National Aura, the source of our nation’s natural law and Daoist magic. It supports our entire world, and even has Heavenly power!

“Exalted Immortal, by selecting that mountain, you can receive the added support of the National Aura, and will definitely experience cultivation base growth to a level that you can’t even imagine.

“The legends say that the National Aura Mountain was refined from a precious treasure. Perhaps with the abilities and resources at hand as a Chosen, Exalted Immortal Meng, you will be able to acquire even greater good fortune.” The wind buffeted their faces as they flew onward, and Jian Daozi’s words were carried backward so that Fan Dong’er and the others could hear.

Meng Hao suddenly stopped in place, turned, and looked deeply into Jian Daozi’s eyes. Then, an enigmatic smile appeared on his face, and his eyes gradually shone with an intense gleam.

The look in Meng Hao’s eyes caused thumping sounds to pound inside of Jian Daozi. However, he maintained the same smile as ever, and ducked his head respectfully.

“You know,” Meng Hao said coolly. “I’ve killed a lot of people. Many of them were schemers, and when I discovered their plots against me, I removed their heads.

“For example, you used a simple map to quickly divide nine Exalted Immortals without lifting a finger. You benefited from the misfortune of others, and also gained some profound insights. Truly an excellent scheme.

“Later, when the lightning and thunder struck us, you looked surprised, but deep in your eyes, you were actually mocking us. Don’t think that nobody noticed your act. How did you come to be aware that the natural laws had changed?”

With each of Meng Hao’s successive statements, Jian Daozi looked more surprised. He started to look anxious, as if he felt there were some misunderstanding. Terrified, he was about to offer an explanation when Meng Hao continued.

“One map unleashed internal chaos,” he said coolly. “One natural law caused a deadly crisis.

“I honestly don’t care much about those things. However, just now, you tried to use that mountain to gain the upper hand again. Did you really think that you could borrow the strength of my hands to slay the others, just because I was stronger than them?” His words caused Jian Daozi’s face to grow deathly pale, and he began to tremble in terror.

“Exalted Immortal, please calm yourself. Everything was just a misunderstanding! It... it wasn’t like that at all! I....” Sweat poured down Jian Daozi’s face, and he seemed horrified, as if he were being wrongly accused of a crime he didn’t commit.

“Let me guess,” continued Meng Hao, his voice growing colder by the moment. “If I were you, I wouldn’t devise a plan which relied on only one person, even if you did end up convincing me about the mountain. After all, none of them would be likely to try to provoke me directly. What you want to do is throw out some other seeds to attract their interest.

“Those seeds of interest... will eventually give birth to a struggle over the mountain.

“Their obsession over the mountain is like a hidden weapon that would not be easily noticed. In addition to all of that, if I were you, I would definitely prepare some other knives to stick into the backs of us Immortals. That would also provide a warning that... we should not act presumptuously here!! My guess is that one of those knives will be making an appearance quite soon.”

Jian Daozi smiled wryly, as if he had valid protestations which were merely falling on deaf ears. He seemed to be on the verge of trying to concoct some explanation when, all of a sudden, something became visible off in the distance. There, a waterfall could be seen, at the base of which was a pond. Next to that pond sat a white fox.

A piece of white jade could be seen on the fox’s head, which looked completely beyond ordinary. As the fox practiced breathing techniques, it caused all of the light in the area to converge on the fox’s head.

Suddenly, one of the middle-aged Demonic cultivators from the Nine Seas God World caught sight of the white fox. His eyes went wide, and he shouted, “Divine Demon jade!!”

A look of greed and wild joy instantly appeared on the Demonic cultivator’s face. There was a flash as he flew off of the ship he had been riding and headed directly toward the fox.

“If I were you, I wouldn’t do that,” Meng Hao said, stopping in place. In response, Jian Daozi’s face flickered. The middle-aged Demonic cultivator stared in shock for a moment, then gave a cold harrumph.

He was well aware of what kind of place the Windswept Realm was, that there was nothing here that exceeded the Immortal Realm. It was a place without laws or rules, and therefore, nobody could stop him from taking something he wanted!

He sent out his divine sense and, sensing nothing abnormal, completely ignored Meng Hao and closed in on the white fox, reaching his hand out to grab to the piece of white jade.

Chapter 1092: Demon Mantra: Mesmeric Rebuke!

Just as the middle-aged Demonic cultivator was closing in on the white jade, all of a sudden, a cold snort could be heard echoing out from inside the waterfall.

“Scram!” someone said.

The single word seemed to invoke thunder and lightning. A shocking energy rose up, causing everything to shake. A windstorm sprang into being, which promptly slammed into the Demonic cultivator.

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLL....

The Demonic cultivator’s face flickered, and blood sprayed out of his mouth in a continuous stream as he tumbled backward like a kite with its string cut. He fell back several hundred meters before finally coming to a stop, his face pale, his body trembling.

Bei Yu sat on her ship, which currently hovered in midair. All of a sudden, her face flickered, and she spoke four words, one at a time. “Demon Mantra: Mesmeric Rebuke!!”

The other Demonic cultivators’ minds trembled, and expressions of disbelief appeared on their faces as they looked over at the waterfall.

Even Fan Dong’er appeared to be shocked.

Meng Hao’s eyes narrowed. The voice which had spoken just now used only one phrase to unleash unthinkable power. That one phrase was like a magical technique, a divine ability that could... shake the mind. Not only did it leave the Demonic cultivator’s body trembling, it also was a powerful attack on his very thoughts.

Meng Hao was familiar with the four words that Bei Yu had uttered. He knew that it was one of the three most powerful Daoist magics of the Nine Seas God World’s Demonic Cultivator Horde!

“Demon Mantra: Mesmeric Rebuke can turn one’s own divine sense into an attack on the self....” he thought. “It is impossible to defend against, and the stronger one’s divine sense, the more terrifying the results!”

Very few Demonic cultivators were able to successfully learn it. In the current generation, only Bei Yu and Long Tianhai had ever studied it, as well as the other eight Sea Realm Demons.

From the way it had been used, Meng Hao, along with Fan Dong’er and Bei Yu, could all tell that whoever was inside the waterfall hadn’t attacked with killing intent, but rather, was issuing a warning.

The Demonic cultivator hovered in midair, his face pale white, looking at the waterfall with terror. Finally he clasped hands and bowed deeply, then hurried back to his ship. The white fox hadn’t moved the entire time, nor had it even looked up. It simply continued to practice breathing techniques with the white jade.

Meng Hao’s eyes flickered, but he continued to stand there silently. Bei Yu hesitated for a moment, then moved forward toward the waterfall. Feeling she had no other choice, she clasped hands and bowed, then said, “I am Sea Daughter Bei Yu of the Junior generation, from the Nine Seas God World. Senior, what relationship do you have with our Demonic Cultivator Horde?”

Demon Mantra: Mesmeric Rebuke was an esoteric magic of the Demonic Cultivator Horde, something that no outsider would ever have access to. And yet, they had all seen it unleashed right here.

There was no response from the waterfall, and eventually, the white fox opened its mouth and swallowed the white jade. Then, it turned, disappearing into the waterfall in a flash of white.

Bei Yu hesitated for a moment, and finally decided not to risk going into the waterfall. Just now, the power of a single word had revealed that the cultivation base of whoever was inside... was terrifyingly powerful.

After clasping hands respectfully one more time, Bei Yu headed back to her ship. It was in that moment that Meng Hao blinked his right eye nine times in quick succession. Rumbling filled his mind as his view of the world suddenly changed completely. His vision was suddenly empowered to pierce through the waterfall where, shockingly, he saw an Immortal’s cave, and a middle-aged man sitting there cross-legged. Located next to the man was a tomb!

It was as if the man had always been there, and always would be, sitting there accompanying the tomb!

As soon as Meng Hao laid eyes on him, the man in the Immortal's cave suddenly turned to look at him. As their gazes met, an expression of shock could be seen in his eyes, and he waved his sleeve, terminating Meng Hao's vision. Pain filled his mind, and his face reddened, but he quickly recovered.

Despite the vision having ended, he could still clearly picture the man's appearance, and remembered that the man had a white scale on his forehead.

"He was a Demonic cultivator!" he thought. After a moment, he proceeded forward. Jian Daozi hesitated for a moment, then followed. Soon, everyone else on the ships followed suit.

After proceeding onward for a bit, Meng Hao's hand suddenly shot out to grab Jian Daozi. Jian Daozi considered dodging, but hesitated, and Meng Hao's hand latched onto his arm.

"Grand Immortal..." he said, sounding alarmed.

Meng Hao's face was calm as his hand clenched down onto Jian Daozi's arm. Cracking sounds could be heard as he then cleanly ripped off one of Jian Daozi's fingers. The pain caused Jian Daozi to shake, but he didn't dare to show any anger, only fear.

"That Demonic cultivator just now was one of the knives you had prepared to stick into our backs, right?" Meng Hao said coolly. Then he released Jian Daozi's arm.

A bitter look appeared on Jian Daozi's face, as if he wanted to explain what had happened, but couldn't.

"You can continue to pretend as much as you want, but remember... don't provoke me!" Meng Hao said one word at a time, staring Jian Daozi in the eye.

"Ripping off your finger was just a warning. If you dare to provoke me again... I don't care who you have hidden here in the Windswept Realm, nor how many knives you've prepared... you will regret it." At this point, Meng Hao gave a slight smile.

To Jian Daozi, however, that smile was filled with something utterly terrifying, as if the person in front of him were a fiendish monster, someone he didn't dare to ever provoke. If he did, then... he had no idea what the consequences might be.

They didn't encounter anything unusual during the rest of their journey. Nor did Jian Daozi speak any further with Meng Hao. As they traveled along, Meng Hao continued to take in the sights, his expression tranquil.

As for the other cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm, they proceeded along quietly. After what had happened to the middle aged Demonic cultivator, their aggressive attitudes seemed to have been reined in, and they didn't impulsively try to grab any of the desirable things they saw along the way.

The Ninth Nation was not very large. After flying for about half a day, Bei Yu veered off toward the Immortal's cave she had selected. One by one, the other Demonic cultivators also left, and eventually Fan Dong'er and her young cultivator companion departed. Soon, a city appeared up ahead of Meng Hao.

It was a city of mortals, and was also the capital city of the Ninth Nation.

Behind the capital city, a mountain was just barely visible. The top half was capped in snow, and the bottom half was emerald green. Beneath the mountain was a lake, which was fed by a river that stretched off into the distance.

The lake was as smooth as a mirror, without the slightest wave or ripple, revealing a perfect reflection of the sky.

Jian Daozi continued to accompany Meng Hao as he flew past the city and across the lake. Soon, he was directly in front of Mount Whiteseal.

As they neared, a frigid wind blew down from the mountain. It was currently summer, and the heat was oppressive, so the cold wind was incredibly refreshing. It was the kind of feeling that would cause people to instantly take a liking to this mountain that was half-covered in snow.

The feeling was reinforced by the white snow on the top half of the mountain, which formed a striking contrast with the emerald green bottom half. The thing that moved Meng Hao the most, though, was that as they neared, he could clearly sense the natural law and World Essence... growing stronger and more defined.

It was as if this mountain were the nucleus of the entire Ninth Nation, as if it was the source of all the natural law and Essence.

In addition, the mountain caused Meng Hao to feel a sensation similar to that which he had experienced from the Towers of Tang on Planet South Heaven.

It was the type of feeling that came from an object that had been the subject of worship for countless tens of thousands of years. It was an intangible energy, similar to that which came from burning incense. After congealing to a certain extent, it became the National Aura of the Ninth Nation, and eventually transformed... into a type of qi flow!

The qi flow of the Windswept Realm!

Meng Hao was becoming increasingly moved. His eyes gradually grew wider as he gazed up at the highest peaks of the mountain, from which he sensed some type of summoning.

The sensation slowly grew more and more intense, causing Meng Hao's heart to begin to pound. His blood began to surge through his veins, and soon he couldn't control the urge to head to the peak of the mountain and see what it was that was calling him.

Just when he was about to step forward, he stopped.

“Interesting. For some reason, I have the feeling that the purpose of the summons is to try to entice me to fly directly to the peak of the mountain....” After a moment of thought, he didn't do so, but rather, began to ascend the stone stairs which began at the very foot.

