

The Heavens 1121

Chapter 1121: The Most Powerful State!

Dao-Heaven had a sudden, intense premonition that if he didn't do something to stop Meng Hao's aura from rising up explosively, then he could very well end up in the middle of a deadly catastrophe.

"Dammit, how could this Meng Hao be so strong!?!?" It was extremely rare for Dao-Heaven to encounter anyone who caused him to think in this way.

"Screw off!" Dao-Heaven managed to shove Yuwen Jian back, and then stepped forward amidst rumbling booms. Yuwen Jian was no match for him; even with the battle-ax, he was still forced into constant retreat. However, he didn't shirk from fighting. Roaring, he unleashed the full might of his body cultivation power, fighting fiercely with Dao-Heaven to buy time for Meng Hao.

Meng Hao shook as he reached a height of 72 meters. All of his Immortal meridians were now fused into one, and he was surrounded by brilliant azure light.

Unfortunately, he was now distinctly aware of the fact that he couldn't actually fight while powering up. He wanted to, but was incapable. This was his first time absorbing the Nirvana Fruit and reaching the Allheaven Immortal stage during a battle. The previous two times had been mere tests while in secluded meditation.

"Dammit!" he thought, growing anxious. However, no hesitation could be seen in his facial expression. His power continued to surge, and to anyone watching, it would seem obvious that there was more to come.

His aura rose past the Immortal Emperor Realm and he entered half a step into the Allheaven Immortal Realm. Terrifying ripples exploded off of him.

Colors flashed and the winds screamed, as if some huge eye had appeared up in the Heavens and was staring at Meng Hao.

Thunder crashed, and the sky above the Windswept Realm twisted and distorted. The lands quaked, and the mountains trembled. The whole world seemed to be changing.

Dao-Heaven's eyes went wide when he saw Meng Hao's power rising up without stop. Even he had to admit that what he was seeing was terrifying to the extreme. He threw his head back and roared, performing a double-handed incantation gesture that caused his cultivation base to erupt with power. A black fog appeared in front of him, which churned as it transformed into a giant, one-horned beast that charged roaring toward Yuwen Jian.

Yuwen Jian's face fell, and his anxiety grew. He wasn't sure what was going on with Meng Hao. Although they hadn't laid out specific plans, according to how the situation had developed, this moment was about the time when Meng Hao should make his move.

"Dammit, what's taking him so long!?" Yuwen Jian roared inwardly. He had half a mind to flee, but instead, gritted his teeth and faced the charging beast.

A huge boom echoed out, and blood sprayed out of Yuwen Jian's mouth. The cracking sounds of breaking bones could be heard. Blood spurted out, and he coughed up chunks of crushed internal organs, and he was sent flying backward. His aura was weakening, and yet, he clenched his teeth, roared, and then decided to go all-out. He hefted the battle-ax and slashed it viciously toward Dao-Heaven, who was trying to rush past him.

With a cold harrumph, Dao-Heaven took a step forward without attempting to dodge the blow at all, lifting his right hand up as he used the Immortal Flail to block the descending ax.

A boom rang out, and then Dao-Heaven turned, as if to shoot toward Meng Hao. Yuwen Jian let out a roar and pounced, attempting to grapple Dao-Heaven and hold him in place. Dao-Heaven's face turned grim.

"Are you looking to die!?" His right hand clenched into a fist and he punched Yuwen Jian in the stomach. Yuwen Jian's eyes went wide as he tumbled backward amidst a haze of blood and gore.

"Meng Hao," Yuwen Jian shouted with a bitter laugh, "you owe me a life!" Even as the words came out of his mouth, his eyes gleamed with determination, and he charged again, preparing to expend one of his lives, in an attempt to block Dao-Heaven for a bit longer.

"DIE!" Dao-Heaven roared, waving his hand. The giant fog beast howled and lunged toward Yuwen Jian. Just when it seemed to be on the verge of hitting him, all of a sudden, the air in front of Yuwen Jian distorted, and a towering figure appeared.

It was none other than Meng Hao, standing there at more than 70 meters tall!

He immediately extended his hand and pushed it out toward the pouncing beast.

That motion caused the previously shocking beast to let out a shriek like a sick cat. It suddenly stopped in midair, incapable of moving a muscle, its expression one of fear and disbelief as Meng Hao reached out and crushed its head.

A boom could be heard as the beast exploded, sending bits of black fog roiling out in all directions.

“M-Meng Hao!” Yuwen Jian panted, shocked at the sight of the figure in front of him. Meng Hao glowed with azure light, and an archaic aura roiled off of him. It was almost as if... in this moment, Meng Hao was not a cultivator of the Mountain and Sea Realm, but instead, someone who had traveled through time from the primordial Paragon Immortal Realm.

He stood tall, radiating azure light. Faint, flickering magical symbols could be seen on him as he stood there like a mountain. The air vibrated and the lands trembled. The clouds up above seemed to lower themselves, as if in obeisance.

In the entire world, and in all the lands, it was as if Meng Hao were the only existence.

That was... a domineering aura that said, REVERE ME!

Meng Hao looked up at Dao-Heaven.

Dao-Heaven's face flickered with a serious expression as he stared back. Inside, he was starting to get nervous.

“Yuwen Jian, get out of here!” Meng Hao said slowly. Yuwen Jian would not be of any use in the battle to come, and if he stayed, it could be possible that Dao-Heaven might unleash something akin to the Blood Demon Grand Magic, or something even more sinister like the Heavenly Demon Devouring. That could put Meng Hao in a bad position.

Therefore, the best thing for Meng Hao was for him to leave!

Yuwen Jian stared deeply at Meng Hao for a moment, as if to affix him to memory. Yuwen Jian didn't have many friends, and even Hong Bin only counted as half a friend. However, in the brief bit of time he had spent with Meng Hao, he had already come to consider him a friend.

"I'm not going to give this battle-ax back to you if you die," he said. "So... don't get yourself killed!" Then he took a deep breath and sped off into the distance with all the speed he could muster. Dao-Heaven didn't even spare him a glance as he left; the threat posed by Meng Hao was far too great.

"Meng Hao!" he roared, and his body emanated cracking sounds. In the blink of an eye, he began to grow. His expression distorted, and when he reached a height of 60 meters, he threw his head back and roared. The sound of his heartbeat echoed out, and on the ninth beat, his energy peaked, and he strode toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's expression was calm. He could sense the power of his sole Immortal meridian, as well as the terrifying strength of his fleshly body. He began to walk forward, then clenched his right hand into a fist and punched out toward Dao-Heaven.

That fist caused the sky to flash and the wind to scream. Dao-Heaven's face flickered, and yet he laughed viciously. As Meng Hao's fist strike neared, he suddenly vanished, then reappeared behind Meng Hao. At the same time, two black, leathery wings spread out from his back.

Next, his hand formed a claw shape, which he slashed toward Meng Hao's back.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever, and he didn't even turn around. Instead, he pushed off with his feet, flying back-first toward Dao-Heaven.

Dao-Heaven's hand struck Meng Hao's back, causing a huge boom to echo out. Meng Hao didn't react, but Dao-Heaven's hand twisted in place, completely incapable of doing anything to Meng Hao. Then, Meng Hao slammed into Dao-Heaven.

An earsplitting boom echoed out, and blood sprayed out of Dao-Heaven's mouth. He flew back like a kite with its string cut, his expression one of shock as more than half the bones in his body broke.

"Impossible! How could he be so strong!?!?" In his astonishment, sonic booms echoed out from him from the incredible speed with which he was thrown through the air as a result of Meng Hao's vicious attack.

In the blink of an eye, he had passed across much of the Fifth Nation, and was actually nearing the border of the Fourth Nation. Subsequently, Meng Hao vanished, then suddenly reappeared directly in Dao-Heaven's path. He extended his right hand, and boundless azure light rose up from him as he used the power of an Allheaven Immortal to wave his finger.

"I'm the number one in the Echelon!" Dao-Heaven roared. "You can't beat me! This state of yours will only last for so long!!" Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he wrapped his wings around his body protectively. At the same time, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing a shield to appear, as well as a vast number of magical items.

A boom could be heard as Meng Hao's Allheaven Finger pressed down onto the shield. Cracking sounds rang out in all directions, and layer by layer, the shield collapsed. Numerous magical items shattered, and then, Meng Hao's finger landed on Dao-Heaven's wings.

A boom rattled out as the wings were shredded to pieces, transforming into nothing but ash. Dao-Heaven screamed miserably as Meng Hao's finger continued on. Then, he raised his right arm, apparently intending to use the Ancient treasure, the Immortal Flail, to block.

Popping sounds filled the air, which came from the Immortal Flail shattering. When it came into contact with Meng Hao's Allheaven Finger, the Ancient treasure was incapable of doing anything against it. Dao-Heaven's eyes went wide with disbelief.

All of a sudden, his right arm exploded into a haze of blood by the lightning-like strike of Meng Hao's finger.

"Undying God Magic!" Dao-Heaven cried in terror. Blood-red light rose up from his body, transforming into a magical symbol which slammed into Meng Hao's finger. The magical symbol trembled, but didn't break, and the mighty force of Meng Hao's finger attack sent Dao-Heaven tumbling backward.

In the blink of an eye, he had flown over the border between the Fifth Nation and the Fourth Nation. Once in the Fourth Nation, Dao-Heaven's magical symbol finally shattered. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and his expression turned haggard. However, his desire to fight was not lessened at all. He threw his head back and howled as Meng Hao charged through the national barrier and flew toward him.

“Meng Hao, you can’t kill me! How much longer can you hold out? Once you leave that state, you’re dead!” Dao-Heaven coughed up chunks blood, and as Meng Hao closed in on him, performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, then waved his hand in front of him. Immediately, the air in front of him rumbled and shattered as a black streak of light flew out.

It was none other than a scroll painting, Dao-Heaven’s Paragon magic!

“Paragon Painting, open!”

Rumbling sounds could be heard as the scroll painting began to open up in front of Meng Hao. This time, it didn’t open thirty percent, but instead, seventy percent!

As soon as Meng Hao laid eyes on the unfurling scroll painting, it revealed a land filled with killing intent. In the middle of the land was a statue of a young man in a black robe, sitting there cross-legged. He had long hair that draped down onto the land upon which he sat.

Rising up from him was an indescribably cold murderous aura.

Chapter 1122: I Call Him Slaughter!

As soon as the intense murderous aura appeared, it roiled out in all directions, kicking up clouds of dust. Lightning crashed repeatedly, and the entire world was stained by the aura of killing until it was black.

It was as if the statue in that scroll was no longer a painting. Furthermore, the Windswept Realm no longer seemed to be the Windswept Realm, but instead, the world inside the scroll painting.

Everything was pitch black, both the land and the sky. And yet somehow, Meng Hao could see everything clearly.

The statue was sitting there cross-legged, wearing black robes. All of a sudden, it twitched, and then slowly began to look up.

It was a simple motion, but it caused rumbling sounds to fill the entire world. The flow of time seemed to cease, and the natural laws seemed to be thrown into massive chaos. Before this person, Essences seemed to prostrate and kowtow in worship.

An intense killing aura stabbed into Meng Hao's eyes like a sharp arrow, piercing into his mind, causing his entire body to shake. His face fell as he was suddenly filled with an intense sensation of deadly crisis.

This sensation of danger did not come from Dao-Heaven, but rather, from the black-robed figure in the painting.

"Who is he?" Meng Hao thought, his heart pounding. "Just what kind of Paragon magic is this!?" Every Echelon cultivator had different Paragon magics, and of the various types that he had encountered, only Dao-Heaven's left him so astonished.

Meng Hao's expression was very serious. He was in the Allheaven Immortal Realm, and knew that he was bursting with power. In fact, without this Paragon magic, Dao-Heaven would not be a match for him.

It didn't matter that Dao-Heaven had entered the Ancient Realm nine times before. Each of those times, he had been treading an incorrect path. Meng Hao's path was that of the Allheaven Immortal, an ancient path, and the most powerful in the Immortal Realm!

Dao-Heaven looked at Meng Hao, his eyes blazing with killing intent. "You said before that my path was wrong...."

"My path was most certainly incorrect. Of that I am well aware. What you don't know is that there is a reason why I continued to tread the same incorrect path, and then return back to the Immortal Realm. That is because the path I want... is the path cultivated by the man in my magical Paragon painting!"

"I don't know his name, nor do I know what this painting truly depicts.... But what I do know is that the painting is ordinary, the paper is ordinary, and even the wooden rollers are ordinary. The only thing beyond ordinary about it is the black-robed figure inside."

