

The Heavens 1101

Chapter 1101: Slaughtering Into the National Aura Mountain!

Han Qinglei sat cross-legged on the Eighth Nation's National Aura Mountain, face pale, coughing up mouthfuls of blood. He nervously produced medicinal pills, which he immediately consumed. Not only had his little excursion resulted in significant loss, he was now being chased by Meng Hao. However, in all of the Windswept Realm, there was no safer place for him to be than on this National Aura Mountain.

As he sat there cross-legged, his wounds slowly began to heal. At the same time, the four middle-aged cultivators from the Eighth Mountain and Sea remained outside of the mountain, both on guard, and at the same time, looking at each other in dismay. All of them were clearly shaken.

They knew Han Qinglei, and they had never encountered a member of the current generation who could outmatch him in this way.

Therefore... seeing Han Qinglei's injuries left them completely unnerved. After all, they were aware that he had previously headed toward the Ninth Nation.

“Was it the Echelon cultivator from the Ninth Mountain who did this? Meng Hao...?”

“It must be him! Han Qinglei was heading toward the Ninth Nation, so they must have ended up fighting!” The four took deep breaths, and their expressions turned very serious.

However, they had no choice in the matter. Regardless of whether it was because of their mission, or the effect it would have on their own chances for success in the Windswept Realm, giving up was not an option.

Time passed, and the four men kept their cultivation bases rotating the whole time. Soon, a bright streak of light appeared on the horizon, and before they could even react, massive rumbling sounds filled the air.

It was none other than Meng Hao!

After entering the Eighth Nation, he had caused an enormous pressure to spread out over the entire nation, in much the same way that Han Qinglei had when he had entered the Ninth Nation. The feeling experienced by Fan Dong'er and the others was now occurring among all the members of the Eighth Nation.

The four men's faces flickered as they looked toward Meng Hao. Before Meng Hao even made a move, the four men clenched their jaws tightly and performed incantation gestures to summon divine abilities.

In unison, the men howled: "Four Holy Beasts Formation!"

The sky flickered, and the earth quaked. These four men were not in the Immortal Realm, but rather, the Ancient Realm!

All of them had cultivation bases with five extinguished Soul Lamps, which was the absolute limit for the Windswept Realm. Their attack caused a massive wind to spring up and roaring sounds to fill the air as a huge White Tiger appeared.

The White Tiger was fully 300 meters long, and was clad in a suit of armor. It radiated a terrifying energy, along with a towering murderous aura.

Next was a Black Turtle, extremely domineering and fierce. It was surrounded by rushing black waters, which roiled up into the Heavens. A seemingly infinite power seemed to surround it as an illusory land mass appeared beneath its feet.

Next was a Vermilion Bird, surrounded by a majestic sea of flames that rose up into the sky. Last was an Azure Dragon, whose roars caused the heavens to distort. All four Holy Beasts materialized, causing lightning to dance and extraordinary energy to surge.

"Four Holy Beasts Destruction!" the four cultivators roared. Immediately, the images of the four Holy Beasts roared and leaped toward Meng Hao amidst churning, seething clouds. The speeding White Tiger was the first to arrive, bursting with a murderous aura.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and he gave a cold snort as he stepped forward and waved his hand. Immediately, the Mountain Consuming Incantation materialized, causing countless mountains to descend, crushing down onto the White Tiger. Rumbling could be heard as the tiger was pinned in place. Meng Hao subsequently descended, then reached out and viciously smacked the tiger on the head.

The smack caused a huge tremor to run through the White Tiger, after which it let out a miserable shriek. Finally, its head exploded, and one of the four cultivators coughed up a massive mouthful of blood.

However, despite losing its head, the White Tiger wasn't dead. After all, it wasn't a real animal, but rather, a magical construct. It still slashed out ruthlessly at Meng Hao with its claws.

An ear-piercing sound like that of metal grating against metal rang out. However, Meng Hao wasn't hurt in the least bit; his fleshly body was already in the Ancient Realm, so how could this White Tiger possibly harm him?

The White Tiger froze in shock, and the four cultivators defending the National Aura Mountain were astonished.

“His fleshly body...”

“Dammit, what fleshly body is that?! He actually wasn't hurt at all by the White Tiger!”

As their hearts trembled, Meng Hao grinned viciously and charged forward, slamming directly into the White Tiger's chest. The Mountain Consuming Incantation was unleashed again, but this time, the mountains didn't descend from the sky. Instead, they burst out from inside the White Tiger. A boom could be heard as the sharp mountain peaks stabbed out through its body, prompting a bloodcurdling shriek. In the blink of an eye, its massive frame was ripped into shreds by the numerous mountains.

The cultivator in control of the White Tiger coughed up more blood, and trembled violently. Cracking sounds could be heard as bones were shattered, and the man very nearly passed out.

He looked at Meng Hao with complete terror and astonishment as he finally realized how Han Qinglei came to be injured so badly. Obviously, Meng Hao was so much more powerful than Han Qinglei that... it was almost impossible to imagine!

Before they could even unleash more divine abilities, Meng Hao turned into a sharp arrow that stabbed toward the roaring Black Turtle.

The turtle was incredibly tough, surrounded by black waters, and standing on top of a huge land mass. All of that made its defenses incredibly high. However, Meng Hao pierced through all that, slamming into it and causing a miserable shriek to ring out. Cracks spread out over the entire Xuanwu turtle, and in the blink of an eye, the black water faded. The land collapsed, and the entire Xuanwu turtle exploded into bits!

It was thoroughly smashed, incapable of standing up to Meng Hao whatsoever. In the same moment, blood sprayed out of the mouth of the cultivator in control of the Black Turtle. He instantly began to shrink back and tremble, and an expression of shock covered his face.

The two remaining cultivators roared, causing the Vermilion Bird and the Azure Dragon to also roar, then swirl together in a combined attack to block Meng Hao's progress.

It was like a dragon and a phoenix attacking together, causing their power to rocket up. The sea of flames surrounding the Vermilion Bird filled the sky, burning everything above and below, threatening to completely eradicate Meng Hao.

As the intense heat caused everything to ripple and distort, Meng Hao smiled.

"Flames?" he said. Without the slightest hesitation, he took a step forward and then performed an incantation gesture with his right hand. Instantly, a ball of flame appeared in his hand.

It was none other than... the Essence of Divine Flame!

He squeezed down, and the ball of flame exploded, sending boundless Divine Flame swirling around him. As the Vermilion Bird closed in, Meng Hao waved his hand, causing the Divine Flame to surge outward. In response to Meng Hao's thoughts, the swirling Divine Flame also transformed into a Vermilion Bird.

Two Vermilion Birds slammed into each other in midair, sending a huge boom echoing out in all directions. Meng Hao's Divine Flame Vermilion Bird completely vanquished the Four Holy Beasts Vermilion Bird, completely burning it up!

Vermilion Birds were born amidst flames, and despite being a magical construct, this Vermilion Bird had some of the true will of an actual Vermilion Bird. However, only a bloodcurdling scream could be heard as it was reduced to nothing but ash. The cultivator controlling it coughed up a mouthful of blood. Blood also oozed out of his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. The backlash caused flames to surround him, completely eradicating him in body and soul.

All of these things take quite some time to describe, but actually occurred in the space of only a few breaths of time. Of the Four Holy Beasts, three were now completely eradicated, leaving only the Azure Dragon behind. As it closed in on Meng Hao, he made a grasping motion, causing the bone-tip spear to appear.

This spear's haft was crafted from the World Tree, and the bone spearhead was long and sharp. A murderous aura radiated out from it, causing everything in the area to turn as cold as the dead of winter. Meng Hao glanced at the Azure Dragon, then hurled the spear toward it. The spear pierced out, slashing a hole into the air as it sped toward the Azure Dragon.

Looking shocked, the Azure Dragon waved its tail in an attempt to brush the spear aside. However, as soon as its tail made contact, it shattered into pieces. The spear moved with shocking speed, leaving behind afterimages as it stabbed into the Azure Dragon with incredible power. The Azure Dragon could not even fight back as the spear slammed it into the ground.

A huge boom rang out as the Azure Dragon was pinned to the ground, causing a huge crater to appear.

Blood sprayed out of the mouth of the cultivator in control of the dragon, and his face turned ashen. Meanwhile, Meng Hao had already reached the National Aura Mountain, whereupon he clenched his hand into a fist and punched out.

The statue on top of the Eighth Nation's National Aura Mountain suddenly flickered with bright light, and a bright shield appeared to block Meng Hao's punch. The resulting backlash was so intense that Meng Hao had no choice but to fall back several paces, frowning.

Almost in that same moment, the surrounding three cultivators clenched their jaws, ignoring the incredible pressure weighing down on them and any potential injury, and charged toward Meng Hao, unleashing divine abilities the entire way.

"Screw off!" growled Meng Hao, waving his arm. Rumbling filled the air as an incredible power surged out, slamming into his three opponents. Blood instantly spurted out of their injuries, and two of them were killed instantly. The remaining cultivator's face went pale, and he retreated in shock.

Meng Hao did nothing to pursue him. Instead, he clenched his right hand into a fist and struck the shield again. His eyes glittered, and a faint, cold smile could be seen on his face.

Inside the shield, Han Qinglei sat beneath the statue, face pale, but fully focused on recovering from his injuries.

Around this time in the Seventh Nation, the Echelon cultivator from the Fourth Mountain, Lin Cong, was standing in a bronze war chariot as it sped forward. He wore a white robe, and his expression was one of surprise. However, he also radiated indescribable power, as well as supreme confidence in himself and his cultivation base.

“So, you’re delivering up a plump gift for me, eh Han Qinglei?” he murmured, eyes glittering. He looked at the jade slip in his hand and laughed.

“From the fluctuations, it seems that Han Qinglei and Meng Hao are fighting already.... Well that’s fine. After the two of them have worn each other down, then I can easily snatch the World Seals of two nations. I don’t care what plot Han Qinglei has brewing, he’s not strong enough to go up against me. I’ll crush him as easily as a dried weed!”

Chuckling coldly, Lin Cong sent his war chariot speeding forward. Massive ripples spread out, and at the same time, he flexed his cultivation base, causing a domineering air to spread out. It was as if he were announcing to the world: Lin Cong is coming!

He was also using his status in the Echelon as a threat!

He emanated crushing power, and had incredible self-confidence, the result of a series of random events that had led to him fighting against the number one member of the Echelon. Although he had been defeated, that cultivator had personally told him that he was the most powerful person he had ever fought!

Chapter 1102: Han Qinglei’s Plot!

Meng Hao hovered outside of the National Aura Mountain, coldly eyeing Han Qinglei inside of the shield. Currently, he could only look at him with his bare eyes; divine sense could not penetrate the shield.

The only thing he could see was Han Qinglei sitting there, treating his injuries.

Meng Hao wasn’t anxious. At the moment, the shield protecting the Eighth Nation’s National Aura Mountain was intact, and would not be easily damaged. However, he was confident that the shield would soon begin to weaken.

And that was exactly what happened. In the region of the central temple, Fan Dong'er and Bei Yu instantly tipped the tide of battle in favor of the Ninth Nation. They immediately issued orders to begin a full-scale assault on the Eighth Nation. Cultivators from both sides began to fight, and the Eighth Nation began to suffer defeat after defeat. The pillar of red light shining above their pagoda began to sink down rapidly.

As it did, the shield surrounding their National Aura Mountain began to ripple. Soon, it was visibly growing thinner, causing Han Qinglei's eyes to widen with shock. From the look of it, this was not what he had anticipated happening, and it caused him to stare murderously at Meng Hao.

When their gazes locked, Meng Hao suddenly got an uneasy feeling. Han Qinglei's expression seemed to be the appropriate one, but Meng Hao simply couldn't believe that Han Qinglei, being qualified to join and maintain his position in the Echelon, would be so easily defeated. People like him would definitely have tricks up their sleeves.

It would be impossible for him to have overlooked the fact that if he retreated here because of being pursued by another, that this safe haven could be weakened because of the situation on the central battlefield.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and he clenched his right hand, unleashing the Life-Extermination Fist onto the shield. The shield continued to hold strong, making it impossible for him to observe Han Qinglei with divine sense. Therefore, he decided that he might as well just do his best to destroy the shield; then all would be laid bare!