Behind him, Jian Daozi and the other old men noticed what he was doing, and exchanged shocked looks.

Mount Whiteseal was the most sacred location in all of the Ninth Nation, a Holy Mountain that many Immortals had visited in the past. Virtually all of them had chosen to fly directly to the top, whereas Meng Hao chose to walk up slowly from the bottom. It was extremely rare.

Actually, ascending the mountain from the very bottom would impart an even more profound sensation regarding the natural laws and Essences that were focused on this nucleus of the Ninth Nation, as well as the National Aura.

Meng Hao began to walk up the steps, taking his time. Sometimes he even stopped to relish the sensation of the natural laws on the mountain, and the omnipresent Essences. Furthermore, he was also able to sense... the so-called National Aura which had built up on the mountain because of the years of worship.

At one point, he stretched his right hand out into the air and made a grasping motion. "Is this... the Essence of wind?" he murmured.

Although he didn't know it, somewhere out in the Ninth Nation, a gale-force wind sprang up.

"The Essence of water.... And this is fire.... They're all incomplete...."

Time passed as he strolled his way upward. Soon it was night, and eventually the rising sun could be seen once again. Then it was noontime. It was at this point that he passed out of the emerald green portion of the mountain and entered the snow white area. Step by step, he went onward. He immersed himself in contemplation of the mountain, in enlightenment. He forgot about walking, forgot about even moving forward.

He wasn't aware of it, but as he proceeded along up the mountain, all of the lands of the Ninth Nation were shaking. Wind blew and rain fell. Lights flashed in the sky, and Spirit Springs erupted. Mountains vanished and then reappeared, and rivers changed course. The entire world was altered.

All of the changes occurred due to Meng Hao walking up the mountain and contemplating the world's natural laws. As he gained enlightenment of the Essences of Heaven and Earth, he made acquisitions which manifested as transformations in the Ninth Nation.

Back at the foot of the mountain, Jian Daozi and the others had long since begun to stare with wide eyes and slack jaws. Even more so than the other old men, Jian Daozi's eyes were now filled with profound anxiety. And what he was anxious about was clearly not Meng Hao.

In fact, Meng Hao wasn't even aware of the fact that he had already reached the peak of the mountain!

Chapter 1093: His Name Shakes the Echelon!

Atop the snow-capped mountain peak, a frigid wind blew snowflakes onto Meng Hao's head. They quickly melted, taking with them some of the warmth inside of him. The resulting sensation was one of icy coldness.

The coldness caused Meng Hao's somewhat blank eyes to suddenly clear. As he regained his senses, the incredible transformations to the lands of the Ninth Nation ceased.

"The world has invisible natural laws...." he murmured.

"On top of natural law is the omnipresent power of Essence.... Understanding something's intrinsic qualities, and seeing its true origin, knowing EVERYTHING about it... that is its Essence." Although his journey from the bottom of the mountain to the top had seemed to go quickly, it truth, it had taken quite a bit of time.

That contradiction actually led him to significant enlightenment regarding Mount Whiteseal and the Ninth Nation. However, he still felt as if there were some areas he hadn't been able to probe. There was something about this mountain, this nation, and even this Realm, that was... incongruous.

It was as if there was a power of rejection, a power that, despite Meng Hao's observations of natural laws and Essence during his trip up the mountain, ensured that his understanding was merely superficial. Now that he thought back, he realized that there was nothing profound or important imprinted in his heart.

After a moment of thought, he looked around at the snowflakes covering his field of vision and drifting down onto his body.

The ground was covered with a thick layer of snow that quickly captured any snowflakes which landed on it. They lost any ability to dance or flutter, no matter how much the wind blew to pick them up.

However, no matter how much his vision was obscured by the snowflakes, he could still see that up ahead of him was... a statue.

It was a statue surrounded by swirling snow. It depicted a man, apparently middle-aged, with a slight smile on his face. He didn't seem powerful or solemn, but a sharp gleam could be seen in his

eyes that appeared to be an admonishing expression. Anyone who caught sight of the statue would be inwardly shaken.

It was the kind of feeling a mortal would experience upon facing a wild beast.

It was as if this person's wrath could cause Heaven and Earth to crumble, could shake the world, could cause all living things to bow in worship. Meng Hao took a deep breath as he looked at the statue; it almost seemed to be looking back at him.

That simple gaze caused his mind to reel, sent his cultivation base into chaos, and caused his qi and blood to seethe. He coughed up a mouthful of blood and staggered backward several paces, his face flickering.

"Just what Realm was this person in?" the thought. "It's only a statue, so it could only have a tiny percentage of the true self's power, and yet its divine will is shocking!"

"Wait a second, that's not right. This feeling... is so familiar!" His eyes flashed as he looked up at the statue, and then a strange expression appeared in his eyes.

"I was called here by this statue...."

"Furthermore, the power that injured me didn't come from the statue, but rather... the entire Ninth Nation!" His eyes glittered as he turned to look out at the entire Ninth Nation.

"That was... the power of the National Fate. The reason it feels so familiar is because this place is the same as the Tower of Tang!! Or perhaps it would be better to say that the power of the Ninth Nation's qi flow, when combined, allows this statue to radiate astonishing pressure!"

"The Windswept Realm has nine nations, and each one... has a bit more than ten percent of the qi flow of the Windswept Realm!"

"The reason I experienced that sensation of rejection is because... I'm not an entity of the Windswept Realm!"

“Well, now that I’m here, there should be some method to get rid of the power of rejection, and attain the approval of the National Aura!” Meng Hao looked back at the statue, and his eyes came to focus on an almost undetectable mark on the back of its hand.

Without careful examination, it would be virtually impossible to clearly make out the mark. Meng Hao’s eyes shone with determination as he formed his divine sense into a magical technique and shot it out toward the mark. However, the mark seemed impossible to break open, as if some type of seal were in place that would require several hours to break through. Meng Hao pondered silently, then suddenly performed an incantation gesture with his right hand and unleashed the Fifth Demon Sealing Hex.

By now, he was very familiar with the Fifth Hex, and had been able to detect that it was useful when dealing with seals. Reverse inside and outside. Consume and spit out. It could unbind all sorts of seals!

As Meng Hao unleashed the Hexing magic, Jian Daozi and the others at the foot of the mountain looked on with fixed gazes. Jian Daozi sighed inwardly, and an imperceptible flicker ran through his eyes. Although he was incapable of making any further cultivation base breakthroughs in this lifetime, he had been able to utilize a secret magic to extend his longevity for many, many years.

In fact, he had lived for so long that he had long since forgotten exactly how old he was. Furthermore, he would never be able to forget how Immortals trampled the inhabitants of the Windswept Realm beneath their feet, humiliating them. He would never be able to forget how it felt to be treated like a slave.

“Perhaps if I hadn’t met THAT person... then I wouldn’t have such feelings,” he thought. “After all, the Windswept Realm is one of the Lower Realms of the Immortal World, and is a slave world.” He bowed his head to cover the hatred and venom that flickered in his eyes.

Soon, vigilance took over, and he looked up. All such previous looks had disappeared from his eyes, which were now filled with what appeared to be mindless veneration for Immortals.

Actually, of the countless Immortals that he had encountered, none had given him the same feeling as Meng Hao. His vigilance intensified.

“His cultivation base is profound, he is extremely cunning, and he attacks with utter ruthlessness. He... is not the type of person to be dealt with easily. However, he will most likely fall into a trance here. And even if that doesn’t happen... it doesn’t matter how strong he is, it won’t be long before the Windswept Realm’s patience will be at an end, and it will completely explode!” Jian Daozi took

a deep breath, and a brilliant light flashed in his eyes before they once again returned to their previous state. He slid his hands into their opposite sleeves, then stooped over low, making himself look inconspicuous and innocuous.

“There is no member of the Echelon who will understand the statue of the Imperial Lord at a single glance. Even though some of the people who come here are aware of its secrets, and each time they come the duration grows shorter, in the end, the fastest one will take at least six hours. This Meng Hao might be incredibly intelligent, with extraordinary enlightenment, but even he would need more time....” Inwardly, he was laughing coldly as he looked up at Meng Hao on top of the mountain. Then, his face suddenly flickered, and his eyes went wide with disbelief.

It wasn't just him. The old men behind him were staring with wide eyes, and panting.

In the moment that Meng Hao unleashed his Hexing magic on the sealing mark, he got the sensation that he was opening a door. His mind trembled, and the world shook. Countless natural laws exploded out of that door, as well as numerous Essences. They swept about, burying him, transforming into a tempest that raged in all directions.

The previously calm Ninth Nation was once again struck with incredible transformations. Mountain ranges rose and rivers changed their course. The incredible transformations caused an indescribable feeling to float up in the minds and hearts of all living creatures in the Ninth Nation.

Meng Hao's breath came in ragged pants as the tempest swirled around him. Numerous natural laws and Essences could be seen, but soon, his eyes glittered as he realized that many of them were duplicates. The glow of augury could be seen, and soon Meng Hao was able to determine... that there were only three thousand!

Among those three thousand, the number that weren't duplicates consisted of only... three hundred!

His eyes flickered as the tempest suddenly slowed down and began to converge in front of him in the form of a flame.

The flame danced down into the statue's hand, as if it were a lamp, a lamp held by the statue!

The dancing flame cast strange light onto the statue, and when that light touched Meng Hao, he suddenly felt the power of rejection fading significantly.

He gazed at the flame, within which could be seen three hundred natural laws and Essences. Unfortunately, they weren't complete, although that was the very reason that Meng Hao was able to sense them at all.

When he caught sight of those three hundred Essences, a voice suddenly boomed out like thunder in his mind.

“Three thousand Daos. Three thousand Realms. Nine Windswept Nations. Nine Nations with three hundred Daos each. They form the World Seal.... The final three hundred Daos are located in the central temple!

“Foreigners, the more great Daos you come to understand, the more enlightenment you receive, and the sooner the day shall come in which you achieve your Dao!”

The voice was profound, but Meng Hao had no time to think about it; the flame in the statue's hand suddenly caused him to sense... vibrations coming from his Nirvana Fruit.

Those vibrations were that of desire. Meng Hao suddenly had the powerful sense that... if he could gain enlightenment regarding those three hundred Essences, then he should be able to fully fuse with his second Nirvana Fruit!

In that same moment, a beam of light exploded out from the Windswept Realm's central temple. It shot screaming through the air, causing all cultivators in the world to stare at it with wide eyes.

It caused boundless ripples to spread out, filling the sky of the Windswept Realm, enabling everyone to see several illusory mountains, all of which had huge statues on them.

Apparently, this illusory world on display... representing unparalleled heights of glory!

Suddenly, one of the statues collapsed, sending a huge boom out in all directions. Even as it collapsed, it reformed, transforming into a new statue, a statue... of Meng Hao!

An austere voice echoed out into all minds, filling all hearts: “Meng Hao of the Ninth Nation has exceeded the previous record holder. He has materialized a statue of himself, and shall be rewarded with the qi flow of the Ninth Nation!”

“Impossible!” thought Jian Daozi, shaking. Behind him, the other old men stared with wide eyes.

As of this moment, the qi flow of the Ninth Nation seemed to fully accept Meng Hao. As it swirled around him, the power of rejection vanished completely. Panting, Meng Hao looked up into the sky.

At the same time, the other cultivators and Echelon members in the other nations were completely shaken.

In the Fourth Nation stood a handsome young man, who currently had a strange look in his eyes. Balling his hands into fists, he growled, “Meng Hao. Why does his name seem so familiar?”

In the First Nation, the incomparably proud number one member of the Echelon stood in front of a similar statue, which was also shining brightly. A ball of flame could also be seen in that statue’s hand. Clearly... he had gained enlightenment mere moments after Meng Hao had.

After looking shocked for a moment, he said, “Faster than me... interesting. Well, even if he was notified about some of the secrets of this place, the enlightenment here can only be acquired by experiencing it over time.”

A profound gleam appeared in his eyes, and he began to laugh. “I think this time I’ll be able to add another precious item to my collection. Meng Hao of the Ninth Nation. He’s from the Ninth Mountain and Sea, right? So, he must be the guy Xue’er is looking for?”

In the Eighth Nation was a young man surrounded by swirling bones. He suddenly looked in the direction of the Ninth Nation. “Meng Hao.... His surname is Meng!”

