

The Heavens 1221

Chapter 1221: A Scholar Taking the Imperial Examinations

Even as the old man spoke, a screen materialized in front of him, which began to replay the battle between Meng Hao and Patriarch Blacksoul.

At one point, the old man waved his finger, causing the moving images to pause and clearly display Meng Hao's face. However, the old man didn't take time to study Meng Hao. Instead, he closed his eyes and took a deep breath.

Then he waved his right hand, causing the image to vanish, leaving behind nothing more than a strand of white qi.

Voice cool, the old man said, "Appearances can change, blood can be altered, and auras can be transformed. However, the fragrance of a soul is something that can never be changed...."

A large number of cultivators had already begun to gather around him, but none of them spoke; they simply looked at him respectfully.

The old man reached out and grabbed the white strand of qi, then clenched his hand down viciously. When he opened it, a white crystal could be seen. He waved his hand, causing the white crystal to split into two parts, which then became four, then eight. In a very brief period of time, 100,000 crystals could be seen!

All but a few hundred of the 100,000 white crystals made a droning sound as they spread out in all directions, quickly vanishing into the void as they headed toward the various sects of the Heavengod Alliance.

"If you get close to the foreigner, the crystal will react.... Patriarch Blacksoul has asked it to be made known that if anyone can slay this person, he is willing... to become their slave for a thousand years!" With that, the old man turned and headed off into the distance.

The cultivators behind him clasped hands respectfully. Afterward, they grabbed the white crystals, and their eyes shone with a strange light. Finally, they dispersed as they began to search for Meng Hao.

The entire Heavengod Alliance was set in motion. Soon, news began spreading about the foreign cultivator who had single-handedly exterminated the entire Blacksoul Society, even collapsing their planet. Most important was the news about Patriarch Blacksoul being seriously injured himself, which spread through the Heavengod Alliance like wildfire.

Countless hearts were completely shaken. After all, the bounty offered by the Heavengod Alliance was a thousand years of servitude by Patriarch Blacksoul, who was a 3-Essences Dao Lord. That was something that both individual cultivators and even entire Sects could not possibly be unmoved by.

It was far better than some physical treasure or access to a special technique.

Furthermore, no one needed to worry about being cheated. If Patriarch Blacksoul was the type of person who wouldn't honor the agreement, the Heavengod Alliance wouldn't have agreed to issue the bounty to begin with.

Most importantly... if the person who wiped out the Blacksoul Society had done so without being injured, then many people would have chosen to just sit back and watch what happened. However, according to the information provided by the Heavengod Alliance, he was actually severely injured, and could not unleash cultivation base power that exceeded the mid Ancient Realm!

Even Patriarch Blacksoul had attested to that.

As such, all of the cultivators of the Heavengod Alliance were thrown into a state of madness....

Numerous individuals sprang into action and began to hunt through the Heavengod Alliance's territory. Virtually all teleportation portals in the Heavengod Alliance were sealed, and those which could not be sealed were heavily guarded. Anyone who wanted to leave would be thoroughly inspected.

As time passed, the news about the extermination of the Blacksoul Society spread outside of the Heavengod Alliance, to be heard by the Han Clan, and the Meng Clan, and all the other sects in the Eighth Mountain and Sea. Everyone was completely shocked.

Furthermore, everyone was speculating about who this person was that the Heavengod Alliance was hunting. After a bit of investigation was done, news spread that he was not a cultivator from the Eighth Mountain and Sea, but rather, from another of the Mountains and Seas. Also... he was an Echelon cultivator with Paragon magic!

With so much news spreading about, it wasn't long... before Meng Hao's name came to be known by the powerful sects and clans.

Matters had already reached the point where no further verification was required. Meng Hao... was the person who had exterminated the Blacksoul Society!

There was one thing that Meng Hao had no way of knowing, which was that after the battle of the Windswept Realm, when all the Echelon cultivators returned to their respective Mountains and Seas... numerous powerful sects had begun keeping records and files about Meng Hao.

Currently, Patriarch Blacksoul was on one of the planets in the Heavengod Alliance, having reformed a new body. Although his face was ashen, when he saw the image of Meng Hao being shown to him on the screen, he began to shake, and his eyes glowed with madness and killing intent.

“That’s definitely him!”

Two middle-aged cultivators stood near Patriarch Blacksoul. They wore unique clothing, long white robes marked with lightning symbols. Within each of those lightning symbols was a person who was clearly in the midst of transcending tribulation!

Daoist robes like these... were only worn by members of the Heavengod Society!

The Heavengod Society formed the nucleus of the Heavengod Alliance. They occupied the peak of the Eighth Mountain and Sea, and in fact, the Lord of the Eighth Mountain and Sea resided in the Heavengod Palace.

There were many rumors floating around the Eight Mountain and Sea regarding their Lord, who was Heavengod. According to the rumors, he was linked to the Meng Clan in numerous ways. However, it was also possible that those were distorted rumors caused because of the general decline of the Meng Clan in recent years.

Other rumors stated that the Lord of the Eighth Mountain and Sea also had Han Clan blood in his veins. Some people even claimed that the Lord of the Eighth Mountain and Sea... was a rogue cultivator who had reached the Dao Realm.

Currently, the two middle-aged men wearing those unique Daoist robes exchanged a glance, then put the screen away. They had been ordered to come here and show the image on the screen to Patriarch Blacksoul for verification purposes. Now that they had the answer to their question, they turned to leave.

Patriarch Blacksoul gritted his teeth and clasped hands respectfully to the two cultivators. “Many thanks, Fellow Daoists from the Heavengod Society. This man must die; he is far too vicious and sinister. He is an outrage to gods and men alike!”

His heart was filled with bitterness; because of the level of his cultivation base and his status, he should not have to be doing things like this. At the moment, though, he was like a stray dog. His soul was halfway dispersed and his cultivation base was unstable, leaving him with no other choice than to bow his head in deference.

The entire Heavengod Alliance was now searching for Meng Hao... And yet, as time passed, not one scrap of information about him turned up. People were starting to get impatient because of the sealed teleportation portals; it would soon reach the point where it would become a big inconvenience to the Heavengod Alliance as a whole. Furthermore, Patriarch Blacksoul could only influence the policy-making of the Alliance up to a point.

The fact that Patriarch Blacksoul had been firm about offering himself up to be a slave for a thousand years changed matters significantly. The search would have been carried out either way, and there still would have been some form of bounty. If Meng Hao showed his face publicly, he still would have been killed. However, if wasn't for Patriarch Blacksoul's offer, the alliance-wide lockdown would have long since been lifted.

Every day that those teleportation portals remained sealed caused the Heavengod Alliance to sustain significant financial losses.

Before departing, one of the two middle-aged men turned to Patriarch Blacksoul and said, “At the most, the portals will remain sealed for ten days. If he hasn't been found by then, they will be opened again. Don't worry, though; as long as he remains in the Eighth Mountain and Sea, he'll be found eventually.”

Meanwhile....

In the territory of the Heavengod Alliance, on one of the four planets that orbited the Eighth Mountain, a planet called Planet Luo River, there was a capital city of an empire of mortals. Countless mortals lived there, going about their daily lives. As evening fell, a donkey could be seen on the public highway, braying and snorting complacently as it walked along.

The donkey had virtually no fur, with only a few patches to be seen here and there. It actually looked very down and out, and yet for some reason, seemed to view itself as a very high and mighty figure.

A young scholar sat on the donkey, wearing a scholar's traveling case on his back, which was filled with various reading materials. In fact, the young man was engrossed in reading as he rode along on the donkey.

The scholar had skin as fair as jade, and was handsome. He appeared to be a teenager, and wore a faded white garment. He and the donkey proceeded along under the evening sun.

Occasionally, some swiftly galloping horses would pass him on the public highway, leaving clouds of dust in their wake. The scholar would cover his nose with his sleeve and then wave the dust away. As for the mule, it would look very irritated, and then suddenly burst out in a fit of speed as if to catch up. However, after running for only a little bit, it would lazily slow down.

Time passed, and the rays of the evening sun were beginning to fade away. However, it was at this point that a town appeared up ahead. Apparently the scholar didn't even notice, however, and continued to take advantage of the fading light to read the bamboo scroll he held in his hands.

Occasionally, beams of colorful light would shoot through the sky up ahead. In fact, the power of divine sense was currently sweeping across the lands, and even touched the scholar. However, it passed right over him; apparently, the mortals of Planet Luo River weren't afraid of cultivators. Throughout the entire day, similar beams of light had appeared on dozens of occasions. Although the mortals had looked up in envy and admiration, they didn't seem frightened at all.

Currently, one such beam of light had just disappeared off into this distance. Finally, the scholar put down the bamboo scroll, stretched, and then noticed the town, which was getting closer and closer. He smiled, although deep within that smile could be seen a sharp coldness.

This scholar was the very person that the cultivators of the Heavengod Alliance were searching for high and low. Meng Hao!

After his initial flight, he knew that it would be difficult to completely evade the Heavengod Alliance, so he acted on one of the backup plans that he had thought up in advance, hiding himself on the closest of the four planets, which was Planet Luo River. With the help of the meat jelly and the parrot, and the feather they had acquired years ago, he had concealed the fluctuations of his soul and aura, transforming himself into a scholar.

There was no other identity that gave him such a sense of familiarity.

“I never imagined that I would once again become a scholar traveling to take the Imperial examinations....” he murmured. The donkey was apparently not very happy, and to make that clear, it suddenly twisted its neck in a complete circle, then continued to twist it several times until its eyes started to bulge out. Meng Hao slapped it on the rump.

“Have you ever seen any donkeys that can twist their necks around several times over?” Meng Hao growled. “Come on, let’s be a bit more realistic here. People are trying to track us down and kill us, you know. If they find us, it’ll be bad luck for the two of you as well.”

The donkey... was none other than the transformed meat jelly.

“Come on, let’s head into this town.... I refuse to believe that the Heavengod Alliance will keep everything locked down forever.” Eyes flashing coldly, Meng Hao rubbed his chest in a place where the flesh hadn’t quite grown back yet.

His cultivation base had been seriously injured because of the deadly battle. However, it wasn’t so bad that he was limited to the mid Ancient Realm, as the Heavengod Alliance presumed. He could still reach his peak power, but unfortunately that could not be sustained for very long.

“I’m going to take advantage of this chance to let my wounds heal a bit more,” he murmured. As the sun slowly dropped over the horizon, he sighed, and his face turned a bit grimmer.

The first thing he had done after arriving on Planet Luo River was to open the incense burner. However, what he had found inside was not what he had hoped for.... Chu Yuyan’s soul.

Meanwhile....

A flying shuttle was speeding along through the starry sky of the Heavengod Alliance. Countless magical symbols covered its surface, which formed together into the character Meng 孟.

This was none other than a Meng Clan merchant ship!

A young man could be seen in that merchant ship. He was handsome, with a fair face, and was currently standing there with head bowed and fists clenched tightly as the middle-aged man before whom he stood rebuked him coldly.

“Meng Chen, don’t forget that you never should even have had this chance. It’s only because of the kindness shown to me by your grandfather years ago that I managed to get you this spot. Don’t forget your place! You’ll just be a bodyguard here, but you need to cherish that identity. If you can just keep Young Master De happy, then your bloodline will have things much easier!

“So what if he arranged to have you spend some time with Young Lord Feng of the Han Clan? You feel wronged or something? Young Master De already agreed. You’re going to do it whether you want to or not!”