"Because of him, the ordinary paper and the commonplace wooden rollers transformed into something miraculous and extraordinary."

"He represents slaughter, and is filled with a murderous aura the likes of which I have never encountered anywhere else in my life. Because of that, I call him Slaughter, and in my heart, I view him as... my Master!"

As Dao-Heaven's words rang out, he knelt in front of the scroll painting, his eyes burning with passion as he kowtowed deeply. After he kowtowed, the statue finished looking up, and its face was finally revealed.

It was a pale face, expressionless, and seemingly ordinary. However, within those ordinary facial features could be seen an indescribable iciness as he stared coldly at Meng Hao.

A mere look caused Meng Hao's body to shake. He felt an unspeakable pressure crushing down onto him, something superior even to the pressure of the Ninth Sea. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and despite being in the Allheaven Immortal Realm, he began to stagger backward.

He had no desire to fall back, but the gaze of the black-robed man in the scroll painting gave him no choice.

As he fell back, the pressure from the man in the painting pushed down on him to the point where it seemed he couldn't take it anymore, and would be forced to his knees, forced to capitulate, forced to offer worship!

With every step that he took back, Meng Hao roared. Finally, after seven steps had been taken, and his eyes were completely bloodshot, he forced himself to come to a stop. The price he had to pay was that a cloud of blood sprayed out of his mouth.

His knees shook so violently they felt like they might break.

"I can't believe I'm being forced into retreat by nothing more than a painting!" he thought. "Even if the person in that painting was once an almighty figure, perhaps even a Paragon, right now... he's just a painting. Why the hell... can he force me to fall back!?" Meng Hao struggled to hold his head up, and a vicious expression appeared on his face. Blood oozed out of his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. However, at the same time, his aura surged mightily.

"My Dao is that of freedom and independence!" he growled. "Other than my father and mother, there's nobody in the world... who can make Meng Hao kowtow! Who the hell do you think you are!?" He finished with a roar, and his Allheaven Immortal cultivation base spun rapidly. His only Immortal meridian rapidly expanded, forming the framework of a bridge inside of him!

He waved his right hand ferociously, and that bridge-like Immortal meridian suddenly erupted with power. Endless rumbling echoed out as it materialized... a real bridge, right in front of him!

The Paragon Bridge!

Meng Hao's Paragon magic was a powerful Dao to begin with. Although its power had seemed rather ordinary early on, that was not because of the magic itself, but rather, because Meng Hao's cultivation base had not been powerful enough to manifest much of it.

Now, though, in the Allheaven Immortal Realm, the unleashing of the Paragon Bridge was completely unlike before. Rumbling filled the air as the majestic bridge descended right in front of Meng Hao, causing the sky to vibrate, shattering the land.

It didn't appear to be illusory, but rather, a true and actual bridge. It was shocking, indescribably large, as if the entire world was but a mere corner of it.

The bridge filled the sky, sweeping across everything, and it emanated the supreme aura of a Paragon. The world trembled, and the lands were terrified. By using the Allheaven Immortal Realm, Meng Hao had finally... revealed some of its true splendor and power!

And yet, there was more! Illusory figures appeared atop the bridge. Although it was impossible to see them clearly, they existed on various locations on the bridge.

These figures radiated terrifying might, and apparently, were people from the past who had qualified to stride upon the Paragon Bridge. Although they did not end up walking across the entire bridge, as former almighty figures in Heaven and Earth, they were able to leave behind some divine will.

In the same moment that the Paragon Bridge appeared, the black-robed statue in the painting looked at it, and a look of reminiscence appeared on his face. He suddenly murmured... "Heaven Trampling... Bridge...."

His voice was filled with the sensation of memories, and yet, the same coldness as before.

This turn of events caused even Dao-Heaven's face to fill with utter shock. His head jerked up in the middle of his kowtow, an expression of disbelief could be seen on his face. The scroll painting was his, and the Paragon magic was his.

And yet... even he had never before heard the black-robed figure within speak a single word!

It was as if the appearance of the Paragon Bridge had provoked some unpredictable transformation. Even as Dao-Heaven's heart trembled, Meng Hao's mind began to spin.

"Heaven Trampling Bridge?" he thought, staring at his own Paragon Bridge.

Shockingly, the black-robed statue in the painting suddenly rose to his feet and took a step forward, his long hair trailing behind him.

When he took that step, Dao-Heaven's heart trembled. Meng Hao was standing directly in his path, and could see things even more clearly. It was as if the step he took contained some type of Dao, something that could bend space and shrink a huge span to the distance of an inch, something that could create something from nothing. With that step, he emerged from the painting, entered reality and appeared... on top of Meng Hao's Paragon Bridge.

Meng Hao's mind spun as he looked at the black-robed figure standing atop the Paragon Bridge. The young man's expression was cold, but it was also tinged with reminiscence. He began to walk across the Heaven Trampling Bridge, step after step, passing numerous other figures, as if he wished to walk the bridge to its very end.

But then he stopped walking. He looked down at the bridge beneath his feet, and seemed to grow melancholic.

"This Heaven Trampling Bridge is incomplete...." he murmured.

"I... am also incomplete...."

"That year... I stood in front of him, and her, my mission accomplished. Then I turned, heart filled with a strange pain, with sorrow, and I vanished...."

"So why...? Why am I still here...?" Then he began to laugh, a laughter filled with icy coldness, and a murderous aura.

“I loved her more than you did!!” Laughing maniacally, the black-robed figure swished his sleeve. Rumbling could be heard as the Paragon Bridge collapsed. As it did, the black-robed figure trembled and faded away along with the Heaven Trampling Bridge, his expression one of reminiscence and pain.

When he reappeared, he was back inside the scroll painting, a statue once again, his head bowed.

When that happened, Dao-Heaven made a gurgling sound and vomited a mouthful of blood. A mist of blood exploded around him; apparently, the scroll painting possessed a gravitational force that absorbed nearly half of his life force. Dao-Heaven trembled, and his face went pale white.

He had used this Paragon magic on many occasions, but never had it resulted in a backlash like just now.

Meng Hao also coughed up a mouthful of blood and fell back. He could sense that his time as an Allheaven Immortal was reaching its conclusion. Eyes glittering, he reached up and patted the top of his head, voluntarily leaving the Allheaven Immortal Realm. The Nirvana Fruit emerged from his forehead and dropped down into the palm of his hand. His aura dropped, and his face turned ashen. He stood there, unmoving, staring coldly at Dao-Heaven.

“Still wanna keep fighting?” he said calmly.

Dao-Heaven panted as the scroll painting faded away. Then he looked over at Meng Hao, smiled coldly, and said, “What, are you scared? You’re beyond weak now! I could kill you as easily as turning over my hand!”

Inwardly, though, he was hesitant. He still wasn’t completely sure whether or not Meng Hao could continue fighting in that incredibly powerful state.

Hundreds of thoughts ran through Meng Hao’s head. Originally, his plan was to try to intimidate Dao-Heaven through his calmness. But then, he realized something, and came up with a new plan. Frowning, he looked over at Dao-Heaven and then held his Nirvana Fruit fruit out in the palm of his hand, where it glittered with brilliant light.

“To kill you would cost me quite a bit,” he said. “I would end up heavily injuring myself, which would make it a lot harder to get anything more out of the Windswept Realm.”

“However, if you’re intent on dying, then I can help you reach your goal.”

Dao-Heaven’s eyes went wide as he looked at Meng Hao. Had Meng Hao remained calm, he would immediately have assumed he was trying to pull a fast one. However, to see Meng Hao frown the way he did made it seem like he was making this decision because he had no other choice. Suddenly, Dao-Heaven wasn’t quite sure what was the truth.

“I’ll know for sure if I just attack him!” he thought. Eyes flickering, he shot toward Meng Hao.

Chapter 1123: Dao-Heaven Retreats!

Almost in the exact moment that the murderous thoughts rose up in Dao-Heaven’s mind, he shot forward. Meng Hao snorted coldly and suddenly backed up. At the same time, he decisively pushed the Nirvana Fruit down into his forehead. Simultaneously, intense killing intent flickered up in his eyes.

His cold gaze locked onto Dao-Heaven in the same way it might look at a corpse.

Rumbling sounds could be heard as the Nirvana Fruit merged into his forehead. His energy immediately shot up. This time, the effect was different than before. He wasn’t immobilized as his body grew larger. Azure light flickered into being around him, and he performed an incantation gesture with his right hand. Then he waved his hand at Dao-Heaven, causing the Essence of Divine Flame to erupt out, which filled the sky.

Dao-Heaven’s heart trembled, and he suddenly lurched to a stop before shooting backward. As it turned out, he didn’t actually want to keep fighting Meng Hao to the death. He didn’t even want to fight at all. The backlash from his Paragon Painting had left him extremely weak. Most importantly... he wasn’t confident in being able to take Meng Hao out right now.

Seeing Meng Hao once again enter that terrifying state confirmed... that Meng Hao was capable of killing him.

“This magic of his has a set time limit, or maybe it’s limited in the number of times he can use it. Well, whatever the limitations are, he’ll still have to pay a price to use it.... That was something he wasn’t lying about!

“Even if he did kill me, he couldn’t kill my soul; I still have lives left. And actually, the Windswept Realm trial by fire isn’t over yet. If we both get severely injured... not only would other Echelon

cultivators try to take advantage of the situation, we might lose our chance at getting more good fortune from the Windswept Realm!

“Besides, there’s no saying whether or not he could actually kill me in the final battle. Conversely, even if I can kill him, then I would likewise be devastated, and wouldn’t be able to recover quickly or easily.” Dao-Heaven had an extremely unsightly expression on his face. If Meng Hao hadn’t struck fear into his heart, he wouldn’t be vacillating in such a way. But now, the facts were out in the open, and he had no choice but to consider the consequences of them inflicting serious injuries on each other.

As he retreated, Meng Hao stood in place. Instead of giving chase, he looked over coldly.

“Unless you want a fight to the death, don’t come looking for me. My patience... has its limits!” Then he took a step forward, stamping his foot onto the ground. The ground quaked and the air vibrated as an incredible power surged up from him. A shockwave blasted out in all directions.

Dao-Heaven continued to flee. He was still suspicious, but he had no way to tell whether or not Meng Hao was simply putting on a show. It was hard to tell, and he was forced to simply guess.

His facial expression constantly flickered as he ran through the possibilities in his mind, and his eyes glittered. Finally, he laughed loudly.

“Are you so anxious to finish our little fight, Meng Hao? There are many paths to follow. If you want to pick this one, who am I to stop you?”

Meng Hao shook his head. Energy surging, he shot forward, leaving afterimages behind him. He waved his hand, causing Divine Flame to spread out above Dao-Heaven.

Dao-Heaven’s face fell, and he instantly performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, then waved his finger toward the ground. Black fog roiled up, transforming into a rumbling vortex. A huge hand then stretched up out of the vortex, which pushed out toward the Divine Flame.

At the moment, raging flames covered Meng Hao’s face, making it so that Dao-Heaven couldn’t see his face clearly. All he could see were his cold eyes, flickering with killing intent.

Meng Hao didn’t pause for even a second. As the Essence of Divine Flame and Dao-Heaven’s magical technique slammed into each other, he strode forward and said, “God Slaying!”

His right hand clenched into a fist, seemingly embodying the will and might of Heaven. The qi flow of the Windswept Realm converged, and his Allheaven Immortal cultivation base caused colors to flash and the wind to scream.

Dao-Heaven's face fell as he continued to retreat, performing a double-handed incantation gesture. A portal suddenly appeared, which slammed open to reveal nine Bone Dragons. Roaring, they flew out of the portal toward Meng Hao, surging with energy.

ROOOOOAAAARRRRRRRRRRRR!

Meng Hao's fist caused the world to shatter. The nine Bone Dragons let out plaintive shrieks as they were shattered into tiny pieces. Dao-Heaven took a deep breath, and then flashed through the air, instantly falling back by 3,000 meters. Then he laughed.

"Meng Hao, fighting like this is meaningless. Since you don't really feel like continuing, then I, Chen, will just take my leave...." Obviously, Dao-Heaven was his Daoist name, whereas his true surname was Chen. With that, Dao-Heaven fled, his expression normal, but his heart filled with vigilance.

"Based on his personality," he thought, "if he actually stops fighting because of what I said, then I'll know he's trying to trick me!" As Dao-Heaven fled, his expression and demeanor made it seem as if he truly wished to get away.