Other members of the Echelon were all similarly shocked, and for the first time, Meng Hao’s name was imprinted into their hearts. They were all members of the Echelon, and were Chosen among Chosen. How could they easily back down from a challenge!?

The desire to fight rose up intensely in their hearts, inadvertently stirred up by Meng Hao.

Chapter 1094: The War of the Nine Nations Begins

A massive wind surged up. It was as if the Windswept Realm was building up power, which could explode out at any moment.

Once that power erupted, the Nine Nations would be swept into war, a war between all cultivators. It heralded... the Echelon battles!

It would determine who was truly number one in the Echelon, who was the true peak power amongst them. To become an Echelon cultivator, one had to be a Chosen among Chosen in any given Mountain and Sea. They were people who could, based on their own cultivation base... challenge experts above their own level!

Blazing suns like that were people who wouldn't easily accept being inferior to others; they were people who strove to be the champion of their generation!

Actually... despite the fact that young man from the First Mountain and Sea was publicly acknowledged as the number one in the Echelon... how could the others fear him?!

The fighting would happen one way or another. Furthermore, in the Windswept Realm... this was a chance for all members of the Echelon in this generation... to experience their first true war!

The war began in the instant that Meng Hao stepped onto the mountain peak, and the light from the central temple shot into the sky, revealing the statues.

As of that moment, Meng Hao's name spread throughout all Nine Nations, and was fixed firmly into the minds of all the cultivators from the Nine Mountains and Seas, and all of the other members of the Echelon.

It was at this point that a figure could be seen speeding along through the Fifth Nation. It was a young woman, incredibly beautiful, although frowning slightly. Behind her were eight beams of light, doggedly pursuing her with deadly intent.

Each one of those pursuing figures was in the Ancient Realm. Furthermore, these people did not have less than five extinguished Soul Lamps; rather, they were so profound as to be unreadable!

That was supposed to be an impossibility in the Windswept Realm, and yet... it clearly wasn't!

The woman was none other than the successor of the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite, Xue'er. As she sped along, she looked up and saw the light coming from the central temple. She saw the statues and the mountains up in the sky, and she saw Meng Hao. At long last, she also heard his name.

“Is it him...?” she thought. Despite being pursued the way she was, her eyes shone with a brilliant light, and she instantly committed Meng Hao’s name to memory. Then, she continued to fly along, and her eight pursuers whistled after her as they tried to catch up.

Meanwhile, back on Mount Whiteseal in the Ninth Nation, Meng Hao took a deep breath and looked back down from the sky. The fire in the statue’s hand cast light into his eyes, filling them with a strange flickering.

After a moment passed, he smiled.

“So, I broke the previous record.... I bet that really sets off the other Echelon Chosen. Well... GOOD!

“I don’t care what other strange things there are in this Windswept Realm, or what Jian Daozi and his pals are scheming... they have nothing to do with me!

“I never imagined that I wouldn’t even need to go to the central temple to find a method for fully absorbing my second Nirvana Fruit and... stepping into the Allheaven Immortal Realm!” Meng Hao took a deep breath. His heart burst with anticipation, and intense excitement filled him.

Without any hesitation, he stepped forward and sat down cross-legged. Next, he released Chu Yuyan from his bag of holding. After looking around for a moment, Chu Yuyan was clearly shaken. She could sense how different the Windswept Realm was, and without any further prompting from Meng Hao, she sat cross-legged and began to practice cultivation. Her focus was now breaking through into the Immortal Realm.

Meng Hao nodded silently, then sent out his divine sense into the flame. Instantly, he could detect the three hundred great Daos inside, the three hundred natural laws, the three hundred Essences!

He had the sudden premonition that the more Essences he came to understand, the easier it would be to absorb his second Nirvana Fruit.

“If one nation isn’t enough, then it will have to be two. If all of the Nine Nations and their 2,700 Essences are insufficient, then I’ll go to the central temple, and use 3,000 Great Dao Essences to fully absorb my second Nirvana Fruit!” He closed his eyes and fully poured his divine sense into the flame.

At the foot of the mountain, Jian Daozi's face flickered. Behind him, the other old men were staring reverently at Meng Hao. After a while, they began to disperse.

Time passed. A month went by in the blink of an eye. During that time, the Windswept Realm seemed peaceful and quiet. However, dark undercurrents swept about. Although fighting had not yet burst out between the ordinary cultivators, and the Echelon cultivators were still adapting themselves to the locale, the mortal armies of the Nine Nations had already begun to wage war.

The armies of the Nine Nations had long since prepared for this war, and now they began to march toward the center of the Windswept Realm... to the region of the central temple.

That area consisted of an enormous plain, at the very center of which was the temple, which was a restricted area. The grass on that plain was white, and the soil was black.

Also located on the central plain were nine towering pagodas. They were ancient and archaic, as if they had existed there for countless years.

Each one of the pagodas stood for one of the nations, around which the armies of the Nine Nations clustered. Each nation had over a million troops; added altogether, there were a total of nearly 10,000,000 soldiers on the battlefield.

Chaotic fighting instantly broke out. None of the nations allied with each other, ensuring a massive battle royale involving all nine of the nations.

Miserable screams rose up into the air, along with the cries of rage that came before death as countless soldiers were slaughtered. The blades and spears that they wielded seemed to indicate that their mission was to cover the black soil with blood until it turned purple.

Under the orders of their marshals and generals, the armies rapidly turned the entire area into a sea of blood.

There was no right or wrong in the fighting. No one questioned why it was happening. They simply fought an eternal battle, and sometimes, it seemed as if they weren't fighting for the right to live, but the right to die!

As the casualties piled up, the nine pagodas began to glow with the color of blood. Shockingly, the brightest glow was coming from the Third Nation, from which a pillar of blood-colored light rose up 300 meters into the air.

The blood-colored beams rising up from the other pagodas were all several dozen meters high. As for the Second Nation, the Sixth Nation, and the Ninth Nation, their blood-colored beams were only about thirty meters.

The only way to get those beams of light to climb higher... was to fight and kill!

The more enemies they killed, the higher the blood-colored beam would climb!

Almost in the same moment that the blood-colored beams rose up from the nine pagodas, the Echelon cultivators on the various National Aura mountains throughout the Nine Nations all felt the qi flow and the speed of their enlightenment changing.

In the Third Nation in particular, the qi flow surged up, such that it seemed as if those who were there were receiving the aid of a divine blessing in terms of gaining enlightenment.

There were transformations in the other mountains as well. In the Second, Sixth and Ninth Nations, the National Aura was out of balance, causing the mountains to tremble. Apparently, the contemplation of enlightenment there was unstable, as if something were obstructing it.

The National Aura scattered, causing pressure to weigh down on the nations. The mortals could only vaguely sense it, but to the cultivators, it was very obvious.

That was especially true of the cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm, who were far more sensitive to it. Fan Dong'er, Bei Yu, and the other Demonic cultivators could all sense the incredible pressure, and their faces flickered as they looked off into the distance.

The pressure rapidly increased, weighing down over them like a sword. It was a very uncomfortable feeling that, if it went on for too long, would significantly restrict their cultivation bases.

Meng Hao's eyes flashed as he emerged from contemplation. Moments ago, he had failed in his enlightenment; not only was the task more difficult, much of the qi flow on the mountain had scattered. In addition, some of the defensive mechanisms built into the mountain had been weakened.

“Why is this happening...?” he thought, frowning. He quickly realized that he simply didn’t understand enough about the Windswept Realm. He rose to his feet and looked out in the direction of the central temple.

Although it was quite a distance away, he could sense it, and knew that the armies of the various nations were engaged in bitter fighting. He could also sense the rising columns of blood-colored light.

After observing for a moment, he spent a moment in thought, and suddenly reached a new conclusion.

“The mortals’ war can influence the qi flow. The more people are killed, the stronger the National Aura will get. Conversely, if the mortal army of the nation is weakened... then the National Aura protecting the mountain will be influenced, as well as making it more difficult for me to gain enlightenment!”

Meng Hao’s eyes flickered as they narrowed.

“But I didn’t give any orders for the Ninth Nation to send its army into battle....

“Well, no matter what, if they’re defeated on the battlefield outside of the central temple, not only will it influence the speed of my enlightenment, the defenses formed by the National Aura will also be weakened, or even disappear. If that happens... then the dangers of having the sealing mark stolen will be increased!

“Perhaps that is the whole purpose of this trial by fire?” After a moment of thought, he understood why the Mountains and Seas sent nine people. The other eight were most likely intended to be sent into battle. Although they couldn’t be used to kill mortals, they possessed many, many other methods that could let them influence the tide of battle.

“It seems I need to send some people to help with the battle. Unfortunately, I can’t go myself....” He frowned, then spent another moment to confirm his line of thinking. He couldn’t even leave Mount Whiteseal; once the process of contemplating enlightenment was begun, it could not be paused. In order to stop, he needed to be enlightened regarding at least 100 Essences.

Currently, he had only been enlightened regarding a bit more than 80 Essences. It wouldn't be long before he reached 100.

After a moment of thought, he reached up and sliced a cut into his forehead, causing a drop of blood to fly out.

He waved a finger, sending some divine will into the drop of blood, which then expanded rapidly, transforming into an almost exact duplicate of Meng Hao

“It's too bad I still haven't figured out how to repair my True Self Dao clone. The only thing I can do now is make divine will incarnation clones like this.” Sighing, he closed his eyes and sent some divine sense out to continue contemplating enlightenment of the World Essence and the great Daos. As for the divine will incarnation, he turned his head and transformed into a beam of light that shot off Mount Whiteseal and into the sky.

Chapter 1095: Loathing Meng Hao!

The incarnation didn't head to the battlefield, as it didn't possess very much battle prowess; it would dissipate after a relatively short period of time. Instead, it headed to the Immortal's caves occupied by other cultivators from the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Similar scenes were playing out in the other nations, most notably in the First Nation, where four beams of light sped toward the central battlefield.

Clearly, the Echelon cultivators had all realized that the mortals' war was extremely important!

Losses would result in the scattering of the National Aura, and a weakening of the defenses. If the defenses were removed... they would be in extreme danger!

In one particular mountain range in the Ninth Nation was a valley that looked like an Immortal utopia. Cultivators clustered about inside and outside the valley, staring in deathly silence at a middle-aged cultivator up ahead.

It was one of the Demonic cultivators from the Ninth Sea, who was currently reclining on a divan, surrounded by dancing female cultivators. Beautiful music drifted through the air, accompanied by birdsong and the fragrance of flowers. The entire scene was lovely.

The Demonic cultivator sighed deeply as he looked around. He still wasn't used to the situation; during the last month everyone he had encountered had looked at him with both fear and fanatical reverence.

A single word from him could cause people to commit suicide. A single glance would cause any beautiful female cultivator he saw to approach seductively and cater to his every desire. If he got irritated, everyone trembled in fear. It was as if he were the will of Heaven, and he was completely lost within that feeling.

He had never experienced anything like this back in the Ninth Sea, nor could he ever have imagined anything like it. There were simply too many people who were more powerful than he was.

Even if he went to some remote location, perhaps he could enjoy a life like this temporarily, but someone stronger than him would eventually come along and take it all away, and then his life would return to how it usually was.

But the Windswept Realm was different, leading to a completely different mental state.

Granted, there had been some incredible pressure just now. Plus, he was a disciple of the Nine Seas God World, and understood that he had a mission in this place. However, he just couldn't hold back from indulging in the pleasures of the Windswept Realm.

As he thought about this he reached up and slowly ran his finger down the cheek of one of the beautiful women. When he saw the awe in her eyes, the Demonic cultivator laughed loudly, and was just about to say something when, all of a sudden, his face fell. He looked up and saw a beam of light flying toward him through midair, which then transformed into Meng Hao.

"Meng Hao!" The Demonic cultivator's eyes widened, and he rose to his feet, instantly on guard. Then he realized it was nothing more than an incarnation. Of course, despite being only an incarnation, it was still Meng Hao.

"Go to the central temple battlefield immediately," Meng Hao said. That simple sentence caused the Demonic cultivator's face to distort with rage.

"You don't have the right to order me around!"