Chapter 1222: Storm Clouds Approach

Around the same time that countless cultivators in the Heavengod Alliance were combing the starry sky for Meng Hao, someone was passing through the barrier between the Eighth Mountain and the Ninth Mountain.

Every step he took left him trembling, as if incredible pressure were weighing down on him. From the look of things, he had been traveling for a very long time to reach this point.

“It’s not that much farther... it’s too bad that with this body, passing through the barrier is quite a task....” It was a young, handsome man whose eyes glittered as if with starlight and with a sense of enigmatic profoundness.

It was none other than... Ji Dongyang!!

“Meng Hao... the Eighth Mountain and Sea is where you and I... will become one!” A strange smile could be seen on his face, and his expression was one of anticipation as he continued to struggle through the barrier.

Meanwhile, back outside the Heavengod Alliance, rumbling sounds could be heard coming from one particular asteroid field. The asteroids were collapsing into pieces and, shockingly, countless bones were flying out from inside them.

The rumbling continued, and the asteroids were destroyed one after another. Soon, the bones had accumulated to the point of being endless.... Within those bones could be seen a man in a long black robe, sitting there cross-legged, his long hair swirling around him. He was gaunt, and yet terrifying ripples spread out from him in all directions. The ripples caused a good portion of the bones to slowly form together until they were a huge throne of bones, upon which the black-robed man settled.

The rest of the bones converged next to the man to form nine enormous Bone Giants.

In the same moment that the nine Bone Giants formed, the black-robed man's eyes snapped open. His cultivation base erupted with power, and his qi and blood surged. At the same time, a mark appeared on his forehead.

This was the Echelon cultivator of the Eighth Mountain, Han Qinglei!

When he opened his eyes, the air around him distorted, and soon, numerous figures materialized out of the void. They quickly dropped to their knees and kowtowed in front of Han Qinglei.

At a glance, it was possible to see that there were dozens of such figures, all of them kowtowing. One by one, they transmitted various messages to Han Qinglei, reporting to him what had occurred in the Eighth Mountain and Sea during his secluded meditation.

Han Qinglei's face was expressionless. However, after hearing all of the reports, his pupils constricted, and he focused on one specific kneeling figure.

“Did you say Meng Hao?” he asked in a voice that caused the starry sky to tremble. His gaze was like lightning, completely menacing as he stared at the cultivator who had brought the news.

The man trembled, and instead of transmitting his messages, he whispered, “According to the news from the Heavengod Alliance, and some other clues, the person who exterminated the Blacksoul Society was definitely Meng Hao.... This conclusion is also based on the report you provided about

the Windswept Realm, Young Lord. In fact, the Heavengod Alliance has asked that you pay them a visit to confirm some information.”

Han Qinglei sat there silently, eyes closed as he recalled everything that had occurred in the Windswept Realm. He thought back to his encounter with Meng Hao, how he had been killed, and then how Meng Hao had saved him during the final battle.

Although not much time had passed since then, the more he thought about it, the more he realized that the Windswept Realm adventure had been one of extreme danger. Even an Echelon cultivator like himself was shocked by it.

“So he actually came to the Eighth Mountain and Sea...” Han Qinglei smiled subconsciously. He actually felt no hatred toward Meng Hao, only a sense of competition.

“And the cultivators of the Heavengod Alliance are trying to track him down and kill him... Perhaps he can tolerate that, but as another Echelon cultivator, I can not!” His eyes flickered icily. People who were not in the Echelon couldn’t possibly imagine the level of pride that Echelon cultivators felt in their standing. As for Han Qinglei, he could accept Meng Hao being defeated or even perishing, but only at the hands of another Echelon cultivator.

For non-Echelon cultivators to be hunting him down was something unacceptable.

Snorting coldly, Han Qinglei smacked his hand down onto the throne of bones. Instantly, it began to rumble, transforming into a white beam of light that shot off into the distance.

“Time to go to the Heavengod Alliance!” In response to his words, the other figures lurking in the starry sky began to power up and follow him. Soon the entire group was on their way to the Heavengod Alliance.

Meanwhile, back in the Heavengod Alliance, because of the enormous scope of the search for Meng Hao, eventually, the Chosen of the various sects in the Heavengod Alliance all emerged and joined in.

This included the Dao Child of the Heavengod Society. These Chosen were very much like the Chosen of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, people who their respective sects had spent incredible resources on to develop them into powerful experts. Any one of them possessed battle prowess that far exceeded the level of their cultivation bases.

In order to ensure that they didn't somehow get killed while training, they still had Dao Protectors, even though they were already in the Ancient Realm. In fact, Dao Protectors would guard them all the way to the Dao Realm!

In a short time, figurative storm winds arose in the Heavengod Alliance, like a huge vortex that sucked in cultivators from the far corners of the Realm.

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Despite the momentous state of affairs in the world around him, Meng Hao was living in relative tranquility. It was a peace and quiet that he hadn't experienced even in the Eastern Lands on Planet South Heaven. For now, he had seemingly truly forgotten about being a cultivator, and wasn't thinking about how he was the subject of a huge manhunt. Instead, he was fully immersed in the life of a scholar.

The town had an inn, where he sat beneath an oil lamp, reading. Occasionally, a smile would flicker across his face, and sometimes he would shake his head. He appeared to be completely immersed in the joy of reading.

Every once in awhile he would rise to his feet, grab a writing brush, and write something down off to the side. He was completely and fully a scholar, just like he had been all those years ago on Mount Daqing.

"There's still half a month to go before the Imperial examinations..." Around midnight, he blew out the lamp and crawled into bed. From there, he could look out the window at the starry sky. Everything was quiet except for the faint sound of snoring that rose from various locations in the small town.

"I never passed the exams back then, but now, I'm going to give it another shot." As he reminisced about his past life, he sighed. Eventually, he pulled out an incense burner, which was covered with layers of magical seals.

Chu Yuyan's soul was in that incense burner, but it was not complete. More than half of it had dispersed, leaving behind nothing more than a discarnate soul....

That discarnate soul was not enough to resurrect Chu Yuyan.... Furthermore, if it entered the cycle of reincarnation as a discarnate soul, then she would no longer be herself. Instead, she would merely be one aspect of whoever she eventually reincarnated into.

Meng Hao could not accept something like that.

“There’s always a way!” He closed his eyes, rotating his cultivation base to continue healing himself.

At dawn, he packed his bags and led his donkey out of the inn’s stable. The innkeeper chatted with him the entire way, wishing him well as he mounted the donkey, opened up a bamboo scroll, and then headed in the direction of the capital city, which was about seven days away.

Meng Hao wasn’t in a hurry. He rode his donkey along the public highway, resting at night, traveling when the sun rose. Days went by in which he enjoyed the scenery, passing by villages and farms. Although he hadn’t planned this, his travels were like a cleansing that left him much more calm and tranquil.

Beams of light occasionally shot through the sky overhead. Out in the starry sky, the cultivators searching for Meng Hao were getting more and more anxious. Despite having searched for Meng Hao for an extended period of time, they hadn’t been able to turn up a single trace.

Their only recourse was to send more people out to search. Planet Luo River was scanned with divine sense occasionally, but the Heavengod Alliance was huge, and it wasn’t an easy thing to search for a single person.

Gradually, the appointed time to unseal the teleportation portals approached. In fact, there was a bit of a backlash among certain factions in the Heavengod Alliance, who felt that locking down the entire Alliance to search for a single person wasn’t very appropriate.

Patriarch Blacksoul wasn’t willing to give in though. Gritting his teeth, he personally went to the Heavengod Society. After he left, the old man who had issued the bounty on Meng Hao sat there cross-legged, personally sending his divine sense out to aid in the search.

However, the Heavengod Alliance was an equally large place for him, and to search it required time and significant resources. Were it not for the hefty price paid by Patriarch Blacksoul, he would never have agreed to help.

Time passed. As a cultivator, Meng Hao's journey was tranquil and enjoyable. It would have been a different story if he were mortal, considering the various dangers to be faced. At one point he encountered some bandits.

The bandits had just sacked a merchant caravan, and were in the midst of their burning, killing, raping, and plundering. As Meng Hao passed by, looked over at the bandits, and they in turn saw him. They immediately began to laugh heartily.

One particularly burly man declared, "Look, a pretty little scholar! He's mine!"

Then, he strode forward toward Meng Hao, a vicious expression plastered on his face, his eyes gleaming with lascivious intent.

Meng Hao frowned, wondering how the Eighth Mountain and Sea could have such debauched inhabitants. As the burly man neared, Meng Hao sighed, then looked up into the sky as if to check for witnesses before giving a cold harrumph.

It was a noise that no one except for the bandits could hear. To them, it sounded like thunder; blood sprayed out of their mouths, and they instantly toppled over.

They weren't dead yet, just unconscious. Meng Hao didn't use any magical technique, just a snort, backed entirely by the power of his fleshly body. With that, he hopped off the donkey and picked up the nearest blade. Then he went from one unconscious bandit to another and dispatched them coolly and quickly.

After that, he returned to the donkey, which had been waiting impatiently the whole time, and continued on his way. Several days later, a huge walled city appeared up ahead.

This was the Imperial capital of this empire.

The Imperial examinations that Meng Hao was so looking forward to would be held here in a few days.

The days passed uneventfully, and soon it was time for the exams to begin. The entire capital city was bustling as students and scholars arrived from all over the empire to take the Imperial examinations.

Meng Hao was one of them. He left his donkey at the inn, straightened his clothes, then cleared his throat as he joined all of the other scholars as they headed to the exam grounds. There, a court official closely examined everyone before they entered to make sure they hadn't brought along anything to help them cheat. Eventually, Meng Hao was escorted to a small room, just big enough for him. A desk could be seen, upon which writing utensils were arranged neatly. Before opening the exam materials, Meng Hao washed his hands in a wooden basin off to the side, then took a deep breath. When the starting bell rang, he sat down in the chair and opened the exam scroll. As soon as he laid eyes on the contents, a smile broke out on his face.

Chapter 1223: Is This a Dream?

He didn't begin to answer the questions right away. He first closed his eyes, as if he were carefully considering how to answer. When his eyes opened, they shone brightly. He picked up the brush and immediately began to write down the first answer.

In the same moment that his brush touched the paper, a righteous, noble aura suddenly appeared within the city, causing colors to flash in Heaven and Earth. At the same time, in the Forbidden Palace elsewhere in the city, the emperor sat there holding a Go piece in his hand. Sitting across the game board from him was a Daoist priest, a smiling old man with the air of a transcendent being.

Suddenly, the Daoist priest's face flickered, and he looked in the direction of the exam grounds, an expression of shock on his face.

“One of the scholars taking the Imperial examinations provoked a righteous, noble aura! Which one?”

The Daoist priest waved his finger, causing water-like ripples to spread out over the game board, which vanished, to be replaced by an image of the exam grounds.

The Daoist priest's gaze shifted, causing the view to pass through the exam grounds as he searched for what he was looking for. Soon, the image focused on a single room, where Meng Hao was currently writing characters down in flowing calligraphy.

The Daoist priest looked at the emperor in amazement, and then back at Meng Hao. He smiled.

“Is that kid special or something?” the emperor asked.

“Special! Very special!” the Daoist priest replied, laughing. His eyes shone with excitement which only increased as he looked at Meng Hao.