Booms filled the air, and the shield rippled. Meng Hao transformed into a gust of wind, battering the shield with fists and magical techniques. Soon, the shield was flickering with colorful lights, and emanating constant booms.

Han Qinglei's face fell as he looked at the shield. He knew full well that it wouldn't be able to last for very much longer, and that once it was broken open, there would be nothing stopping Meng Hao. Han Qinglei gritted his teeth, and an expression of determination appeared on his face. Suddenly, he began to laugh maniacally.

"I never imagined that I, Han Qinglei, would be forced into such a tight spot. Meng Hao... you're definitely strong enough to be in the Echelon. You might not be a match for the number one Echelon cultivator, but you're probably powerful enough to fight with Lin Cong from the Fourth Mountain.

“I didn’t want to have my cultivation base breakthrough so soon, I was planning to hold off for a bit longer. I have no desire to be a first Echelon cultivator to break through to the Ancient Realm. After all, the more deeply you prepare in the Immortal Realm, the more powerful you will be after your breakthrough!

“But since you’ve pushed me this far, fine. I’m going to break through, and then we’ll resume our battle!” Even as his words continued to echo about out, Han Qinglei performed a double-handed incantation gesture, then pushed his palm down onto his chest, causing cracking sounds to echo throughout his body. The aura of a cultivation base breakthrough exploded out, merging with the Windswept Realm as a whole.

Meng Hao’s eyes widened, and his uneasy feeling got even stronger.

“When I wasn’t attacking, his expression seemed normal. But that’s not right. As soon as I attacked, he saw the shield falling apart, and then suddenly chose to make a cultivation base breakthrough....” Meng Hao frowned, but didn’t stop unleashing attacks. More distortions appeared on the shield, and cracking sounds could be heard as fissures spread out. As the Eighth Nation suffered successive setbacks in the battle near the central temple, the red light shining from their pagoda continued to fall. At the same time, their shield grew weaker and weaker.

A boom could be heard as a huge crack spread out from where Meng Hao’s fist had just slammed into the shield, piercing halfway into it. Soon, the Eighth Nation’s beam of red light was the weakest among all of the Nine Nations. Meng Hao threw his head back and roared, unleashing the Essence of Divine Flame, causing popping sounds to ring out from the shield.

More cracks appeared, and then, in the blink of an eye, the shield collapsed into countless fragments, sending a shockwave sweeping out in all directions.

The shockwave was intense, but Meng Hao pierced through it, finally setting foot onto the Eighth Nation’s mountain. He instantly sent his divine sense sweeping out toward Han Qinglei to determine whether or not his suspicions were valid.

However, in the moment that his divine sense was about to touch him, Han Qinglei’s cultivation base erupted with the aura of a breakthrough. Colors flashed and the wind screamed, and soon, the power of the great Door of the Ancient Realm began to descend, scattering Meng Hao’s divine sense.

Although all of this seemed coincidental, it all aligned with his suspicions. Everything seemed to make sense. In fact, he could now see that nothing which was happening was coincidental, in fact... it was the opposite!

Meng Hao's body blurred as he shot toward Han Qinglei, whose cultivation base was rising rapidly into the Ancient Realm. Seeing Meng Hao closing in, he clenched his teeth and, even while breaking through, performed an incantation gesture and waved his finger at Meng Hao. Immediately, illusory white bones appeared, which shot toward Meng Hao.

Behind the bones was a magical Wheel of Time, yet another unleashing of Paragon magic. Numerous divine abilities all struck out toward Meng Hao.

Rumbling echoed about, but Meng Hao didn't pause for a moment. He waved his right hand, summoning the Paragon Bridge. Next was the raging Essence of Divine Flame, which swept out in all directions. The illusory white bones were shattered, and the magical Wheel of Time was destroyed.

At the same time, Han Qinglei threw his head back and roared, causing azure lightning to strike down and fuse with his body. Then he extended his right hand and pushed it out toward Meng Hao.

The gesture caused his entire right arm to explode into a cloud of blood and gore. Shockingly, a bolt of azure lightning filled with a strand of blood shot out from the remnants of his destroyed arm. Instead of shooting toward Meng Hao, though, it exploded, transforming into an azure shield that surrounded Han Qinglei, the statue, and the entire mountain.

At the same time that the azure lightning transformed into a shield, Han Qinglei threw his head back and roared. The breakthrough energy became more and more powerful, and up above, the energy of Heaven and Earth formed together into something that looked like a huge door.

"You can't do a thing to me now, Meng Hao!" Han Qinglei cried, laughing uproariously.

However, in the exact moment that his words rang out, Meng Hao suddenly blinked his right eye nine times, causing the starstone there within to melt and then rapidly spread out to cover his entire body. In the space of a few breaths, he completely transformed into a planet.

This was none other than the Fang Clan Daoist magic... One Thought Stellar Transformation!

The sudden appearance of this technique caused Han Qinglei's eyes to widen. He hadn't seen Meng Hao use it in their previous encounter, and now, his heart started to pound. Before he could even do anything in response, Meng Hao in planet-form shot forward like a meteor. Anything standing in his way was like rotten wood, and he instantly slammed into the azure lightning shield.

A huge boom rang out as the shield shattered into pieces and Meng Hao burst in. The planet vanished, and Meng Hao appeared in normal form once again, directly in front of Han Qinglei. Instantly, his hand shot out and latched onto Han Qinglei's neck.

Han Qinglei could do nothing to block him, and his breakthrough process was interrupted.

"I knew it!" Meng Hao said calmly. As soon as his hand had touched Han Qinglei, his divine sense flowed through it and swept through Han Qinglei.

"You were aware the entire time your so-called breakthrough would fail.. In fact, you never even intended to break through!

"That's because this isn't even your true form. You're nothing but a clone!

"You tried to hide that fact from me with the aura of a breakthrough, plus, you kept my divine sense stuck outside your shield so that I couldn't see the truth."

"So what if you know?!" said Han Qinglei, laughing loudly, his expression one of derision. "My true form has long since fled! You won't be able to find him any time soon. Besides, you don't even have the time to go looking!"

No one in the Echelon was weak, neither in terms of cultivation base nor intelligence!

"That's because you intentionally lured other Echelon cultivators here, right?" Meng Hao said coolly. "With the Eighth Nation's World Seal here as bait, plus the Ninth Nation's seal, the other Echelon members will be trying to kill me, giving you a chance to slip away."

His tone was tranquil, and his words calm. Han Qinglei had previously been quite smug because of his scheme, but all of a sudden, he got a bad feeling. Meng Hao was definitely completely beyond what he had expected.

“You....” He was just about to continue speaking when all of a sudden, the pressure weighing down on the Eighth Nation grew even more intense, seemingly doubling. That could only mean one thing; another Echelon cultivator had entered the Eighth Nation.

Meng Hao’s expression was the same as ever as he viciously clenched his right hand. Han Qinglei’s clone instantly exploded into pieces, completely destroyed!

The pursuit and dispatching of Han Qinglei’s clone had gone quickly and cleanly. Meng Hao waved his right hand, ignoring anything that might be happening up in the sky behind him, and instead headed toward the statue, reaching out toward the flame of the World Seal in the statue’s hand to grab it!

In that instant, a deep voice echoed out like thunder, filled with killing intent and somber dignity.

“That’s not for you to take! Touch it, and I’ll wipe out your entire clan!”

In conjunction with the voice, everything shook, and a huge wind rose up. The clouds parted to reveal a war chariot emanating a black light like a will of extermination. It radiated a domineering air and an intense pressure as it rumbled down from above.

The sinister chariot was being pulled by 1,000,000 souls, all of which were screaming fiercely, shaking the entire battlefield. As the chariot neared, darkness spread out like that of night, covering everything.

Standing in the chariot was a white-robed young man with long black hair and handsome features. He seemed threatening, although not angry, and he almost looked as if he had just emerged from the Yellow Springs, an emperor of death directing 1,000,000 dead souls into battle.

Each word he uttered boomed like thunder, crashing into Meng Hao’s ears. The mere voice itself caused the Eighth Nation’s National Aura Mountain to shake; cracks spread out, and the mountain seemed to be on the verge of collapsing.

Meng Hao started laughing as he looked up at the war chariot. Then his smile turned cold, and he said, “Wipe out my entire clan? You don’t qualify!”

Even as he spoke, his hand reached the World Seal... and grabbed it!

Chapter 1103: The Most Powerful Path of Immortality!

“How dare you!” The clouds above the Eighth Nation churned. The war chariot ripped through the air, pulled by 1,000,000 souls, causing the darkness of night to spread out rapidly. Standing in the chariot was Lin Cong from the Fourth Mountain. He looked like an emperor of death, wielding the power of the Yellow Springs, his voice echoing out like claps of thunder.

Meng Hao’s face was calm, but inwardly, he was musing about how his previous assumption that he was at the absolute peak of the Immortal Realm had been proved wrong during his battle with Han Qinglei. Each and every person who joined the Echelon possessed different destinies and types of good fortune. They were all people who other cultivators simply couldn’t compare to. You could say that each Echelon cultivator had their own unique path, and therefore... each member was different.

The paths were different, and thus, the Echelon cultivators were all different!

Han Qinglei’s path had been somewhat discordant. He had his white bones and his azure lightning, but none of those things truly belonged to him alone. Therefore, despite the fact that he walked onto the path of the Echelon, when facing off with Meng Hao, it would be difficult to do anything except lose. Lose over and over again.

That was because Meng Hao had his own path to Immortality. That was the ancient way, the legendary and most powerful path, that of the Allheaven.

Now, he could see that this Echelon cultivator from the Fourth Mountain obviously had his own path too.

He wasn’t sure exactly what path that was, and actually, he didn’t even feel the need to know!

The path of the Allheaven Immortal was something that had already been legendary in the time of the primordial Paragon Immortal Realm. However, because many years had passed, it would have been virtually impossible for other paths to Immortality not to spring up in the other Mountains and Seas, paths which people would tread in the hopes of gaining greater power.

“Perhaps it has something to do with Paragon magic,” he thought. “After all, you have to gain enlightenment of Paragon magic in order to get into the Echelon. Perhaps... there is some additional reason for the existence of the Echelon besides accomplishing Paragon Sea Dream’s plan. Maybe it’s also to see which path... leads to becoming the most powerful Paragon in the Heavens!” Meng

Hao wasn't absolutely sure about this assessment. However, he was still about sixty to seventy percent sure that this was what was going on.

“Although, whatever other paths the Echelon cultivators tread, they will find that they are all dead ends when compared to mine. Even if they persist in walking further along those paths, they will find that the Allheaven Immortal... is the most powerful type of Immortal!

“I'm going to defeat all of them one by one, and then they'll understand the truth!” His eyes began to glitter with a brilliant light of confidence.

That confidence... was self-confidence. He was sure that he would travel the farthest, and that being an Allheaven Immortal... was the most powerful path of Immortality!

After these thoughts flashed through his mind, he decided to spend no more time thinking. He turned his gaze away from the Fourth Mountain's Echelon cultivator and his 1,000,000 souls, and instead retrieved the fire that represented the World Seal.

In the instant that he acquired the flame, an enraged roar could be heard echoing down from the sky. At the same time... a beam of light shot up from the area of the central temple.

The intense light caused everything to shake. It was far more intense than the light which had appeared when Meng Hao or when Han Qinglei had broken the previous records to successfully understand 100 Essences.

It was fully 3,000 meters wide as it shot through the Heavens. From a distance, it looked like a massive column connecting Heaven and Earth. Everyone in the entire Windswept Realm was able to see it, regardless of where they were!

The lands quaked, and the Heavens rumbled. The intense energy rippling out was unprecedented, vastly more powerful than on the previous two occasions. It was even possible to say that it was completely beyond compare.

The two before were like slivers of bamboo, whereas this one was as thick as an arm. Shocking peals of thunder rang out, causing all cultivators in the Windswept Realm to be thoroughly shaken.

The intense sound and shaking caused everyone near the central temple to look on with astonished expressions. They could do nothing but stare as the huge pillar of light shot up into the heavens and then transformed into a massive vortex.

Meng Hao stood next to the statue, holding the Eighth Nation's World Seal in his hand, and looked up at the vortex, a slight, cold smile touching his face.

"So, it's just as I suspected," he thought. "The first person to snatch a World Seal will break the previous record and provoke a blessing!"