“Maybe not, but I’m strong enough to kill you,” Meng Hao responded coolly. His words were filled with infinite coldness. He might be only a weak incarnation that couldn’t do anything to the Demonic cultivator, and yet his words were filled an inarguable murderous aura. “Go. That is your mission in this place. It doesn’t matter what pleasures you’ve enjoyed or how much you’ve fallen in love with them, if you forget your mission, then there’s no reason for me to keep you alive.”

With that, Meng Hao spun and shot off into the distance.

The Demonic cultivator stood there silently for a moment, then threw his head back and roared. He might be furious, but he had no choice other than to comply. He flew up into the air, waved a hand, causing clouds and mist to surround him, and headed straight for the central battlefield.

Meng Hao wasn’t worried that the Demonic cultivator might refuse to go. He was not the first person Meng Hao had approached, but rather, the second. The first Demonic cultivator had also erupted into a fury, but in the end, was too terrified to refuse. The second Demonic cultivator reacted in the same way as the first one had. In their own little worlds, they were like emperors, with complete authority over everything. After only a month of living like that, they had almost become lost in their own fantasies. It was something that Meng Hao found extremely frightening. In his opinion, cultivators, even Demonic cultivators, should not have allowed their mindset to be influenced in such a way in the space of just a month.

There were many things from the outside world that were the complete opposite here, and yet, it was happening within an unreasonably short period of time.

It was almost as if there were some bizarre power in the Windswept Realm that amplified one’s desires by multiple orders of magnitude, making them more intense and pronounced.

“Have I been influenced as well?” he asked himself, but had no answer. With a flash, he sped toward the location of the next Demonic cultivator.

His destination was a small city, within which was a blacksmith shop. A burly man was there, bare-chested, and the clang of metal striking metal could be heard as he worked with iron. He occasionally pulled a piece of iron from a furnace, examined it, then began to strike it with a hammer.

The weather was oppressively hot, ensuring that not many people were out in the streets. When Meng Hao appeared, a tremor ran through the burly man’s body, and he looked up and chuckled wryly.

This man was none other than the extremely devious and cunning burly body cultivator from the Demonic Cultivator Horde that Meng Hao had exchanged blows with.

“You didn’t have to come personally,” the man said. “I know what my mission is. Once I finish with this sword, I’ll be on my way.” The man lifted up the bright red strip of metal he had been working with, then shoved it into cold water. Hissing sounds and steam rose up, and after a moment, he pulled the metal back out. It was a blade, riddled with tiny holes, yet overflowing with a murderous aura.

“You’re different from all the others,” Meng Hao said coolly. He looked around at the blacksmith shop, which appeared to be completely ordinary, without the slightest bit of extravagance to be seen. From what he could tell, the inhabitants of the city had no idea that this burly man was actually an Immortal.

“My desires are unique,” the man said, “and unusually strong. Because of that, they are hard to fulfill.” After a moment of thought, the man tossed the huge blade into his bag of holding, grinned at Meng Hao, and then walked out of the shop.

For some reason, the man’s style seemed to be very different from before, causing Meng Hao to stare at him for a moment.

“I hope you stay this way,” he said suddenly.

“That’s the plan,” was the reply. The burly man laughed loudly, then flew into the air. He quickly disappeared over the horizon. Meng Hao’s eyes glittered, then he turned and vanished, to reappear directly in front of the man.

Although it had seemed that the man flew off toward the central battlefield, he actually ended up fleeing in the opposite direction. As soon as he saw Meng Hao blocking his way, he laughed heartily.

“Oops, I took a wrong turn! My mistake!” he said. Then he turned and headed toward the central battlefield.

Meng Hao watched him disappear. After a moment of thought, he looked back at the blacksmith shop for a moment, then left. He didn't force anyone else to fight. Instead, he merely inspected the Immortal's caves of the other cultivators in the Ninth Nation.

His incarnation was slowly fading away, and perhaps because of that, it was becoming more and more difficult for anyone to detect him.

He saw Bei Yu, surrounded by a sea of flowers. There were also countless cultivators and mortals who were tending to the flowers like gardeners, while Bei Yu practiced cultivation in the middle. Although the entire scene seemed harmless at first, Meng Hao was able to see that the seeds of desire were slowly taking root within her.

He found Fan Dong'er, whose situation was quite unique. Not a single person could be found in her vicinity, and in fact, she had placed herself in secluded meditation, choosing to have no contact whatsoever with the outside world.

He stood outside her Immortal's cave for quite some time, watching thoughtfully. Eventually he left.

Just before his incarnation faded away, he found the only other human cultivator besides Fan Dong'er, the young man from the Nine Seas God World. In general, he appeared to be refined and even scholarly, and yet the world he had created was like a scene from hell.

The mortals there trembled, and the cultivators were in terror as they excavated Immortal Jade out of an enormous mine!

When Meng Hao saw the Immortal jade, his mind trembled slightly, and he began to pant. It was as if some enormous power had surfaced in his mind, urging him to instantly slaughter the young cultivator and take all of the Immortal jade for himself.

The impulse rose up without any warning, and was so strong that Meng Hao's eyes were instantly shot with blood. His cultivation base surged, and he waved his hand, causing incredible pressure to weigh down on all life forms in the area. Their minds reeled, and a bellow of rage could be heard as the young cultivator suddenly flew up into the air.

"Meng Hao, what are you doing!?!?" he roared. Meng Hao's incarnation suddenly collapsed into pieces, transforming into nothing more than ash. It wasn't something done intentionally; rather, the

incarnation had reached its limit, and the surge of Meng Hao's cultivation base had caused any remaining life force it had to vanish.

The young man stared in shock for a moment, and then his face darkened. He looked in the direction of Mount Whiteseal and snorted coldly before floating back down to the ground.

Back on Mount Whiteseal, Meng Hao was seated cross-legged next to the statue. Suddenly, he coughed up a mouthful of blood, and his face went pale. He opened his eyes, and a shocked expression could be seen on his face.

He immediately performed a double-handed incantation gesture to ensure that his contemplation of enlightenment was not interrupted. If a backlash during the process of contemplating enlightenment of Essence did not destroy him in body and soul, it would still shatter his cultivation base.

Enlightenment like this could not be interrupted; complete focus was required.

"It's like I wasn't under control of myself!" he thought, shaken. "As soon as I saw that Immortal jade, the impulse I felt was too strong. It was... indescribable. Most terrifying of all was that in that moment, I didn't even have the inclination to fight back against it." He took a deep breath, suddenly aware of how truly mysterious the Windswept Realm was. Furthermore, he had the feeling that he was probably being influenced in certain ways that he wasn't even aware of, perhaps from the moment he had arrived in the Windswept Realm.

His heart had grown colder than it usually was, and the thought of that... caused him to tremble.

"Desires are amplified.... Thankfully, that was an incarnation, and it ended up self-destructing. If it had been my true form...." He could only imagine what would have happened in that case.

After a moment of silence, he once again immersed himself in contemplation. However, the vigilance in his heart remained at a peak.

Back on the mortal battlefield in the central district, the three Demonic cultivators had joined the fray, easing some of the tension. However, it didn't take long before cultivators from the other nations arrived, and the fighting grew more chaotic. The Ninth Nation was having trouble mustering its National Aura, causing them to suffer more defeats. In fact, of all the blood-colored beams, theirs was the lowest.

It was at this point... that the gaunt youth in the Eighth Nation, the one surrounded by bones, suddenly stood up. He was the first one to gain complete enlightenment of 100 Essences.

Furthermore, he ceased any continued efforts at gaining enlightenment, and turned toward the Ninth Nation, his killing intent rising high.

“Meng Hao. Surnamed Meng.... That’s the family name I hate more than any other!” With that, a flash could be seen as he shot toward the Ninth Nation, killing intent seething.

“Either way, you’ll be the first to die. I’ll take your sealing mark, and cut you down! I, Han Qinglei, will get the glory for slaughtering someone else in the Echelon!”

Chapter 1096: Han Qinglei!

When Han Qinglei, the Echelon cultivator from the Eighth Mountain, gained enlightenment of 100 Essences, a bright beam of light rose up from the temple in the middle of the crowded central battlefield with its millions of soldiers.

Colors flashed in the sky, and once again, the images of mountains and statues appeared up above. This time, another of the statues collapsed, to be replaced by the image of Han Qinglei.

“Han Qinglei of the Eighth Nation has broken the previous record, gaining enlightenment of 100 Essences, and shall be rewarded with a blessing of qi flow!”

As the ancient voice echoed out, red light erupted up from the Eighth Nation’s pagoda. It exceeded 300 meters and rapidly approached 450 meters. At the same time, the Eighth Nation’s qi flow increased, ensuring that the Mountain of National Aura’s defenses were increased to a terrifying degree.

Currently, the cultivators from the other nations were shaken. All eyes turned toward the Eighth Nation as Han Qinglei’s name became the second to rock the entire Windswept Realm!

Meanwhile, near the central temple, the red light shining from the Ninth Nation’s pagoda was growing increasingly weak. The overall strength of the Ninth Nation was weakening, and Mount Whiteseal’s defenses were substantially reduced.

Meng Hao's contemplation of enlightenment was going worse than ever, and he was incapable of stopping. He was now on his 98th Essence, and the enlightenment was slow in coming. All the while, he had to be very wary of the powerful influence of the Windswept Realm itself, which tried to incite his desires and lead him astray.

As the qi flow of the Ninth Nation faded, the influence of the Windswept Realm increased. Fan Dong'er and the others could sense this. Most importantly, the desires in their hearts grew more intense. If they couldn't understand the reason behind it, they would merely grow more frenzied, more lost. However, those who eventually reached an understanding of what was happening were terrified.

That was especially true of Fan Dong'er. She coughed up a mouthful of blood in the middle of her Immortal's cave, and her face revealed traces of panic. She had been the first among the group to sense the massive change in her inward desires, which was why she had chosen to go into secluded meditation in an attempt to gain control. As of this moment, however, the opposite was happening; she was on the verge of losing control.

As for Bei Yu, she sat in the middle of the sea of flowers, seemingly completely entranced. From the look of it, her entire body was in the process of merging into the sea of flowers, as if she herself were turning into a blossom among the sea of flowers!

At the same time, a bright beam containing countless bones shot through the air above the Eighth Nation at top speed. A day later, it reached the border between the Eighth and Ninth Nations. Without the slightest hesitation, Han Qinglei shot across the border, laughing maniacally as he burst into the Ninth Nation.

He wore a black robe, and was very gaunt; the murderous aura which surrounded him erupted explosively.

In almost the exact moment that he entered the Ninth Nation, Mount Whiteseal shook violently, and the defensive pressure of the Ninth Nation increased dramatically.

However, such pressure did nothing to Han Qinglei. Laughing uproariously, he shot out over the lands, a bright beam of light surrounded by innumerable illusory white bones. Shrill screams could be heard echoing out from the bones as he sped forward; the sky dimmed and winds swirled.

Black clouds spread out across the skies of the Ninth Nation, and all the lands were cast into shadow.

The murderous aura which erupted off of Han Qinglei was like a tempest as he shot toward Meng Hao!

As he passed along, the earth quaked, and all cultivators and living creatures in the Ninth Nation shook. From their perspective, the previously bright and sunny day had instantly turned as dark as night.

“Meng Hao, you’re DEAD!” he shouted, his voice echoing out as he increased his speed. He was like a lightning bolt that rapidly drew closer to Mount Whiteseal.

As he neared, the Ninth Nation’s National Aura dissipated even more rapidly, and the pressure grew more intense. Fan Dong’er once again coughed up a mouthful of blood, and suddenly looked off into the distance.

“What’s happening? What caused the influence to increase so much, and so quickly?!” She gritted her teeth and flew out of her Immortal’s cave. When she looked up into the air, her face flickered as she saw the roiling black clouds off in the distance.

Inside of those black clouds were countless bones, speeding toward the capital city, and the Ninth Nation’s Mountain of National Aura, Mount Whiteseal!

Fan Dong’er wasn’t the only shocked one. Bei Yu sat in the sea of flowers, an expression of struggle on her face. She forced her eyes open, and a tremor ran through her as she looked around. Then she started to struggle even harder.

In another area, in the Immortal jade mine, mad laughter rang out. It was a laughter of satisfaction and joy as the young cultivator from the Nine Seas God World was completely lost inside of himself. As he looked around, all he saw was endless Immortal jade.