“In all my travels through the years, this is the first time I’ve seen someone who could provoke such a righteous, noble aura. It’s been decided; from now on he’s a prized seedling for the Righteous Noble Sect!” The Daoist priest laughed heartily, then rose to his feet and strode in the direction of the exam grounds.

It was in almost the exact same moment that the old man in the Heavengod Society happened to scan the area with divine sense.

His divine sense was in the Dao Realm already, and had also been augmented by the Heavengod Society’s ancestral treasure, making it incredibly powerful, and increasing its range. In addition to that, he had spared no effort to boost it even further in his search. As it scanned Planet Luo River, the entire planet vibrated.

Meng Hao stopped writing for a moment, and slowly closed his eyes. He had noticed the divine sense just now. Although it hadn’t stopped specifically on him, he had the feeling that he had been detected.

“What a pity. I’m not even half done with the exam....” he murmured. He looked down at the exam paper, then smiled casually. Ignoring the matter of the divine sense, he continued writing.

Back on the Eighth Mountain, in the Heavengod Society, the cross-legged old man suddenly opened his eyes. His face was a bit pale, but he waved his sleeve nonetheless. Instantly, hundreds of thousands of jade slips flew out from the Eighth Mountain, piercing through the void to head in all directions.

The jade slips appeared in the hands of numerous cultivators, who then heard the voice of the old man speaking in their minds: “The foreign cultivator who exterminated the Blacksoul Society is currently on Planet Luo River, taking the Imperial examinations in the capital city of the Righteous Noble State!”

The jade slips were also specifically locked onto Meng Hao’s location, so that any cultivator who held them could easily find him.

Numerous figures began to speed in the direction of Planet Luo River, all of them worried that they would be late, and that someone else would be able to apprehend the prize before them.

Somewhere in the starry sky was a young man who appeared to be around thirty years of age, striding along with his hands clasped behind his back. The starry sky trembled as he walked along. Behind him, an enormous figure could be seen that bore the semblance of Heavengod, shining with boundless light.

As the young man walked along, a jade slip shot up to him, which he grabbed. Then his eyes glittered with viciousness. Smiling, he headed directly toward Planet Luo River.

In another location, a 3,000-meter blood mist surged through the starry sky. Inside were various powerful beasts, snarling as they struggled to free themselves from the mist. Soon though, cracking sounds could be heard as their bodies collapsed, and they were absorbed into the blood mist.

Suddenly, a jade slip flew through the sky and into the blood mist. Moments later, cruel laughter rang out.

“So they finally found him... interesting, very interesting...” The blood mist changed directions and headed toward Planet Luo River.

In a stretch of the starry sky not too far away from Planet Luo River, a woman could be seen flying along. She looked like an utter barbarian, a coiled whip resting at her side and a wild look in her eyes. Suddenly, several gigantic pythons materialized around her, which then carried her in the direction of Planet Luo River.

The woman was swarthy but extremely beautiful. As she neared Planet Luo River, she suddenly whistled. The sound wasn't very piercing, but the result was that all the snake-type creatures on Planet Luo River suddenly began to hiss loudly.

All it took was a brief moment for all of the Heavengod Alliance to be shaken into action. The first to mobilize of all were the sects on Planet Luo River itself. How could they have ever imagined that the person the entire Heavengod Alliance was searching for was on their own planet?

Planet Luo River was one of the four great planets in the Eighth Mountain and Sea. In addition to the Righteous Noble Sect, there were three other sects on the planet.

Those four sects were the overlords of Planet Luo River, and occupied very important positions within the Heavengod Alliance. Currently, all four of those sects had mobilized and were headed toward the capital city.

Bright beams of light shot through the air, and all of the snakes emerged from the forests and mountains, hissing loudly. They did nothing to harm the people, but rather, headed directly toward the capital city.

Colors flashed, the wind screamed, and the ground shook. However, Meng Hao remained in his little exam room, continuing to write down his answers. He truly wanted to finish the whole exam, and thus make peace with his failures in years past.

After about ten breaths of time passed, Meng Hao finished writing the final character. He took a deep breath and blew on the exam paper to dry the ink, then put the brush down.

“It’s too bad I can’t wait until the results come in. I definitely won’t fail this time. It’s too bad that either way, I won’t be able to become a grand official to realize my dream of being super rich....” With a silent chuckle, he stood up. At that point, a wind blew outside, and suddenly something burst into the exam grounds with speed that exceeded all normal cultivators. It was... a donkey.

As soon as the donkey entered the exam grounds, everyone stared with wide eyes. The official conducting the examination gaped in disbelief as the donkey head-butted the wall of Meng Hao’s exam room, breaking it open and bursting inside.

Meng Hao laughed and jumped onto the donkey’s back, which brayed as it crashed through the opposing wall. Then, everyone watching was thrown into an uproar as the donkey then flew up into the air.

“An Immortal....”

“But... why was an Immortal taking the Imperial examinations?”

“Heavens, I can’t believe I just took the Imperial examinations with an Immortal!!” Numerous cries of astonishment echoed up into the air.

In almost the same instant that Meng Hao flew up into the air on the donkey, a bright beam of light closed in, which was none other than the Daoist priest. He had a strange look on his face; he had not received one of the jade slips and therefore didn't know who Meng Hao was. Apparently, he didn't care about that though, nor did he care whether or not Meng Hao was even a cultivator.

“Hey little bro, don't go!” the Daoist priest blurted. “Fear not, I am Xu Ran from the Righteous Noble Sect. Um... are you interested in joining up?”

“If you join our sect, you can have anything you want. The Righteous Noble Sect has a thousand scrolls of Daoist magic, three thousand magical techniques, and countless disciples. We're ranked seventh in the Heavengod Alliance!

“We even occupy thirty percent of Planet Luo River. Come on and join us! After you do, you can do anything you want!”

As soon as Meng Hao heard the man's words, his eyes went wide. However, before he could respond, countless shocking beams of light suddenly shot down from up above.

“Meng Hao!! It's Meng Hao!”

“So it turns out he's here! Kill him and you can have Patriarch Blacksoul as a slave for a thousand years!!”

“Kill him!” Numerous excited shouts could be heard as no less than a thousand cultivators began to converge on the area from all directions.

Meng Hao's donkey shivered, then looked pleadingly up at him. Meng Hao chuckled and leaped off the donkey, which then turned into the meat jelly with a popping sound, and then flew into Meng Hao's bag of holding.

“What a pity,” Meng Hao said, shaking his head. A cold smile appeared on his face, and as soon as he did, his aura suddenly changed. No longer did he look like a scholar, but instead a demonic fiend, bursting with energy. Everything rumbled as he waved his hand, causing the sky to fill with a boundless blood-colored light. A huge rift then opened up and the Blood Demon emerged, roaring as it charged the surrounding cultivators. Meng Hao's eyes flickered with killing intent; he would show absolutely no mercy to these cultivators of the Eighth Mountain and Sea who were trying to kill him.

A flash could be seen as Meng Hao transformed into an azure roc, which blasted into the enemy cultivators like lightning. Immortal mountains descended, a violet moon flickered, and a sun began to suck in all the light in the area, then released it with explosive force. In the blink of an eye, dozens of bloodcurdling screams could be heard echoing out as enemies fell out of the sky.

Blood sprayed in all directions, falling down toward the earth in a rain of gore.

Of the surrounding cultivators, a few hundred were wearing green Daoist robes. They didn't attack immediately, but instead began muttering, which then caused an astonishing explosive aura to build up that only they could see.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered; he couldn't see the aura either, but he could sense that whatever magic these people cultivated was very unique.

It appeared to be a Daoist magic as distinctive as that of the Burning Incense Stick Society that he had encountered in the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

In the moment that Meng Hao noticed what they were doing, the Daoist priest was suddenly thrown into a rage. He strode forward and stood in front of the several hundred cultivators, then shouted, "What do you people think you're doing? Wreaking havoc on sect allies? You should be calling him Elder Uncle!" As soon as the words left the man's mouth, the cultivators lurched to a stop and stared in shock. The old man leading the group stepped forward, smiled wryly at the Daoist priest, then clasped hands and bowed.

"Elder Grandfather, this man... this man is, uh, Meng Hao."

"So what if he's Meng Hao!?" the Daoist priest replied, glaring.

The old man hesitated for a moment, then thought about all the muddle-headed things the Daoist priest was known for doing, then quickly explained, "Meng Hao... he's, you know, the one who exterminated the entire Blacksoul Society?"

"Exterminated the Blacksoul Society?" the Daoist priest said, spinning around and looking at Meng Hao with an even stranger look than before.

“Hahaha! As expected of my apprentice. Excellent! Wonderful! I’ve been annoyed with those bastards from the Blacksoul Society for years now. You are obviously destined to be my apprentice. You haven’t even formally paid respects to me as your master, and you’ve already solved one of my headaches for me!”

Chapter 1224: Be a Good Kid, My Little Disciple, Don’t Run!

A strange expression could be seen on Meng Hao’s face, but before he could say anything, the Daoist priest glared at the surrounding disciples of the Righteous Noble Sect.

“What are you standing around for? Can’t you see that your Elder Uncle is being bullied!? Why aren’t you helping him?!” The Daoist priest stamped his foot down, causing the air to rumble. The disciples of the Righteous Noble Sect exchanged wry, helpless glances.

The old man who was the leader of the bunch appeared to be on the verge of tears. He let out a long sigh, unsure of whether or not to attack Meng Hao.

Even as he was going back and forth about what to do, the sound of a whistle could be heard high up in the sky. As it echoed out, all of the snakes on Planet Luo River hissed loudly.

The sound echoed about, and the clouds churned, revealing numerous Cloud Pythons swirling through the air toward Meng Hao.

Simultaneously, countless arrow-like snakes shot up from the ground, eyes sinister, forked tongues flicking.

It wasn’t over yet, though. Up above in the sky, an even larger python began to descend. It glowed with brilliant light, and even emanated an aura similar to that of a Paragon.

All of the cultivators in the crowd were completely shaken. As for Meng Hao, when he looked up, his eyes went wide for a moment, and then he actually smiled.

“Finally,” he murmured, “I get to see... some of the local Chosen.” He was already itching to fight, so as soon as the python appeared, he instantly shot up into the sky, moving so fast a sonic boom echoed out. Relying only on the strength of his fleshly body, he slammed into the Cloud Pythons. By the time that they howled and they collapsed into countless pieces, Meng Hao was already bearing down on the Paragon-like python.

He quickly waved his hand, causing the Essence of Divine Flame to roar out, transforming into a sea of flames capable of burning everything. In response, the huge python opened its mouth and blasted out a huge air channel, making it impossible for the sea of flames to touch it, then opened its mouth to shoot a beam of light toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao smiled coolly, then clenched his hand into a fist and punched out toward the python and its gaping maw.

First fist, Life-Extermination Fist!

As the fist sailed through the air, Heaven and Earth went wild with flashing colors. A massive wind sprang up, and everything shook violently. The python let out a miserable shriek as the light shattered, and its body then collapsed into pieces.

Meng Hao threw his head back and shouted. Although the sound of it wasn't extremely loud, as soon as it echoed out, the rest of the surrounding pythons began to tremble. Not daring to get any closer, they turned tail and fled.

"Shut the hell up!" someone said imperiously. It was the barbaric woman, riding on a five-colored beam of light that closed in on Meng Hao with incredible speed.

The woman was quite pretty, despite her swarthy skin. She had a very unique air to her, making her look very different from any other female cultivator Meng Hao had ever encountered.