Meng Hao's face was covered by the Divine Flame, and as such, Dao-Heaven couldn't see anything more than Meng Hao's eyes. Those eyes didn't change at all, and in fact, grew colder than ever. Even as Dao-Heaven attempted to flee, Meng Hao caused the starstone in his eyes to melt, covering his body so that he transformed into a planet!

It was a planet wreathed in Divine Flame, making it look like a shooting star as it sped after Dao-Heaven.

Based on its speed and trajectory, it really seemed as if he wanted to catch up.

Dao-Heaven realized this, and his expression turned dark.

“So he really does still have enough power to stay in that Realm!!” Even as Meng Hao closed in, Dao-Heaven suddenly increased his speed. In a flash, he was a great distance away.

“Meng Hao,” he called behind him, “have you met a girl named Xue’er yet?”

“If not, I should really leave you alive so that you have a chance to meet her!”

“Next time we run into each other, though, that will be the day you die!” Laughing, he shot off with incredible speed.

“Pipe down!” Meng Hao said from within the planet, his voice echoing out with incredible pressure. He continued to give chase for another several thousand meters. However, considering Dao-Heaven’s incredible speed, soon there was no trace of him. Meng Hao slowly came to a stop. The planet disappeared, and his human form reappeared.

He looked no different than he usually did. The Nirvana Fruit emerged from his forehead and dropped into his hand. He hovered there in midair, expression cold, looking in the direction Dao-Heaven had fled. Finally, he gave a cold harrumph, turned, and headed off in a different direction.

He took his time leaving, and as for the direction he chose, it was none other than the Third Nation.

Not long after he disappeared over the horizon, a strand of black smoke appeared on the battlefield. It swirled together in midair to reveal an illusory image of Dao-Heaven, frowning. As Meng Hao disappeared in the distance, he let out a sigh.

“So, he wasn’t trying to trick me. After fighting me, he actually chose to go to the Third Nation! This Meng Hao... is a formidable opponent.” The illusory figure shook his head, then vanished.

Meanwhile, Meng Hao was calmly making his way across the border of the Fourth Nation and into the Third Nation.

As soon as he entered the Third Nation, he staggered to a stop and coughed up eight successive mouthfuls of blood. With each mouthful of blood, his body wasted away by ten percent. After only a few breaths of time had passed, he was so skinny that he looked like nothing more than a bag of bones. His hair had even turned completely gray.

His expression lackluster, he very nearly fell down to the ground. As he stood there, he smiled bitterly.

He actually had tricked Dao-Heaven. His final decision to enter the Allheaven Immortal Realm came at the price of burning his life force almost to the very limit. In fact, he couldn't have proceeded much further even if he wanted to.

It was only when he reached this point, and was behind the barrier between nations, a place where Dao-Heaven wouldn't be able to observe him, that he allowed himself to weaken rapidly. As the blood sprayed out of his mouth, he grew weaker and weaker.

"This Dao-Heaven is incredibly powerful!" he murmured. The reason he had covered his face with the Essence of Divine Flame earlier was because he didn't want Dao-Heaven to realize that he was burning his life force. It was for the same reason that he chose to use the One Thought Stellar Transformation to become a planet in the final chase.

Furthermore, the reason he chose to come to the Third Nation was that, according to his analysis of the situation, the fact that Dao-Heaven had avoided the Third Nation on multiple occasions made it obvious that something was fishy. Picking the Third Nation made it seem like he was far stronger than he actually was.

Fooling Dao-Heaven was not an easy thing. He was incredibly devious and suspicious, and made numerous probing attempts to find out if Meng Hao was trying to trick him. To Meng Hao, it was like walking along the edge of a cliff. Even the slightest misstep could have left him in grave danger.

"What a pity.... If I could fully absorb the second Nirvana Fruit, and truly step into the Allheaven Immortal Realm, then I could definitely kill Dao-Heaven. Right now, though... I'm not a match for him." Meng Hao frowned. He had to admit that in all the years he had practiced cultivation, and among all the countless Chosen he had encountered, because of all the good fortune he had encountered, there was no one in his generation who was a match for him. He was even capable of sweeping over the Echelon.

Except for the Echelon cultivator from the First Mountain, Dao-Heaven. He was a truly formidable opponent!

After all, although Meng Hao had practiced cultivation for a much shorter time than Dao-Heaven, who had deep and profound resources at his disposal, Meng Hao also had significant good fortune,

and was far beyond ordinary. Anyone who got into the Echelon was by default an extraordinary person.

Also, anyone who had a chance of being acknowledged by Xue'er, the successor of Immortal Ancient, could by no means be a weakling.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and he produced some medicinal pills to consume. After a moment, his eyes widened as he suddenly realized something.

"How come I didn't feel any pressure after entering the Third Nation?" Before, every time he passed through border barrier from one nation to another, there would always be pressure weighing down. The only time it hadn't happened was here in the Third Nation.

"Dao-Heaven always seemed to avoid the Third Nation...."

"There must be some mysterious secret about this place."

"However, that's a good thing for me, since I'll be able to focus fully on healing myself. Although, I don't want to stay here for too long. Once I've recovered a bit, I'll head back to the Ninth Nation." He flew onward, and before long reached a mountain range, where he found a remote cave. After settling down to meditate, he sealed the cave mouth.

However, in almost the same moment that he began to meditate, his eyes snapped open. A brilliant red light had just begun to shine up from the blood-colored mask inside his bag of holding. Even the bag of holding was incapable of covering it up.

Simultaneously, Meng Hao could sense the aura of the Blood Mastiff. It had been years since the Blood Mastiff had dissipated in the midst of protecting him. Although he had sensed signs that it might awaken on numerous occasions, this was the strongest by far.

Meng Hao was delighted, and immediately took the blood-colored mask out of his bag of holding and sent some divine sense into it. As soon as he felt the Blood Mastiff, he realized that a connection and resonance had sprung up between them.

There was an aura of blood in the area, which was incredibly enticing to the Blood Mastiff. It filled it with desire and was the main reason why it was now waking up.

That blood was coming from the earth! From deep within the earth!

Chapter 1124: For the True Dao!

Around the same time that Meng Hao entered the Third Nation, the middle-aged man in the Imperial robes who sat cross-legged on the Third Nation's National Aura Mountain was looking into a crystal ball that floated in front of him.

Light swirled about inside the crystal ball, and apparently, an entire world existed isolated therein. If you looked closely, you would be able to tell that within that isolated world were three people. They were screaming, and apparently wished to be able to break out of the world, but could not.

If Meng Hao were there to see them, he would be incredibly shocked, perhaps even feel his scalp go numb. That was because... he knew two of them!

One was the dead boy Hong Bin, and the other... was the tenth Echelon cultivator Hai Dongqing!

As for the third person, it was easy to imagine who it might be. As expected, it was the Echelon cultivator from the Second Nation, who had died by Dao-Heaven's hands.

Although those three people were already dead, their souls appeared to be sealed inside of that crystal ball. What a bizarre situation!

Suddenly, the man in the Imperial robes opened his eyes, and a mysterious light could be seen glowing within them. He slowly turned to look in the direction of the border between the Third and Fourth Nations. In the same moment, Meng Hao entered the Third Nation.

This man's cultivation base was not incredibly high, and he was not even in the Immortal Realm. However, he had a bizarre aura floating around him that made him seem completely mysterious and enigmatic.

At the same time that he opened his eyes, numerous figures appeared around him, either standing on the mountain peak or floating above it. All of them wore black robes, with cowls that covered their heads, making it impossible to see their faces. However, all of those figures emanated the ripples of the Ancient Realm.

Of course, cultivators of the Windswept Realm were incapable of breaking through to even the Immortal Realm, let alone the Ancient Realm. And yet here were multiple powerful experts of the Ancient Realm. Furthermore, among the black-robed experts were two or three whose cultivation base ripples were stronger than the others, indicating that they were comparable to Elders from various sects and clans in the Mountain and Sea Realm, with ten or more extinguished Soul Lamps.

All of them hovered there silently, awaiting the orders of the man in the Imperial robes.

As for that very man, his expression was the same as ever as he waved his right hand, causing numerous flickering images to appear in front of him. One of those images depicted Meng Hao entering the Third Nation.

He watched thoughtfully as Meng Hao coughed up blood, his body withering. The man's eyes flickered.

"Is the girl taken care of?" he asked suddenly.

"We sent people to kill her," said one of the black-robed cultivators, his voice hoarse, like that of an old man. "Unfortunately, she's very crafty, and has managed to evade them thus far. She's still alive."

"She's a dangerous variable," the man in the Imperial robes said. "Go take care of her yourself, just to be safe. Time is wasting away, so make it happen quickly!"

"For the true Dao!" the black-robed man said earnestly, clasping hands and bowing.

"For the true Dao!" responded the man in the imperial robes.

"For the true Dao!" the rest of the black-robed men chanted fervently in unison, lowering their heads.

"Regarding Meng Hao... he counts for nothing, much the same as Dao-Heaven. They are ants in a maze, nothing more. Ignore them. If he dares to come to the National Aura Mountain, then just as Dao-Heaven, he will flee in fright and never dare to set foot back into the Third Nation again. We should tangle with the Echelon only if necessary, so leave them alone. They will become useful to us later. Soon, when we leave this mountain, then... we will achieve our grand design!" The man smiled, gazed into the crystal ball for a long moment, and then closed his eyes.

The black-robed men maintained silence. After clasping hands and bowing, they slowly dispersed, each one heading in a different direction.

In his Immortal's cave in the Third Nation, Meng Hao's heart trembled as he looked down at the blood-colored mask. Then he glanced at the ground. Eyes flickering, he sent out some divine sense into the earth. After a moment passed, he frowned. His divine sense wasn't able to locate anything unusual.

However, from the way the mastiff was struggling to awaken, he could tell that its intense thirst was increasing. Meng Hao had never sensed anything like this from the mastiff before.

It was as if, in order to sate that thirst, the mastiff would not only awaken, but do so in a transmogrified state. It would be different than before, having undergone a drastic transformation.

"What exactly is hidden down there...?" he thought. Instead of doing anything rash, he put the blood-colored mask away, closed his eyes, and continued meditating to heal his injuries.

With medicinal pills and his Eternal stratum, he recovered rapidly. After only three days, his eyes opened, and they shone with a brilliant light.

"I'm sixty percent recovered..." he murmured. "From here on out my recovery will naturally slow down." During the three days he had spent recuperating, the mastiff's thirst had only gotten stronger.

He slapped his bag of holding, and the parrot and meat jelly flew out. They looked around nervously for a moment but, seeing no danger, heaved sighs of relief.

"Don't worry, Dao-Heaven isn't chasing us," Meng Hao said with a cold snort. Sometimes the parrot and meat jelly acted fearless in the face of death. At other times, they seemed like unbelievable cowards. The whole thing was a huge headache for Meng Hao. He just couldn't believe that they were unaware of the battle that had occurred with Dao-Heaven. He had even considered directly summoning them.

However, during the heat of the battle, both of them had been busy playing dead.

“Hey, you can’t blame Lord Fifth for this,” said the parrot with a guilty chuckle. “Considering Lord Fifth’s level of skill, a single glance and a few breaths of time would be all it took to wipe Dao-Heaven out thousands of times over. The problem was I really happened to be napping at the time. Hahaha.”

“Lord Third disagrees,” the meat jelly said solemnly. “Lord Third thinks that you need practice! In order to become truly strong, you need more and more experience! Lord Third will never help you unless it’s absolutely, positively necessary!”

To hear the meat jelly say something like this caused Meng Hao to stare in shock. Historically speaking, the meat jelly would always just copy the parrot. It wasn’t just Meng Hao who was taken aback; the parrot was also stunned.

“Did you two get into an argument?” Meng Hao asked curiously.

The parrot cleared its throat, then glared threateningly at the meat jelly.

“Old Third is actually right,” it said, putting on an air of superiority. “It seems there’s no need for Lord Fifth to hide the truth from you. It’s true. Unless there is an extremely deadly crisis, we won’t do anything to help you.”

“That’s right!” yelled the meat jelly. “Lord Third and this evil bird did get into an argument. Damned pigeon. Henceforth, our differences are irreconcilable!”

“What did you just say! I DARE you to say it again!” squawked the parrot, its feathers standing on end.

“I’ll say it again,” roared the meat jelly, glaring at the parrot. “I’ll even say it three times!”