“Wealth like this will make my cultivation base vastly more powerful!!”

As for the burly body cultivator and the other Demonic cultivators on the central temple battlefield, all of them were shaken inwardly, and their desires stirred to mad heights.

Heaven wished them dead, but first, it would drive them mad!

In the time it takes an incense stick to burn, the roiling black clouds sped from the border of the Ninth Nation all the way to Mount Whiteseal. The clouds acted like flesh, and the countless bones formed together into what looked like real bone structures. The entire thing transformed into a huge black fist!

It was fully 300 meters wide, shooting down from the sky toward Mount Whiteseal in a deadly strike!

“Time to die, Meng Hao!” he howled, voice sinister and full of killing intent. Everything shook as the fist descended toward the mountaintop, and Meng Hao, sitting there cross-legged by the statue.

By this point, Meng Hao had just gained enlightenment of the 99th Essence, and was very close to completing the entire process of the first stage. All he needed was one more Essence, and yet, because of the fading of the Ninth Nation’s National Aura, the enlightenment was very difficult and slow in the coming.

Rumbling could be heard as the fist smashed down toward Mount Whiteseal. All of a sudden, the statue began to glow, sending out a protective shield that covered the entire mountain, Meng Hao included.

The huge pitch-black fist slammed into the shield, causing a deafening boom to echo out. Colors flashed, and the lands trembled. Intense ripples spread out, along with cracking sounds, as a huge crack appeared in the shield. It quickly repaired itself, but based on the speed with which it did so, it was obvious that the shield would only hold out for so long.

The fist shattered into fragments, but it was, after all, just formed from clouds and some bones. Han Qinglei appeared, then transformed into a black bolt of lightning which smashed into the shield.

“OPEN UP!!” he roared. Although he was gaunt, he radiated terrifying energy. His cultivation base was only in the Immortal Realm, but he was capable of rocking the Ancient Realm!

An intense power radiated out from him... causing countless bolts of lightning to spring up. Shockingly, they rapidly transformed into nine Lightning Dragons.

Mount Whiteseal shook, but Meng Hao remained there with his eyes closed tightly. He could not halt his enlightenment before it was complete, and he was focusing his mind in an attempt to speed it up as much as possible.

“Give up!” Han Qinglei roared. “You’ll die today, and the Ninth Nation’s World Seal will be mine! I’m also going to wipe out your Echelon qualifications!”

“I, Han Qinglei, was the first to reach a full 100 Essences! I can kill anybody, but the main reason I’m picking you is because you’re surnamed Meng!”

“After you die, remember to tell your ancestors that the person who killed you was Qinglei of the Han Clan!”

It was at this point that, all of a sudden, Fan Dong’er appeared in midair. Killing intent swirled in her eyes, and the wave of her hand caused numerous imprints of magical items to appear on her body. They rapidly expanded, as the hundreds of magical symbols grew to the size of a small mountain.

The sight was monumentally shocking.

Fan Dong’er had no choice but to show up. She knew that if she didn’t, and the attack against Mount Whiteseal succeeded, the World Seal would be taken away. The result would be that she could no longer resist the influence of the Windswept Realm without any National Aura.

She could also see that Meng Hao was at a critical juncture, and wouldn’t be able to do anything, so she had no choice but to interfere, for her own sake.

“If I can just buy enough time, Meng Hao will come out eventually. This guy might be powerful, and might be in the Echelon, but Meng Hao is too!” Gritting her teeth, Fan Dong’er closed in and attacked Han Qinglei.

Han Qinglei’s eyes flashed as he caught sight of Fan Dong’er, and he smiled.

“You think a bit too much of yourself,” he said, his voice booming like thunder. “I think I need to show you why people like you... don’t even qualify to fight the Echelon!” He waved his right index finger, sending four roaring Lightning Dragons toward Fan Dong’er.

Simultaneously, rumbling sounds could be heard as Bei Yu, no longer in the middle of the sea of flowers, also closed in at high speed. One of her eyes was confused and vacant, but the other was clear, and even before she was close, she shouted out, causing invisible divine sense power to coalesce into a needle, which stabbed viciously toward Han Qinglei.

Han Qinglei's face flickered, and he waved his left hand, sending four more Lightning Dragons charging out. The fifth, he caused to self-detonate, borrowing the explosive power to fight back against the power of Bei Yu's divine sense.

“How amusing. Two beauties have teamed up to fight me. I almost don't have the heart to say so, but I can tell you that I look forward to flaying the two of you alive and revealing your true beauty; your white bones. How entrancing that will be!” Han Qinglei's eyes gleamed with a bloodthirsty light, and he licked his lips. Suddenly, a flash could be seen as he... transformed into three people!

One was his true form, the other two were clones!

All three licked their lips simultaneously. One attacked the shield, and the other two split up to handle Fan Dong'er and Bei Yu respectively. As explosions filled the air, expressions of disbelief appeared on the faces of Fan Dong'er and Bei Yu. Despite the fact that they were both fighting mere clones of Han Qinglei, to the two of them, it felt like they were fighting someone... vastly more powerful than them!

“Is everyone in the Echelon this strong....?” thought Fan Dong'er. Shaken, she looked over at Meng Hao sitting there cross-legged in meditation.

“Hurry it up, Meng Hao!!”

Chapter 1097: Valiant!

Han Qinglei, Echelon cultivator from the Eighth Mountain, was so powerful that Fan Dong'er and Bei Yu were both completely shaken. To them, any person who could rock the Ancient Realm while being in the Immortal Realm well-deserved to be referred to as a blazing sun.

As far as Fan Dong'er was concerned, Meng Hao was actually more powerful than those blazing suns. But now that she had met Han Qinglei, she had to admit that he was terrifyingly powerful.

The sensation she had experienced when fighting Meng Hao had now appeared for a second time.

“Are Echelon cultivators powerful... because they’re in the Echelon, or is it... their power that earns them a place there!?” Fan Dong’er couldn’t quite accept it. She was the Divine Daughter of the Nine Seas God World and before meeting Meng Hao, she had viewed herself as being above all others, the center of all attention. However, Meng Hao’s appearance on the scene had changed everything.

Even now, she could remember the first time she had met Meng Hao back on Planet South Heaven. Back then, he hadn’t been as terrifying as he was now. Furthermore, the speed with which he had risen to prominence made the entire situation difficult to accept. Before she could even come to terms with it, he was already far ahead of everyone else. Wherever he went, he became a huge mountain blocking the paths of everyone else.

A boom rang out, and blood oozed out of Fan Dong’er’s mouth. She fell back at top speed, waving her hand to cause numerous sealing marks to appear. They merged together in front of her to transform into a magic bottle, which then shot toward Han Qinglei’s hideously grinning clone.

Han Qinglei’s clone laughed coldly and performed an incantation gesture with his right hand. Instantly, a flower of white bones materialized. It spun through the air, radiating a white light as it slammed into the magic bottle. Massive rumbling could be heard as Han Qinglei shot forward. As he extended his hand, the flesh and blood suddenly transformed into bleached bones. He touched Fan Dong’er’s forehead and a boom rattled out. Blood sprayed out of her mouth, and she went pale white as freezing cold spread through her. Her vision swam, and a sensation of crisis welled up. Suddenly the air behind her shattered, and a female corpse appeared. Fan Dong’er had kept the corpse hidden up to now, but because the blow had sent her mind into chaos, she could do so no longer. Immediately, an aura of death exploded out, completely astonishing Han Qinglei. Being the cautious person that he was, he immediately fell back.

In that same instant, the space he had just occupied was inundated by countless black strands of hair, which then exploded out in all directions.

“Interesting,” the clone said, smiling. “It seems I’ll need to take things a bit more seriously.” Off to the side, his second clone was steadily forcing Bei Yu backward.

Bei Yu’s divine abilities and magical techniques caused rumbling sounds to fill the air. Her divine sense magical art sent innumerable invisible needles stabbing forward in attack. However, the mere wave of a hand by Han Qinglei’s clone caused a suit of bone armor to appear. He allowed the divine sense to strike him, and it did nothing. Then, the bone-armored clone stretched out both hands, and his fingertips turned into sharp claws which he waved through the air like the weapons of a celestial warrior. Instantly, Bei Yu was put into a very dangerous position.

Meanwhile, Han Qinglei's true form was performing numerous incantation gestures to unleash all sorts of divine abilities. Bright, multicolored lights slammed into the protective shield, causing it to twist and warp. Cracking sounds could be heard, and more fissures spread out.

Meng Hao continued to sit there cross-legged beneath the statue. He was currently contemplating the final Essence, and at the same time, was feeling extremely anxious. However, there was nothing he could do but focus all of his power and energy on the enlightenment.

All of a sudden, Han Qinglei and his two clones suddenly stopped in place and fell back. All three figures then flew toward each other and, instead of merging together, smiled viciously and then levied palm strikes against each other's chests!

At the same time, the three figures cried out: "Three Body Dao!" At the same time, an unbelievably powerful sound like a crack of thunder rang out.

After striking each other with their palms, the three figures' cultivation bases rocketed up, and their battle prowess increased dramatically! In fact, in this state... they were apparently more powerful than Han Qinglei when he was not split into three!

"Bone Tomb Magic!" The three figures split apart and shot toward Fan Dong'er, Bei Yu, and Mount Whiteseal's shield, bursting with incredible energy.

They moved so fast that they looked like black arrows, and in the blink of an eye, one of the figures was in front of Fan Dong'er. He waved his hand, causing countless white bones to descend, which then transformed into the shape of a tomb, with Fan Dong'er stuck in the middle.

A similar bone tomb appeared around Bei Yu, and another one descended toward Mount Whiteseal.

The three Han Qingleis all cried out together: "Three Body Dao! Bone Tomb Magic! Slaughter By Time!" Their voices echoed out, seemingly ancient and filled with the aura of Time.

The three bone tombs rumbled as they began to spin. Shockingly, bone headstones appeared on top of each of them, upon which shapes began to form, as if images of Bei Yu, Fan Dong'er, and Mount Whiteseal were being etched on their surfaces!

The image of Bei Yu was the first to be completed. A miserable shriek rang out, and she coughed up a mouthful of blood. Instantly, her body began to wither, and she seemed to be crumbling under intense pressure. She was incapable of escaping, trapped in the pressure of the bone tomb as it pushed her down toward the surface of the ground.

It was... turning into a real tomb!

Inside the tomb, Bei Yu was ashen, losing consciousness, her body rapidly aging as her life force was sucked away.

Fan Dong'er struggled to fight back, but she was no match. Despite the boundless will of death from the female corpse, she couldn't fight back against the pressure. Rumbling could be heard as Fan Dong'er was forced down toward the ground, crushed by the bone tomb. Her life force slowly began to flow away, and she began to age.

"Meng Hao!!" she cried urgently, and yet, her cry was quickly cut short.

At the same time, the third bone tomb was crushing down onto Mount Whiteseal's protective shield. Because of the losing battle on the central battlefield, the shield had been greatly weakened, and so under this attack the already-fractured shield instantly fell to pieces and was destroyed.

Fan Dong'er was being crushed. Bei Yu had lost consciousness. Mount Whiteseal's shield exploded. From all of these, it was possible to see exactly how powerful Han Qinglei was, and also, how strong Echelon cultivators were!

Each and every member of the Echelon was an incredibly powerful expert, someone who was above all other blazing suns. Furthermore, the only people of their generation who qualified to fight Echelon cultivators... were other Echelon cultivators!!

"Alright, Meng Hao, let's see how you fight back this time! Killing you like this might be a bit of a bore, but considering that you're surnamed Meng, even if you aren't connected to the Meng Clan, I'm elated to have the chance to slaughter you!" Han Qinglei laughed uproariously, and killing intent roiled up from his three bodies. As Mount Whiteseal's shield shattered, he instantly pounced down toward Meng Hao!

However, in almost the exact moment that he closed in, Meng Hao's right hand slapped down onto his bag of holding. Then, he waved his hand, sending numerous black pods flying out, his eyes tightly shut the entire time.

Magic Pod Soldiers!

Popping sounds could be heard as the black pods transformed into vicious imps, who screeched as they opened their mouths to reveal long, sharp teeth. There were a total of fifty blackpod imps, and as soon as they appeared on the scene, they shot toward Han Qinglei's three bodies.