"Lady Dragon-Snake!!"

"It's Lady Dragon-Snake from the Dragon-Snake Fusion Sect! I can't believe she's here on Planet Luo River!"

"The Alliance's bounty on Meng Hao is just too enticing. It even caught the attention of the Dragon-Snake Fusion Sect.... Or maybe it caught the attention of the ever-flamboyant Lady Dragon-Snake herself...."

"If she's here, then presumably the other eight members of the Nine Claws of the Heavengod are on their way too!" As everyone discussed the matter, the old man from the Righteous Noble Sect sighed, inwardly thanking Lady Dragon-Snake for showing up and getting him out of the embarrassing situation. Now he didn't have to decide whether or not to attack Meng Hao.

Looking at his Master out of the corner of his eye, he couldn't help but smile wryly. Right now, the Daoist priest's eyes were shining brightly, and the old man knew that whenever that look appeared, the Daoist priest was about to do something very muddle-headed....

Meng Hao looked at the woman closing in on him, and his eyes slowly narrowed. At the same time, a smile appeared on his face when he heard what the surrounding cultivators were saying about who she was.

“Nine Claws of the Heavengod. They must be Chosen from the Heavengod Alliance.... Excellent. I've collected on most of my debts from the Ninth Mountain and Sea, and now that I'm here... it's only right and proper to make a killing in the Eighth Mountain and Sea too.” Laughing loudly, he suddenly shot directly toward Lady Dragon-Snake.

Her pupils constricted when she realized how powerful he was. However, she didn't attempt to dodge out of the fight. Her right hand flickered with an incantation gesture, causing five-colored light to explode out in all directions, transforming into five pythons which howled as they shot toward Meng Hao.

At the same time, she waved her hand, summoning a string of bells. When she swung the string, melodic chiming could be heard. When that sound entered Meng Hao's ears, though, it was like the roaring of the highest Heavens, and he even felt his psyche trembling.

Meng Hao gave a cold snort. He had cultivated the Dao Divinity Scripture, so as soon as the psyche-shaking sound waves hit him, he sent his divine sense out, which transformed into an invisible tempest and smashed back against them. Lady Dragon-Snake's face fell, and blood oozed out of the corners of her mouth. Alarmed, she fell back.

Before she could do anything else, Meng Hao flashed through the air, transforming into an azure roc, which shot like lightning toward the five pythons. Of course, rocs are the nemeses of dragons and snakes, so as soon as its aura appeared the five pythons immediately shuddered. The azure roc quickly closed in and slashed its claws toward them.

Booms echoed out as the pythons, completely unable to fight back, were ripped to shreds. Meng Hao then closed in on the woman herself.

“Roc Transformation!! You're a disciple of the Heavenly Roc Sect!” The woman's face fell, and she fell back, quickly performing an incantation gesture with her right hand. Then she spit out a

mouthful of dark blood, which transformed into a blood-colored sealing mark. The sealing mark writhed, and in the blink of an eye, had transformed into a dragon!

It was a dragon formed from black blood, which made this a Black Dragon. The Black Dragon kicked up a huge wind as it roared and shot toward Meng Hao.

“Is a magical technique like this really worthy of a Chosen?” Meng Hao said, shaking his head. If this was all she could do, this woman wouldn’t deserve to have a promissory note and owe Meng Hao money.

He took a step forward, clenching his right hand into a fist and unleashing a punch.

It was his second fist strike, the Bedevilment Fist!

As the fist rumbled through the air, the Heavens seemed to teeter on the verge of collapse. The Black Dragon had just appeared, but was already twisting and distorting. It let out a miserable shriek, as if it were about to collapse into pieces.

In almost the same moment that Meng Hao spoke, Lady Dragon-Snake rotated her cultivation base, causing more than ten Soul Lamps to appear around her, more than half of which were extinguished. Within each of those soul lamps could be seen the image of a person meditating.

All of them wore the same face as Lady Dragon-Snake, except that from the waist down they were snakes. Suddenly, they opened their eyes and looked at the Black Dragon.

“Thirteen Dragon-Snake Augmentations!” she cried in a piercing voice. A tremor suddenly ran through the Black Dragon, and its energy redoubled!

After that, it tripled, quadrupled... in the blink of an eye, the Black Dragon’s energy had increased by thirteen times. Now, it seemed absolutely, completely different from before. Furthermore, it even emanated faint traces of the Dao Realm.

Meng Hao was taken aback, but still shook his head.

“That still isn’t going to cut it,” he said. He was fed up with this fight already, so he immediately unleashed his third fist strike. God Slaying!

As soon as the God Slaying Fist was unleashed, everything began to shake. The Black Dragon, which was now thirteen times more powerful than before, let out a miserable shriek as its body was destroyed. The surrounding cultivators were shocked, and looked over at Meng Hao with wide, astonished eyes.

“The Heavengod Alliance was wrong. The power he can wield... is not that of the Ancient Realm!!”

“H-his... his injuries have healed!!”

“Before he was injured, he could wipe out the entire Blacksoul Society. Even Patriarch Blacksoul himself received terrifying injuries!!”

Even as everyone reacted with shock, Meng Hao strode forward toward Lady Dragon-Snake and extended his right hand. His eyes glittered with an intensely cold light; these cultivators had come here to kill him, so it didn't matter if they were men or women; unless they qualified to have a promissory note, Meng Hao would not go lightly on them.

He closed in on Lady Dragon-Snake, killing intent raging. Her face fell, and both hands flashed in a double-handed incantation gesture. Just as Meng Hao was about to grab her by the neck, she roared, and suddenly transformed into a ghost image.

When she reappeared off in the distance, blood was oozing out of her mouth.

“Eee?” Meng Hao said. In the moment that she had performed her teleportation, he had felt fluctuations of the Dao Divinity Scripture.

He flashed through the air toward her again, and Lady Dragon-Snake's face paled and filled with terror. Even as she backed up, she performed an incantation gesture and then fled via teleportation once more.

His interest piqued, Meng Hao suddenly waved his finger, unleashing the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex. The woman didn't know why, but she suddenly lurched to a stop, and her eyes went wide with despair.

Even as he closed in on her, all of a sudden, a withered hand appeared out of nowhere to claw at Meng Hao.

“Quasi-Dao? Scram!” Meng Hao instantly knew exactly what type of person this was. He waved his hand, causing the aura of the Paragon Bridge to erupt out. The instant the hand made contact with him, it shattered. An old woman staggered out into the void, looking at Meng Hao with an expression of terror. Coughing up blood, she shot toward Lady Dragon-Snake, grabbed her, and fled.

That old woman was Lady Dragon-Snake’s Dao Protector, but even she was currently terrified. “Young Lady, we must flee. This man... isn’t injured at all!!”

Seeing that Lady Dragon-Snake was fleeing, Meng Hao smiled, although it was an icy smile. He suddenly waved his hand toward the fleeing Lady Dragon-Snake.

“Call upon Karma to form a binding writ. Starting today... you owe me money!” Immediately, Karma Threads appeared above Lady Dragon-Snake. Meng Hao then reached out and grabbed the brightest of the shining threads, and then placed a sealing mark on it!

Rumbling sounds could be heard as Lady Dragon-Snake coughed up blood. Her heart was now filled with an indescribable dread, especially when she saw the glowing piece of paper floating down onto Meng Hao’s palm. She suddenly felt as if she had lost something important, and her fear grew.

It was at this point that a cold snort echoed through the sky, and a writhing blood mist descended toward Meng Hao.

“Ah, another one,” he said, chuckling. Instead of standing there waiting, he suddenly transformed into a prismatic beam of light that shot up into the sky. However, from a distance it looked like he was actually trying to flee.

Just as Meng Hao was about to blast up into the sky and start fighting, the Daoist priest appeared in mid-air, beaming with a huge smile as he hollered, “Be a good kid, my little disciple, don’t run!”

Chapter 1225: Master, Save Me!

Just as Meng Hao was about to blast up into the sky and start fighting, the Daoist priest appeared in mid-air, beaming with a huge smile as he hollered, “Don’t go, my little disciple!”

Although his shout seemed casual, it actually caused the sky to shake violently, as if it were about to collapse. In fact, if you looked up, you would see innumerable rifts opening up.

The red mist which had been just about to shoot down, suddenly shrank back, as if whatever person was concealed inside were suddenly shaking, and going all out to retreat.

This sudden turn of events caused Meng Hao to stare in shock, and also, sadness. His original plan had been to leave Planet Luo River, and in the process, incite the Chosen in that red mist into fighting, then use A Writ of Karma to force him or her to owe Meng Hao money.

How could he ever have imagined that the Daoist priest would interfere? The level of this priest's cultivation base caused Meng Hao's eyes to widen slightly. He obviously had a very high position in the Righteous Noble Sect, and from the way he had shouted just now, Meng Hao could tell that he was a 3-Essences Dao Lord, comparable to Patriarch Blacksoul, or perhaps a bit higher.

That made Meng Hao even more depressed than before. Back when he couldn't fight Dao Realm experts, he had virtually never encountered a single one. But now that he was capable of fighting them, they seemed to be popping up everywhere.

The reality of the situation was that it was because he was in a much different position now, and thus the people he encountered were different. In any of the various Mountains and Seas, the number of Dao Realm experts would never exceed several dozen. Most of them ended up as Patriarchs of various sects, and as such, were not the type of people ordinary cultivators ever encountered.

Take, for example, Patriarch Blacksoul. In a sect with hundreds of thousands of cultivators, there was only one Dao Realm cultivator, Patriarch Blacksoul!

And yet, because Meng Hao could fight Dao Realm experts, it was only natural that when he got involved in a situation, it would take the interference from them to resolve that situation.

As for this Daoist priest from the Righteous Noble Sect, he truly was a 3-Essences Dao Lord, and was one of three Dao Realm experts in that sect. In fact, he wasn't even the strongest of those three, but rather the second strongest!

Having three Dao Realm experts meant that the Righteous Noble Sect was in a very strong position in the Heavengod Alliance, a trend which was very similar to the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

“There’s no need to flee, my little disciple. Come, come, return with me to the Righteous Noble Sect. With me around, nobody would ever dare to lay a hand on you!” The Daoist priest approached, staring at Meng Hao with wide eyes. Meng Hao subconsciously edged backward.

The Daoist priest didn’t seem to mind. The more he looked at Meng Hao, the more excited he got because of that righteous, noble aura on him, which was apparently very special. Although the aura was fading, it was still quite apparent. In fact, it was the most clearly visible such aura that the Daoist priest had seen for many years.

“Aiii, if only I could have found you before you started practicing cultivation. I could definitely have raised you into the most powerful expert in the Righteous Noble Sect! Although, it’s not too late. Come, come. Your name is Meng Hao, right? You know, if you join the Righteous Noble Sect, you can get a Daoist name!

“My Daoist name is the Noble Ran. Let me think for a second....” The Daoist priest slapped his thigh. Smiling radiantly, he said, “I got it! Your Daoist name is the Righteous Haowie!”

The disciples of the Righteous Noble Sect around him exchanged dismayed glances. All of a sudden, they were no longer looking at Meng Hao with hostility, but rather, with sympathy.

Meng Hao was turning a bit green in the face. The Righteous Haowie, the Righteous Haowie.... When he heard the name, he wasn’t sure whether to laugh or cry. Were it not for the fact that he could tell that the Daoist priest harbored no ill will against him, he would long since have gone ballistic.