That was one reason why Meng Hao was so confident, and also why he had been so calm. He didn't care who Han Qinglei got to come here, nor what other schemes he had in place. He was sure that if the first person to be enlightened regarding the National Aura received a blessing, and the first person to be enlightened regarding 100 Essences also got a blessing, then surely, the first person to win a World Seal would also receive a blessing, and a more powerful one at that.

Although it might seem like all these things happened over a long period of time, in fact, they happened almost instantly. Echelon cultivator Lin Cong from the Fourth Mountain flew through the air, causing everyone in the nation to involuntarily look up in shock.

In the sky above the central temple, the vortex rapidly grew larger. In the space of a few breaths of time, it covered the whole sky like a sheet, allowing everyone suddenly gain a glimpse of another world.

It was the same world which had appeared before, a world of mountains and statues. If you looked closely at those statues and mountains, you would see that they were split almost evenly.

Furthermore, within that world were four statues and five mountains that stuck out among all the others. Those statues were the largest statues in the world, as if all the other statues were children in comparison.

The five mountains were similarly taller than all of the other mountains, as if no one had ever been able to subjugate them and turn them into statues. The four statues and five mountains were filled with indescribable ripples of force which, if they spread out into the world, would shake everything.

Numerous mountains and statues floated about, but the four statues and five mountains stuck out the most. They were like the nucleus of the entire world. As of this moment, the first statue began to

emanate rumbling sounds, and then suddenly collapsed into pieces, which crumbled down and then reformed into a new statue.

That statue... depicted Meng Hao!

Instantly, Meng Hao's appearance was revealed to everyone in the Windswept Realm. They could also see that this statue looked completely different than the first statue that had appeared when he had broken the record and reached the peak of the world!

He was the focus of all attention, causing everyone to tremble with shock!

An ancient voice suddenly rang out: "Meng Hao of the Ninth Nation has broken the previous record. He defeated Han Qinglei of the Eighth Nation, and wrested away the Eighth Nation's World Seal. He is the first person to win a World Seal, and will be rewarded with twenty percent of the qi flow of the Windswept Realm!"

The voice echoed throughout the entire Windswept Realm, to be heard by everyone. People gasped, and looks of astonishment appeared. This reward was even more amazing than in the previous two. This time, it was twenty percent of the qi of the entire Windswept Realm!

It was difficult to even contemplate what it meant for a single person to acquire twenty percent of the qi flow of the entire world. It was as if Meng Hao were being favored by the entire Windswept Realm.

All of a sudden, Meng Hao was surrounded by an invisible tempest, a tempest that no one could see, and only he could sense.

His mind trembled as he heard what sounded like countless voices, voices which were apparently the prayers and entreaties of countless living beings from the Windswept Realm, over the course of innumerable years.

Furthermore, Meng Hao felt the Windswept Realm's power of rejection vanish. No longer was it trying to expel him. Instead, it approved of him, as if he were now mysteriously connected to the Realm.

That connection caused Meng Hao to begin to pant. He could only imagine how much easier that connection would make it for him to understand the Essences. However, that was secondary. At the moment, he could now sense something like the will of the Windswept Realm.

What caused him to pant even more than anything else was that the will of the Windswept Realm now viewed him with kindness, and wished to protect him!!

Twenty percent of the qi flow... indicated that any opponent who faced him directly could be struck dead by lightning!

Furthermore, if that qi flow ever reached one hundred percent....

Then, even if Meng Hao were a mortal who could wield no magic whatsoever, he would still be like an Imperial Lord within the Windswept Realm.

He closed his eyes and focused fully on connecting with the will of the Windswept Realm within the tempest.

Meanwhile, in the First Nation, the most powerful Echelon cultivator sat there cross-legged. Suddenly, his eyes snapped open, and they were filled with unprecedented focus.

“Qi flow,” he murmured. “So, this reward is qi flow too. That’s completely different than in times past!!” The cultivators sitting around him all looked very serious.

A similar scene played out in the Second Nation!

However, on the Third Nation’s National Aura Mountain was a cultivator who was not from the Third Mountain, but had an Echelon mark on his forehead nonetheless. He was a middle-aged man, and currently, he was frowning.

“I WILL lead the Windswept Realm back to prominence!” he murmured coldly, his eyes flickering with killing intent. “As the former sole Imperial Lord of the Windswept Realm, what reason do you have to resist me!?”

The Third Nation was special, but as for the Fifth Nation, the Sixth Nation, and the Seventh Nation....

All members of the Echelon, and all other cultivators, were shaken by the reward being given to Meng Hao. At the same time, Meng Hao's name was deeply imprinted onto their hearts.

In the Sixth Nation was a young woman, currently involved in a deadly chase. Her face was pale, and she was now being pursued by even more people than before.

"Three records broken, and two of them were him!" she thought.

As she sped through the air, she looked up at the statue of Meng Hao in the sky, and a gleam of anticipation appeared in her eyes.

"Soon.... I have the feeling that we'll be meeting soon," she murmured. "Meng Hao... could you be the person I've been waiting for? If you are... then I'll help you become the most powerful cultivator in the Echelon. That's my mission...."

"If it's not you, well then I'll just have to go with the Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain."

This woman was none other than Xue'er, the successor of Immortal Ancient.

As these world-shaking events occurred, in a city of mortals in the Eighth Nation, a young student sat in a house reading a bamboo scroll. Actually, he only appeared to be reading, and was in fact trembling slightly.

He could sense all of the things happening in the world outside. You could even say that those things were happening because of him!

After a long moment, he put the bamboo scroll down and looked out of the window up into the sky. His face darkened, and after a moment of hesitation, he sighed.

"Meng Hao.... So that's why you were so calm. You were banking on the reward from the Windswept Realm!"

“Perhaps everything that happened in the battle went according to your plans. Meng Hao... the Echelon cultivator from the Ninth Mountain. I’m going to remember you!” That seemingly mortal young student was... Han Qinglei!

Chapter 1104: Killing You... Will Only Take Seven Steps!

Han Qinglei stood there silently, sighing inwardly. Once again, the desire to fight burned in his eyes.

He kept telling himself that he was in the Echelon, a Chosen among blazing suns. He could accept being defeated in battle, but he couldn’t accept being humiliated!

From the moment he had entered the Eighth Nation, he had parted ways with his clone, using it to distract Meng Hao so that his true form would be able to evade detection. Then he had used a secret magic to stifle his aura and escape to this place.

Without the clone to distract Meng Hao, his secret magic alone would not have been enough to escape undetected. One of the unique aspects of this technique was that the longer he used it, the more difficult it would be to see through it.

What he had needed was time, which was why he had sent his clone to take his place.

“Lin Cong is the second most powerful among the Echelon, and I’m no match for him. Meng Hao might have been able to beat me, but to defeat Lin Cong... will be extremely difficult!

“Seven current members of the Echelon stepped into the Ancient Realm in the past, but after realizing that their paths were incorrect, they intentionally lowered their cultivation bases with the purpose of breaking through again later. Each successive time they break through, they become more powerful!

“Lin Cong is so strong that it’s impossible to determine how many times he’s broken through into the Ancient Realm, only to drop back down....

“Those things don’t have much to do with me, though. Since I can’t keep hold of the Eighth Nation’s seal, it would be better to curry favor by handing it over someone else, than to give it to Meng Hao. This also means I won’t be hunted down, so one of these days, I’ll have a chance to make my comeback!” Han Qinglei’s eyes glittered, and he took a deep breath. Finally, he bowed his

head and continued to hide his presence. He wanted to use another secret magic to observe the battle between Meng Hao and Lin Cong, but after some consideration, decided against it.

He felt sure that Meng Hao was no match for Lin Cong, and yet, wasn't completely certain. Meng Hao's calm face hovered there in his mind's eye, and after a moment of thought, he made up his mind.

Although he chose not to observe the battle, the Echelon cultivators in the other nations all used various secret magics, and utilized significant resources, to be able to observe the battle.

This fight was not just a chance to see how strong Lin Cong was, it was also an opportunity to see Meng Hao's battle prowess, which would help them be prepared for future encounters.

Glowing screens appeared in front of each of the various members of the Echelon. Those screens all depicted the National Aura Mountain in the Eighth Nation!

Currently, Lin Cong bore down on the mountain in shocking fashion, causing everything to shake. As he neared, his rage erupted.

“Dammit! All of that... should be mine!!

“You're stealing the qi flow of the Windswept Realm that belongs to me. Well then... I guess I'll just have to kill you!!” Lin Cong's voice echoed out, and his war chariot rumbled as he bore down on Meng Hao. He extended his hand and waved a finger at Meng Hao.

Immediately, the 1,000,000 souls leading the chariot issued intense screams, then spread out like a sea of dead souls, covering everything. They transformed into a gigantic hand, which then smashed down viciously toward Meng Hao as he stood there on the mountain peak.

Meng Hao looked up, and his eyes snapped open. The invisible wind which surrounded him split apart, and despite the fact that Meng Hao clearly didn't make a single move, dozens of lightning bolts suddenly appeared in midair. They stabbed down, smashing into the ground in front of Meng Hao, blocking the enormous, pitch-black hand of dead souls.

This... was one of the benefits Meng Hao received after acquiring twenty percent of the qi flow of the Windswept Realm!

Protection provided by Heaven and Earth!

Booms echoed out as the lightning slammed into the 1,000,000 dead souls. They screamed as the enormous hand collapsed into pieces in front of Meng Hao, incapable of even touching him.

Almost in the exact moment that the 1,000,000 souls fell apart, Meng Hao's energy spiked through the roof!

“Killing you... will only take seven steps!” he said.

In accompaniment with his domineering words, his cultivation base rocketed higher and higher, and a domineering aura spread out in all directions. He did not retreat. He did not dance about with fancy fighting moves. He just went in for the kill!

However, when his words entered the ears of the other Echelon cultivators in the other nations, they were met with cold laughter.

“This Meng Hao is way too arrogant and conceited. He thinks he can kill Lin Cong with only seven steps? Not even the Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain could do that! What makes Meng Hao think he can!?”

“Lin Cong is powerful. He might be quite a bit beneath the Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain, but it's real grandstanding for Meng Hao to claim that he can kill him with seven steps!”

In the First Nation, the most powerful Echelon cultivator, the white robed young man from the First Mountain, coolly said, “It's good to be confident, but reality won't match up.”

Of course, Meng Hao couldn't hear the words being spoken. However, even if he could, he wouldn't pay them the slightest heed. His path was that of the legendary Allheaven Immortal, and in his heart, he knew that to be the most powerful path. To tread such a path required unflinching determination. Furthermore... he would crush anything that stood in his path, walk to the peak, and smash all the other Echelon cultivators. He would use his actions... to show that he was the most powerful in the Echelon!

BOOM!

Meng Hao stepped forward to begin the Seven God Steps.

Lin Cong in his war chariot threw his head back and laughed. It was an icy laughter, filled with both killing intent and fury.

Never had anyone in his generation dared to say anything like that to him before. Only seven steps... were needed to kill him? The domineering air of those words prompted Lin Cong to laugh maniacally.

“Not even the Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain would be confident enough to say something like that to me. Meng Hao, you’re the first!” By the time Lin Cong’s words finished echoing out, Meng Hao had taken his first step!

That step took him from the peak of the mountain to a position in midair. He was now in front of the chariot, causing the scattered remnants of the dead souls to tremble and flee in all directions. They were screaming, as if there were some powerful energy exploding off of Meng Hao, something that, if it struck them, would exterminate them for all eternity!

As the dead souls screamed, Meng Hao unleashed a punch.

The Life-Extermination Fist!

That fist slammed into the war chariot, unleashing a massive force onto Lin Cong. Lin Cong was just about to use some divine abilities and magical techniques, but the force interrupted him. His face fell when he heard a muffled boom coming from his war chariot, which was then shoved backward by 300 meters!

Boundlessly domineering!

In the same moment that the war chariot was thrown back, Meng Hao took a second step. His energy once again erupted, making him multiple times more powerful than before.

Heaven and Earth shook as the step landed him in front of the war chariot once again, whereupon he unleashed yet another punch!

Yet again, the Life-Extermination Fist! As boundlessly domineering as before!

Booms rang out as the war chariot, with Lin Cong inside of it, was shaken violently. Yet again, his magical techniques were interrupted. From the very beginning until now, he hadn't even had a chance to fight back!