Meng Hao instantly felt a headache coming on. Seeing that the two of them were about to start arguing, he snapped, “Enough! If you want to argue, you can do it back inside the bag of holding. Parrot, look around and see if you can see anything strange about this place. Meat jelly, you check it out too. There’s something off here, there’s uh... some bullies!”

At first the meat jelly looked disdainful, but as soon as it heard bullies mentioned, its eyes shone brightly. It looked closely at the ground, and then suddenly gasped.

“There really are bullies! Lots of bullies!!”

The parrot looked over, and its expression flickered with disbelief.

“Desolate Blooddriven Heavenly Departure formation!!

“That’s an ancient evil spell formation, and yet people nowadays are still able to use it!? It operates on sacrifices, but to offer sacrifices here... this is impossible!!”

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered, and he sent out his divine sense to merge with the parrot and meat jelly. In that instant, his mind trembled, and he suddenly saw numerous images. Deep down in the earth, far, far below, was a sprawling necropolis!

The necropolis was huge, and featured ninety-nine gigantic pits of boiling blood. The boiling blood let off a blood-colored mist that swirled up into the air.

Sitting cross-legged next to each of the ninety-nine blood pits were countless cultivators. Their cultivation bases were not very advanced, and so skinny that they looked like bags of bones. They stood next to the pits, fanatical expressions on their faces as they slashed their arms with knives and poured the blood out into the pits.

Gradually, the sound of chanting could be heard, filling the necropolis.

Deeper into the necropolis were dozens of black-robed figures, sitting cross-legged in meditation. They appeared to be standing guard. Because they were protected by what seemed to be a spell formation, Meng Hao couldn’t make out the level of their cultivation bases.

Most shocking of all was that at the bottom of each of the ninety-nine blood pits was a cultivator, sitting there cross-legged. There were ninety-nine of them, one for each pit, and considering that they were submerged in blood, if it weren’t for the fact that Meng Hao was using a special vision technique, he wouldn’t be able to see them.

Meng Hao recognized one of those cultivators. It was none other than... the old man from the Ninth Nation, Jian Daozi!

Meng Hao began to pant. With the help of the parrot and meat jelly, his vision pierced down into the blood pits. What he saw was that the pits were actually shaped like funnels, and if you looked closely, there were eyelets at the bottom.

Beneath those eyelets, and beneath the ninety-nine blood pits, was a tunnel that led to another part of the necropolis.

It was much smaller than the main necropolis, almost like a secret chamber connected to the larger structure up above. Both structures together almost looked like an inverted bottle gourd!

Within that secret chamber were several statues that resembled spirit creatures, including a turtle, a crane, and even a bat.

The statues were connected by a ray of light that linked them together, forming a circle. In the middle of that large circle, in the very center of the secret chamber, was a blood-colored block of ice!

That blood-colored block of ice contained something sealed inside of it... a blood-colored bat!

That bat looked the same in every respect as the the bat statue among the surrounding group of statues!

Currently, the block of ice was melting, and as it did, a blood qi rose up into the tunnel above, to be absorbed by the ninety-nine eyelets!

“What is all this?!” thought Meng Hao, his face flickering. When he looked at the blood-colored block of ice, he immediately felt an aura of boundless evil buffet against him. Although he was only looking at it with divine sense, and was separated from it by the parrot and meat jelly, he could still sense it. It was an evil filled with madness and terrifying power.

It was definitely... something that cultivators couldn't control. It was like something that exceeded the natural laws of Heaven and Earth, and even that of Essence.

“That's... a renegade spirit...” the parrot murmured.

Chapter 1125: Take Its Place!

“Renegade spirit....” It was a term Meng Hao wasn’t familiar with. But from the way the parrot said it, it sounded like something that had a long, complicated history.

The meat jelly looked confused at first, but after a moment appeared to have recalled something, and it started to shake.

At the same time, the Blood Mastiff, who was still in his bag of holding, inside the blood-colored mask, began to struggle with an even stronger thirst, as if... it wanted to consume that blood-colored bat!!

Meng Hao’s face flickered as he retracted his divine sense from the necropolis. He sat there in the Immortal’s cave, lost in thought and hesitation. However, inside the blood-colored mask, the Blood Mastiff was emanating an intense thirst that seemed to be reaching a peak.

“So you want to eat it, huh...?” Meng Hao murmured. He suddenly clenched his teeth. If he wanted his cultivation base restored to its peak, it would take over a month, even with the combination of medicinal pills and his Eternal stratum.

However, too many things could happen in a month. There were strange goings-on in the Third Nation, and he had no desire to stay here any longer than necessary.

“Well, I’m going to help you!” The mastiff occupied a special place in his heart. He would never forget the first time he had laid eyes on it, how small it had been, and how attached it was to him. He had raised it from when it was tiny, and in the Blood Immortal Legacy Tournament, it had protected him, and had even died for him, without the slightest hesitation. In its final moments, it had merely turned back for a moment in an attempt to lick his face, as doing so one more time would make it completely content.

Images from the past rose up in his mind. How could Meng Hao ever forget his loyal mastiff!?

As soon as he made his decision, the parrot looked at him in shock.

“Are you crazy!?!?” the parrot squawked. “That’s a renegade spirit, a mysterious entity of Heaven and Earth. It looks like this particular renegade spirit is dead, but it’s definitely something that you and the mastiff are no match for!”

“These people of the Windswept Realm can use this renegade spirit,” Meng Hao replied. “Well... why can't I?” Without any further hesitation, he stamped his foot on the ground and began to sink down into the earth.

The parrot let out another squawk and, seemingly throwing caution to the wind, followed Meng Hao. The meat jelly blinked, and then also followed along.

“Dammit, possess a renegade spirit?” the parrot muttered. “Consume it? Take its place...? Crazy! Meng Hao, you're crazy! That mastiff is crazy too! Well, fudge! Lord Fifth is also crazy!”

As the meat jelly followed along, it also yelled, “Lord Third is crazy too!”

Meng Hao sank down into the ground, heading in the direction he had probed earlier with divine sense.

Meanwhile, out in the Third Nation, the man in the Imperial robes sat cross-legged on the National Aura Mountain. All of a sudden, his eyes snapped open. He shot to his feet, his expression one of shock, disbelief, and then rage.

“Dammit!! The renegade spirit's blood burial site has a spell formation that obscures divine sense. The secret entrance wouldn't even be visible to someone in the Dao Realm. This Meng Hao... how did he discover it!?”

The man's face flickered, and without realizing it, he began to take a step forward. However, in almost the same moment, he stopped in place, eyes fixed on the crystal ball. His expression darkened.

“Kill him and bring me his head,” he ordered coldly. “Investigate how exactly he was able to see through to the blood burial site!”

In response to his orders, seventeen or so black-robed men appeared nearby, all of whom clasped hands and said, “For the true Dao!”

With that, they turned and disappeared.

Down below the lands of the Third Nation, Meng Hao sped along, his expression ruthless, his eyes swirling with killing intent. He wasn't fully recovered from his injuries, but he could unleash about sixty to seventy percent of his cultivation base. Bursting with explosive speed, he went deeper and deeper.

Everything was pitch black, and there was no path that could be seen. Even sending out his divine sense, he saw nothing. Soon, he reached the location he had seen with the help of the parrot and meat jelly. He came to a stop.

"It should be around here...." he thought, eyes flickering. He looked over at the parrot, who muttered to itself for a moment before shining with radiant, multi-colored light that spread out in all directions. There up ahead, Meng Hao's could finally see the necropolis in his divine sense.

He looked at it and gritted his teeth. He knew that there was something strange going on in the Third Nation, and he was well-aware that his cultivation base had not yet been restored to its peak. Therefore, if he was going to fight... he needed to do it decisively.

He shot forward, causing muffled rumbling sounds to echo out underneath the lands. He pierced through the soil like an arrow, and when he emerged, he found that he wasn't inside the necropolis, but rather, had just slammed into a huge, invisible barrier.

The moment his body slammed into it, a backlash attack hit him, and blood oozed out of his mouth. He backed up, and everything began to shake. Cracks spread out on the surface of the barrier.

At the same time, the cultivators inside the necropolis all heard the rumbling sounds, and could sense the trembling. They clustered around the blood pits, and the ones slashing their arms to pour out blood all looked up with expressions of shock.

Simultaneously, the dozens of black-robed cultivators with obscured faces, the ones standing guard, all rose to their feet and looked in the direction from which the sound echoed.

Outside of the necropolis, Meng Hao bellowed: "Parrot!"

The parrot seemed conflicted about what to do for a moment, but then it squawked and caused the light shining off of it to speed toward the barrier.

“Listen to Lord Fifth and OPEN UP!” it roared. The multi-colored light slammed into the barrier, instantly opening up a hole. Without the slightest hesitation, Meng Hao shot through the hole, stepping right into... the necropolis!

Everything happened incredibly quickly, which was how Meng Hao preferred to do things, to fight with decisiveness. Almost as soon as he entered the necropolis, cold snorts echoed out, and dozens of black-robed men flew into the air. All of them emanated the fluctuations of Ancient Realm cultivation bases. Their energy surged, and they joined forces in a unified attack, which sped through the air toward Meng Hao.

Almost as soon as Meng Hao began to charge forward, his face fell. “Dammit,” he thought, “the Windswept Realm isn’t limited to the Immortal Realm after all! Where did all these Ancient Realm cultivators come from!?!?”

He waved his right hand, sending the Essence of Divine Flame roaring out toward the dozens of black-robed cultivators.

A boom rang out, and blood oozed from Meng Hao’s mouth as he backed up. The dozens of black-robed cultivators also backed up a bit, but it only took a moment for them to once again close in.

Divine abilities and magical techniques blazed to life, joining together and then smashing toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered as the Lightning Cauldron appeared. Thunder cracked, and electricity danced, but unfortunately, the transpositioning function didn’t work. Meng Hao’s heart sank. Putting the Lightning Cauldron away, he didn’t hesitate any longer to stride forward and meet the incoming cultivators in battle.

“Screw off!” he roared, relying on the strength of his fleshly body to fight back against the divine abilities and magical techniques. He was like an explosive dragon, battering ahead, his right hand utilizing the Life-Extermination Fist, his left hand the Bedevilment Fist. Both fists struck out with mad, explosive power. Seven black-robed cultivators were blasted aside, blood spraying out of their mouths. Meng Hao shot like lightning toward the region with the blood pits.

“Halt!” a cold voice cried. The dozens of the black-robed cultivators once again moved to block Meng Hao’s path. Three of them waved their hands and, shockingly, Sea Dragons appeared, which roared toward Meng Hao.

“Daoist Magic of the Nine Seas God World !” Meng Hao’s eyes widened as he looked over at the black-robed men. Then he snorted coldly, performed an incantation gesture, and pointed out with his finger. Numerous mountains descended, linking together into a mountain range that smashed down toward the men. At the same time, he shot onward, getting closer to the blood pits. By this point he was about 300 meters away.

The entire necropolis trembled, and quite a few of the black-robed men coughed up blood. However, they continued to seek to block Meng Hao, almost as if they were deranged.

This time, they all performed the same incantation gesture, unleashing a bizarre magical technique.

“True Dao Advent!” As soon as the words left their mouths, a bizarre power of natural law sprang up. It transformed into a huge net-like cage that enveloped the surrounding area. Even as it sought to blanket Meng Hao, his face flickered and he transformed into a golden roc. As the net of natural law neared, he suddenly shot forward and slammed into the chest one of the black-robed men. A boom could be heard as the man exploded into bits. After shooting onward by about 150 meters, he returned to human form, lifted his right hand, and jabbed a finger at them.

Eighth Demon Sealing Hex!

This time, what he was hexing was not a single person, but rather, a whole group of people, plus the net of natural law which was descending down onto him.

With the wave of a finger, all of the black-robed men felt themselves shudder to a stop. The huge net also stopped in place. However, Meng Hao had to pay a heavy price; he coughed up a huge mouthful of blood. Nonetheless, he didn’t stop for even a moment, closing the remaining 150 meters in a flash, appearing next to one of the blood pits.

He waved his hand toward the air above the blood pit, and all of a sudden, all of the blood in the pit rose up and showered out in all directions. There at the bottom of the pit, an old man could now be seen.

Moments ago, he had been submerged in the blood, absorbing it, but now that he had been interrupted, he opened his eyes. Previously, his cultivation base had been at the Cauldron Seeking stage. However, as of this moment it was clear that it was climbing up. Now... he was in the Immortal Realm, despite the lack of any Door of Immortality appearing.