"That's all you've got?!" Han Qinglei laughed coldly. Despite his words, he was inwardly vigilant. He had in no way underestimated Meng Hao, as he knew that weaklings would never be able to get into the Echelon.

Although he wasn't sure what exactly was so special about these blackpod imps, the fact that Meng Hao had unleashed them at such a critical point in the battle led Han Qinglei to believe that they were not something to be taken lightly. On the surface, he seemed to be acting rashly, but it was actually his clone that shot forward first, while his true form held back.

The fifty blackpod imps screamed as they shot through the air toward the clone. A boom could be heard as more than thirty were sent tumbling away, although they didn't seem to have received very serious injuries.

Han Qinglei was instantly shocked, and his eyes widened. As for the dozen or blackpod imps that remained on the clone, they opened their mouths wide and began to chew into it.

Han Qinglei snorted, allowing the clone to block the blackpod imps as his true form and his other clone closed in on Meng Hao.

"Those blackpod imps are pretty impressive, Meng Hao. After I kill you, I'll collect them up as souvenirs!" Han Qinglei and his clone increased their speed as they charged toward Meng Hao.

A tremor ran through Meng Hao. He was at a critical juncture, and was just a sliver away from achieving complete enlightenment. Han Qinglei wasn't giving him enough time! It was at this point that Meng Hao suddenly heard a deep growl, as if something which had long since been sleeping in his bag of holding were finally beginning to wake up.

It was a very familiar feeling, and after a moment of considering, Meng Hao realized that it was... the aura of his Blood Mastiff!

“Is the mastiff going to wake up?!” he thought, his mind spinning. However, what appeared was not the mastiff. Instead, as his bag of holding opened up, an archaic voice echoed out, accompanied by the sound of flapping wings.

“Yo! This mountain belongs to Lord Fifth, the Heavens belong to Lord Fifth, the Earth belongs to Lord Fifth, and this little Haowie is also Lord Fifth’s! Lord Fifth has appeared! Are ya scared?!” The parrot flew out in between Meng Hao and Han Qinglei, one wing flapping madly in place, the other pointing out accusingly at Han Qinglei.

On the parrot’s ankle was a bell, upon which the face of the meat jelly appeared, which proceeded to yell in an attempt to sound archaic as well. “That’s right! This mountain belongs to Lord Third too, the Heavens belong to Lord Third, and the Earth also belongs to Lord Third. Haowie is also Lord Third’s. Are ya scared?! Well, are ya?!”

“Screw off!” said Han Qinglei, smiling coldly. The killing intent in his eyes exploded to incredible heights. Everything shook, a massive wind kicked up, and the darkness intensified. A huge hand appeared, formed of countless bones and filled with a frigid wind. Surrounded by a sea of bones, it shot forward.

The parrot immediately flew forward and slammed into the sea of bones. The result was that several of its feathers, which weren’t incredibly numerous to begin with, were knocked off of its body. It watched the feathers floating down toward the ground, and began to tremble. Finally, it threw its head back and let out an unprecedentedly bloodcurdling howl.

“Dammit! DAMMIT!” the parrot raged. “Y-y-you... you actually knocked some of Lord Fifth’s feathers off! AAAAGGGHHHHHH! My feathers! AAAAAGHHHHHHH! My beautiful feathers! That’s how I attract lovers.... I’m ruined, I can’t handle this! I’m gonna flip my lid! This is beyond ridiculous!!

“Summon the seafood! Seafood dishes, ASSEMBLE!”

Chapter 1098: Blades Clash!

The parrot was infuriated. It didn’t have too many feathers to begin with, and it believed every single one of them to be very precious. They might all be different colors, but that didn’t make them any less valuable. Together, they represented the parrot’s ability to attract other luxuriantly furred and feathered beasts.

But now some of those feathers had been knocked off, which to the parrot, was the same as being disfigured!

It was sure that lacking those feathers would result in the scorn and mockery of any furred or feathered beasts it met in the future. Therefore, its rage surged into the Heavens.

In response to its roar, Han Qinglei frowned, but didn't pause for a moment in his charge toward Meng Hao. However, all of a sudden, numerous black beams of light shot out behind the parrot. In the blink of an eye, a large group of Demonic cultivators had appeared.

These Demonic cultivators were not in human form. Instead, they looked like an assortment of seafood. There were shells, shrimp, crabs, a sea turtle....

"It's time to sing for Lord Fifth!" the parrot squawked. "This bastard dared to ruin some of my feathers. Crush him!"

In response to the parrot's orders, the Demonic cultivators immediately formed up and began to sing. "I was a bad kid when I was young, I'm a little seafood dish, lalalalala, little seafood dish, dobedobedoooo, little seafood dish...."

When Meng Hao had listened to this song before, he always assumed that it was simply uncomfortably discordant. However, when the group started singing this time, all of a sudden, thunder began to rumble, and bolts of lightning instantly shot down toward Han Qinglei.

Han Qinglei's face flickered with shock, and he fell backward in retreat, staring at the clamorous parrot and his singing seafood dishes. He began to pant in disbelief as the singing apparently began to affect the natural laws and Essence of the Windswept Realm.

A powerful energy of expulsion began to gather around Han Qinglei, causing his face to fall.

"What is that thing!?" he gasped, looking at the parrot in astonishment. Thunder crashed, and wild colors flashed in the sky. Black clouds gathered, and numerous lightning bolts converged. Han Qinglei's scalp began to go numb.

A single glance told him that this song was completely beyond ordinary, as if it had become the Heavenly will of the Windswept Realm, and could control natural laws, and even Essence, something terrifying to the extreme.

If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal, but even more shocking to Han Qinglei was that the singing instantly caused moisture to build up in the area. Apparently, the song was able to materialize a sea, complete with raging waves.

“Impossible!!” he cried. The parrot looked extremely pleased with itself, and whooped out in excitement.

“Scared yet? Dammit! You dared to pluck some of Lord Fifth’s feathers! You dared to ruin Lord Fifth’s good looks! Lord Fifth isn’t gonna let you off the hook!”

More lightning and thunder crashed as the group switched songs.

“I’m your little, dear little seafood dish! However I love you, it’s never too much. I’m your little, dear little seafood dish! Seeeaaaaafoooooood DISH!”

The change in the song caused the sea to churn. Furthermore, mountains appeared up in the sky which began to crush down toward Han Qinglei. The booms from the mountains crashing against the ground almost sounded like musical instruments, pounding out a rhythm to go along with the song.

“Spell formation?! It’s a spell formation that incites the Essences of Heaven and Earth!?!? What... what kind of bird is that?!?!” Han Qinglei’s face flickered with continuous astonishment and shock as he finally realized that he was facing a spell formation. However, he had never before heard of any type of spell formation that was unleashed by singing.

He had definitely never heard... of any type of spell formation that could incite Essences of Heaven and Earth. A spell formation like that would be exceedingly rare, the stuff of legends.

Rumbling filled the air, and Han Qinglei’s face went ashen. He fell back again, avoiding the falling mountains. His mind reeled as the seafood group once again changed songs.

“We’re seafood dishes! We’re seafood dishes. Waaaaaah! Great and mighty Lord Fifth. Whoaaaaah! Great and mighty Lord Third....”

The instant the lyrics rang out, the parrot began to glow with blinding light, as if the song were boosting its power. Shockingly, Essences and numerous natural laws began to swirl around, making the parrot look like some sort of divine being. It let out a squawk, which turned into an attack like a powerful arrow that shot toward Han Qinglei.

“You dared to spoil Lord Fifth’s good looks!” it raged, its voice echoing out with thunderous, domineering power. “Lord Fifth is gonna screw you!”

However, it was at this point that the meat jelly attached to the parrot’s ankle suddenly began to speak in a very solemn tone. “You can’t curse people. Cursing is wrong. You should say that you will slay him, not that you will screw him. Screwing is wrong. Screwing is immoral!”

“Shut the hell up!” the parrot roared, shooting toward Han Qinglei. “Lord Fifth is gonna screw this guy!”

Han Qinglei’s face fell. “Dammit, it can actually power itself up too!!” He suddenly felt as if his entire world had been turned upside down. He had never seen a spell formation that operated on singing. Nor had he ever seen a bird as arrogant and aggressive as this. He most definitely had never seen a bird that roared about screwing things.

“Well so what if you can incite the Essence of Heaven and Earth!? That power comes from the spell formation, and those Demonic cultivators aren’t powerful enough to keep it running for long!” Han Qinglei gritted his teeth and waved his hand, sending his second clone charging toward the parrot. Then he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing a throne of white bones to appear. At the same time, a huge throng of skeleton warriors also materialized.

Some of the skeletons were black, and held long bone spears in their hands. They led the other skeletons in a charge against the parrot. When the two forces slammed into each other, a huge boom echoed out.

Countless bones shattered, and the throne exploded. Blood sprayed out of Han Qinglei’s mouth. Roaring, he performed an incantation gesture then waved his finger, ripping the air open. Immediately, a bone hand stretched out and swiped viciously toward the parrot.

The parrot squawked, and the singing of the seafood dishes grew more intense. As for the parrot, it attacked wantonly, piercing through the bone hand to appear directly behind Han Qinglei’s clone, whereupon it charged viciously toward his rear end.

Han Qinglei's clone looked on in shock, and suddenly dispersed. When he reformed some distance off, the parrot let out another furious squawk and charged him again.

It was clearly a dangerous situation, but Han Qinglei's true form simply chuckled coldly. A derisive look appeared in his eyes as one of his clones handled the blackpod imps, and the other took care of the bizarre bird.

"Nine Windswept Nations, each with 300 great Daos. The final 300 are located in the central temple. A total of 3,000 great Daos, and whoever gains enlightenment of the most will be able to enter the central temple. Now the time has come... to give me the Ninth Nation's World Seal!" Chuckling coldly, Han Qinglei's true form flashed through the air toward Meng Hao, extending his right hand as if to touch Meng Hao's forehead.

"DIE!"

Even as Han Qinglei's finger closed in on Meng Hao, all of a sudden, the tinkling of a bell could be heard coming from the parrot's ankle. The bell vanished, reappearing between Meng Hao's forehead and Han Qinglei's finger in the form of a fist-sized meat jelly, which slammed into the finger.

The meat jelly was soft but also elastic. Within that elasticity was an incredible toughness which instantly blocked Han Qinglei's finger.

A boom could be heard, and the meat jelly let out a roar. It looked angrily at Han Qinglei and said, "You're a bully!!"

Han Qinglei stared in shock. He was quickly coming to the realization that Meng Hao had a boggling amount of bizarre items at his disposal. First were the blackpod imps, next was the terrifying parrot, and now was this strange meat jelly that had the face of an old man.

"SCREWWWW OFF!" Han Qinglei roared. He was reaching the limit of his patience. He could never have anticipated that after handling Fan Dong'er and Bei Yu, he would shatter the shield only to face so many setbacks in trying to kill Meng Hao.

His hand suddenly flashed to the side, striking at Meng Hao from a different angle. However, no matter how he varied his moves, the meat jelly always blocked him. Furthermore, it continued to scream miserably and to berate him loudly.

“Bully! You’re nothing but a bully!

“Lord Third converts bullies like you! Bully! Lower your weapons and allow the great and mighty Lord Third to help you become obedient, kind, and upright!

“AAGGHH! You’re still hitting me?! Bully! Bully! BULLY! BULLY!!!”

Han Qinglei was on the verge of going crazy. Letting out a furious howl, he performing an incantation gesture, materializing a divine ability. Countless bone swords appeared which stabbed toward Meng Hao. It was at this point that the meat jelly transformed into a huge canopy which completely covered Meng Hao and blocked all of the bone swords.

“Lord Third is starting to get pissed off! What are you doing, huh? Hey, what are you doing! You big bully!”

Han Qinglei was thoroughly enraged at having been repeatedly forced to waste so much time. Eyes gleaming with a bizarre light, he suddenly clenched his hand into a fist. As he did, the flesh and blood vanished and became nothing but bleached bones.

He punched out, not with the power of the fleshly body, but with an incredibly powerful divine ability. It slammed into the meat jelly, who let out a miserable shriek. Its body shrank down defensively. Suddenly, a derisive grin appeared on Han Qinglei’s face.

Eyes glittering he said... “Time... stop!”