“This is ridiculous!” Meng Hao said, flicking his sleeve. Face cold, he snorted, ignoring the Daoist priest and spinning to shoot up into the sky. He wanted to leave Planet Luo River, but at the same time, was wary of the Daoist priest.

Even though Meng Hao could sense that the man did not want to hurt him, it was still better to be cautious. In order to make sure the man didn’t try to stop him, he transformed into an azure roc, flapped his wings, and shot away, leaving behind nothing but a series of sonic booms.

The Daoist priest stood where he was and did nothing to block Meng Hao's way. Instead, he looked on with a broad smile. The Righteous Noble Sect disciples behind him had strange looks on their faces as they tried to figure out exactly what their muddle-headed Patriarch was out to do.

"Well, if you want to leave, I won't stop you. However, we are destined to be Master and apprentice, Righteous Haowie. It has been fated by the Mountains and Seas. It has been fated... that within ten breaths of time, you will return." The Daoist priest's words were very mysterious. He stood there, hands clasped behind his back, looking every bit the transcendent being. Based on physical appearance alone, he appeared to be anything but ordinary.

Meng Hao sped along in azure roc-form, and within the space of a few breaths of time, he could see that out in the starry sky, tens of thousands of beams of light were shooting in his direction.

Boiling killing intent raged, distorting the starry sky. If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal. Meng Hao would still choose to leave. But soon, he realized that among those beams of light were the fluctuations of at least ten Dao Realm experts.

All of them were speeding in his direction!

Even Meng Hao's scalp went numb at the thought of ten Dao Realm cultivators. That was not even to mention the fact that among those ten auras, two of them... exceeded the level of Dao Lords!

There was no way he could leave now! Even if he somehow got away from Planet Luo River, he still wouldn't be able to avoid being killed eventually. Unfortunately... Patriarch Blacksoul hated Meng Hao so much that he was willing to treat himself completely viciously.

Perhaps individual cultivators might be able to ignore the idea of having him as a slave for a thousand years, but to a sect as a whole, that was too much of a temptation. They would do anything possible to make that happen!

"Heavengod Alliance...." Meng Hao said, eyes flickering coldly. With a sigh, he rolled his eyes, turned, and headed back down toward the surface of Planet Luo River.

Even as he turned back, the ten Dao Realm experts joined forces to attack. Rumbling filled the air as the power of numerous Essences materialized, transforming into a stream of brilliant light, almost like an enormous whip, which slashed through the void toward Meng Hao even as he retreated back down toward the lands of Planet Luo River.

At the same time, the rest of the cultivators pushed forward with explosive speed.

Back down on Planet Luo River, the cultivators from the four local sects had just seen Meng Hao leave. Just moments later he returned, looking very out of sorts; countless beams of light could be seen behind him in the starry sky, as well as a seven-colored light stream.

As the seven-colored light stream closed in, Meng Hao's face fell, and he quickly shouted out to the Daoist priest.

“Master, save me!!”

The transcendent-looking Daoist priest cleared his throat. Keeping his hands clasped behind his back, he slowly looked up and said, “Who is calling out for Master?”

He seemed to be refusing, but really... he was actually quite pleased with himself.

Meng Hao smiled bitterly. Behind him, the stream of light was closing in, bursting with killing intent. If it touched him, he wouldn't be killed instantly, but it would definitely reopen the wounds he had just spent all this time healing.

Gritting his teeth, he said, “I'm... I'm the Righteous Haowie, oh Master, if you don't save me right away, then I won't recognize you as my Master!”

Immediately, the Daoist priest's eyes began to shine as brightly as the sun and moon.

“Ah, fear not, my little disciple. Master is coming!”

Laughing with excitement, and looking somewhat smug, he suddenly took a step forward. When his foot landed, he was between Meng Hao and the seven-colored stream of light. Suddenly, he lifted his right hand in the air, angling his hand as if he were holding a brush, and then began to write characters in the middle of the air!

“How dare you bastards bully my apprentice! The Righteous Haowie is an upright person with a righteous, noble aura! Any enemy of his is an enemy of mine!”

“You’re at the threshold of Planet Luo River, and this is the Righteous Noble Sect! Do me a favor and screw off!”

Colors flashed and the wind howled. As the Daoist priest waved his hand to write characters, magical symbols flickered, and at the same time, a righteous, noble aura suddenly exploded out from him. That in turn seemed to incite the aura of Planet Luo River itself, which surged out and slammed into the seven-colored stream of light.

Massive rumbling could be heard as the stream of light quivered and then collapsed into pieces. At the same time, the righteous, noble aura shot further out into the starry sky, becoming an invisible pillar of qi that caused the entire starry sky to tremble. The incoming cultivators were all shocked and stopped in place, not daring to get any closer.

Numerous shouts of rage could be heard after the stream of light collapsed.

“Xu Ran, you oaf, are you crazy!?!?”

“He’s always been crazy!”

“That’s Meng Hao! He’s not your apprentice, he’s the killer who took out the whole Blacksoul Society!”

“Xu Ran, is your Righteous Noble Sect actually going to violate the orders of the Heavengod Alliance!?!?”

The sound of their cries echoed out, causing the lands to quake, rivers to flow backward, and all living beings to tremble.

“I might be crazy sometimes, but not today!” the Daoist priest replied, his voice booming. “You’re the crazy ones! You might not be able to tell, but I can clearly see that Meng Hao has a righteous, noble aura. For him to have an aura like that means that anyone he killed deserved to die!”

“If he exterminated the Blacksoul Society, that indicates... that the Heavens, the Eighth Mountain and Sea itself, and even the will of the entire Mountain and Sea Realm, wished the Blacksoul Society to be eradicated!”

“It doesn’t matter who he is, Meng Hao or some other Hao. Today, he’s my apprentice, the Righteous Haowie!” With that, he swished his sleeve, causing massive rumbling to fill Heaven and Earth as he once again summoned the power of Planet Luo River to surge out into the starry sky.

Of course, for him to do such a thing twice, to fight back against ten Dao Realm experts and countless other cultivators, left him with blood oozing out of his mouth.

Meng Hao was shaken. He looked silently at the Daoist priest, feeling more than a little moved. After hearing the man talking about his supposed righteous, noble aura, Meng Hao suddenly began to speculate that it actually had something to do with the qi flow of the Mountain and Sea Realm.

They were now at an impasse. The cultivators who had come to kill Meng Hao remained out in the starry sky, unwilling to enter Planet Luo River. This was one of the original planets of the Eighth Mountain and Sea, not an artificial planet created by some almighty cultivator. It had existed for as long as the Eighth Mountain and Sea had, and was one of only four planets like it. All the powerful sects on those primary planets were important parts of the Heavengod Alliance.

Furthermore... they all had secret magics that enabled them to control the power of those planets themselves!

Chapter 1226: The Something-something Seal the Heavens Incantation

In the middle of this intense standoff, the Daoist priest threw his head back and proudly brushed his sleeve.

“Disciples of the Righteous Noble Sect, hear my command!” he said in a loud voice. “Escort your Elder Uncle back to the sect!”

The disciples of the Righteous Noble Sect were shaking in their boots. They looked up at the forces arrayed against them in the sky, then back at Meng Hao and the Daoist priest, bitter smiles on their faces. After a moment of hesitation, they sighed, clasped hands to Meng Hao, and then turned to leave.

The other cultivators present, as well as the force in the starry sky, looked on as Meng Hao and the Righteous Noble Sect made their way off. The Daoist priest looked extremely pleased with himself as he quickly caught up with Meng Hao and then walked along at his side, laughing heartily.

“The Righteous Haowie. Well, what do you think? Should we switch to another Daoist name?”

Meng Hao hesitated, looking first at the Daoist priest and then all of the disciples of the Righteous Noble Sect. Finally, he sighed.

“Uh... we don't need to switch.”

“Alright, then it's settled!” The Daoist priest slapped Meng Hao on the shoulder.

“Senior...” Before Meng Hao could say anything else, the Daoist priest glared at him angrily. Meng Hao smiled wryly.

“Er... M-master.... Um, the Heavengod Alliance put a bounty on my head. If I go back to the Righteous Noble Sect with you, sir, I'm afraid it would be a big inconvenience....” Meng Hao was actually feeling some reservations. Originally, he had planned to simply manipulate the Righteous Noble Sect to make use of their power. However, the way the Daoist priest actually took him under his wing had moved Meng Hao, and now he was worried about dragging the whole sect into his own problems.

“Nonsense!” the Daoist Priest said, sounding completely unruffled. “The Righteous Noble Sect is the number one sect on Planet Luo River, and super famous in the Heavengod Alliance. Why should we be scared? What are we, babies? All you did was exterminate the Blacksoul Society, right? Fine, one of these days when I'm in a good mood, I'll go exterminate a sect too. There's no way the Heavengod Alliance will put a bounty on MY head!”

Meng Hao was struck speechless. Although what the Daoist priest said actually made sense, if Meng Hao truly became a disciple of the Righteous Noble Sect, then technically, he would also be a part of the Heavengod Alliance. In that case, everything that had happened would be considered an internal affair of the Heavengod Alliance.

If that happened, there would be a plethora of options to resolve the situation. However... Meng Hao had the feeling that things wouldn't necessarily play out as smoothly as the Daoist priest believed.

Most important was Meng Hao's own status... that of a cultivator foreign to the Eighth Mountain and Sea!

Time passed. They proceeded along, led by the Daoist priest to a huge monastery that consisted of three towering mountains. Located at the peak of each mountain was a statue surrounded by clusters of pagodas and buildings. Located in the middle of the three mountains was a sprawling Daoist rite temple.

Incense smoke swirled up into the air, and the sound of tolling bells could be heard. Cranes soared in the air up above, and countless Immortal creatures could be seen lazing about, clearly at peace with the local cultivators.

This was the Righteous Noble Sect. As Meng Hao looked around, he could see the powerful aura of Heaven and Earth filling the sect. Visible within that aura was a sense of uprightness that caused the entire Righteous Noble Sect to feel both ancient and honorable!

That was just what he could see at first glance. When he narrowed his eyes and looked closer, he was shocked at what else he could sense... the qi flow of the Mountain and Sea Realm!

Shockingly, the Righteous Noble Sect had some of the qi flow of the Mountain and Sea Realm. Although it wasn't much, it indicated that this place was beloved by the Mountain and Sea Realm!

Visible on the main gate were four characters, bold and powerful. It was impossible to tell how many countless years they had existed there, but looking at them filled a person with strange feelings, as if those characters were eternal, and would never fade away.

The four characters read... Represent Heaven; Administer the Dao!

"The qi flow of the Mountains and Seas..." Meng Hao murmured as he stepped into the monastery. "A righteous, noble aura.... Represent Heaven in administering the Dao."

Almost as soon as the disciples of the Righteous Noble Sect stepped into their sect, numerous beams of light appeared in the air up above. Those were the cultivators who had come to kill Meng Hao, and were now surrounding the Righteous Noble Sect.

Even the ten Dao Realm cultivators came and occupied ten different locations equidistant from the sect. The powerful fluctuations of their cultivation bases were extremely threatening and overbearing.

Rumbling could be heard as the righteous, noble aura within the Righteous Noble Sect churned, spreading out to cover the entire sect. The sect's grand protective spell formation was activated, causing the entire sect to suddenly blur from the perspective of those on the outside. The only things most people could see clearly were the three huge statues atop the mountain peaks.