“He's not just getting in lucky shots!” he thought, inwardly shaken.

You couldn't blame him, really. Anyone who ended up fighting Meng Hao would encounter the same domineering battle tactics. He destroyed opportunities to attack, and would always aim to seize the initiative, and the first blow!

Everyone back in the Ninth Mountain and Sea had experienced that, and now, it was time for other cultivators to learn exactly how domineering Meng Hao was!

Three steps, three punches! Booms echoed out continuously as the chariot was again shoved backward!

Four steps, four punches! Massive rumbling filled the air as Meng Hao dazzlingly set out to prove that he could back up the domineering nature of his words and kill Lin Cong with only seven steps!

If he could, then his self-confidence would grow even greater, his momentum even stronger. His name would rocket to the very top of the Echelon!

Even if Lin Cong didn't die in the end, in the future, his mental state would collapse whenever he saw Meng Hao.

Lin Cong was flabbergasted at how he was being completely subjugated!!

“This is impossible! No one in my generation has ever completely suppressed me during a fight!!”

Booms shook the sky as Meng Hao attacked with frantic madness. Four steps. Four punches!

Each one of those punches was the Life-Extermination Fist, which continuously interrupted Lin Cong's magical techniques, making it very difficult for him to unleash any magic at all. The fourth punch caused cracks to spread out over his war chariot, which then exploded into pieces.

Lin Cong let out a bellow of rage and waved his hand, using the opportunity to try to release a divine ability. The will of death swirled around him, as if the Yellow Springs themselves were rising up from the underworld.

He had to go all-out with everything to fight back. He couldn't allow Meng Hao to build up any more momentum, or for himself to be any further suppressed. He was suddenly shocked to realize that if things kept going the way they were, then it wasn't necessarily impossible... for Meng Hao to actually kill him with seven steps!!

However... just when he was on the verge of unleashing his divine ability, Meng Hao took a fifth step. His energy shot up explosively, far past anything from before. The Heavens flickered, and a huge wind screamed up, making the qi flow of the Windswept Realm even more evident.

When he took that fifth step, he appeared directly in front of Lin Cong, whereupon he... unleashed yet another punch!

This was a different strike, not the Life-Extermination Fist, but rather, the blow of Self-Immolation, the Bedevilment Fist!

It was an insanity the likes of which could sacrifice anything, even one's own life, to enter a state of mad Bedevilment, which was then materialized into a punch. As of this moment, only one thought existed inside of Meng Hao's head.

Because he was Bedeviled, that fist possessed both form and will!

Lin Cong's eyes went wide, and his heart filled with astonishment. He was aware before that Meng Hao was not weak; after all, he had defeated Han Qinglei. However, he had never imagined that Meng Hao would be this powerful!

From his view, Meng Hao's power didn't come from his cultivation base, but rather his style of fighting. It was a style that used a completely domineering momentum, it left the opponent incapable of even breathing, all the way until they were destroyed.

Meng Hao's way of fighting was something completely unique, something he had never before encountered.

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLE!

One shocking punch destroyed Lin Cong's divine ability as if it were a rotten log. The mad, Bedeviled fist exploded on toward Lin Cong, bursting with power.

Blood oozed out of Lin Cong's mouth as he was shoved backward. He let out a miserable shriek, feeling completely and utterly humiliated as Meng Hao took a sixth step!

When that step landed, the world crackled with thunder. Countless lightning bolts exploded up around him as his energy flew even higher. Even the mountain down below was shaking violently; cracks appeared as if it would fall apart at any moment.

Chapter 1105: What Did You Just Say?!

The shattering of the sky grew even more apparent. Cracks rapidly formed and closed up, leaving behind what looked like scars. There didn't seem to be anything out of the ordinary about Meng Hao, and yet, he had suddenly become a larger-than-life figure, like a giant who stood on equal footing with the Heavens.

A terrifying aura rose up from him as he took his sixth step, and unleashed the sixth punch!

It was the Bedevilment Fist yet again, the strike of Self-Immolation. However, this strike was delivered even more directly than before, and the domineering power of Meng Hao's energy seemed to fuse with Heaven and Earth.

When the strike landed, Lin Cong let out a miserable scream. He bit his tongue and spit out a mouthful of blood, which transformed into majestic Yellow Springs that swept out in all directions.

Massive booms could be heard as the Yellow Springs were destroyed. Meng Hao was slightly injured, and yet, the killing intent in his eyes had not lessened.

"Last step!" he said, taking the seventh step in unison with the destruction of the Yellow Springs.

It was as if the entire world ground to a halt, and was replaced by Meng Hao. With the assistance of twenty percent of the qi flow of the Windswept Realm, Meng Hao could fuse with the lands, as if... he were the embodiment of the will of Heaven!

The entire world began to burst; Meng Hao was like a divine spirit that represented the will of Heaven, becoming its embodiment as he fused with Heaven and Earth!

His foot landed, and it was as if the Heavens were crushing the lands beneath. His fist was like Heaven and Earth, destroying all living things. It was as if Meng Hao were the most respected entity in all creation.

That was because this was...

The God-Slaying Fist!

When the God-Slaying Fist was unleashed, the Echelon cultivators in the other nations watching the battle let out successive gasps. They had watched Meng Hao's terrifying momentum grow with each step, had seen the wild and Devilish energy building up, had witnessed his intensely domineering style. It instantly left a deep impression on everyone, and caused them to tremble in astonishment.

The Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain, the white-robed youth, felt his eyes going wide as an expression of shock filled his face. Meng Hao's way of fighting left even him astonished. Meng Hao seized the initiative and pressed forward, crushing everything in front of him like dead weeds.

All of the Echelon cultivators were completely astonished by this fist strike.

“What fist strike is that?!”

“It might not be impossible... for him to actually kill Lin Cong with only seven steps!!”

“This Meng Hao is actually incredibly strong! Han Qinglei couldn't match up to him, and it looks like Lin Cong is also going to be defeated.... He might be qualified to fight for the spot of the number one most powerful cultivator in the Echelon!!”

At this point, Lin Cong performed a double-handed incantation gesture, then shoved his hands out in front of him.

“Holy Requiem Skull!!” he roared. Shockingly, a Paragon magic appeared, an enormous, golden skull!

The surface of the skull was covered with innumerable magical symbols, tightly packed in a way that seemed to encompass a will of death that mourned for all living things.

The Holy Requiem Skull was Lin Cong’s Paragon magic. By gaining enlightenment of this skull, he was able to craft a Paragon magic, and thus enter Paragon Sea Dream’s Echelon!

Becoming part of the Echelon completely changed his destiny, allowing him to rise to prominence in the Fourth Mountain. With the secret support of Ksitigarbha, he had survived numerous deadly trials, and had defended his place in the Echelon.

All of those numerous battles gave him complete and utter control over his Paragon magic, a power which enabled him to peer ahead into the future of the battle!

He was able to find the weaknesses in all other Daoist magics, he was also able to predict what actions his opponents would take. He would then use all of that information to his advantage. Even more shocking to his opponents was that he could see visions of their future.

Because of that, and thanks to the tips and pointers given him by Ksitigarbha, the path of Immortality that he treaded was essentially the same as that of Ksitigarbha! It was a unique path of Immortality that was like striding out from death into a new life!

However, his Paragon magic required a significant expenditure of mental energy, and therefore, he rarely used it. However, having been forced into a corner by Meng Hao’s domineering style, he was left with no choice but to utilize this most powerful Paragon magic.

However, as soon as he unleashed his Holy Requiem Skull Paragon magic, Lin Cong’s face completely fell. The only thing he saw in his vision was that there was no way for him to escape from the power of Meng Hao’s fist strike.

There were no gaps!

There was no way to escape!

He was even able to determine that after Meng Hao's strike landed, he didn't plan to follow up with any divine abilities or magical techniques. It was as if... Meng Hao was completely and utterly confident that this fist and this step would utterly eradicate Lin Cong!

"How could this be!?" he thought, shaking mentally. He tried to back up, but Meng Hao's killing intent exploded out, as if the God-Slaying Fist were capable of eradicating all living things in Heaven and Earth!

It would land on Lin Cong, and there was nothing he could do about it!

Tears of blood seeped out of Lin Cong's eyes. After madly depleting his mental energy to use his Paragon magic at this critical juncture, he was able to glimpse a bit of the future.

The only result of that flashing vision was that Lin Cong's face fell.

He had no time to think. Eyes bloodshot, he viciously sent the gold-colored Holy Requiem Skull rumbling forward to try to block Meng Hao's incoming fist strike.

Meng Hao hadn't lost even a bit of momentum. He was backed by the will of Heaven and Earth, so no matter what tried to block his path, it would be brushed aside with ease. There was nothing that could stand in the way of his surging energy.

That was because Meng Hao's God-Slaying Fist was backed by the qi flow of the Windswept Realm, utilizing the will of Heaven to take it to the absolute peak!

Anything and everything would be reduced to rubble in the face of this fist!

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLE!

Meng Hao's God-Slaying Fist slammed into the golden skull, causing massive rumbling to echo out. The skull trembled and then exploded into pieces, allowing Meng Hao's fist to slam into Lin Cong's chest.

Cracking sounds could be heard, and Lin Cong let out a bloodcurdling scream. His body hurled backward like a kite with its string cut. All the bones in his body shattered, and in the blink of an eye, he exploded. His chest erupted in a fountain of blood, which spread out in all directions until his entire body was destroyed, with the exception of his head!

By now, all spectators in the Windswept Realm were completely and utterly shocked, filled with pounding waves of astonishment. To witness something happening that moments ago had seemed impossible, led to unparalleled stupefaction.

In the First Nation, the Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain, the white-robed young man, had been sitting there cross-legged moments ago. Now, he was standing, staring at the screen along with all of his followers, whose faces were covered with complete disbelief.

They all knew Lin Cong, and because of that, the scene which was playing out in front of them was completely astounding.

“He... he actually did it!!” the followers gasped.

The Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain looked at the screen and then suddenly smiled, although it was a smile of complete coldness. His eyes flickered with a bright light as he said, “This guy does qualify to fight me.”

In the Second Nation, on the National Aura Mountain, everything was freezing cold. Countless snowflakes swirled around a man who sat there on the mountain peak. He wore a blue robe, and he was the Echelon cultivator from the Second Mountain. His features were cold, but his eyes narrowed as he watched the ice screen in front of him, and the image of Meng Hao upon it.

He seemed calm on the outside, but inwardly, he was rocked by waves of shock.

In the Third Nation, a strange scene was playing out. One hundred cultivators sat cross-legged on the National Aura Mountain. At their head was a middle-aged man wearing an Imperial robe. His face was extremely dark and sinister.

“Is this Meng Hao a variable thrown in by the Windswept Imperial Lord...?”

The pudgy Echelon cultivator in the Fifth Nation, the young boy in the Sixth Nation, and the murderous youth in the Seventh Nation, all watched with flickering faces and trembling hearts.

Earlier, they didn't think that Meng Hao could kill Lin Cong with a handful of steps, but now they had personally witnessed the battle, and seen Meng Hao's power and domineering style. It instantly turned into a massive pressure weighing down on them.

Now, not a one of them dared to underestimate Meng Hao. Although they coveted his two World Seals, as of now, they were forced to weigh the risks associated with trying to take them.

You could say that Meng Hao's battle just now had completely cowed the Echelon cultivators in the Windswept Realm.

At the same time that all the Echelon cultivators were shaken by Meng Hao, Lin Cong's body exploded in the air above the Eighth Nation. Just when his head seemed on the verge of exploding, killing him in body and spirit, golden light suddenly began to shine up from the shattered golden skull. It transformed into a golden vortex which surrounded Lin Cong's head, as if to teleport him away.

There was still a bit of life force left in Lin Cong's head, thanks to his special way of practicing cultivation. As long as he still had his head, he could recover, although it came with a heavy price, including a drop in cultivation base.

In the moment that he was about to teleport away, Meng Hao's energy suddenly rose up even higher than before, and he said, "Think you can just leave? Exterminate!"

The words were spoken softly, but in that moment, an enormous, shocking foot appeared!

The foot seemed to obfuscate the entire sky, and when it appeared, it began to crush down onto Lin Cong, shattering natural law, destroying Essence!

This was the ultimate power of the Seven God Steps!