The old man let out a shout, and was about to start fighting Meng Hao, when Meng Hao snorted coldly. His right hand shot out with lightning speed in a clawing gesture, latching onto the man's arm and squeezing down hard. Cracking sounds were joined by a bloodcurdling scream as all the bones in the man's body were shattered. In the same moment, Meng Hao disappeared into the eyelet at the bottom of the pit.

As soon as he disappeared, booms filled the air, and countless divine abilities and Daoist magics slammed into the spot he had just occupied. The black-robed men surged with energy and began to speed over from all directions.

Meng Hao didn't wait for them to show up. He immediately transformed into a beam of light that shot through the eyelet, and then into the tunnel that led to the secret chamber below.

In almost that same instant, brilliant light filled the necropolis. The dozens of black-robed men exchanged glances, then transformed into beams of light that followed Meng Hao down into the blood pit and beyond.

Chapter 1126: Hold the Tunnel!

At the same time, the other blood pits began to boil, as if they were being sealed. Clouds of bloody mist rose up into the air, which transformed into blood-colored swords that then hovered up above, radiating murderous auras.

The only pit with no blood sword was the pit Meng Hao had just vanished into, the one all the black-robed men were speeding toward.

Meng Hao moved with incredible speed. When he emerged from the blood pit, he found himself in a long, narrow tunnel that sloped downward into the secret chamber below. When he emerged into the chamber, blood-colored light stabbed dazzlingly into his eyes.

Inwardly, he was shocked at the indescribably evil aura that blasted against his face. It was as if countless miserable screams were echoing in his ears. Somehow, the voices seemed familiar, as if each and every one belonged to people he knew.

The effect wasn't limited to just voices. Myriad visual hallucinations appeared, and at the same time, his body felt like it was about to collapse, as if he were in the deepest depths of the Yellow Springs.

His heart began to pound, and his blood flowed in reverse. His face fell, and his cultivation base was almost thrown into chaos, to the point where he almost lost control of it. He quickly bit the tip of his tongue, using the surge of pain to gain clarity. Face pale, he immediately fell back toward the tunnel, and only when he reached it did he manage to stave off the sensations.

Furthermore, he had the strong premonition that even remaining at the entrance of the tunnel for too long would allow the evil aura to infect him completely, and he might even lose his cultivation base!

The feeling of intuition made his eyes widen. He quickly looked around, and saw the statues surrounding him. A Xuanwu turtle, a crane, and even a deer...

“Are they all... renegade spirits?!” he thought, eyes widening. Then his eyes came to rest on the blood-colored block of ice, and he saw what was sealed inside of it, the blood-colored bat.

All of the evil aura was emanating from that blood-colored ice block, and from the blood-colored bat therein. It... was the wellspring of evil in this place!

The parrot and meat jelly looked around, their faces flickering.

It was at this point that a howl echoed out from inside Meng Hao's bag of holding. The blood-colored mask flew out to hover in mid-air, rumbling and emanating blood-colored light. That blood-colored light indicated... that the mastiff had finally awakened.

It suddenly flew out into the open, turning to look at Meng Hao with a gaze of deep fondness. It was the same look it used to give him when it was small. In its world, Meng Hao was its master, its family, and the entire purpose of its life.

After looking at him, its eyes filled with determination, and it howled. Then it turned, transforming into a blood-colored beam that shot into the block of ice, where it began to attempt to possess the renegade spirit, to... take its place!!

If it failed, it would die!

But if it succeeded... from then on, it would be a renegade spirit!

If not for the fact that this renegade spirit was extremely weak, and perhaps had already died long ago, it would normally be impossible for the mastiff to succeed. And even in this state, no one could tell whether it had a chance.

Thankfully, it was a spirit born of blood, and therefore had the same origin as the Blood Bat, which gave it a bit better of a chance.

Rumbling echoed out, and the blood-colored ice block trembled. Strange howls could be heard echoing out, along with the sounds of a fierce battle that quickly filled the secret chamber. Blood sprayed out of Meng Hao's mouth, and he backed up swiftly. He was incapable of helping the mastiff possess the renegade spirit, so the only thing he could do was protect it in this critical moment.

Whether or not it would have the good fortune to succeed depended completely on the mastiff, not Meng Hao.

Furthermore, he couldn't stay where he was; he had to leave. If he stayed any longer, he would be infected by the evil aura, and his cultivation base would begin to waste away.

Besides, he could hear the sound of the black-robed cultivators whistling through the tunnel behind him.

He took a deep breath and looked over at the parrot and meat jelly. The parrot instantly understood the look in his eyes.

It hesitated for a moment, then let out a squawk.

"Time to go for broke! Fudge! Lord Fifth is gonna go for it! Meng Hao, you owe me a favor, big time! Old Third, get over here and help me!" The parrot flapped its wings, causing numerous beams of multicolored light to fly out and cover over the blood-colored ice block.

The meat jelly didn't look happy about the situation, but it flew over and let the parrot grab it. They merged together, and then unleashed a bizarre Daoist magic that enabled them to assist the mastiff and increase its chances of success.

"Even with the help of Lord Fifth, its final success will be determined by its own good fortune!" the parrot roared.

“Many thanks,” Meng Hao said. “You’ve done all that you can. The rest will be up to it.... As for me, I can’t help much. But what I can do is stop the intruders, and prevent them from interfering!” He gave a final look at the block of ice into which the mastiff had disappeared, then turned and flew out of the secret chamber and into the tunnel.

Although the evil aura still had a significant influence on him, he could still forcibly resist it for a time. Of course, if Meng Hao could do that, so could the black-robed cultivators.

He wasn’t willing to risk allowing them into the secret chamber itself. After all, he had no idea what actions they might take that could affect the mastiff, and even lead it to fail.

He cared too much about the mastiff, and therefore wouldn’t make any decisions lightly. The only surefire option was holding the tunnel against the enemy!

The overall structure of the blood burial site was composed of two parts, the larger necropolis above, and the smaller secret chamber below. They were connected by this tunnel, which was Meng Hao’s current location. Already, he could see the black-robed cultivators closing in on him.

Eyes flickering with killing intent, he didn’t hesitate for a moment before going on the offensive.

“Mastiff, you’ve defended me over and over again. Now... it’s my time to defend you!” he murmured. He rotated his cultivation base, and killing intent roiled out of him. He wasn’t sure if the mastiff would succeed in possessing the renegade spirit, nor how long it would take to do so. But he did know that, at the moment, there was nowhere to retreat to. Nor did he have any desire or need to retreat.

He took a deep breath, causing his cultivation base and his Immortal meridians to surge with power. He was like a razor-sharp blade that instantly slashed into the attacking black-robed cultivators.

The tunnel wasn’t very large, making it a challenge to unleash divine abilities and magical techniques. If Meng Hao were at his peak, then killing a few dozen people like this wouldn’t be problematic at all. However, his cultivation base was only at about sixty percent of its normal level, making it difficult to fight.

It was a tough task, but he was an Echelon cultivator, and was in the Immortal Emperor Realm. He was someone that ordinary Ancient Realm experts couldn’t easily touse with. Rumbling sounds

echoed out as he attacked. A Blood Demon head materialized, and Essence of Divine Flame raged in all directions.

“You’re not cultivators of the Windswept Realm!” he shouted, speeding like lightning into the midst of the black-robed cultivators. His right hand shot out and latched onto the head of one of them, and he unleashed the Blood Demon Grand Magic. However, the power of absorption did nothing to the man.

The black robe was shredded to pieces, revealing a young man with the top of his head mangled and bloody. His face was pale as he cried out: “Our Daos are different! Your Dao is fabricated, and ours is real! You can’t do anything to us! We live and die... for the true Dao!”

Laughing, he faded away into death.

Meng Hao’s heart trembled. Then, another black-robed cultivator appeared in front of him, and he unleashed the Life-Extermination Fist. Rumbling could be heard as his opponent trembled and coughed up blood.

His cowl was destroyed, revealing his face. He was a middle-aged man who, shockingly, had a scale on his forehead! He was a Demonic cultivator!

“For the true Dao!” he cried, and then began to laugh maniacally before exploding into bits.

There was no change in facial expression whatsoever on the part of the other black-robed cultivators, nor did they speak. However, they attacked with increased ferocity, unleashing a biting wind that swept across Meng Hao. Suddenly, nine Sea Dragons roared toward him with gaping maws.

The more Meng Hao fought, the more shocked he was. He was getting a very strange feeling from these black-robed enemies.

Frowning, he summoned the Paragon Bridge, which instantly emanated crushing pressure, forcing the black-robed cultivators away. Meng Hao made a grasping motion, and the bone-tip spear appeared in his hand, which he stabbed toward the forehead of one of the black-robed cultivators. The cowl of the robe was thrown back, revealing a woman. Despite the fact that she was about to die, she showed no fear.

“For the true Dao!” she said coolly before exploding.

Meng Hao’s hair was beginning to stand on end. If by this point he didn’t realize who these people were, then he didn’t deserve to be the shrewd and cunning Crown Prince of the Fang Clan. As soon as he saw their cultivation bases, he immediately thought back to the “warning” given by Jian Daozi when they had first arrived in the Ninth Nation.

Back by the waterfall, after seeing the Demon Mantra: Mesmeric Rebuke in use, he had employed his Celestial Vision technique to observe the figure hidden behind the water.

He had begun to make speculations even at that time. Later, he saw all of the other cultivators sinking into their desires, and he suddenly became aware that it was possible to become lost within the Windswept Realm. Then he realized that... it was probably possible to stay there, to choose to not leave, to remain behind in the Windswept Realm, eternally lost therein.

Back then, he had considered that as a possibility. Now, facing these black-robed cultivators, Meng Hao received confirmation of his suspicions.

“You people... are cultivators from the Mountain and Sea Realm!” he roared. “You are from previous generations who came to the Windswept Realm and then lost yourself in your desires! In the end, you chose not to leave!!”

The black-robed cultivators didn’t answer his accusation. Instead, they simply looked at him and said, “For the true Dao!”

Their voices were calm, and even seemed to contain some strange power that left Meng Hao in shock. Next, the black-robed cultivators shot forward in attack.

Booms rang out. Meng Hao’s eyes were bloodshot, and his clothes were spattered in the blood of his enemies. Meanwhile, up above in the necropolis, the air rippled as seventeen figures suddenly appeared. These were the people who had been dispatched by the man in the Imperial robes. Black cowls obscured their facial features, and from the ripples coming from the cultivation base of the man in the lead, he actually had ten extinguished Soul Lamps.

When the man spoke, his voice was incredibly ancient: “Hear the orders of the Emperor: kill Meng Hao; fiendish formation, return to your positions; resume the blood refinement!”

All of a sudden, all of the blood pits began to boil madly. The blood swords hovering over them flew over to the black-robed man, swirled around him, and then lined up into formation, after which they shot down into the tunnel toward Meng Hao.

Chapter 1127: You're Zong Wuya!

In almost the same moment that the blood-colored swords began to speed through the air, the bubbling blood in the ninety-eight pits suddenly shrank down, revealing ninety-eight cultivators.

Each and every one was an old man, and they were all radiating blood-colored light that seemed to burst with evil. Suddenly, their eyes opened, and what could be seen was not the clarity of normal eyes, but a murky, bloody glow. It was as if they weren't even conscious or aware of themselves, as if they had been transformed into puppets that merely followed orders or acted on instinct.

One of those old men was Jian Daozi, who no longer looked shrewd and intelligent like before. However, he didn't seem ancient and decrepit like before either, but instead seemed to burst with the vigor of his prime.

All of them began to breathe, and when they exhaled, the air of evil around them seemed to increase.

"Kill the intruder Meng Hao!" said the black-robed man, his voice hoarse and raspy. Instantly, the ninety-eight blood-colored cultivators roared and flew into the air. Currently, their cultivation bases were no longer at the Cauldron Seeking stage; they had broken through from the Spirit Realm and into the Immortal Realm!

Although they had just broken through, the evil auras that surrounded them made them seem extremely eerie. Ninety-eight old men became beams of blood-colored light that sped through the air toward the pit where Meng Hao was located.

"You people too! Get in there!" the black-robed leader said to the other men who had come with him. One by one, they blurred away, vanishing.

The black-robed leader was the last one to do anything. It was impossible to see his face or his expression, but he seemed to be lost in thought for a moment before waving his hand and causing a black light to spread out. It spread out to cover the entire area, apparently sealing it.

Having accomplished this, the man began to slowly walk toward the pit where Meng Hao was located.