One of those statues held a sword, another held a scroll, and the last was dressed in a scholar's robe, and held his hands clasped behind his back as he looked up into the sky.

When the Dao Realm experts on the outside saw those three statues, their eyes widened, and they said, "The Three Righteous Noble Saints...."

As soon as Meng Hao set foot into the sect, a powerful voice instantly echoed out.

"Bring Meng Hao to see me, now!" When the other disciples heard the voice, they immediately bowed their heads respectfully. The Daoist priest was the only one whose eyes flashed angrily as he strode toward the most prominent of the three mountain peaks.

Meng Hao followed along. The two of them hurried forward to the mountain with the statue of the scholar staring into the sky. At the foot of the statue was a temple, outside of which could be seen two young boys, sitting there cross-legged. When they saw the Daoist priest, they immediately rose to their feet and clasped hands respectfully.

The Daoist priest didn't say anything, but instead stalked past them into the temple entrance. Meng Hao was about to follow him when he turned and said, "Master will go in alone. I want to see whether my words still count for anything in the Righteous Noble Sect!"

Meng Hao stopped in place. When he looked at the temple in front of him, he could tell that there was some terrifying entity inside, emanating fluctuations that caused enormous pressure to weigh down on him.

"Three Essences makes a Dao Lord. Four, five, and six Essences are Dao Sovereigns.... The person inside that temple is a Dao Sovereign!" Meng Hao's pupils constricted. He had faced a 3-Essences Dao Lord, had been forced to risk his life in combat, and still had not been able to eke out a victory. If he faced a Dao Sovereign, even one with only four Essences, he would definitely lose!

Each Essence in the Dao Realm created a huge disparity. The difference between a Dao Lord and a Dao Sovereign was like the difference between Heaven and Earth. Therefore, the level of difficulty of breaking through from being a Dao Lord to become a Dao Sovereign was incredible.

Furthermore, it ensured that in the Mountain and Sea Realm, Dao Sovereigns were not common. People like that... were actually qualified to vie for the position of Mountain and Sea Lord!

Meng Hao took a deep breath, and waited silently. The two boys standing guard measured him up curiously. They hadn't left the mountain recently, so they actually had no idea who Meng Hao was or what he had done.

Time passed, and nothing could be heard from inside the temple. After a while, the two boys couldn't hold back from asking Meng Hao some questions. One had a look of sympathy on his face, while the other looked at him with a curious expression as he asked, "Are you Patriarch Noble Ran's new apprentice?"

When Meng Hao nodded in response, the two boys exchanged a glance, then looked back at Meng Hao. This time both of them wore sympathetic expressions. Then they began to speak in turns:

"When I was reading the ancient records... I saw that 1,700 years ago, Patriarch Noble Ran accepted an apprentice... who died two months later!"

"1,500 years ago, he accepted another apprentice who also died after two months...."

"1,300 years ago, he took a third apprentice, who also died."

"To date, Patriarch Noble Ran has had eight apprentices, none of whom lived past three months. All of them died, and furthermore all of them died... in very strange ways."

"What do you mean strange?" Meng Hao asked, somewhat spooked.

"One was struck by lightning. He didn't die from the first lightning bolt, it took dozens. After he died, the sky cleared up immediately...."

"There was one who ended up spontaneously exploding while cultivating.... Oh, and another caught fire and burned to death. Another one experienced misfortune for two whole months until suddenly a meteor fell out of the sky and crushed him to death. Well, the point is, they all died in different ways."

Meng Hao's eyes went wide; he almost couldn't believe what he was hearing.

He was just about to ask some more questions when the seemingly quiet temple suddenly began to emanate intense ripples, as if some dispute were underway. After enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn, the Daoist priest burst out angrily. After taking a few steps, he turned and glared back into the temple.

"You might be a Dao Sovereign, and you might be the First Patriarch of the Righteous Noble Sect, but your worldview doesn't go past the Eighth Mountain and Sea!

"I refuse to believe that with your cultivation base, you can't see the righteous, noble aura on this apprentice of mine!"

The temple was completely quiet. No response could be heard. The Daoist priest stamped his foot and then began to stalk off angrily. As he passed Meng Hao, he motioned to him with his eyes, which caused Meng Hao to turn solemnly and follow him away.

They left the central mountain and headed toward the mountain on the left, the one with the sword-wielding statue. At the base of that statue was another temple. After entering the temple, the Daoist priest angrily looked over his shoulder at the central mountain peak.

"Master, I think I should probably leave," Meng Hao said slowly. He couldn't stop thinking about the words spoken by the two boys moments ago.

"Leave? Where can you leave to?" the Daoist priest said biting. "The Heavengod Alliance is huge, and the teleportation portals are still sealed. If you set foot outside, hundreds of thousands of cultivators are going to try to kill you, maybe even more than that. You might have been able to exterminate the Blacksoul Society, but can you exterminate the entire Heavengod Alliance? Well, can you?!"

"Not at the moment, no," Meng Hao replied calmly.

"Even if you could, I wouldn't let you. If you were the kind of person to do things like that, how could I have had the face to take you as my apprentice? Besides, it's only natural that I have a way to teleport you out of this piddling Heavengod Alliance!

“I’ve bought you two months of time, during which you’ll just stay here and try to get as many people as possible to come surround the sect. Then when the time comes, I’ll teleport you out, and things will be much safer.” The Daoist priest sighed deeply. Of course, he didn’t notice how jumpy Meng Hao got as soon as he mentioned the time frame of two months.

“It’s too bad that something like this happened right when you became my apprentice.” Suddenly, the Daoist priest seemed to go crazy. Gesticulating wildly at the people besieging the sect, he let loose a long stream of curses, after which he stamped his foot.

“Dammit. I’ve had eight apprentices throughout the years, and in the end, they all died. Now that I have a ninth, I won’t let him die no matter what.

“Righteous Haowie, the time has come for me to instruct you in the Righteous Noble Sect’s most powerful, most mysterious, most invincible Daoist magic. It’s called The Dao is in My Heart The Will is in My Eyes I Shall Possess the Mountains and Seas Seal the Heavens Incantation!” The Daoist priest’s eyes were completely bloodshot, and when he spoke the final words, Seal the Heavens Incantation, he spoke them very dramatically, one word at a time.

“If you can master that art,” he continued solemnly, “then in the future, you’ll definitely be invincible in the Mountain and Sea Realm!”

“Um... Master,” Meng Hao said tentatively, “did your last eight disciples also study the... something-something Seal the Heavens Incantation?”

“It’s not the something-something Seal the Heavens Incantation! It’s The Dao is in My Heart The Will is in My Eyes I Shall Possess the Mountains and Seas Seal the Heavens Incantation! As for your other poor Elder Brothers, of course they studied it. Each and every one of them. Unfortunately... before any of them could finish, they died.” The Daoist priest looked sad, very sad, and not the least bit of that was an act.

Chapter 1227: Daoist Priest!

“The Dao is in My Heart The Will is in My Eyes I Shall Possess the Mountains and Seas Seal the Heavens Incantation!”

Meng Hao had just arrived in the Righteous Noble Sect. It was currently evening; the sun was setting off in the distance, and a cool breeze rustled through the swaying flowers and vegetation that covered the mountains. Meng Hao stared blankly at this Master of his, whose unreliability could only be outdone by Patriarch Reliance....

He listened silently as the Daoist priest began to explain the so-called something-something Seal the Heavens Incantation.

“This incantation is incredibly powerful. Super powerful. Invincibly powerful!

“Its creator is a one-of-a-kind super genius in the Eighth Mountain and Sea-- no, in fact, no one else like him has existed since the creation of the Mountain and Sea Realm!

“The first requirement of the incantation is that you possess a righteous, noble aura. Then, you must have a fearless heart. You have to place the Eighth Mountain and Sea within your heart, and then do the same for all the other Mountains and Seas, until all Nine Mountains and Seas are inside of you. After that, you can... force the Mountain and Sea Realm to recognize you as its Lord!

“If you succeed, then you will have completed the first step of the incantation. After that is the second step, Sealing the Heavens. You will have to seal each one of the 33 Heavens, which will in turn cause your cultivation base to increase by a factor of 100% with each sealing!

“After sealing the 33 Heavens, then, theoretically speaking, your cultivation base should be 33 times more powerful!” As the Daoist priest spoke, his expression was one of reminiscence, and he seemed profoundly ancient.

Meng Hao hesitated for a moment. Seeing how entranced the Daoist priest seemed to be, he couldn't hold back from asking, “And after that...?”

“After that? There's nothing after that,” the Daoist priest replied, glaring. “By that point, you'll be invincible. You don't need anything after that. Besides, it's hard to imagine anything more. Impossible, really!”

After a moment of silence, Meng Hao asked, “Master, um... sir, you created the something-something Seal the Heavens Incantation, right?”

“Hahaha! So, so you live up to my expectations as my disciple, even if you're not quite as smart as me. Excellent deduction. Since you found me out, Master won't hide the truth any longer. You are absolutely, positively correct. Aii. Your Master has been keeping this secret for two thousand years now; at long last I can speak it out in the open.

“Righteous Haowie, listen well. The Dao is in My Heart The Will is in My Eyes I Shall Possess the Mountains and Seas Seal the Heavens Incantation was created by me. It is the most powerful, most mysterious, and most supreme Daoist magic in the Righteous Noble Sect!” The Daoist priest swished his sleeve and raised his right hand dramatically into the air.

Meng Hao chuckled wryly. He suddenly realized he had a headache.

The Daoist priest glared at Meng Hao out of the corner of his eye, clearly displeased. “This is when you’re supposed to cheer!”

Meng Hao stood there silently. However, the Daoist priest continued to hold the pose tenaciously. After a long, awkward moment, Meng Hao thought about how the man had protected him, and he sighed. Forcing himself to sound excited, he said, “Master, you’re so incredible!”

The Daoist priest laughed loudly, then lowered his hand.

“Just trust your Master. The Dao is in My Heart The Will is in My Eyes I Shall Possess the Mountains and Seas Seal the Heavens Incantation is incredibly powerful. Considering the level of my cultivation base, I can only use it at ten percent of its full power. But even that ten percent is very, very, very powerful! Way more powerful than me, you have my word on that!” The Daoist priest was bragging so hard that, though he was trying to seem high and mighty, spittle flew from his mouth.

With that he swished his sleeve, raised his right index finger into the air, and pointed straight up into the sky. “Come, come, it’s time to practice the incantation. Just watch how I do it.

“The Dao is in My Heart!” he roared, causing the words to echo out through the sect. Meng Hao couldn’t help but notice that all of the disciples in the Daoist rite temple at the base of the mountain quickly lowered their heads in embarrassment. He looked back at the Daoist priest, unable to prevent his eyelid from twitching uncontrollably.

The Daoist priest then bent his legs to form a circle... then raised his right hand up again, except this time to his forehead....

“Follow me!” he said, glaring at Meng Hao. “Come on!”

Meng Hao cleared his throat and thought once again about how the Daoist priest had personally taken him under his protection. Sighing, he bent his legs to form a circle and then, with difficulty, raised his hand vertically in front of his forehead.

“Say the words!” urged the Daoist priest.

Meng Hao gritted his teeth and finally decided to just give in. “The Dao... The Dao is in My Heart!” he roared.

The Daoist priest’s eyes glittered, and he laughed. “Good, very good. Now for the second stance.”