The previous seven steps were just a buildup of momentum and energy, leading up to this explosive, exterminating attack.

An intense sensation of deadly crisis filled Lin Cong. He had experienced such feelings before in his life, but this was the most intense it had ever been. Even his battle with the Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain hadn't been so terrifying and shocking.

There was no possible way he could have ever imagined that Meng Hao... would be so powerful!!

When he saw the foot descending, he realized he didn't have time to complete the teleportation. He knew that he was about to die, so he let out a powerful howl that echoed out in all directions.

"Meng Hao, if I die, Xu Qing dies too!" Those words entered Meng Hao's ears like the crash of zillions of thunderclaps. His entire body began to shake.

"What did you just say!?" His heart began to pound in a way it rarely did, even causing his divine ability to become unstable. The enormous foot in the sky trembled, and because of his mental instability, his momentum faltered, and his energy began to wane.

Upon leaving Planet South Heaven, he had asked his father about Xu Qing. Fang Xiufeng had told him that he left some divine will on Xu Qing to protect her during reincarnation. Finding out her final destination when she was actually reincarnated was a matter of fortune and timing, but Fang Xiufeng had assured him that he didn't need to worry.

Even still, and even after so many years had passed, Meng Hao still worried about it occasionally. His original plan had been to wait until he left the Nine Seas God World, and then go back to Planet South Heaven to find out more about the situation. After all, she was his wife, his beloved partner. Although he didn't often think about the matter, to hear Lin Cong say what he just did filled Meng Hao's mind with crashing waves of shock.

Chapter 1106: Slaughtering Into the Fourth Nation!

In the moment that the instability of Meng Hao's divine ability caused the enormous foot to grind to a momentary halt, Lin Cong's head finally got its opportunity to flee. The golden vortex covered his head, then began to spin rapidly. Finally, Lin Cong's head vanished.

The vortex then transformed into countless motes of golden dust, which then vanished as well.

Meng Hao's face darkened as he looked at the spot where Lin Cong had vanished. His mind was still being battered by waves of astonishment. Xu Qing's place in his heart was something that he didn't allow anyone to touch; it was his weak spot.

Xu Qing was his wife, to whom he had sworn his vows in front of Heaven and Earth. He had watched her beauty fade as he held her in his arms, looked on as her soul entered the Underworld River. They had agreed...

To meet again after she was reincarnated.

Meng Hao could never have predicted that he would hear Xu Qing's name come out of Lin Cong's mouth in this place. It was something that caused his eyes to glow with infinite coldness.

This was his first time encountering Lin Cong, and he knew that it was also the first time Lin Cong had ever seen him. Therefore... for him to say Xu Qing's name indicated that Lin Cong... had seen her in her reincarnated form!

Then he thought about where Lin Cong came from, and a tremor ran through him. "That means there's an eighty percent likelihood that Xu Qing is on the Fourth Mountain!"

"But how could Lin Cong possibly know about the relationship between me and Xu Qing?" Then he thought about Lin Cong's Paragon magic, and the familiar aura he had sensed, and he understood everything. What Lin Cong had seen was not something that he could use to defend against the God-Slaying Fist. Instead, he saw the connection between Meng Hao and Xu Qing!

A moment later, Meng Hao's eyes began to flicker with killing intent as he recalled Lin Cong's words.

If I die, Xu Qing dies too!

"Lin Cong, you're courting death!" he said, looking up. Then he took a step forward. He did not return to the Ninth Nation, but instead, didn't hesitate for a moment as he headed toward the Fourth Nation.

As of this moment, World Seals weren't important, and Mount Whiteseal wasn't important. The only important thing... were clues about Xu Qing, and... what Lin Cong had just said!

Without clarifying these matters, how could he possibly return to the Ninth Nation? Even if he did, his heart would be in chaos, and he wouldn't be able to remain calm.

Rumbling filled the air as Meng Hao slashed through the air in a beam of light, flying like a bolt of lightning. Dust kicked up as he sped faster and faster, his killing intent rising.

Soon, he was nearing the border of the Eighth Nation. He would not enter the Seventh Nation; but rather, head through the region of the central temple. After all, that was the fastest way to reach the Fourth Nation.

He had no way to know whether or not Lin Cong took this route, but there was no time to pause and consider the matter. He sped along, soon leaving the Eighth Nation and entering the region of the central temple.

When he looked down, he saw the fierce, bloody fighting, and the countless soldiers engaged in battle. The entire land was stained red with blood.

He merely glanced at it as he sped by, piercing through the air with shocking momentum. The other cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm saw him, and were instantly shocked.

“That’s Meng Hao!”

“That’s the Echelon cultivator from the Ninth Nation, Meng Hao!”

“Why is he here?”

Although none of these people had witnessed his battle with Lin Cong like the Echelon cultivators had, they knew that he had broken two of the previous three records. It was something that filled most of them with incredible awe and fear.

There were some fools among them whose greed and avarice was awakened as soon as they laid eyes on Meng Hao. From what they understood, if you could kill someone in the Echelon, then you could get their Echelon mark.

Not too long after Meng Hao entered the central temple region, a stream of sword light suddenly sped through the air toward him. The sword qi was shocking, filled with a murderous air, and was apparently imbued with natural law as it stabbed toward Meng Hao’s neck.

“You just showed up, why are you running away?!” someone said coldly. The attack was made by a middle-aged cultivator, but he wasn’t the only aggressor. Two other cultivators shot toward Meng Hao from off to the side.

In other circumstances, Meng Hao might be filled with a desire to hunt them down and kill them, or might just ignore them. But in his anxiety-filled state, there was only one fate in store for anyone who got in his way.

Instant death!

His eyes were bright red as he extended his hand, grabbing the incoming flying sword, then sending it speeding back in the direction it had come from.

The speed with which it moved now vastly exceeded its previous speed. Intense, incomparable energy propelled the sword forward. The sword itself could not withstand the force propelling it, and began to collapse, starting from the tip. Before it could even collapse by half, though, it stabbed so hard into the forehead of the cultivator who had thrown it that even the hilt blasted through him.

The speed was so indescribable that, despite the extraordinary cultivation base of the middle-aged cultivator, he didn’t even qualify to try to dodge it. He was dead instantly.

This scene caused the other two cultivators to gasp and fall back. Other restless cultivators off in the distance looked on with shock, and didn’t dare to attempt to get in Meng Hao’s way.

Since no one dared to block him, Meng Hao shot through the central temple region, quickly reaching the area where it bordered the Fourth Nation.

Many of the cultivators behind him looked on with shocked faces.

“He actually went through the entire central temple region?”

“How is that possible? The pressure there is incredible! Misfortune will befall anyone who enters there. Not even other Echelon cultivators would dare to go in there, and yet... he did!?”

“Could it be... because of the twenty percent of the qi flow of the Windswept Realm?” Everyone was shocked as Meng Hao sped off.

Meanwhile, Lin Cong's head appeared on the National Aura Mountain of the Fourth Nation. The head promptly withered, causing Lin Cong to let out a howl. Blue veins popped out, and then veins and arteries began to snake down out of his neck. They grew longer and longer, quickly forming the outline of a body. His face was now pale white, but he bit his tongue again and then roared. Next, bones began to form inside of that body.

A recovery like this was one of indescribable pain, and an incredible price had to be paid...one that he could barely manage. Furthermore, he would experience a cultivation base loss that would be impossible to recover from easily.

However, all of that was better than dying.

"Meng Hao, I'm not going to let you get away with this!" he growled, his expression vicious. As his body reformed, he threw his head back and howled. Venomous rage appeared in his eyes. Just as Meng Hao had suspected, his Holy Requiem Skull had given him a glimpse, not of a way to survive the fist strike, but rather, another vision.

He had seen the Fourth Mountain, and Meng Hao, surrounded by a sea of blood and mountains of corpses. It was as if Meng Hao had traveled there amidst endless slaughter.

In the vision, he saw Xu Qing. She and Meng Hao were looking at each other, their gazes soft.

The vision not only caused him to feel jealous, it gave him the opportunity he needed.

"Faster, must go faster!"

"I don't know exactly what type of relationship Xu Qing and Meng Hao have, but seeing how nervous he got, she's obviously his weak spot. As soon as I said her name, he just about went crazy. He's definitely on his way here to kill me!"

"I have to recover so that I can flee!" He gritted his teeth hard as his body restored itself. Time passed. More than an hour went by, during which time he continued to pay a heavy price for the recovery process.

When his body finally reappeared, he coughed up a massive mouthful of blood. This body was incredibly weak; he now possessed only about sixty percent of his original cultivation base.

This was actually the weakest he had ever been since joining the Echelon. His face was ashen as he reached up and grabbed the World Seal from the statue. He then flew off of the National Aura Mountain, eyes glittering as he was surrounded by four figures, those followers of his whom he had brought with him to the Windswept Realm.

After a moment of hesitation, a look of determination could be seen in his eyes, and he said, “Activate the Stellar Alteration Grand Magic!”

His four followers didn’t respond. However, their appearances gradually began to change until they all looked like Lin Cong. Even their auras seemed the same. Then, they sped off in four different directions.

As for Lin Cong, he picked a different direction to flee in.

Almost in the same instant that Lin Cong’s four followers sped off, incredible pressure suddenly weighed down on the Fourth Nation. The lands quaked and the air distorted; Lin Cong and his four followers all trembled.

“He’s here! How could he be so fast!? This is impossible!!” Lin Cong said, his face falling. He instantly unleashed a secret magic, dispersing his aura and fleeing at top speed.

Meng Hao’s killing intent raged as he entered the Fourth Nation. He immediately sent his divine sense out and, in the blink of an eye, sensed the five auras. He frowned, then sped toward the nearest one.

Booms echoed out through the Fourth Nation. It only took the space of ten breaths for him to reach the source of one of Lin Cong’s auras, and what he found was a cultivator who looked exactly like Lin Cong.

As soon as the cultivator saw him, his face fell, and he backed up. Meng Hao waved a finger to employ the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex, causing the man to lurch to a stop.

Next, his entire world was overturned by Meng Hao’s palm, which latched onto the top of his head.

“Soulsearch!” Meng Hao’s voice was as cold as the wind in the middle of winter. When it blew past the cultivator’s ears, the man’s head filled with indescribable pain. He began to tremble, and then screamed.

Chapter 1107: Goal: Number One in the Echelon!

The cultivator’s face twisted, and screams of pain echoed out in all directions. Everyone who heard them was shocked to the core, and could scarcely even imagine how such pain could be possible. It was something almost beyond description.

At best, you could say it felt like a hand being shoved into your brain and rifling around violently. Blood sprayed from the cultivator’s mouth, and he suddenly went as stiff as a board. He was dead.

Despite his death, his corpse still adhered to Meng Hao’s hand, and did not fall to the ground.

After a few breaths of time, Meng Hao’s eyes glittered.

“Lin Cong, huh...? So you turned your four followers into doppelgängers to try to pull a fast one on me!” He lowered his hand, and the cultivator’s corpse dropped toward the ground. Before it could even land, Meng Hao had shot off into the distance.

He sent his divine sense out into a wide area, looking for Lin Cong’s true form. However, Lin Cong’s magical technique was strange, and Meng Hao could find no weaknesses in it. The remaining four figures sped rapidly off in different directions. Another strange thing was that their auras were all slowly fading. It wouldn’t be too long before they would disappear from Meng Hao’s divine sense altogether.

Lin Cong’s original plan had been to ensure that there was no aura for Meng Hao to detect at all. If he did spend time searching, at most, he would find the four cultivators he had switched bodies with.

However, Lin Cong could never have predicted that Meng Hao would arrive in the Fourth Nation so quickly. Instead of crossing through the other nations, he had chosen to pass directly over the central temple.

That formed a kink in his plan!

However, everything could be resolved as long as enough time passed. Meng Hao gave a cold harrumph. He patted his bag of holding, and numerous blackpod imps flew out, which he sent screaming out in all directions. They were like black bolts of lightning, emanating murderous auras.

Under the control of Meng Hao's divine sense, they sped out in pursuit, whereas Meng Hao did nothing. He did no pursuing whatsoever. He simply hovered there in midair above the Fourth Nation, equidistant from all of the fleeing versions of Lin Cong.

His method for determining which one was Lin Cong was a simple one. He would just wait to see what happened when the blackpod imps tried to possess the four different figures. Success or failure didn't matter; either way he would get some clues.