“Meng Hao of the Ninth Nation, the Ninth Mountain, the Ninth Sea....” he murmured. It was almost as if he were recalling something from the past. He sighed.

In the tunnel below the necropolis, Meng Hao threw his head back and roared as he unleashed a fist strike with both hands, killing the final members of the first wave of black-robed cultivators.

This battle was being fought with only sixty percent of his cultivation base. To defeat dozens of Ancient Realm opponents in such a way was difficult to say the least. Currently, he was coughing up blood, and his face was ashen. He suddenly looked up at the mouth of the tunnel, where a bright red glow could be seen. At that point, numerous red-colored flying swords could be seen screaming toward him, followed by the explosive, evil auras of the ninety-eight blood-colored cultivators. As soon as their crimson eyes locked onto him, they howled like beasts and charged toward him in attack.

Meng Hao’s eyes widened as he realized that the flying swords were actually sentient. Both the swords and the cultivators seemed to be operating on the same source of power as the blood-colored ice block, except on a much weaker level.

Meng Hao frowned, and then let out a cold harrumph. The starstone in his left eye melted and spread out to cover his entire body, transforming him into a planet. He then flew toward the incoming flying swords, causing rumbling sounds to echo out.

He shot forth like a meteor, taking up nearly the entire diameter of the tunnel. When he slammed into the flying swords, a huge boom echoed out, and they were sent spinning back toward the blood-colored cultivators. The entire tunnel was thrown into chaos. Although there were quite a few of the blood-colored cultivators, because the tunnel was so narrow, they were unable to scatter or dodge, and were immediately bombarded by the full force of Meng Hao’s One Thought Stellar Transformation.

When it slammed into the men, blood erupted out, and all of them were ripped to shreds. However, it was at this point that the seventeen black-robed men arrived, incantation gestures flashing in their hands.

Waving their fingers toward Meng Hao, they roared: “Star-Slaughtering Dao of Lightning!”

As soon as the words left their mouths, the rumbling of thunder could be heard. Seventeen lightning bolts then shot out from the black-robed men, merging together in mid-air to form a single violet-colored lightning bolt!

As soon as it appeared, it emanated a mighty power of expulsion. It seemed powerful enough to reject and expel Heaven and Earth, to reject natural laws, to reject Essence!

At the same time, the world seemed to be rejecting and expelling it!

Meng Hao's mind trembled; when he looked at the violet lightning, he got the feeling that this was something which shouldn't even exist!

It was not in accord with Heaven and Earth, did not conform to natural laws, and was not harmonious with Essence. The instant it appeared, it seemed to be a Dao from another world. This was not something from the Windswept Realm, nor from the Mountain and Sea Realm. It was a thing of pure destruction, and when it shot toward Meng Hao and slammed into his One Thought Stellar Transformation, the planet cracked and exploded. Meng Hao appeared, blood spraying from his mouth as he was sent tumbling backward.

Simultaneously, time seemed to flow in reverse for all of the blood-colored cultivators who had just exploded. They rapidly reformed, as if they were eternally unkillable, after which they immediately shot forward in attack. Furthermore, each one grabbed a blood-colored sword, making them look exactly like sword cultivators.

Meng Hao had an unsightly expression on his face. Behind the ninety-eight blood-colored cultivators were seventeen black-robed attackers. Meng Hao felt threatened, threatened to the extreme, and what was causing it wasn't the cultivation bases of these people, but the divine abilities and magical techniques they used.

Almost in the same moment that the blood-colored cultivators closed on him, Meng Hao began to stride forward, unleashing the Seven God Steps. His power rose explosively, and was even amplified because of the constraints of the tunnel. It was when he took his sixth step that he balled his right hand into a fist and unleashed the Life-Extermination Fist.

Rumbling filled the air. This strike was filled with the power to exterminate all forms of life, and was backed by the full strength of his Ancient Realm fleshly body. A tempest sprang up, which ripped through the tunnel and slammed into the eternally unkillable blood-colored cultivators. They were instantly shredded into a bloody mist, and even as they began to reform, Meng Hao passed through them to close in on the seventeen black-robed cultivators.

The cultivators quickly began to perform incantation gestures. Any one of these people who faced Meng Hao alone on the battlefield would not be his match, not without some special Daoist magic. However, when they joined forces to attack, it was a different story.

As they performed their incantation gestures, violet light swirled around them and formed into a long, violet spear, which instantly stabbed toward Meng Hao.

It moved with incredible speed, causing intense ripples to emanate out, the same type that both rejected the world around it, and was likewise rejected.

However, this time, Meng Hao suddenly waved his right hand, causing dozens of black pods to fly out. Popping sounds could be heard as they transformed into blackpod imps, which screeched as they shot toward the black-robed cultivators, intent on possessing them.

The black-robed men possessed unique and bizarre Daoist magics, but they were still just ordinary living beings with souls, and were still in danger of being possessed. Furthermore, they were in the middle of casting magic, and as such, the blackpod imps were easily able to enter their bodies.

The chances for the blackpod imps to successfully possess them were small, but actually, Meng Hao didn't need them to succeed. When they failed, they were ejected and made divine sense attacks.

The black-robed cultivators instantly began to tremble. At the same time, the Daoist magic they had unleashed, the terrifying violet spear, began to twist in mid-flight, and then simply dissipated.

In that same moment, Meng Hao flew through the air, right hand clenching and then smashing toward them as the Life-Extermination.

Just when his blow was about to land, a cold snort echoed out from behind the black-robed men, filled with an archaic air. A shadowy figure walked out, another man in a black robe, but taller than the others. This was their leader, the last man to join the fight.

He moved with incredible speed, and was soon directly in front of Meng Hao.

“The Emperor on the National Aura Mountain sensed that someone had broken into this place. Meng Hao, you shouldn't have done this. And by the way, that is not the proper usage of the Life-

Extermination Fist.” As the man spoke, he clenched his right hand into a fist, and suddenly, a will of life-extermination exploded out in the form of a single punch.

Meng Hao’s eyes went wide. He found the man’s words to be extremely strange, but had no time to think about why. The two of them sailed through the tunnel toward each other until their fists slammed together.

A deafening boom echoed out, causing everything to shake. The necropolis itself seemed like it might collapse; cracking sounds rang out as the tunnel began to grow unstable. Blood oozed out of Meng Hao’s mouth as he was sent tumbling backward by the force of the blow.

The black-robed man was also shaken, and fell back several paces. When he looked up, his black cowl still covered his face, making it impossible to make out his features. However, his eyes shone brightly with bizarre light. He began to walk forward again, clenching his hand into a fist and unleashing another attack.

“Bedevilment!” he said coolly, his voice hoarse. He punched out, and a wildly domineering air rose up. It was as if this man were the only important thing in the world. He seemed to enter a state of Bedevilment in which he would unleash a blow capable of sacrificing everything.

Meng Hao’s face fell; the injuries he had sustained earlier had not recovered, causing him to be at a severe disadvantage. However, when he saw the black-robed man unleashing the Bedevilment Fist, he stopped moving backward and instead unleashed his own Bedevilment Fist.

A huge boom rang out when their fists met, and everything shook violently. The necropolis began showing even more obvious signs of collapsing than before.

Blood sprayed out of Meng Hao’s mouth, and he was sent flying backward like a kite with its string cut. He was pushed back so far that soon he was near the entrance to the secret chamber. He was panting as he looked up at the black-robed old man. The man’s cultivation base fluctuations put him at ten extinguished Soul Lamps. Furthermore, the explosive level of his body cultivation gave Meng Hao the sensation that this man was even stronger than Dao-Heaven!

The old man strode forward, unleashing another punch. “God Slaying!”

In that exact same moment, Meng Hao’s eyes suddenly flickered, and he roared, “You’re Zong Wuya!”

In response to the words, the old man trembled. Meng Hao took advantage of that distraction to take a deep breath and unleash his own fist strike.

“God Slaying!”

It was at that point that, in the secret chamber below, the mastiff let out a howl. It was a howl filled with determination, as if the mastiff had reached a critical juncture in the possession process, and was going all out. It would be reborn and replace the renegade spirit, or die in the process!

Chapter 1128: True Dao?

Both Meng Hao and the black-robed man unleashed the God-Slaying Fist!

It was the last of the three body cultivation fists, which combined the will of extermination, the voluntary self-immolation for the sake of bedevilment, and materialized the will of slaughtering gods. It was... the God-Slaying Fist!

Furthermore, because Meng Hao had the accumulation of the qi flow of the Windswept Realm, it also had some of the will of Heaven in it, making it the absolute peak fist attack of the Immortal Emperor Realm.

As for the black-robed man, his God-Slaying Fist came from having experienced countless bloody battles. He had honed his killing will to the extent that apparently... he had actually killed Gods, and fused that will into his fist strike. When he struck out, Heaven and Earth crumbled, and a massive wind kicked up.

The two of them shot through the tunnel like lightning, their fists on a direct collision course.

A massive, shocking rumbling sound shook everything, and that was before their fists even touched. The tunnel appeared to be on the verge of being ripped to shreds, as if it were being torn apart by two enormous hands.

Blood sprayed out of Meng Hao's mouth, but his killing intent was already raging. Roaring, he pushed forward until he and the black-robed old man actually made contact.

This was a God-Slaying Fist going directly up against another God-Slaying Fist!

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMM!

The area around them exploded. Massive vibrations ripped through Meng Hao, and blood sprayed out of his mouth yet again. An indescribable and yet familiar force surged back toward him from the black-robed old man. It flowed up his right arm and then filled his entire body, which seemed as if it were about to explode.

The two Ancient Realm fleshly body Soul Lamps in Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and then emanated brilliant light. His Eternal stratum surged to life, and his cultivation base exploded with energy, all of it to counteract the God-Slaying power.

Amidst intense rumbling, blood oozed out of his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. The massive power shoved him backward relentlessly before he finally ground to a halt in front of the entrance to the secret chamber.

However, the black-robed old man was shaken as well. Blood oozed out of his mouth as he staggered backward seven or eight paces. When he looked up, his eyes shone with a strange light, and he hunched over like a bow ready to unleash an arrow. Then he burst into movement, flying through the tunnel at incredible speed. In the blink of an eye, he was closing in on the entrance to the secret chamber, where Meng Hao was.

As he neared, he could see into the secret chamber; the parrot and meat jelly were in full view, as was the blood-colored ice block.

“So you're here for that,” he said slowly, flicking his sleeve. Almost instantly, light streamed out of his sleeve, forming into a magical symbol which sped past Meng Hao and headed toward the blood-colored ice block.

Meng Hao began to pant, and his eyes glittered with a cold light. He waved his finger, unleashing the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex toward the incoming old man.

The Eighth Demon Sealing Hex transformed into invisible threads which instantly bound the old man up. He lurched to a halt, but after a moment, his body began to expand, and he forced himself free of the Hexing magic.

In the instant that he did, Meng Hao performed an incantation gesture and unleashed a Daoist magic onto the flying blood-colored magical symbol. Before it could get close to the blood-colored ice block, it dissipated.

The old man's eyes glittered, and he suddenly spoke in an archaic voice: "Daos can be classified as true and false. There are fabricated Daos, and genuine Daos.... My Dao, is from outside the Mountains and Seas, a Dao above Daos!"

As he spoke, he traced a circle in the air in front of him with his right hand which, when completed, roiled with an air of chaos.

An intense power of expulsion appeared yet again. Simultaneously, a beam of light shot out from inside the circle; it was a violet light, something that seemed capable of smashing all magics, and it sped directly toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's Daoist magic was instantly crushed, and dissipated without a sound. Then the violet light began to fade. However, before it disappeared completely, it transformed into a violet hand that grabbed toward Meng Hao.

Rumbling sounds echoed out as Meng Hao fought back with all the power he could muster. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he fell back. Behind him, cracks were spreading out over the blood-colored ice block, as a faint roar could be heard from within; an urgent, enraged roar.

As he fell back, Meng Hao's expression turned vicious. Throughout his years of practicing cultivation, he had faced many deadly situations. Most of the time, he was able to sweep through them and come out on top. It wouldn't be proper to call him invincible, but you could say that very few opponents were a match for him.

After arriving in the Windswept Realm, he had likewise swept forward, virtually unstoppable. He had fought Han Qinglei, Lin Cong, and had even killed another Echelon cultivator. But then he had met the intensely powerful Dao-Heaven, and his previously unstoppable momentum faltered.

Then he arrived in the Third Nation, and during the course of the battle had been forced into his current predicament. Because of his pride and self-confidence, he was feeling a bit overwhelmed, even stifled. It almost felt unfair.