Next, he lifted his left hand up and held it horizontally in front of the other hand, to make the character 十.

“The Will is in My Eyes!” he roared. No matter how you looked at it, the horizontal position of his left hand made it so that his eyes were completely covered up.

Having no other choice, Meng Hao followed suit.

“I Shall Possess the Mountains and Seas!” the Daoist priest cried. He then he squatted down, and leaped high into the air, looking very much like a frog....

Meng Hao gaped with wide eyes, but finally gritted his teeth and followed along, jumping up into the air....

“Seal... the Heavens... Incantation!” Hovering there in midair, the Daoist priest stretched both hands out wide, threw his head back and roared. His voice resonated out in all directions, becoming clearly audible to even the cultivators who had surrounded the sect. Strange expressions became visible on all of their faces.

As for Meng Hao, he simply didn’t have the courage to yell out the words ‘Seal the Heavens Incantation’ so loudly. Smiling bitterly, he spoke them out much more quietly, and then splayed his arms. The entire area around him then filled with... nothing. There was absolutely no change.

“Not bad!” the Daoist priest said, looking pleased. “You keep practicing this magic for the next two months. Trust me, it’s incredibly powerful, invincible in Heaven and Earth. It can sweep across anything in the Mountains and Seas, and can even exterminate Paragons!”

Meng Hao couldn’t think of anything to say in response.

“Alright, that will do for now. You keep cultivating that on your own, I have some things to take care of.” With that, the Daoist priest waved his sleeve and headed down the mountain, quickly vanishing.

Meng Hao sighed and sat down cross-legged. Frowning, he began to consider what other options were available in escaping the Heavengod Alliance’s manhunt, as this place... wasn’t a long-term option. The Daoist priest was muddle-headed, but the First Patriarch of the Righteous Noble Sect was not, and clearly wasn’t willing to let him stay here permanently.

Obviously, the Daoist priest had forcefully demanded to have even the two months of time.

“Well, that’s fine,” Meng Hao thought. “That will be enough for me to finish healing up, and get back to my peak!” Eyes glittering coldly, he took a deep breath and then began to meditate to treat his injuries.

Before too much time passed, rumbling could be heard from off in the distance, and a pillar of light shot up into the sky. Within that light was the shadow of a person who was seemingly teleporting off to some other location. Meng Hao immediately opened his eyes and looked over.

He found himself looking in the direction of the Righteous Noble Sect’s teleportation portal.

His eyes flickered for a moment before he once again began to work on his injuries.

More time passed. Soon, ten days had gone by.... During those ten days, Meng Hao occasionally went down the mountain to watch the disciples of the Righteous Noble Sect practicing cultivation, where he could sense the qi flow of the Mountain and Sea Realm, as well as the righteous, noble aura. Unfortunately, he could only spend about half of each day working on healing his injuries. The other times, the Daoist priest would drag him off to cultivate the something-something Seal the Heavens Incantation.

At first, Meng Hao was too polite to refuse. However, it quickly reached the point where he felt like he just couldn't take it anymore. Luckily, though, nothing strange happened as a result of practicing it; no misfortune, no lightning strikes, no spontaneous combustion.

Although he wanted to refuse, every time he thought about how the Daoist priest had stood up to all of the cultivators out in the starry sky on his behalf, he simply couldn't bring himself to say anything. So he went along, albeit halfheartedly.

But then one day when he went down the mountain, he happened to be passing through a valley when he overheard two disciples talking.

“Elder Grandfather Noble Ran has gone crazy again.... For the past ten days or so, he's been using the teleportation portal at least ten times per day. All he does is send some random things to random places. What the heck is he doing?!”

“It costs quite a few spirit stones to use the teleportation portal, especially for sending things to the destination and back. And he goes somewhere different every time....”

“Well, there's nothing you can do about it....” The two disciples sighed.

Shaken, Meng Hao hurried over to where the teleportation portal was located, where he saw the Daoist priest handing some spirit stones over to the disciple in charge. Apparently he was preparing to teleport some spirit creatures who were polymorphed into humanoid shapes.

Sensing Meng Hao's presence, the Daoist priest turned. As soon as he saw Meng Hao, he laughed heartily.

“So, it's my little disciple! Come, let's head back and practice the Seal the Heavens Incantation some more.” He stepped forward, grabbed Meng Hao's arm, and then sped back toward the mountain peak. Meng Hao didn't say anything on the way, and when they reached the mountain peak, he practiced the Seal the Heavens Incantation with unusual earnestness. He performed every motion meticulously, and even cried out the words as loud as possible.

After practicing for a few hours, Meng Hao suddenly asked, “Master, why have you been using the teleportation portal so much in the past few days?”

“Why?” the Daoist priest replied, sounding surprised. “Well for you, of course! I used to say you were almost as smart as me on a good day, kid, so how could you be so dumb?”

“After the two months are over, you’re going to need to teleport out of here. Since the teleportation portal are sealed, it’s impossible to leave the Heavengod Alliance directly. You can still teleport to regions that are near the exits, though. However, there are far too many methods to interfere with a teleportation, someone can even interrupt it when you’re halfway there.

“Therefore, just to be safe, I’m clouding the waters a bit. If I activate the teleportation portal multiple times a day for two months in a row, then the people looking for you are gradually going to lose their patience. Then eventually you can just slip through.”

Meng Hao’s heart trembled as he looked at the Daoist priest. This was a person he had never met before in his life, and yet had moved him repeatedly just in the past few days.

The world of cultivation was a cold place in which people constantly fought and schemed against each other; it was a dog eat dog world. However, the more the world was like that, the more precious certain acts of beauty were. They were unforgettable things, things to be engraved upon the heart and never parted with.

Perhaps there were certain qualities that remained in a cultivator no matter what level they practiced cultivation to. After all, in the end, they were people and not animals.

Meng Hao looked at the Daoist priest for a moment, then clasped hands and bowed very deeply.

In the following days, he did not practice half-heartedly any more. He would earnestly follow along with the Daoist priest in practicing the Seal the Heavens Incantation. He was convinced that it was not really a Daoist magic, but rather, something invented by the Daoist priest, a figment of his imagination.

Eventually, Meng Hao learned that the Daoist priest had not always been this way. Once, a long time ago, he had left the sect only to return heavily injured, his beloved partner dead, and his children lost to the ravages of time. He came back alone, holding nothing but a piece of black leather the size of a hand, after which he lapsed into a coma.

It was from that moment on that he occasionally became muddle-headed. As to what had happened to his family, he never talked about it. The sect made some investigations, but were never able to find any clues.

However, the Daoist priest began to occasionally sit alone on the top of the statue on the mountain peak, looking off into the sky, laughing madly, raving, tears streaming down his face.

A month into his time in the sect, Meng Hao even saw it happen once. The moon was shining high in the sky as the Daoist priest sat atop the statue, laughing or... perhaps crying.

Chapter 1228: Supreme Power!

It was like a frightening laughter that, if you listened to it long enough, sounded like weeping laced with indescribable sorrow.

Meng Hao stared silently at the Daoist priest sitting there on the statue, then closed his eyes. It was not a moment to disturb the man. He knew that the Daoist priest was now in his own world.

At dawn, the Daoist priest vanished, and then reappeared in front of Meng Hao, as muddle-headed and unreliable as ever.

When Meng Hao opened his eyes, he saw a lively and energetic Daoist priest standing there who didn't seem to have a care in the world. "Come, come, my little disciple, shout loudly with your Master. The Dao is in My Heart The Will is in My Eyes I Shall Possess the Mountains and Seas Seal the Heavens Incantation!"

Time passed. More and more cultivators were gathering outside of the Righteous Noble Sect. They crowded the lands and filled the sky; more than 1,000,000 cultivators had been attracted to the area because of Meng Hao.

The Righteous Noble Sect felt a lot of pressure, and the sect's protective spell formation was active day and night. No one dared to relax for a moment, and the disciples were constantly on guard.

One by one, more Dao Realm experts arrived. Eventually there were almost twenty, causing a terrifying pressure to weigh down on the entire area.

Occasionally the mass of cultivators would cause ripples to spread out across the land, and the sky would distort under their auras. The pressure was so strong that it seemed like the Heavens themselves were bearing down. No smiles could be seen on the faces of the disciples of the Righteous Noble Sect, and on more than one occasion, Meng Hao could see hateful glances cast in his direction.

Although this was the Righteous Noble Sect, where they cultivated a righteous, noble aura, the pressure from the outside and the danger the sect was now in made it unavoidable that they feel rancor toward the person who had brought this down upon them.

Meng Hao rarely went down off the mountain anymore. He simply sat there quietly, watching the teleportation portal being activated ten times, sometimes even dozens of times, each day. It was happening with such frequency that it became mundane, and every time it activated, human-looking figures would be among the things that were teleported.

Occasionally, the teleportation portal would be used several dozen times in a row. This ensured that there was no pattern to how it was being used, and also caused the cultivators of the Heavengod Alliance on the outside who wanted to try to break the teleportation process to slowly grow completely exhausted.

Soon, there were only twenty days left of the two month period. On one particular afternoon, the Daoist priest found Meng Hao to practice the Seal the Heavens Incantation, after which he suddenly said, "Alright, enough time has passed. We don't want anyone to be able to calculate the time exactly, so therefore, you're leaving right now!"

Meng Hao's eyes flickered with a serious look as he slowly rose to his feet. He clasped hands and bowed deeply, then the two of them sped over to the location of the teleportation portal. This was not their first trip there together, they had actually been on numerous occasions. Not only would it make it difficult for anyone on the outside to detect what was going on, it would also confuse anyone within the sect who was paying attention and passing information to the outside.

When they got to the teleportation portal, it had already been activated, and someone was inside, waiting to be teleported away. The surrounding disciples in charge of the portal didn't pay much attention at all to the Daoist priest and Meng Hao, who they were used to seeing here.

The Daoist priest looked at Meng Hao and began to speak in a hoarse voice: "If the teleportation goes successfully, you'll emerge near the border of the Heavengod Alliance. The border region is too vast and can't be sealed completely, so that will be your opportunity. You'll need to employ as much speed as you can manage to cross the border and leave the Heavengod Alliance. Then... you'll be safe.

"If anyone blocks your path, or destroys the teleportation path, then remember to keep heading in the same direction that the path was taking you!"

“Once you step onto the teleportation portal, everything will be up to you...”

Suddenly, he flicked his sleeve, causing the teleportation portal to perform several teleportations in a row. Rumbling filled the air, and bright light rose up. But then, it suddenly stopped. After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, the Daoist priest suddenly barked, “Now!”

Meng Hao’s eyes flickered. He stepped into the teleportation portal without the slightest hesitation. Almost immediately, he saw that outside of the Righteous Noble Sect were countless other teleportation portals being activated at the same time, as the cultivators there tried to match their frequencies to the teleportation portal inside the sect.

Meng Hao’s face flickered, but it was at this point that the Daoist priest suddenly stepped into the teleportation portal and grabbed Meng Hao by the arm.

In the instant that the teleportation portal was activated, the Daoist priest leapt off of the portal, dragging Meng Hao with him as he then flickered and shot up into the sky at high speed.

Immediately, numerous angered cries could be heard from outside the Righteous Noble Sect.

“Shameless!”

“Noble Ran, don’t tell me you’re rebelling against the Heavengod Alliance!?!?”

“Dammit!!”