Soon, he looked up.

"Gotcha!" he said, vanishing.

Meanwhile, near the border between the Fourth and Third Nations, Lin Cong had an extremely unsightly look on his face. He was surrounded by more than ten screaming blackpod imps, all of whom were trying to possess him.

"What are these things!?" Lin Cong had a powerful cultivation base, but right now, he was reduced to about sixty percent of his power. As for the blackpod imps, their possession technique was bizarre. If they failed, they would transform it into a piercing divine sense attack that Lin Cong was having a hard time dealing with. A sensation of deadly crisis welled up in him, and he began to tremble.

As the feeling of imminent death grew stronger, he began to shake even more violently.

"I'm NOT going to die here!!" Filled with regret, he sent a mighty wind blowing out to drive away the seemingly unkillable blackpod imps. Then he gritted his teeth and, despite his weakened form, once again unleashed his Paragon magic!

The golden Holy Requiem Skull materialized in front of him, not as a way to attack the blackpod imps, but as a means of trying to find a way out of his current situation!

Lin Cong's face went pale as he realized there was no such way out.

“Impossible! Heaven never cuts off all paths! There's always hope in every situation!” Eyes gleaming with a vicious look, he bit the tip of his tongue, causing his body to wither rapidly. His hair even turned white.

He went all out, sacrificing even his longevity in an attempt to get his Paragon magic to reveal a means of escape.

Rumbling could be heard, and Lin Cong's body continued to wither, when finally, he found what he was looking for in the Holy Requiem Skull. After he saw it, he gaped in shock, then, laughing maniacally, viciously smacked his own chest. A huge blob of blood spurted out, which then splashed down onto the ground.

His laughter grew more and more intense as he spun around, a look of determination on his face. He then pushed his finger down onto his forehead, sending a tremor through his body. His eyes suddenly went blurry, but rapidly grew clear again. He glanced at the Holy Requiem Skull and realized that he was now missing some of the memories he had had before. Expression serious, he headed off into the distance.

Before too long, he was once again surrounded by blackpod imps. At the same time, a long beam of light appeared in the air not too far off, radiating killing intent.

“Lin Cong!” roared Meng Hao, his voice rumbling like thunder filled with Heavenly might, causing Lin Cong to shake. His divine sense was blessed with twenty percent of the qi flow of the Windswept Realm, transforming his voice into thunder from Heaven, and surrounding his body with a lake of lightning.

Lin Cong was nearly deafened by Meng Hao's voice. His mind spun, and blood sprayed out of his mouth. After reforming his body, he had only possessed sixty percent of his original cultivation base, making it very difficult to use his Paragon magic. In fact, wasting his longevity and life force the way he had just now caused his cultivation base to drop even further, until it was at only thirty percent of its original strength.

It didn't matter how strong he was before. With a cultivation base like that, he was like a candle flickering in the wind. Meng Hao's mere voice shook his heart and caused blood to spray out of his mouth. There was nothing he could possibly do to fight back.

All he could do was scream miserably, and look up with an unyielding expression.

He hated Han Qinglei, and hated the fact that he had greedily tried to snatch the Eighth Nation's World Seal. The end result had been complete ruin.

He also hated fate. The speed of Meng Hao's pursuit had ruined all of his preparations. All he had needed was another hour, and then he would have disappeared without a trace.

But now, everything had changed, and there was nothing he could do about it.

"The Heavens want to destroy me? Well, I'm not willing to die by your hand, Meng Hao!" Lin Cong began to laugh, a loud, shrill laughter.

"You want to know about Xu Qing, well... come on!" he screamed as he hovered there in midair. "Soulsearch me if you want, scrape the information out of my brain! I don't care!"

"I just want you give me an honorable death!" He was in the Echelon, and second in power only to the Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain.

He was a blazing sun in the Fourth Mountain, and he was a proud person. Even if he died, he wanted to die with honor!

Meng Hao shot toward him like lightning. Without the slightest hesitation, he reached out and placed his hand onto the top of Lin Cong's head.

Meng Hao wouldn't believe anything that Lin Cong told him about Xu Qing; he needed to see it for himself!

He unleashed his Soulsearch magic, pouring his divine sense into Lin Cong's brain. Images from Lin Cong's life passed through his mind until finally, he saw Xu Qing!

She actually looked exactly the same as she had before entering reincarnation. She wasn't the most beautiful woman in the world, but her face was etched eternally onto Meng Hao's heart.

Lin Cong trembled from the indescribable pain. He clenched his teeth tightly, and didn't groan or moan at all. His eyes began to fade, and his body was shaking. However, his subconscious mind... demanded honor!

A moment later, Meng Hao lifted his hand away, and blood sprayed out of Lin Cong's mouth. His expression was blank, and his body was still trembling. His mind was gone, and apparently, the only thing he had left... was his honor.

Meng Hao said nothing. He now knew that when Lin Cong had said that Xu Qing would die if he did, it had been a complete fabrication. Actually, Meng Hao had already come to the conclusion earlier that such a thing wasn't possible.

He took another look at Lin Cong, then pulled his hand back and tapped his forehead. A massive power poured through him, wiping out any life that was left. Lin Cong shuddered, and for a brief moment, his eyes became bright and lucid. Then he closed them... and died.

His corpse dropped down to the ground, but his bag of holding was snatched by Meng Hao. Inside was the Fourth Nation's World Seal.

"Qing'er..." he murmured, "so, you're a disciple of Ksitigarbha, on the Fourth Mountain...."

"Just wait for me, Qing'er. Once I'm out of this Windswept Realm, I'm coming for you!" Then he turned and disappeared in a flash of light.

He left the Fourth Nation, passing back through the central temple region and entering the Ninth Nation. All of a sudden, a tremor ran through him, and he turned to look back at the Fourth Nation.

"Something's off! I killed the Echelon cultivator from the Fourth Mountain. According to the natural law of the Windswept Realm, shouldn't I be rewarded for breaking a previous record...?" Putting his thoughts aside of Xu Qing, he suddenly reviewed everything that had happened with Lin Cong. Finally, his eyes widened.

He then smacked his bag of holding and produced a promissory note. After looking at it carefully, he confirmed that it was Lin Cong's promissory note, and then he suddenly smiled.

"These people definitely deserve to be in the Echelon. Han Qinglei had his schemes, and Lin Cong his plots. It seems that truly killing them won't be easy.

“So, you’re not dead, Lin Cong. However, you will have no chances to rise to prominence here in the Windswept Realm. You’ll be forced to hide from me, not daring to even stick your head out!

“I may not be able to track you down and kill you, but I’ve slaughtered your heart. I’ve planted a shadow there, ensuring that I become your inner Devil!

“You’re not the first, nor will you be the last. The Windswept Realm... is the location where I, Meng Hao, will rise to prominence in the Nine Mountains and Seas! I will rise to prominence in the Echelon!

“When I leave this place, I will do so as... the number one in the Echelon!” He did not return to the Fourth Nation to continue searching for Lin Cong. Lin Cong’s life or death didn’t concern him anymore. With the status Xu Qing currently had in the Fourth Mountain, she was not somebody that could easily be trifled with.

Meng Hao flashed through the air toward Mount Whiteseal. After all of his years practicing cultivation, it was only during these battles that he had gradually formed a unique, domineering style that was all his own!

Chapter 1108: Entering Allheaven Again!

Hidden beneath the domineering air, however, was something others could never detect... the con!

For example, Lin Cong’s promissory note. Even Lin Cong knew nothing about that. He had unwittingly fallen for Meng Hao’s scheme. That promissory note had come during their first battle, when Meng Hao utilized the Seven God Steps. When Lin Cong’s attention had been fully preoccupied by the surging energy created by it, he secretly went about creating the promissory note.

He did it that way intentionally, just in case he didn’t manage to kill Lin Cong, or if he escaped. That way, he wouldn’t come out completely empty-handed. At the very least, he would have a promissory note. Then, the next time they met, he could loudly declare that Lin Cong owed him money!

He would never have imagined that his promissory note habit would end up providing proof that Lin Cong wasn’t dead.

As for exactly why he wasn't dead, the answer came to him on the way back to Mount Whiteseal.

“Echelon cultivators can be killed twice without their soul being exterminated!” he murmured, thinking back to what Paragon Sea Dream had told him all those years ago. It was a special ability unique to the Echelon.

The only way for an Echelon cultivator to truly be exterminated, was to kill that person twice, and THEN... a third time. That last kill would be their final death. In turn, whoever killed them would be half a step into the Echelon.

The rest of that half step was to travel to the Ruins of Immortality in their Mountain and Sea, and find Paragon Sea Dream. Then they could get the other half of the mark, and truly become a new member of the Echelon.

As he sped through the air, Meng Hao reached up and touched the place on his forehead where the Echelon mark was concealed.

At about the same time that Meng Hao returned to the Ninth Nation, something happened back in the Fourth Nation. During Lin Cong's flight, he had spit up a glob of blood, which had long since soaked into the ground. Now, that patch of ground suddenly trembled, and a hand stretched up.

The hand was as flawless as white jade, like that of a newborn baby. It trembled, and the earth shook for a moment before exploding out as a figure stood up.

It was... Lin Cong!

His face was pale, but his cultivation base was different than it had been earlier. Apparently... it was completely restored to its original peak. However, his body was trembling. After taking a few breaths, he roared:

“Meng Hao!” His face twisted with intense rage and hatred. “In the Fourth Mountain and Sea, in all the deadly situations I encountered, I never used up one of my lives! I never imagined that you would actually push me into a corner and kill me!

“The enmity between us is irreconcilable!” He gnashed his teeth, and he even thought about retaliating against Xu Qing after he got back to the Fourth Mountain, to use her to get revenge against Meng Hao. However, when he considered that Xu Qing was the Princess of the 49th

Cavern, he realized that despite the fact that she was Meng Hao's weak spot, it was actually impossible for him to do anything to her.

The realization filled him with bitterness. He suddenly realized that, even though he was still alive, Meng Hao had become his inner Devil.

He stamped his foot down onto the ground, and then flew into the air toward the National Aura Mountain. There was no way to vent his overflowing hatred. Even if he felt that he couldn't exist under the same sky as Meng Hao, the next time they met, all he would do was flee. He did not dare to go up against him.

Currently, he was even wondering if Meng Hao knew that he wasn't dead.

Naturally, Meng Hao was completely aware of that fact. Currently, he was landing on Mount Whiteseal, where he sat down cross legged and flicked his sleeve to produce two tongues of flame.

These were none other than the World Seals from the Fourth Nation and the Eighth Nation.

The two flames flickered up into the hand of the statue, where they lined up with the Ninth Nation's World Seal. The three flames made the Essences and natural laws even more majestic.

Meng Hao took a deep breath. Not wasting any time, he focused on contemplation. He had long since realized that, after taking the World Seal of the Fourth Nation, he no longer possessed twenty percent of the Windswept Realm's qi flow, but rather, thirty percent.

As he contemplated enlightenment, time passed. The overall structure of the Windswept Realm changed due to the defeats of Lin Cong and Han Qinglei. The Fourth Nation and the Eighth Nation were routed, and were eliminated from the central battlefield.

The other six nations continued to fight their bloody battles. However, the Ninth Nation had risen to prominence in the war, causing the cultivators from the other nations to join forces against it in resistance.

Before long, the intense fighting led to a chaotic battle situation.

Fan Dong'er and Bei Yu began switching off with other cultivators from the Ninth Mountain and Sea, so that there were some of them constantly fighting, almost as if they were unwilling to return from the battlefield.

It was as if they could find peace in the fighting, and would not be influenced by their desires.

Half a month flashed by. The speed with which he was gaining enlightenment of the three World Seals was rapidly increased because of the blessing of thirty percent of the qi flow of the Windswept Realm. By this point, he had gained enlightenment of nearly 500 Essences.

And he wasn't finished.

During the half month, the fighting in the central region changed as more Echelon cultivators gained enlightenment of their respective World Seals. The battles grew even more chaotic.

In order to snatch the World Seals from other nations, it was first necessary to weaken them, which could only be done by gaining an advantage in the central region. Under the control of the Echelon cultivators, the armies in the central region fought with increased intensity.

Occasionally, certain countries would suffer defeats, and the red beams of light coming from their pagodas would grow dim. At that point, other Echelon cultivators would enter that nation to begin fighting.