When those two words left his mouth, everything around him suddenly seemed to grind to an eternal halt.

Everything went quiet. The meat jelly was stuck in midair, and only Han Qinglei seemed to be unaffected. His face was pale, however; clearly, using this Daoist magic was not an easy thing for him.

The instant that time stopped, his eyes glittered with killing intent. His hand changed angles, slipping around the meat jelly’s defenses and rushing directly toward the top of Meng Hao’s head in the form of a fist.

“It’s over!” he said. However, just when his fist was about to strike Meng Hao’s head, Meng Hao’s eyes snapped open, and they gleamed with a murderously cold aura.

His right hand shot up, leaving behind afterimages as it sped to meet Han Qinglei’s fist!

Their eyes suddenly locked.

One of them had a look of shock, the other had a cold gleam in his eyes.

At the moment, one of them looked vicious and cruel, and as for the other, the coldness in his eyes was like that of a sharp blade!

Chapter 1099: Victory!

Their eyes met, their fists slammed into each other, and a huge boom echoed out between the two of them. It resonated up into the Heavens, silencing the entire world. A massive wind kicked up, and nearby mountain peaks shook violently.

The shaking caused crevices to open up in the ground. The meat jelly returned to its normal state, and, seeing that Meng Hao had awoken, quickly retreated.

Han Qinglei was hit by a huge backlash, shoving him backward. The air was ripped to shreds as a succession of nine booms echoed out before Han Qinglei finally ground to a halt, his face ashen, blood oozing out of the corners of his mouth.

Meng Hao was also shoved backward; he now hovered in midair, his face slightly flush, but his eyes as sharp and penetrating as ever!

“You’re right, it is over,” he said coolly, “... for you! I’ve had enough of your crap!” He suddenly shot forward like a lightning bolt, using his unique battle style, charging Han Qinglei in an overwhelmingly domineering fashion!

His cultivation base exploded with power; moments ago during that critical juncture, he had finally gained enlightenment regarding the 100th Essence, and was able to come to his senses.

Han Qinglei's face fell, but he didn't retreat. Gritting his teeth, he also shot forward in attack. Booms rang out as they met in midair, exchanging hundreds of moves in a few seconds.

Meng Hao waved his hand, causing numerous mountains to descend, crushing down onto Han Qinglei. Han Qinglei performed an incantation gesture, summoning his throne of bones, along with countless other white bones, all of which formed together into a huge bone giant that attacked the mountains.

Meng Hao gave a cold snort and advanced, transforming into a golden roc. A brutal air rose up as he slashed his claws viciously at Han Qinglei. Rumbling sounds echoed out as Han Qinglei performed another incantation gesture. This time, a swarm of bone swords materialized, forming layers of walls that blocked Meng Hao and fought against him viciously.

Booms echoed out in all directions, the air distorted, and the sky dimmed. Blood sprayed out of Han Qinglei's mouth, and Meng Hao's golden roc faded away. However, in that same moment, Meng Hao's right hand clenched into a fist.

The Life-Extermination Fist!

Up to this point, Meng Hao still had not revealed any hint that he practiced body cultivation. He had only attacked with divine abilities and Daoist magics. Now that he was using this fist, Han Qinglei's face instantly fell.

"A body cultivator!" he gasped. As the fist neared him, he shrieked and quickly performed an incantation gesture, causing multiple bone shields to appear. However, no matter how many of them appeared, all of the shields collapsed, layer after layer, until the fist slammed into Han Qinglei.

BOOM!

Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he tumbled backward, completely astonished by Meng Hao. However... he was still filled with the desire to do battle.

One punch sent Han Qinglei falling backward. Meng Hao didn't immediately pursue him, but instead waved a finger toward the two bone tombs, causing them to explode. Fan Dong'er appeared, face pale, just having regained consciousness. On the other side, Bei Yu was completely pale and still unconscious.

“Time magic....” Meng Hao murmured. He performed an incantation gesture and waved his finger, causing the air around Bei Yu to distort. A feeling like that of Time radiated out, causing Bei Yu to immediately recover.

Meng Hao had a deep understanding of Time, but wasn't able to actually manipulate its flow. However... what he was doing now was not that. Instead, he was simply breaking Han Qinglei's magical technique.

“You definitely deserve to be in the Echelon like me....” Han Qinglei said. “In that case, let's fight!” He wiped the blood from his mouth and chuckled. Eyes burning with intense killing intent, he shot toward Meng Hao in a flash of light.

This time, his two clones threw their heads back and roared, then burned their life forces to shove the blackpod imps away and knock the parrot aside. They joined Han Qinglei's true form to charge Meng Hao.

The parrot was still furious, but after a moment of thought, it wasn't confident enough to pursue the clone. Instead, it angrily shouted, “Haowie, crush him to death for me! That damned bastard dared to ruin Lord Fifth's good looks! I want him screwed! In fact, why don't you screw him for me... wait, no. Don't screw him, I want the first go!”

A strange expression could be seen on Meng Hao's face as he looked over at the parrot. After thinking about how the parrot had protected him just now, he cleared his throat and nodded.

Next, his cultivation base erupted with power. 123 Immortal meridians surged. 33 Heavens descended with full power. The aura of an Immortal Emperor radiated out, transforming into a tempest that rose all the way up into the sky. Meng Hao hovered in the middle of it all, his hair flying about, his eyes glittering like lightning as he exuded a massive pressure.

“You want to fight? Fine, let's fight!” he said, his voice booming like thunder. This was the most formidable member of his own generation that Han Qinglei had ever encountered. Even as Meng Hao's words rang out, his three bodies arrived at Meng Hao.

The three figures slapped their palms together.

“Three Body Dao!”

“Bone Tomb Magic!”

“Slaughter By Time!”

Their cultivation bases rocketed up, causing them to look like three long spears stabbing toward Meng Hao. Meng Hao’s face was calm, and he did not fall back. Instead, he took a step forward. Massive winds surged around him as he clenched his right hand into a fist and punched out.

Bedevilment Fist!

The striking fist caused colors to flash in the sky, and at the same time, a will of self-immolation to the point of Bedevilment exploded out. That fist seemed to represent the darkness of night. The sky above turned black, and the darkness of a Devil crushed down onto the lands.

BOOOOMMMMMM!

As the fist struck out, and darkness fell, Han Qinglei’s three forms transformed into a huge bone tomb. However, that tomb instantly collapsed into pieces, and the Time magic inside was shattered.

Blood sprayed out of the three figures’ mouths as they fell back. However, their will to fight was as strong as ever.

“Meng Hao, you qualify to see my complete state! Three Body Unification!” Han Qinglei threw his head back and howled. At the same time, his two clones began to glow with boundless light. In the blink of an eye, they shot toward Han Qinglei, merging into him, forming a shocking...

Three-headed, six-armed figure!

The three heads radiated an intense murderous aura as the six arms all performed incantation gestures, unleashing divine abilities and Daoist magics with unmatched speed.

Han Qinglei transformed into a beam of light that burst with energy as he shot toward Meng Hao.

Instantly, the two of them slammed into each other. Meng Hao was a master of devious divine abilities. He attacked with ruthlessness, and even when injured, would not retreat. He was

constantly on the offensive, his Eternal stratum in full operation, his secret Immortal meridian technique ensuring that the power of any divine ability or Daoist magic he used was amplified.

Furthermore, he also wielded the power of an Immortal Emperor. That made his magical techniques even more powerful. Every attack he made could cause the sky to fade. Han Qinglei was now completely shocked.

Meng Hao's way of fighting, his constant aggressive attacks, turned into a heavy pressure that weighed on the mind, and seemed to give him more powerful momentum. Han Qinglei was being forced back, and thus losing any opportunity to land a decisive strike.

"Dammit, how can this Meng Hao be so strong!?" Han Qinglei's face fell, and he gritted his teeth. Six arms all performed incantation gestures, causing a shocking, magical wheel to appear in front of him!

The wheel was not complete, and in fact, only about ten percent of its full state was corporeal, with the rest being illusory. Numerous magical symbols covered it, and it emanated an ancient and primordial aura.

This was the Paragon magic that Han Qinglei had used to earn his spot in the Echelon. The Wheel of Time!

This wheel had a mysterious origin, and had the power to manipulate Time. Because of it, Han Qinglei had been enlightened regarding Paragon magic, and was endowed with a mysterious might.

"Paragon magic, Dao of Time!" Han Qinglei's hands flashed with incantation gestures, and the magical wheel began to rotate. Time seemed to flow, spinning toward Meng Hao, ripping open the air as it neared him. Shockingly, numerous images manifested by Time appeared, filling the area with countless scenes of the past eras from the surrounding lands.

"Paragon magic, huh...." Meng Hao gave a cold harrumph. He waved his right hand, and the sky trembled. A huge bridge descended, which was none other than... the Paragon Bridge!

As soon as the Paragon Bridge appeared, the magical wheel trembled, as if... it wasn't even able to match up!

Han Qinglei's face fell. As the two Paragon magics collided, everything trembled violently. It almost seemed as if the world was going to collapse. Intense shaking filled all of the cultivators in the Windswept Realm.

Rumbling booms could be heard as the magical wheel collapsed. Although the Paragon Bridge was slightly shaken, it continued to emanate intense pressure. Blood sprayed out of Han Qinglei's mouth, and his body began to fall apart. Two of his heads exploded, and three of his arms were destroyed. Although he let out a miserable shriek, his will to fight had not left him.

His remaining three arms performed incantation gestures, and threw his head back and roared. All of a sudden, a bone statue appeared in front of him, emanating an astonishing aura. This was one of his trump cards, a bit of good fortune that he had acquired. Now that he was using it in battle, Meng Hao waved his hand, causing the Essence of Divine Flame to appear.

"Essence? Impossible!!" For the first time, Han Qinglei was inwardly shaken, and felt terror rising up in him. This fear was something that caused Han Qinglei to feel extremely humiliated. He was in the Echelon, and yet here he was, scared of someone else in the Echelon. He wanted to pull his emotions into check, but just couldn't stifle his terror.

"There are a lot of things which you might think are impossible, but really aren't," Meng Hao said coldly. "You just lack experience."

As he closed in on Han Qinglei, the world trembled. Fan Dong'er and Bei Yu looked on with complete shock. They knew Meng Hao, and yet were still astonished. It was as if Meng Hao... was even more powerful than they had imagined!

It was as if in this battle, Han Qinglei was completely suppressed, totally on the defensive. In fact, the awe-inspiring way he had fought against them moments ago now seemed like nothing.

Han Qinglei was forced into retreat over and over. His face fell, and soon he began to laugh bitterly. However, his eyes gleamed with focus.

"You're strong," he said, "much stronger than I imagined. You're surnamed Meng... but there's no way you could have anything to do with the Meng Clan. However... it will definitely be amusing to kill you with one of the Meng Clan's own divine abilities!" Laughing maniacally, he extended his right hand and waved a finger through the air.

"Azure Lightning!"

As he spoke, his body trembled, and blood sprayed out of his mouth, as if making this attack pushed him to the boundary of his limits. Innumerable lightning bolts crackled around him, spreading out, transforming into a lake of lightning. Up in the sky, a bolt of azure lightning crackled down, connecting to Han Qinglei, causing his energy to rise dramatically.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered, and a sensation of imminent crisis welled up in him.

"Meng Clan..." he murmured, face flickering. As Han Qinglei's energy spiked, Meng Hao took a deep breath and suddenly stepped forward.

That step caused everything to shake dramatically. At the same time, a massive foot appeared in the sky, crushing down toward Han Qinglei, instantly interfering with his rising energy!

Shockingly, Meng Hao was now unleashing the divine ability he had acquired from Su Yan, the Seven God Steps magic!

The second step caused the entire world to tremble, and the wind to churn violently.

Meng Hao didn't stop. He took a third, a fourth, and a fifth step. Each step caused wild energy to surge up around him. It wasn't his own energy, but energy from the magical technique, summoned from the void, from the world, from Heaven and Earth!

When Su Yan had used the Seven God Steps on him, Meng Hao had been thoroughly shaken. She even used it to resist his Paragon magic. That was what had originally caught his interest, and was also why he had chosen to take this particular Daoist magic from her.

Of all the Daoist magics he was familiar with, none could compare to the Seven God Steps in terms of the momentum it could unleash. This magic... was a Dao of momentum!