"I'm in the Echelon. I'm Meng Hao, Crown Prince of the Fang Clan!"

“In my life of cultivation, I have experienced much enlightenment, and have benefited from a lot of good fortune. Even Dao-Heaven will only maintain his edge on me for a short time. I will defeat... everyone! Even you, Zong Wuya!” Meng Hao’s eyes were shot with blood as he ceased any thoughts of retreating, and instead began to charge the black-robed old man.

As he did, his body flickered, and he transformed into a huge golden roc which flashed like a streak of gold toward the old man, and then slashed at him with vicious claws.

The black-robed old man sighed, once again tracing a circle in the air and pushing it forward. Violet flames burned, transforming it into a ring of fire that soared toward Meng Hao.

“Your Dao is a fabricated Dao,” the old man said coolly. “There’s no need to try to put on airs.” In the mostly destroyed tunnel behind him, the blood-colored cultivators and the other black-robed old men were approaching. Meng Hao was now completely trapped, without any avenue of escape available.

“Daos are inner paths of the heart, Zong Wuya,” Meng Hao said. “How could they possibly be categorized as fabricated or genuine?! How close-minded!” The golden roc sped toward the violet ring of fire. When they slammed into each other, the violet flames flickered brightly, and the Dao of Meng Hao’s golden roc body seemed to be dispelled. The golden roc rapidly vanished, and Meng Hao returned to human form, his face ashen as he coughed up a mouthful of blood.

He was shocked to find that he was incapable of overpowering this type of violet Daoist magic.

“When a fabricated Dao encounters a true Dao,” the old man said, “the fabricated Dao becomes more illusory, and the true Dao becomes more corporeal.” He drew another circle, and it was once again violet. However, this time there were no violet flames; instead, it was a violet ring of lightning.

Rumbling could be heard as the two violet rings shot toward Meng Hao.

“Do you understand?” the old man asked Meng Hao.

Cracking sounds could be heard coming from the red block of ice behind Meng Hao in the secret chamber. More cracks had spread out across its surface, and the aura of Immortality was emanating

out, and growing stronger. The roaring coming from inside was becoming more distinct, and more urgent.

A critical juncture had arrived. Determination filled Meng Hao's eyes as he raised his right hand, unleashing another God-Slaying Fist. This time, he seemed to be holding absolutely nothing back. Despite being seriously injured, he let out three successive punches.

The first two were sent against the two violet rings, and the third one was directed at the floor of the tunnel!

Intense booms rang out. The God-Slaying Fist was the most explosive power he could unleash with his fleshly body, and although the violet rings could cause Daos to vanish, they could do nothing about fleshly body strength.

The two violet rings were instantly shattered by Meng Hao's two fist strikes. As for his third fist strike, when it struck the tunnel, everything began to collapse. Massive amounts of dust billowed out, completely obscuring Meng Hao's vision.

At the same time, Meng Hao dashed backward into the secret chamber!

Flickering light filled the chamber as it was apparently affected by the collapse of the tunnel outside. However, nothing had been significantly damaged. The statues were still there, and the blood-colored ice block was now completely blurry. The blood-colored bat was no longer visible inside; the only thing that could be seen was a turbid red haze.

Numerous cracks spread out across the surface of the ice block, and an intense Immortal Realm aura was emanating out. In fact, by this point, that aura was at the peak of the Immortal Realm. The howling grew more anxious, as if the mastiff were worried about Meng Hao's safety.

The parrot and meat jelly were completely focused on assisting the mastiff in the possession process. They could spare no attention for Meng Hao, nor could they afford to let anything disturb their work.

When Meng Hao entered the secret chamber, more cracking sounds could be heard from the block of ice, and the aura grew stronger.

He began to pant. He had no time to examine the situation closely; time was of the essence. Because of all the chaos caused by the collapse of the tunnel, he had managed to buy a little bit of time. His second Nirvana Fruit appeared in his palm; due to his injured state, had been unwilling to absorb it again. However, he currently didn't seem to have any other options.

Taking a deep breath, he lifted the Nirvana Fruit up and pushed it down onto his forehead. Immediately, rumbling sounds filled his body, and his energy spiked. He grew larger, and the azure light of the Allheaven Immortal Realm erupted around him.

Soon, the entire secret chamber was filled with the azure light, and his energy was rocketing up.

It was at this point that, back in the collapsed tunnel, the black-robed leader brushed the dust and rubble off of his clothing and began to stride forward in an attempt to reach the secret chamber.

Ten breaths of time passed, and then a massive boom could be heard. Dust flew out in all directions as the black-robed old man burst into the secret chamber in a flash of light.

In that exact moment, Meng Hao looked up. He was surrounded by azure light, and was now in the Allheaven Immortal Realm. His eyes were filled with the intense desire to fight; he took a step forward and once again unleashed the God-Slaying Fist!

That fist was now vastly more powerful than the version he had used only moments ago. Originally, the black-robed old man hadn't paid much attention to it, but now, his face fell, and he stopped in place. Then, he also unleashed the God-Slaying Fist.

A huge boom rang out as the two of them slammed into each other in midair. This time, Meng Hao didn't fall back. The one who fell back was the black-robed old man, his expression that of shock. At the same time, Meng Hao let out a roar like that of an explosive dragon as he charged into battle.

Once again, he relied on that same fighting style that he usually used; he seized the initiative and began to domineer his opponent!

Chapter 1129: The Blood Mastiff Flies!

The black-robed man's face flickered as he was once again sent falling back. The intense level of power Meng Hao now wielded had struck fear even in Dao-Heaven's heart. The black-robed man might have a powerful fleshly body and bizarre Daoist magic, but fighting with Meng Hao in his current state caused him to feel immense pressure.

Rumbling filled the air, and blood sprayed out of the man's mouth. Even as he fell back, Meng Hao closed in for another fist strike.

The man's eyes went wide, and he performed a double-handed incantation gesture.

"True Dao!" he barked. A blinding sea of violet light erupted in front of him, which became a gigantic violet hand that flew toward Meng Hao.

"Smash all magics? Dispel all Daos?" Meng Hao said with a cold harrumph. He performed an incantation gesture, and the Essence of Divine Flame appeared. Backed by the power of the Allheaven Immortal Realm, the Essence of Divine Flame spread out in all directions with terrifying power. Rumbling sounds could be heard as it slammed into the enormous violet hand.

This time, no Dao dispelling effect occurred. The violet hand was incapable of banishing the Divine Flame, and could only resist it. Rumbling could be heard as the Divine Flame began to fade. At the same time, the violet hand collapsed.

The remaining Divine Flame continued on toward the black-robed old man, instantly engulfing him. The man's face fell, and he rapidly fell back in retreat. However, the blood-colored cultivators and other black-robed old men behind him were not so fast.

In the blink of an eye, the divine flame swept over and enveloped them. Miserable shrieks rang out. Despite possessing undying bodies, the blood-colored cultivators were destroyed nonetheless.

As for the black-robed men, they let out bloodcurdling screams as they were transformed into ash.

The leader of the black-robed men was completely shocked as he fell back. He performed another incantation gesture, causing boundless violet light to appear. It transformed into a series of Daoist magics and divines abilities, which then strung together to form a huge net which shot toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao waved his hand, letting loose another divine ability which shattered the huge net. The black-robed man's face fell. Blood oozed out of his mouth, and he fell back again. Meng Hao was just about to go on the offensive again, when all of a sudden, his entire body spasmed beyond his control. Intense pain radiated from his forehead as the Nirvana Fruit emerged and fell down. He caught it, but as he did, an intense wave of weakness swept through him.

He coughed up a mouthful of blood and staggered back a bit. He now had no offensive power left whatsoever. He felt empty, and he immediately began to simply float down toward the ground.

Seeing this, the black-robed old man quickly shot toward Meng Hao; he was on him in the blink of an eye. Shockingly, the attack he used was yet again the God-Slaying Fist.

Meng Hao smiled bitterly. He had no more energy left, and his vision dimmed. Exhaustion filled him, and despite the deadly situation, there was nothing he could do to stimulate himself.

As the black-robed man closed in, a roar of rage suddenly echoed out from within the blood-colored ice block. The ice suddenly shattered, sending chunks flying in all directions. A blood-red streak shot through the air, instantly covering Meng Hao to protect him from the old man's fist strike.

A boom rang out, and the old man was visibly rocked. Blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth, and the backlash sent him flying backward. At the same time, a muffled grunt could be heard from within the blood-red light. Next, the blood-colored light turned into a mist, within which could suddenly be seen the mastiff's enormous head. Scowling viciously, it lunged toward the black-robed man with gaping maw, as if to consume him.

The man's face fell, and he retreated further, avoiding the attack. However, more blood oozed out of the corners of his mouth.

"Possession!" the old man cried. "You... you were using this beast to possess the Blood Bat?!?!"

Meng Hao panted as the awakened mastiff swirled around him, pouring life force energy into him, reviving him. When he saw the red mist around him, and the mastiff's head, a familiar sensation filled him, and he couldn't help but smile.

"It interrupted the fusion process to save you," said the parrot. "It will take some luck to find another opportunity like it."

The parrot and meat jelly looked exhausted. After glancing at Meng Hao for a moment, they streaked back into his bag of holding.

The mastiff now emanated powerful fluctuations of the Ancient Realm; it was clearly on par with a human cultivator with ten extinguished Soul Lamps.

It could have been even more powerful; opportunities to possess renegade spirits were extremely rare in the universe. However, Meng Hao was its master, its family. The only reason it wanted to get more powerful was to protect him. Therefore... if Meng Hao fell into a deadly crisis, then it would not choose to continue to power up. After all, if it lost its master, its life would have no meaning.

It was a loyal dog, and it was entirely correct to say that it lived for Meng Hao!

A gentle light could be seen in Meng Hao's eyes as he looked at the mastiff, which threw its head back and roared. Cracking sounds could be heard from inside the mist, which then coalesced to form the mastiff's body. Fierce bone spurs stuck out all over it, and its teeth were razor sharp. It was blood-red, like a gigantic and terrifying wild beast. Furthermore, it now sported two enormous, blood-colored wings!

The mastiff looked more fierce than ever, like some sort of fiendish blood god. Its eyes radiated a seemingly infinite coldness and ferocity toward the world. It was as if, to the mastiff, there was no such thing as good or evil, right or wrong. There was only... its master!

It looked fierce, brutal, and cold. Any person who lacked courage would instantly be terrified just by looking at it.

Even many of the most ferocious creatures in existence would tremble in fear at a single glance.

There was only one person who this terrifying mastiff would allow to sit on its back, who it would wag its tail for. That person was... the person who had raised it from the time it was small. Meng Hao.

He was the one and only person who could do such things!

Meng Hao sat down on the mastiff's back, and it roared. It flapped its wings, then flew up toward the surface of the land above. Everything trembled around it, collapsing, leaving behind an enormous crater as it emerged into the sky.

As it flew out, it apparently broke through some type of seal which had been in place over the area. At the same time, it grew even larger. Soon it was 300 meters long, and as it flew, it let out an astonishing roar that caused everything to shake, and caused a huge wind to spring up.

It was at this point that an enraged cry could be heard rising up into the sky. The sound came from none other than the top of the Third Nation's National Aura Mountain.

"Kill him!" roared the man in the imperial robes. "Get that blood crystal back!"

In the moment that the mastiff flew up into the air, he was able to sense that the blood-colored ice block had shattered. He also sensed that the blood-colored bat had been consumed, and that as a result... the mastiff had taken its place!

As his roar echoed out, numerous incredibly powerful black-robed cultivators appeared around him. They almost instantly transformed into beams of light that shot toward Meng Hao.

The strongest were the three black-robed men in the lead position, especially the center-most of that group. He wore the same black robe as the others, but his face was not covered. He was a middle-aged man with no hair, and a tranquil expression that seemed to embody wisdom.

As soon as they took to flight, they emanated incredible pressure. When Meng Hao felt it, his face flickered. Patting the mastiff, he said, "Come on, let's go!"

Immediately, the mastiff threw its head back and roared again. Then it transformed into a beam of blood-colored light that shot off into the distance.

As time passed, more black-robed cultivators converged on the area. At the same time, the black-robed man that Meng Hao had fought underground emerged from within the rubble of the crater. Instead of joining the groups of other black-robed men, he flew up toward the bald cultivator with the expression of wisdom. Shockingly... he merged into that man!