During the half month, fierce fighting went on in virtually all of the National Aura Mountains of the various nations. There were both victories and defeats, but through it all there were only two mountains that no one dared to enter!

One was the First Nation's Mountain of National Fate, which was controlled by the Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain. No one dared to encroach on his territory.

The second nation was Meng Hao's Mount Whiteseal, in the Ninth Nation. Although all the other Echelon cultivators were aware of how many World Seals he had, after his battle with Han Qinglei, and then his defeat of Lin Cong, he had settled his position. None of the other Echelon cultivators were confident enough to take him on.

It was in this fashion that seven more days passed. Suddenly, a boundless light rose up from Mount Whiteseal, within which Meng Hao opened his eyes. He slowly stood up and made a grasping motion with his right hand, causing the three flames to fly over into his palm, where they vanished.

Three World Seals, 900 great Daos. 900 Essences. All of that information was burned into his heart. Although he wasn't able to actually wield any of them, the sense of accomplishment he felt caused his aura to be completely different than before.

He looked more elegant than before, and as he stood there, it seemed as if he were connected with the whole world. The light began to fade away, and he closed his eyes. When he opened them again moments later, he suddenly produced his second Nirvana Fruit. His eyes glittered as he pushed the fruit into his forehead.

In the instant the Nirvana Fruit contacted his forehead, a familiar sensation filled him. A massive tempestuous roar filled his mind, causing him to feel as though his head were about to explode.

He began to grow taller. 15 meters. 24 meters. 30 meters. 39 meters....

His fleshly body was ripped and torn, and intense pain rushed through him that was nothing like the last time he had temporarily absorbed the second Nirvana Fruit. This time, his fleshly body was not in the Immortal Realm, but rather, in the Ancient Realm!

His Ancient Realm fleshly body rumbled as it grew. Of his nine Soul Lamps, two had previously been lit. Now, the third and fourth began to burn, and a tiny spark appeared in the fifth.

His fleshly body power was increasing explosively!

His heart began to pound loudly, and then, thunder began to boom around him, as if it were cheering him on!

A power more terrifying than his Ancient Realm fleshly body began to flourish within him.

Soon, he was 60 meters tall, and he looked like a giant, his head raised, surging energy giving rise to madly whipping winds.

ROOOOAAAARRRRRRRRRRRR!

He trembled as a tempest raged inside of him, tearing him apart. It was almost as if his qi passageways were going to be completely destroyed.

The Nirvana Fruit was like a key that unlocked terrifying power within his blood. Once again, shocking fluctuations began to flow through his veins!

Meng Hao could clearly sense that his 123 Immortal meridians were now ripping apart and then forming back together into a single Immortal meridian!

Although it was only one Immortal meridian, it formed something like a painting, a painting which showed the outline of a perfect circle!

His cultivation base rose up rapidly, and his every breath seemed to cause peals of thunder to echo out as he sucked in all of the energy of Heaven and Earth that existed in the area.

Power like this was something that far exceeded the Immortal Emperor Realm.

The mountain shook, and the lands quaked. All of the living things in the Ninth Nation could suddenly sense the shocking and domineering power that now existed on Mount Whiteseal.

The people who could sense it most clearly were the disciples of the various sects in the Ninth Nation, especially Jian Daozi. His face fell as he and all the other cultivators of the Ninth Nation looked off into the distance with expressions of shock.

As of this moment, Meng Hao was surrounded by the color azure.

Azure represented the Allheaven! The Allheaven represented the infinite!

Radiant azure light radiated off of Meng Hao as he threw his head back and roared. The sky shook, and massive winds blew.

This time, Meng Hao was able to endure for twenty breaths of time before his body trembled, and he coughed up a mouthful of blood. He staggered backward as the Nirvana Fruit emerged and fell down into his hand.

Although he now looked quite disheveled, his eyes gleamed with obsession and excitement.

“Gaining enlightenment of the Essences really will help me absorb the second Nirvana Fruit!

“I now understand 900 Essences, which lets me stay in that terrifying state for twenty breaths of time, which is much longer than before. According to my calculations, if I can gain enlightenment of 3,000 Essences, then I should be able to... permanently remain in the Allheaven Immortal Realm!” This hope caused him to throw his head back and laugh loudly.

“Besides, the first time I tried to absorb my second Nirvana Fruit, it wasted much of the energy in my body, so much so that I couldn’t even stand up. But now... it only took thirty percent of my energy!”

Chapter 1109: The Echelon War Truly Begins!

As the Nirvana Fruit sank down, the shield surrounding Mount Whiteseal faded away, but the light shining off of Meng Hao grew stronger. He took a deep breath and then stepped off of the mountain and into the air.

The wind battered him, and although his hair whipped about, not a bit of his aura could be blown away. It was as if the energy belonging to Meng Hao couldn’t be touched at all by the wind, but rather, influenced the entire world around him.

“I’ve already gained complete enlightenment of three World Seals. If I want to completely absorb the Nirvana Fruit... I’ll need more sealing marks!” Meng Hao’s energy rocketed up, and he overflowed with the desire to fight. His eyes flashed like lightning as he shot off into the distance.

As he left the Ninth Nation, his goal was to slaughter his way into other nations... to defeat their Echelon cultivators and steal their sealing marks!

He would take advantage of this opportunity in the Windswept Realm to seize... his greatest available good fortune, which was to become an...

Allheaven Immortal!

He would become number one in the Echelon!

BOOM!

He turned into a streak of bright light that sped through the sky for less time than it takes half an incense stick to burn. Then, he suddenly stopped and looked down toward the ground.

He was still in the Ninth Nation, and far below, he had just noticed a vein of Immortal jade deep under the ground. The human cultivator from the Mountain and Sea Realm was still there, and although he couldn't see Meng Hao, Meng Hao could see him.

The man appeared to be mired in madness, completely lost. When Meng Hao saw the Immortal jade, a feeling of desire suddenly rose up in his heart, but he immediately quashed it.

"I love money, but I'm my own master. I'll never let material things control me!" he said coolly. As he crushed the invisible fetters, a shattering sound seemed to echo about in his mind. He turned away and ignored everything down below as he sped off into the distance.

In the final seven days in which Meng Hao had gained enlightenment of the World Seal, the Echelon cultivators in other parts of the Windswept Realm were all thrown into a state of chaos by the shocking events which occurred.

The First Nation's Echelon cultivator attacked the Second Nation, completely defeating the Echelon cultivator there. Only by sacrificing one of his lives was he able to flee. Of course, the Second Nation's World Seal was then completely undefended, and was taken away by the First Nation's Echelon cultivator, who completely leveled the entire National Aura Mountain to get to it.

After that, the Echelon cultivators from the Fifth and Sixth Nations fought each other. The shocking battle shook Heaven and Earth, and resulted in both sides sustaining heavy injuries. In a critical moment, the First Nation's Echelon cultivator appeared. He ignored the Third Nation's mountain, passing directly through to the two fighting Echelon cultivators, whom he took on himself.

That battle was shocking to the extreme, and in the end, the entire Fifth Nation was destroyed. Their National Aura Mountain toppled, and in the end, both Echelon cultivators from the Fifth and Sixth Nations were defeated, and the Fifth Nation's World Seal was taken.

No one knew whether or not the Fifth Nation's Echelon cultivator was killed, but in either case, nobody could find him after the battle. The Sixth Nation's Echelon cultivator returned to his National Aura Mountain, severely injured.

After these things happened, the First Nation's Echelon cultivator seemed to be invincible, capable of sweeping over all of Heaven and Earth, leaving everyone astonished.

Of the Windswept Realm's nine World Seals, the Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain and Meng Hao each had three. The others remained in the Third, Sixth and Seventh Nations respectively.

The war had spread out from the central region to the Echelon members themselves. It was about that time that Meng Hao reached the Eighth Nation.

He didn't pause for even a moment, speeding through the air like a meteor, passing over the Eighth Nation as he headed toward the Seventh Nation. His aura surged mightily, growing ever-stronger.

Before long, he reached the Seventh Nation, and when he entered it, intense pressure roiled out from its National Aura Mountain.

The source was none other than the Echelon cultivator of the Seventh Nation, Yuwen Jian, the young man with the incredibly murderous aura. He currently stood on the mountain peak, hand curled around the haft of a long spear, looking up into the sky with a gleam of anticipation in his eyes.

"It's not my custom to sit around waiting for people to come fight me," he said coolly. He took a step forward, abandoning the defenses of the National Aura Mountain as he flew directly in Meng Hao's direction.

The entire Seventh Nation trembled as Meng Hao and Yuwen Jian sped toward each other through the sky!

When Meng Hao caught sight of Yuwen Jian, he didn't slow down in the least bit. Instead, he sped up and prepared to attack.

When Yuwen Jian saw Meng Hao, he let out a cold snort. His murderous aura exploded to the sky, and just like Meng Hao, he didn't hold back, but instead, pushed himself faster.

In the blink of an eye, the two of them collided in midair above the Seventh Nation.

A huge boom rang out, and everything shook. A massive fissure ripped open in the sky between them, and a huge shockwave exploded out.

“Meng Hao!” cried Yuwen Jian, flying backward. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, after which he threw his head back and laughed. His entire person exploded with the desire to do battle. He hefted his long spear, which thrummed as countless slain souls suddenly appeared, looking incredibly ferocious.

“Listen up, fool, I’m Yuwen Jian, Echelon cultivator from the Seventh Mountain! Meng Hao, do you dare to make a bet with me? If you win, I won’t just hand over the Seventh Nation’s World Seal, but I’ll trade it with you! The prerequisite is that you qualify to fight me! If you lose, then you have to give one of your three World Seals to me!” Yuwen Jian’s voice echoed about, and he took a step forward, a domineering air swirling around him continuously.

Meng Hao also began to stride forward, eyes glittering. From their initial contact moments ago, Meng Hao could instantly tell that Yuwen Jian’s fleshly body was at roughly the same level as his own.

“A body cultivator!” he thought, his eyes gleaming brightly. He had an Ancient Realm fleshly body, yet didn’t come close to being an authentic body cultivator. In fact, the only true body cultivator he had ever met was the burly Demonic cultivator. However, that man was an amateur, and couldn’t be considered truly powerful in terms of body cultivation.

But now... Meng Hao could sense that Yuwen Jian was a true body cultivator!

Looking him over, he could see a faintly red glow coming off of Yuwen Jian. “He must have bathed in the blood of a God!” he thought.

“Well, do you dare?” asked Yuwen Jian, his voice booming. He swept his spear out in front of him, causing a massive rumbling sound to ring out. The air vibrated, and even seemed to be on the verge of shattering, as a massive energy surged off of Yuwen Jian,

He stood there like a celestial warrior, bursting with the mad desire to fight.

“I could fart better proposals than that bet of yours,” Meng Hao said coolly. “But as for your challenge to a duel... how could I not accept!?” He clenched his right hand into a fist and then unleashed a punch.

His fist and Yuwen Jian’s spear almost instantly slammed into each other, and an ear-splitting boom rang out. The flexible spear absorbed the backlash and was deflected away, and Yuwen Jian fell back again. Blood poured out of his mouth, and when he looked up, his expression was even more maddened than before. He tossed the spear aside, licked the blood off of his lips, and stared at Meng Hao with bloodshot eyes.

“That runt Han Qinglei wasn’t a match for you, and you also defeated the sissypants Lin Cong. You’re strong, Meng Hao. But... I’m even stronger!

“Did you really think that Lin Cong was actually the second most powerful after the Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain, Dao-Heaven?”

“That list was made thirty years ago, and besides, being in the Echelon requires finding your own correct path. The difference in power between us members was once vast. Back then, I might not have been a match for Lin Cong. But now... I could defeat him easily!

“Even Dao-Heaven’s title of number one most powerful Echelon cultivator... is just that, a title! He isn’t necessarily the most powerful!” Yuwen Jian laughed, and his desire to do battle surged. He then charged toward Meng Hao in a blur, unleashing a vicious palm strike.

As the palm ripped through the air, sonic booms echoed out. The air around Meng Hao distorted, as if power from all directions were being sucked in by Yuwen Jian’s palm strike.

Meng Hao didn’t flinch back. He strode forward, unleashing the Seven God Steps. However, in that moment, Yuwen Jian smiled ferociously, threw his head back and roared.