As he took those five steps, nothing about him looked out of the ordinary. However, for some reason, the feeling he gave off was that he existed above Heaven and Earth. Massive energy swept out and crushed down toward Han Qinglei.

Han Qinglei's face drained of blood. His Azure Lightning was based on energy, and caused the will of lightning inside of him to form together into Heavenly might, which he could then use to crush his enemy.

But now, he was shocked to find that Meng Hao was even more powerful than that!

“Impossible!!” he gasped. Then Meng Hao took a sixth step, and finally, a seventh. He now seemed vastly higher than anything in existence. Heavenly might formed a gigantic foot that crushed down onto Han Qinglei.

“NO!!!” he cried miserably. He quickly performed an incantation gesture, causing Azure Lightning to shoot out from him toward the descending foot.

ROOOOOAAAARRRRRRRRRRRRRR!

When they slammed into each other, the foot crushed the lightning without even pausing and kept going, stomping viciously down onto Han Qinglei. A huge boom could be heard, and the lands quaked. A gigantic footprint appeared between Mount Whiteseal and the capital city of the Ninth Nation, which sunk deeply down into the earth.

Blood sprayed out of Han Qinglei’s mouth, and his body withered. His aura was severely weakened as he stood there in the middle of the footprint. Laughing bitterly, he crushed a jade slip, which caused a mist to appear that surrounded him and carried him away rapidly.

He was fleeing, and it caused his heart to drip with blood. He was utterly humiliated by his complete and utter defeat in battle. He had been the invader in this instance, and also the one to flee. He had never imagined that he would be forced to escape via this particular jade slip during a battle with someone of his own generation. And yet, here he was, fleeing in the face of death by crushing that jade slip.

“Think you can just leave?” Meng Hao said, appearing in midair, his face somewhat pale. This battle had been somewhat difficult, but it was nothing compared to the deadly ambush set up for him by the Demonic Cultivator Horde.

With a cold snort, he waved his hand, and a strange light began to gleam in his eyes. He suddenly waved his finger toward Han Qinglei.

“A Writ of Karma!” he said, his voice echoing out, filled with sternness, austerity, and holiness....

“Call upon Karma to form ties of destiny! You owe me money!”

Chapter 1100: Fate!

Meng Hao had sown Karma with the other Echelon cultivators using A Writ of Karma when he was the first person to break through the previous record atop Mount Whiteseal. At that time, his name was spoken throughout the Windswept Realm, everyone came to know him, and invisible connections of Karma were created.

Using Karma in such a way was completely domineering. In fact, before Meng Hao created A Writ of Karma, nothing like it had ever existed.

Based on the enlightenment he had experienced at that time, and his own personality and requirements, he had created a completely unique and domineering Daoist magic, something that could forcefully create ties of destiny.

It was impossible to evade or resist. Furthermore, as long as Karma had been sown, it would definitely be reaped!

Even as he fled, Han Qinglei felt a tremor run through him. All of a sudden, he felt as if his fate was being adjusted. The abrupt sensation caused his heart to begin to thump.

He wasn't sure why, but he suddenly couldn't think about anything except Meng Hao. Meng Hao's name seemed to fill his mind, almost like a curse weighing over him.

“What's going on!?! I owe him money?!” Han Qinglei's face fell, and he wanted to struggle, but found that he couldn't. To his terror, his mind and heart were filled with Meng Hao. Most horrifying of all were the words that were echoing out like thunder in his mind.

You owe me money.

You owe me money!

YOU OWE ME MONEY!!

The voice boomed like thunder, and caused Han Qinglei's face to grow even paler than before.

“What magical technique is this?! Dammit!!” He was completely alarmed to realize that this was a type of magic that he had never even heard of before.

When Meng Hao waved his finger, the entire world changed in his eyes. Everything shook and time seemed to slow to a crawl. Faintly, he could see numerous Karma Threads stretching away from the heads of everyone visible. Han Qinglei himself had an abundance of Karma Threads, so many that it made it difficult to distinguish the individual threads. However, there was one thread connecting him to Meng Hao.

That thread might not bind them together very strongly, but it was there, glowing with intense light. A Writ of Karma.... The deeper the relationship between the caster and the target, the stronger the Karma Threads. The stronger the Karma Threads, the more domineering the effect of the magical technique.

“The first thing that happened was you learned my name,” Meng Hao said somberly, his expression dignified, as if he were describing some holy aspect of Heaven and Earth. “Then you were completely defeated by me. What’s happening right now can be described as Karma!

“Karma serves as destiny. Heaven and Earth bear witness. An indelible brand is created, which manifests as a promissory note. The day your debt is paid back, the Karma will be dispersed!” He waved his hand as if he were writing something, and then, colors flashed in the sky, and the wind screamed. Booms rang out, as if lightning and thunder were bearing witness to the Karma between Meng Hao and Han Qinglei.

Han Qinglei let out a miserable shriek. Despite the fact that he was surrounded by mists, and shooting away at top speed, his mind still filled with a roaring like that of thunder. At the same time that Meng Hao unleashed his magic, Han Qinglei felt a faint aura being pulled up out of his body.

It was an astonishing sensation, and also horrifying. He had the sudden premonition that Meng Hao was marking him in a way that would affect him for the rest of his life.

“NO!” he roared. However, struggling was useless. By now, he had no choice but to ignore the shame he felt. His body trembled, and he wanted nothing more than to be gone from this place. His terror regarding Meng Hao had reached a pinnacle, and for the first time, he felt complete and utter regret for ever having chosen to attack the Ninth Nation and Meng Hao.

The parrot hovered not too far off, watching the scene with entrancement. It was envious, extremely envious. Of all the Daoist magics that Meng Hao was able to wield, A Writ of Karma was the only one that it felt to be breathtakingly beautiful, and the parrot almost couldn't control itself whenever it saw it in action.

The meat jelly was also envious, and wished that it could have such a Daoist magic. If so, whenever it met bullies, it would use A Writ of Karma on them, and things would go much smoother as a result.

Fan Dong'er had an unsightly look on her face. Although she was currently on the same side as Meng Hao, when she saw A Writ of Karma in action, she couldn't help but think about certain things which had occurred in the past.

As for Bei Yu, she had regained consciousness earlier and had seen most of the fight between Meng Hao and Han Qinglei. Now, she watched as Meng Hao, looking like the very picture of holiness, unleashed A Writ of Karma. She almost couldn't imagine what kind of person would go to the lengths of creating a magical technique like this, just to get people to owe him money.

Not only that, when he unleashed the magic, he was filled with a look of piety....

Meng Hao actually did feel very pious right now. His righteous and reverent voice echoed out across the lands:

“Henceforth, you owe me money! The compound interest shall not be altered! One year, twofold! Ten years, a hundredfold. One hundred years, ten thousandfold! Karma Thread, form the promissory note. NOW!”

As his dignified words echoed out, Meng Hao clenched his hand viciously onto Han Qinglei's Karma Thread. It twisted and distorted, letting out brilliant light. In the blink of an eye, the light formed together into a writ, formed from Daoist magic.

It floated gently down toward Meng Hao, who took hold of it gingerly, as if it were a precious treasure. When he saw the numbers written on the note, he cleared his throat and added it to the thick stack of other notes in his bag of holding.

In the moment that the promissory note appeared, Han Qinglei coughed up a mouthful of blood. He could clearly sense that the aura which had left him moments ago indicated that he had entered some sort of agreement with Meng Hao.

That agreement was almost like one of indentured servitude. Most importantly, he had no control in the matter, and had been forced to sign the agreement! Regardless of whether he agreed to it or not, he now owed Meng Hao a vast amount of wealth.

If he didn't pay it back, then due to Karma, his cultivation base and his future would all be subject to unforeseen changes. A situation like this, and a Daoist magic like this, caused Han Qinglei to tremble violently. In his terror, he suddenly recalled a terrifying sort of Daoist magic.

"Fate!! This is a magic of Fate! He... he actually knows Fate magic!! This is impossible! In all of Heaven and Earth, from ancient times until now, no one has ever achieved enlightenment of the Dao of Fate!!" Blood sprayed from his mouth, and he let out a mighty roar. Finally, he pushed the mist to increasing speed, and vanished over the horizon.

"This isn't a place where you can just casually come and go!" Meng Hao said righteously. "First of all, you interrupted my cultivation. Even if I overlook that, though, how could I possibly let you go when you owe me some money!?" With that, he waved a finger toward Fan Dong'er and Bei Yu. Two streams of qi flowed into them, causing them to shudder as their cultivation bases were completely restored. They even ended up with more power than before.

"Fellow Daoists, please head to the central temple. Kill all of the cultivators from the Eighth Nation. Weaken the defenses of the Eighth Nation's Mountain of National Fate. Assist me as I go to the Eighth Nation to wrest away their World Seal!

"If I succeed, we can all seek to gain enlightenment together! We can contemplate the natural laws and Essences of the Windswept Realm, and solidify our path to the future!" In response to his words, Fan Dong'er and Bei Yu's eyes glittered. They were intelligent people, and instantly understood Meng Hao's plan. This opportunity was definitely a rare one, and besides, Meng Hao had now offered them a promise!

The two women exchanged a glance, and then nodded. Immediately, they transformed into beams of light that shot off toward the central temple, where they would work hard to assist Meng Hao.

In the moment that Fan Dong'er and Bei Yu left, Meng Hao took a step forward, heading in the direction in which Han Qinglei had fled. He employed full speed as he raced to catch up.

"Don't run, Han Qinglei! Pay me back that money!" As his voice boomed out, the blackpod imps, the meat jelly, and the parrot all turned into beams of light that shot through the air behind Meng

Hao. As for the seafood dishes, the parrot used a cosmic storage technique to tuck them away into its wings. Then, it arrogantly cried out:

“Don’t run, Han Qinglei! Lord Fifth hasn’t screwed you yet, how dare you flee!!”

Beams of light shot through the air, causing everything to shake. Han Qinglei was still fleeing, coughing up blood as the mist around him faded away. This was his life-saving magic, and was something that couldn’t be sustained long-term. It was merely a temporary boost in speed, something that would enable him to flee from a deadly crisis.

The incredible speed ensured that he was able to leave the Ninth Nation and return to the Eighth Nation almost instantly. His face was pale, and the sensation of imminent crisis still hadn’t left him. He could sense that the terrifying Meng Hao was currently chasing him down!

As soon as he entered the Eighth Nation, his voice roared out, bolstered by a magical technique.

“Troops of the Eight Mountain, come posthaste!” His voice echoed out through the Eighth Nation to all of the other eight cultivators who had come from the Eighth Mountain. Of that group, four were fighting in the region of the central temple. Their bodies trembled, and they immediately employed their top speed to leave their current locations to speed toward Han Qinglei.

Time passed. An hour later, Han Qinglei was still speeding through the air, occasionally coughing up blood. The mist that had surrounded him and hauled him along was now completely gone. Instead, four imposing beams of light surrounded him in a protective formation as he flew toward the Eighth Nation’s Mountain of National Fate.

“I need to get back to the Mountain of National Fate as soon as possible! I can use the defensive measures there to fight back against Meng Hao. That will at least give me some time to recover from my injuries!!

“Meng Hao won’t be able to spend too much time trying to catch me. If he does, he’ll leave the Ninth Nation vulnerable to attack by other members of the Echelon!

“As long as I can buy enough time, I’ll definitely be able to get through this deadly crisis!” Han Qinglei’s eyes were crimson red as he shot through the air.

It was at this point that Meng Hao suddenly appeared at the border between the Eighth and Ninth Nations. He looked like a celestial warrior, and as soon as he entered the Eighth Nation, all of the cultivators there could feel the pressure radiating off him, and they trembled.

“When receiving guests, it is improper not to return favors. Since you decided to come to my home and stroll around, I’ve decided to come to your home to collect my interest.” Meng Hao cleared his throat and looked somewhat apologetic, although he didn’t hesitate for a moment before heading immediately toward the Eighth Nation’s Mountain of National Fate.

Rumbling filled the air as he closed in. The pressure weighing down from the Eighth Nation grew stronger; by this point, Han Qinglei had reached the mountain. As soon as he set foot on it, his voice rang out:

“Defend this location to the death! Don’t allow anyone to step even half a foot inside!”