In the blink of an eye, the two became one. The middle-aged man's appearance then changed. He looked older, and yet, a Quasi-Dao aura suddenly erupted from him!!

Although he wasn't truly in that Realm, he was close enough to be considered a Quasi-Dao expert!

“Meng Hao,” the man murmured. “Ninth Mountain. Ninth Sea....” His eyes flickered with reminiscence, and he sighed lightly. Then he shot through the air in pursuit, followed by all the other black-robed men.

The incredible speed with which he moved ensured that he quickly left the other black-robed cultivators behind. He was like an arrow that pierced through the sky with unbelievable speed.

As for the mastiff, it was moving so fast that it left afterimages behind as it shot through the Third Nation toward the central temple region.

Meng Hao sat on its back, consuming medicinal pills, focusing all his efforts on recovery. His Eternal stratum was hard at work as he took advantage of every moment to try to reach the highest level of power possible. Without being at that peak of his power, there were simply too many dangers within the Windswept Realm.

He could also sense the intense killing aura that was approaching him from behind.

Thanks to the mastiff’s incredible speed, they quickly left the Third Nation and entered the region of the central temple.

That was also the location of the grand War of Nine Nations, and the cultivators from the various Nine Mountains and Seas. Although there weren’t many people left, everyone had chosen to remain in this area. They knew that this was the area that, although it seemed dangerous, was actually the safest place to be.

Anyone who returned to the Nation from whence they came could be dragged into the fierce fighting of the Echelon cultivators, which was definitely the most dangerous possible situation to be in.

Furthermore, all of the cultivators had come to the realization that the central temple region was the most suitable location in which to control their desires.

As soon as Meng Hao entered the area, the cultivators and mortals engaged in deadly fighting all looked up at the enormous mastiff, and gasped in shock.

“What is that?!?!”

“Heavens! How could a blood-colored beast like that show up in the Windswept Realm!?!?”

Soon, the shocked mortals and cultivators realized that someone was sitting atop the mastiff.

“Look, on it’s back... it’s a person!!”

“It’s Meng Hao!” Fan Dong’er and Bei Yu were in the central temple region, and they almost immediately caught sight of the mastiff, and Meng Hao on its back.

It was at this point that the bald Quasi-Dao cultivator let out a slight sigh as he left the Third Nation and entered the central temple region.

“It’s been a long time... since I was here,” he murmured softly.

Chapter 1130: Muddling the Dao!

In the instant that the bald cultivator entered the central temple region, Meng Hao opened his eyes and looked over his shoulder at the man.

The man’s gaze also came to fall upon Meng Hao, and he smiled.

It was a gentle smile, filled with seemingly boundless warmth. It caused the wounds of all the mortals down below to begin to heal. Even the cultivators trembled as they felt their qi and blood flourishing.

The man proceeded forward, smiling, to appear directly in front of Meng Hao.

“Meng Hao,” he said, “you managed to commandeer the blood crystal and flee the Third Nation. It seems you have the qualifications to be awakened. There’s no need for you to remain in this fabricated world. Come with me to see the true Heaven and Earth. Then you will understand... the truth.”

The mastiff halted in midair, growling and glaring vigilantly at the bald cultivator. There was something familiar about this man’s aura, and something terrifying and stifling.

Meng Hao's eyes widened as he looked back silently at the man. He seemed to possess no killing intent whatsoever, and the words he had just spoken were so strange that Meng Hao was somewhat befuddled.

Down below, the mortals had ceased combat, and were looking up at the black-robed man floating there in the sky. All of sudden, people began to drop to their knees and kowtow. Soon all of the soldiers of the various Nations were on their knees.

The cultivators from the various Mountains looked on with flickering expressions. This bald cultivator filled their hearts with fear, and they could sense that he overflowed with the violence of a raging sea.

However, that ferocity also seemed to be under control. The only thing he revealed was calm.

Fan Dong'er and Bei Yu felt their hearts trembling. They exchanged a vigilant glance, and then began to back up slowly.

"I don't want to fight with you again," the man said, looking at Meng Hao with a sincere expression. "Therefore... just come with me. What do you say? Follow, and you will face no danger to your life. In fact, you'll even be able to acquire some good fortune.

"Because of the matter of the blood crystal, your Dao and our Dao are now similar. What is yours, is ours. There is no difference between the two. You have no reason to fear."

Meng Hao's eyes widened. As soon as the man used the word 'again,' he realized what was going on. After looking at the man closely, his heart began to pound.

"You're... Zong Wuya!" Meng Hao said slowly.

"What you fought before was simply my clone," Zong Wuya said softly. "This is the real me, Junior Brother Meng Hao."

A complex expression appeared on Meng Hao's face. He could sense the incredible pressure of the man's cultivation base, and knew that he couldn't fight him. Even in the Allheaven Immortal Realm, it would still be difficult for him to contend with a Quasi-Dao expert.

Meng Hao remembered seeing Zong Wuya's name on the golden gate stone stele in the Nine Seas God World. Before he had gained enlightenment of the third body cultivation fist strike, Zong Wuya's name had been listed in 1st place.

Later, he had investigated a bit, only to find out that there was no Zong Wuya anywhere in the Nine Seas God World.

After a moment silence, Meng Hao said, "You came to the Windswept Realm, but never left. You decided to stay behind, just like all the other black-robed cultivators. All of you are Mountain and Sea Realm cultivators who came here throughout the years but chose to remain. Obviously you didn't succumb to your desires. Why did you stay?"

"Some people choose to stay because they get lost in their desires," Zong Wuya said calmly. "Others stay to pursue their obsessions. As for me, I chose to stay... because of the true Dao."

"True Dao?" Meng Hao asked.

Zong Wuya looked at him and smiled. Then he waved his hand, causing a gentle wind to spring up. It carefully picked up everyone down on the ground below, even Fan Dong'er and Bei Yu. "I'd like to discuss the Dao with my young friend here. Ladies and gentlemen, please give us some privacy. Many thanks to you." The wind then carried them all to a location off in the distance.

With that, Zong Wuya floated down to the ground and sat down cross-legged, then looked up at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao frowned. After a moment of thought, he floated down to sit across from Zong Wuya.

A gleam of reminiscence appeared in Zong Wuya's eyes as he slowly said, "Meng Hao, in your opinion, what is true, and what is false?"

"True and false are like inside and out," Meng Hao replied calmly. "Without what is true, that which is false cannot exist. However, as I mentioned to you earlier, when it comes to Daos... there is no such thing as true and false!"

"Well then, in your opinion, what is a Dao?" Zong Wuya's expression was placid, but the reminiscence in his eyes grew even stronger as they continued to discuss the Dao.

Meng Hao didn't need to think about the answer. He immediately responded: "The Dao is the obsession in your heart, the path that you choose to follow."

"In that case, what is your Dao?"

"Freedom and independence!" Meng Hao said, his voice filled with decisiveness that could sever nails and chop iron.

"Freedom. Independence...." Smiling, Zong Wuya shook his head.

"What is freedom? And similarly, what is independence? Is freedom being free from all restrictions? Is independence an absence of all restraint? As you sit here in front of me, Heaven and Earth restrict you. The entire world restrains you.

"Look up, and you will see the sky. The sky weighs down on you. Beyond the Windswept Realm is the void, the Heavens. There are 33 Realms, all of them are also weighing down on you. Beyond those 33 Realms, are even more Realms and worlds. All of them are also pressing down on you." Although Zong Wuya spoke calmly, his words were as incisive as the stabs of a sword. They even seemed to be filled with a strange power, as if every word he spoke were completely and utterly correct.

As his words entered Meng Hao's ears, he trembled. He wasn't sure why, but he suddenly thought back to the image painted by Shui Dongliu back on Planet South Heaven all those years ago, and had to ask himself if what existed at the top of that painting was actually the sky, or not...?

"What about morality and principles," Zong Wuya continued, his wording growing more cutting. "Are they not restraints? Can you ignore them? Can you trample on them? Where does your freedom come from? Where does your independence come from?" His eyes glittered, and seemed to contain matchless wisdom.

"You are weak," he said, staring Meng Hao in the eye. "When you meet powerful people, you have no freedom, nor any independence, not unless you are the most powerful person. However, the starry sky is wide, and the Heavens are vast. Perhaps when you think you are the most powerful person in existence, wouldn't you always be wondering if there might be other people over the horizon who also view themselves to be at the ultimate pinnacle?"

“I--” Meng Hao was about to reply, but was cut off by Zong Wuya.

“You have an incorrect understanding of the Dao. Your freedom is not a Dao, it is an obsession of yours. And an obsession... is likewise not a Dao!”

His words echoed about, causing Meng Hao’s mind to reel.

“This is actually what I wanted to explain to you. Do you know what the true Dao is? It doesn’t matter if it’s you or other people, in all of the Mountain and Sea Realm... there is only one Dao. No matter what enlightenment or thought process goes into the Daos of others, what they pursue, are all fabricated Daos.

“Therefore, your Daoist magics and divine abilities, when faced against the true Dao that I follow, will be dispelled. That is because, when faced with what is true, fabrications will naturally fade away.”

Meng Hao was panting as he looked at Zong Wuya, as if his heart was filled with waves of shock. Meng Hao had never heard words like this spoken before, words that seemed designed to subvert everything he believed in.

Zong Wuya continued: “The life you live, your thoughts, your words, the things you have heard, the enlightenment you have achieved, are all falsehoods. None of it is real; it is all counterfeit. Meng Hao, reject the Echelon, and come experience the REAL world. I will take you, and together we will leave this place. You can contemplate the true Dao, and then you will understand... what the real world is!

“Don’t tell me you have never considered why Immortals are classified as true and false? False Immortals reach Immortal Ascension by being enlightened regarding the true Immortality of others!

“What about the Ancient Realm? It’s the same!

“And the Dao Realm...? Also the same!” Zong Wuya eyes shone with a strange light. Deep inside, that look of reminiscence grew stronger, almost as if he weren’t speaking to Meng Hao, but to himself.

It was almost as if these were words being spoken to him by someone else in the past, words that had stirred his heart, that had changed his life. Now, he was in the position occupied by whoever

that person had been years ago. He was speaking shocking words to change Meng Hao's life, and in the process... strengthening his own resolve!

“You live in a Paragon's world, and that Paragon was not the Paragon who founded the Echelon, Sea Dream. No, he was the most powerful entity in the Paragon Immortal Realm, Paragon Nine Seals!

“You live in the world he created, and therefore, all of your enlightenment, has been regarding HIS Dao. In fact, the only Dao of the Mountain and Sea Realm is HIS Dao!

“Do you know what the end result of all this will be? I'll tell you, Meng Hao. The end result is that all of you, every single cultivator in the Mountain and Sea Realm, are all just fuel, fuel being used to power the resurrection of Paragon Nine Seals!

“In the end... he will be resurrected, and all of you... will lose yourselves for all eternity. You will become his blood, his bones, and all the other parts of his body!

“Perhaps if you become powerful enough, you might even become one of his fingers!

“Therefore, that is why I say that all of those Daos are mere fabrications. All those Daos are falsehoods. Only if you leave this place will you ever gain enlightenment of your own Dao. Then, you can understand... what it actually feels like to acquire the true Dao. Then you will clearly understand... what the Dao is!

“Give up your fleshly body, and forsake your place in the Echelon. I will take your soul to experience the baptism of tribulation. It will wipe away that which seals you to the Mountain and Sea Realm. In the outside world, there are people who have already prepared a new fleshly body for you, a true fleshly body. Enter that fleshly body, break away from that which is fabricated, and you can become... a real person!

“Only at that time will you be qualified to truly pursue your freedom and independence.

“At that time you will see the true world. There, you will see the true starry sky, not the sun and moon which are mere materializations of Nine Seals' eyes. The magic there is not the magic of the five elements, which are nothing more than the manifestation of Nine Seals' five organs. The rivers and seas there are not made from Nine Seals' blood, and it is not a Mountain and Sea Realm formed out of Nine Seals' magical item.

“Most importantly of all, you will gain enlightenment that is NOT the Dao and will of Nine Seals, NOT the natural law of the Mountains and Seas, NOT the Dao of the Mountains and Seas!

“Meng Hao, why do you refuse to open your eyes! In the real world, the most radiant symbol is none other than the butterfly! In the real world, the lands flow with the true Dao! Gain enlightenment of the true Dao, and you can even become a Paragon!

“Leave this place with me. Come with me... to experience the true Dao.” When Zong Wuya finished speaking, his eyes were shining with even more intensity than before.