“Sealing Magic!” he cried, causing the sky to tremble. The power of a sealing mark descended not toward Meng Hao, but the area around him.

It transformed into a cage, with Meng Hao and Yuwen Jian being locked inside. However, because of the cage, Meng Hao was unable to utilize the Seven God Steps to borrow energy from the surroundings.

“I was ready for that Daoist magic!” laughed Yuwen Jian, advancing forward again.

He roared, and his body suddenly began to grow larger. In the blink of an eye, he was fully twice as large as before, and from the look of it, half of the power of his fleshly body was now converged in his right arm. He was clearly vastly different than moments ago, and as he swung his right arm, shocking power erupted.

His qi and blood rumbled, and anyone who was sensitive to auras, even if they were some distance away, would be able to sense the towering bloody glow that rose off of him. It was like a bright lamp in the middle of the night!

“DIE!” he roared as his fist rocketed out with power seemingly capable of shaking Heaven and Earth!

Meng Hao’s face was calm. Freeing himself from the cage wouldn’t be difficult. However, now that he had encountered a true body cultivator like Yuwen Jian, his desire to fight boiled hotter than ever.

As Yuwen Jian closed in, Meng Hao clenched his hand into a fist and leaped forward. Instantly, an aura was unleashed that seemed capable of destroying the Heavens, and exterminating all life.

That power of extermination converged in Meng Hao’s fist, creating a true... power of Life-Extermination!

The Life-Extermination Fist!

The air around them shattered as two streaks of light could be seen speeding through the air toward each other. Then, Meng Hao’s punch collided with the power of Yuwen Jian’s fleshly body, and a huge boom echoed out.

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLE!

Heaven was rent and the Earth collapsed. Everything quaked violently. Vibrations ran through Meng Hao as he fell back several dozen paces. The shocking power from body cultivator Yuwen Jian left him shaken and visibly moved. And yet, his desire to fight grew stronger.

Blood sprayed out of Yuwen Jian's mouth as he staggered backward several hundred meters. When he looked up, an invincible will to fight could be seen in his eyes. He threw his head back and laughed uproariously.

“Exhilarating! Alright Meng Hao, let's see if you can handle another punch. If you survive, then I'll happily loan you my World Seal to contemplate!”

Chapter 1110: What Are You Doing!?

As Yuwen Jian's laughter rang out in the air, he suddenly took a deep breath, and then a sound like that of a windstorm exploded up around him.

The air in the area collapsed, as if his single breath was sucking in all of the energy of Heaven and Earth around him to merge into his body.

The result was that his body grew rapidly until he was over 18 meters tall!

“Six Times Nine God Body, First Transformation!” Yuwen Jian roared as his body then explosively grew from 18 meters to a shocking 27 meters tall. He looked like a giant, hovering there in midair, exuding shocking pressure.

He lifted his right hand up and clenched it into a fist, which he held out toward Meng Hao. It was a simple motion, but the cracking sounds which rang out as a result caused the air to shatter. He let out another roar, and he looked like a mountain as he then charged toward Meng Hao.

He was enormous, but he moved with unbelievable speed. In the blink of an eye he was in front of Meng Hao, his enormous fist punching out with terrifying, exterminating power.

Meng Hao's eyes glowed with a strange light. His blood surged through his veins, and his desire to fight was strong as Yuwen Jian's fist closed in. He took a deep breath, and although his energy didn't surge in the same way Yuwen Jian's had, but his aura still shot up madly with that single breath.

A madness rose up, a madness like that of Bedevilment. It was a determination like nothing else, something that disregarded everything, even the shattering of all bones, in the pursuit of cutting out a swath of blood.

That entire will was focused into a single punch that rumbled through the air. This was Meng Hao's second body cultivator fist strike.

The Self-Immolation Fist! Also known as... the Bedevilment Fist!

A huge boom filled the air as Meng Hao and Yuwen Jian slammed into each other. The lands trembled, mountains collapsed, and the sky flashed. Meng Hao let out a muffled grunt and staggered backward about twenty paces. When he looked up, he saw Yuwen Jian flying through the air like a kite with its string cut, blood spraying from his mouth. Meng Hao's single punch had sent him spinning, and it looked like his body was on the verge of being shredded to pieces.

"Second transformation!

"Third transformation!

"Fourth transformation!" Yuwen Jian's voice boomed out as he fell back, and his body continued to grow larger until he was 108 meters tall. Now he really was a giant, with explosive energy. Roaring, he finally came to a stop, and then braced himself and prepared to fight back against Meng Hao's Bedevilment Fist. As he strode forward, he said, "Fifth transformation!"

Another roar could be heard as he grew even taller. By the time Meng Hao reached him, he was 135 meters tall. From a distance, Meng Hao looked completely insignificant.

However, that seemingly insignificant frame contained a power that caused even Yuwen Jian's fleshly body to tremble.

Meng Hao's eyes were as cold as ice. Yuwen Jian had said his punch from moments ago would be his last one, but here he was attacking again. Meng Hao was losing patience. Suddenly, his fist opened up into a palm. Such a motion should have caused a drop in his momentum, but instead, shocking ripples spread out.

It was as if his palm had fused with world to become the will of Heaven!

As of this moment, outside of the sealed cage area, a massive pressure seemed to be weighing down, an awakening aura that pierced through the seal and settled onto Meng Hao.

His open palm then slowly clenched back into a fist, causing the aura to explode out like the will of Heaven, unleashing an intense, indescribable killing intent!

“God Slaying!” Meng Hao said coolly.

However, in the moment that he spoke, the attacking Yuwen Jian suddenly shivered as he felt a sensation of unprecedented deadly crisis well up inside of him. It was indescribably intense, and he had the premonition that if he went through with his attack, he would end up dead!!

“Dammit! How can he be so strong!?! He must have been holding back his strength when he was fighting with Lin Cong!” Yuwen Jian’s face fell, and his surging energy suddenly faded away. He instantly backed up, shrinking down to his normal size. Then, his face extremely serious, he angrily said, “Brother Meng Hao, what are you doing! Well? What do you think you’re doing!?!? Didn’t we have an agreement? We were just comparing fighting tips, right? I can’t believe you’re using lethal attacks!?!?”

“As brothers, this really pains me! We might have just met each other, but we became friends at first sight! There’s no need try to kill each other! You qualify to exchange World Seals with me! Hahaha! Brother, I already said that last fist strike was my last one, and I always keep my word.” Yuwen Jian didn’t seem to feel the least bit uncomfortable or embarrassed to switch from being arrogant and condescending to calling Meng Hao brother. His expression was one of complete sincerity, just as a body cultivator should be; he exuded an air of complete honesty and forthrightness.

“About trading for the World Seal, Brother Meng Hao, why don’t we go to the Seventh Nation’s National Aura Mountain together? Trading for the World Seal means that we won’t have to damage our relationship. Plus, you can gain enlightenment of further essences. What possible downside could there be?”

A strange expression appeared on Meng Hao’s face, and he cleared his throat as he relaxed his fist.

“That would be for the best.”

“Please, follow me!” Yuwen Jian gave an inward sigh of relief, then laughed heartily as he led the way. He and Meng Hao transformed into two beams of bright light that shot toward the Seventh Nation’s National Aura Mountain. Before long, they arrived, and since Meng Hao had been invited by Yuwen Jian, the National Aura Mountain’s defenses did not target him.

Once they arrived at the statue, Yuwen Jian made a grasping motion, causing the flame of the World Seal to float over and hover atop his palm.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he extended his hand in a similar fashion, causing a World Seal flame to appear.

The two of them stared at each other warily for a moment before waving hands and exchanging the two flames.

Yuwen Jian smiled, then nodded and sat down cross-legged. He didn't immediately begin to contemplate enlightenment, but rather, looked at Meng Hao and waited for him to begin. After all, once the process started, there was no way to suddenly stop it. If one person started without the other, neither would feel comfortable about the situation.

Furthermore, Yuwen Jian wasn't willing to just hand over the Seventh Nation's World Seal permanently.

After a moment of thought, Meng Hao waved his left hand, causing blackpod imps to spread out around the area and act as Dharma Protectors. Then he sat down and looked at the flame in his hand.

Yuwen Jian took a deep breath, causing bright lights to begin to swirl around him, which transformed into a protective shield. They exchanged a final glance, and without saying anything else, simultaneously sank into contemplation.

Immediately, tremors ran through their bodies. Remaining ever vigilant against each other, both began to focus on Essences and natural law.

Time passed by. Three days later, they had both reached a critical juncture in their contemplation. Although Yuwen Jian had not previously received a blessing of qi flow from the Windswept Realm like Meng Hao had, this was his home turf, and therefore, his process of enlightenment went quickly.

Conversely, Meng Hao was not on his native Mount Whiteseal, but instead on the Seventh Nation's National Aura Mountain. That should have made his speed of enlightenment much slower, but he had the benefit of the qi flow of the Windswept Realm. Therefore, although his speed was slightly slower, it was a speed that he could accept, putting him just slightly ahead of Yuwen Jian.

However, on the fourth day, just when Meng Hao was on the verge of completion, the pressure in the Seventh Nation increased dramatically, and rumbling sounds filled the air.

Yuwen Jian's eyes snapped open, and a grim look appeared on his face.

"Someone's coming!" he growled. Being in the midst of contemplating enlightenment, however, there was very little he could do. He looked over at Meng Hao, who had also opened his eyes, and was frowning as he looked off into the distance.

Not too much time passed before three beams of light appeared, speeding through the air. In the lead position was a young man with half-black, half-white hair. He wasn't just handsome, he was beautiful, and had a glittering Echelon mark on his forehead.

He was followed by two other cultivators, a man and a woman. Both appeared to be young, but they emanated terrifying cultivation base auras. They were in the Ancient Realm, with five extinguished Soul Lamps each. Furthermore, the feeling they gave off was not that of ordinary Ancient Realm cultivation bases. They seemed more powerful, indicating that these were Chosen.

"Dao-Heaven's number one follower, the eleventh Echelon cultivator, Hai Dongqing!!"

Yuwen Jian's face flickered, and his eyes went wide.

"Follower? Hai Dongqing?" Meng Hao asked.

"Hai Dongqing used to be like me, an Echelon cultivator from the Seventh Mountain. However, after he was defeated by Dao-Heaven, he inexplicably joined his entourage. As an Echelon cultivator, it's a complete disgrace to become the follower of some other person!" Yuwen Jian gritted his teeth and stared at the three incoming cultivators. "Dammit, shouldn't Dao-Heaven's goal be the Third and Sixth Nations? I can't believe he's ignoring them and focusing here!" Yuwen Jian's face flickered, and he cursed inwardly. His contemplation of enlightenment was still incomplete, making it impossible for him to fight.

"Do you have a grudge with Hai Dongqing?" Meng Hao asked suddenly.

Yuwen Jian's face darkened further, and he nodded. "I killed him once, years ago."

Considering that they were both Echelon cultivators from the Seventh Mountain and Sea, there was little wonder that they had a hard time maintaining a good relationship, and had ended up fighting to the death.

Meng Hao sat there quietly for a moment while Yuwen Jian ground his teeth. Although Yuwen Jian couldn't attack personally, he could summon help. He smacked his hand down onto the ground, and rumbling sounds echoed out through the Seventh Nation. Shockingly, numerous holes suddenly appeared all over his body, which then exploded, revealing a group of figures.

They were puppets, dozens of them, with powerful cultivation bases. Meng Hao's eyes widened slightly, but given that Yuwen Jian was also in the Echelon, it was only natural that he would have some tricks that he wouldn't reveal without good cause.

Almost as soon as the puppets appeared, Hai Dongqing began to descend from above, his hair floating around him, his body radiating shocking energy.

"So, we meet again, Yuwen Jian!" Hatred gleamed in Hai Dongqing's eyes. His voice was soft and effeminate as he floated over. His gaze then shifted to Meng Hao.

"Meng Hao? I never imagined I would find you here! Oh well, it doesn't matter. I guess today I'll get to take four World Seals for Elder Brother Dao-Heaven!"

Yuwen Jian's eyes went wide, and he started cursing loudly: "Elder Brother Dao-Heaven!? What bullshit! You're nothing more than Dao-Heaven's lackey, you fool! How shameless do you have to be to join someone else's entourage, huh Hai Dongqing?"