More than half of the Dao Realm experts on the outside were already bathed in the light of teleportation. The Daoist priest had timed his move very craftily. Once the portals were activated, there was no way for the people inside them to leave, and they had to go along with the teleportation.

The remaining Dao Realm experts who had not entered teleportation portals bellowed in rage and shot into the air toward the Daoist priest.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered. The Daoist priest hadn’t mentioned anything at all about this before. Obviously, everything he had been doing with the teleportation portals in the past several weeks,

including the feint just now, had been a trap. It was all bait to lure the experts of the Heavengod Alliance away.

The Daoist priest never had any intention of having Meng Hao use the Righteous Noble Sect's teleportation portal to escape. Doing that... was far too unsafe and had too many weak points.

However, his performance had been so realistic that many people were fooled and, no matter whether they were willing or not, got stuck in the teleportation portals and then vanished. In fact, there was an even deeper layer to this plan; because of all the activity with the teleportation portals, the cultivators of the Heavengod Alliance had long since concentrated all of their attention on the portal. In order to intercept him, massive numbers of cultivators had even been arranged to surround every teleportation node within the entire Alliance. Furthermore, they engaged the help of almighty experts whose task was expressly to cover Planet Luo River with their divine sense, laying in wait to sever any teleportation beams leaving the planet.

If Meng Hao really had tried to get away via teleportation, it would have been impossible for him to reach his destination. He would have been attacked and forcibly ejected from the teleportation beam.

Rumbling echoed out as the Daoist priest shot up into the sky with Meng Hao, moving at incredible speed. In the blink of an eye, they were outside of Planet Luo River. Meng Hao looked over at the Daoist priest, and was once again deeply moved. Behind them, angered roars could be heard as six beams of light closed in, six almighty Dao Realm cultivators.

Behind them were countless more cultivators, all of them racing to catch up with the Daoist priest and Meng Hao.

It only took a moment for the other cultivators throughout the Heavengod Alliance, the ones sent to lock down the teleportation portals or ambush Meng Hao's teleportation beam, to be notified of what had happened. They immediately abandoned their positions and raced toward Planet Luo River at top speed.

One slight change can sometimes have a huge effect on the overall situation. The Daoist priest's sudden action caused the entire setup put in place by the Heavengod Alliance to be ruined. Rumbling echoed out in all directions as the Daoist priest and Meng Hao entered the starry sky.

"Come with me," the Daoist priest said, eyes glittering. He waved his hand, causing a flying shuttle to appear, upon which he and Meng Hao alighted. Then, rumbling could be heard as the flying shuttle shot out into the starry sky at incredible speed.

As soon as he landed on the flying shuttle, Meng Hao shivered and looked down at it.

“This is....”

“How could Master allow anyone to harm you, my little disciple? The Righteous Noble Sect’s teleportation portals were all being watched. Even if they hadn’t been, I would never have felt at ease letting you use them.

“The only type of teleportation portal I can trust would be one created by myself!

“This flying shuttle is actually a teleportation portal. Sit down cross-legged, and merge your mind into the shuttle. Go, quickly! The faster the shuttle goes, the more powerful the teleportation will be. I refuse to believe that these people could have predicted that I would have a flying shuttle teleportation portal!” With that, the Daoist priest waved his hand behind him. Rumbling echoed out as the six pursuing Dao Realm experts launched attacks.

The Daoist priest trembled, and blood oozed out of his mouth. He might be strong, but he was not strong enough to handle six Dao Realm cultivators simultaneously.

It was at this point that two streams of divine sense suddenly shot through the air toward them all. Shockingly, these were also Dao Realm experts. Now there were eight of them, three of which were Dao Lords. All of these people were on the level of Patriarchs in the various sects of the Heavengod Alliance, and when they combined forces, their Essence power caused the shuttle to tremble on the verge of collapse.

Meng Hao’s face flickered, and the Daoist priest suddenly threw his head back and laughed. Then, he reached down and slapped his left hand onto the surface of the flying shuttle, giving it more power. It suddenly shot forward at ten times its original speed. It was moving so fast that it seemed to be engulfed with flames; simultaneously, the teleportation portal inside began to activate. A shapeless rift opened up in front of the shuttle, and it looked as if the shuttle were about to be swallowed up by a huge mouth.

This caused the faces of all the observers to fill with shock. The Dao Realm Patriarchs howled in rage.

“You can’t get away!” one of them roared. As soon as the words rang out, it seemed like the rules of nature changed to follow suit. Essence transformed into natural law, wrapping around Meng Hao. However, it was at this moment that the Daoist priest began to laugh loudly. Eyes shining, he shouted,

“Watch closely, my apprentice. Before you leave, your Master will demonstrate... the Seal the Heavens Incantation!” With that, he bent his legs into a circle and then pointed his right index finger up into the starry sky.

“The Dao is in My Heart!” As soon as the words left his mouth, time seemed to slow to a halt, and everything stopped moving. A righteous, noble aura filled the area, and the Eighth Mountain and Sea began to tremble.

More shocking of all was that the Daoist priest’s bent legs all of a sudden looked like a tilted mountain peak!

“The Will is in My Eyes!” He moved his left hand to intersect with his right hand. His hair whipped about wildly, and a strange gleam shone from his eyes. At the same time, an indescribable aura suddenly began to radiate out from him.

“I Shall Possess the Mountains and Seas! Seal... the Heavens... Incantation!!” With that, his legs straightened as he leaped up and stretched his arms out wide!!

The Eighth Mountain was shaking so violently it seemed as if it would crumble. The Eighth Sea howled, and the starry sky distorted. Everything was in chaos. As for Meng Hao, he could see the qi flow of the Mountain and Sea Realm converging on the Daoist priest. Massive power built up in his outstretched arms and then shot out into the starry sky.

Faintly, an image of the Nine Mountains and Nine Seas of the Mountain and Sea Realm appeared, filled with supreme power!!

Everyone present was completely shocked!

Chapter 1229: Did I Say You Could Go?

Meng Hao watched as the Nine Mountains and the Nine Seas formed into the shape of a huge giant, apparently shaped together by the call of the Daoist priest’s magic. As soon as it appeared there in the starry sky, it waved its finger toward the enemy cultivators.

That simple wave of a finger caused the starry sky to be swept away, layer after layer. The cultivator's faces were filled with shock and quickly fell back, even the Dao Realm experts.

Many people were aware that the Noble Ran of the Righteous Noble Sect had created the Seal the Heavens Incantation. When it was brought up in conversation, it was generally considered a big joke, and therefore, no one would ever have been able to guess that when the Daoist priest unleashed it on this day... it would explode out with a shocking, supreme power.

Blood sprayed out of the mouths of the ordinary cultivators, and the Dao Realm experts could not prevent the blood from oozing out of their mouths. The single wave of the giant's finger was apparently backed by the power of the Mountains and Seas, and it wasn't targeting the cultivators in order to harm them, it was actually... performing a sealing.

One swipe of a finger was sealing the Heavens!

If the Heavens could be sealed, there was no need to even mention the people under them!

That waving finger caused sealing marks to appear on all the cultivators. One by one, they coughed up blood, and were sent spinning through the starry sky, completely out of control.

“The Seal the Heavens Incantation.... This is impossible!!”

“How could the Noble Ran's poppycock magical technique actually be... so powerful!!” Everyone was astonished.

The Daoist priest was trembling, and he also coughed up a mouthful of blood, and instantly aged significantly. In order to avoid any further trouble for the Righteous Noble Sect, he ceased any further attacks. Then he turned and looked at the resplendent beam of light which was fading off into the distance.

It was almost as if he could see Meng Hao within the light, and could tell that he was just as shocked as all the other cultivators at what had happened.

“My little disciple,” he said coolly, “this is your Master’s Seal the Heavens Incantation!” Then he remained there, hovering in midair, surrounded by the other cultivators who had all just been scattered about.

A certain aura was emanating off of him in that moment, an aura that was difficult to describe. Suddenly, he no longer seemed muddle-headed and unreliable. He looked like a transcendent being, completely beyond ordinary.

Completely ignoring the other cultivators, he turned and headed back to Planet Luo River and the Righteous Noble Sect!

In another patch of the starry sky in the territory of the Heavengod Alliance, near the border, floated an asteroid . No records from any sect contained any information about a teleportation node on this particular asteroid, but all of a sudden, it began to glow brightly. Moments later, the asteroid exploded into pieces as a stone platform appeared from within.

The platform itself was covered with cracks and the markings of a teleportation spell formation. The spell formation was currently activated and running at full power and, from the looks of it, it wouldn’t be too long until it broke down completely. Soon, more cracks appeared over its surface, and a flying shuttle flew out from inside of it.

As soon as it did, the stone platform lost its ability to hold itself together, and shattered. At the same time, the flying shuttle also transformed into ash.

Subsequently, Meng Hao appeared there in the starry sky.

Everything was quiet; not a single sound could be heard. Meng Hao turned and looked off into the distance, still thinking with amazement about what he had just seen.

“Seal... the Heavens... Incantation....” he murmured. How could he ever have imagined that the Daoist priest’s comical magical technique would be so shockingly powerful?

For one person to seal hundreds of thousands of cultivators... well, that Daoist magic was definitely no ordinary Dao, it had ascended to the level of a strategic weapon. One could even imagine how, if there was some great war being fought, the Daoist priest could completely turn the tides by himself.

In all the years he had practiced cultivation, Meng Hao had never seen anything like it before, and it left his heart racing. After all, throughout the more than one month that he had been in the Righteous Noble Sect, he had practiced the technique hundreds of times at the bequest of the Daoist priest.

“There’s always something new to learn....” he murmured. “The further you travel, the more you see and experience. It’s only then that you realize that there are Heavens beyond what you imagined could exist, and likewise, people who exceed your imagination. Likewise, whatever Daoist magics you knew, there are always more powerful ones out there!” Staring off into the distance, he clasped hands and bowed deeply in his appreciation toward the Daoist priest.

Meng Hao was the type of person to remember every single individual who had helped him.

However, he also knew that now was not the time to wallow in emotions. After bowing, he quickly shot off into the distance.

“The border region of the Heavengod Alliance is dotted with artificial planets that are used as teleportation checkpoints. Other than those planets, there is nothing else but the vast border itself....

“The gateway planets will be heavily fortified, and I definitely won’t be able to get past them.... Therefore, I’ll just have to break through that endless border.” Having made his decision, he took advantage of the fact that no one was around to shoot off into the distance.

Time passed. A day later, something like a white line appeared off in the distance. At first he couldn’t quite tell what it was, but as he neared, the white line turned into a white wall. It was illusory, and spread out as far as the eye could see in either direction. Meng Hao looked it over, hesitating for a moment. Finally, a cold glint appeared in his eyes as he shot toward the wall.

He reached it in the blink of an eye, and then slammed into it with the full force of his Paragon Bridge. The wall shuddered, and cracking sounds could be heard as fissures spread out across the surface of the wall.

Just as he was on the verge of breaking through, his face fell and he suddenly stopped in place due to the intense sensation of deadly crisis that filled his mind. A beam of light suddenly appeared out in the void, spreading out as if to envelop Meng Hao and lock him in place.

“Nobody who goes berserk in the Heavengod Alliance can leave peacefully.” The owner of the calm voice was an illusory face which had just appeared in the starry sky. It was none other than the old man who had originally determined Meng Hao’s location.

Meng Hao’s eyes gleamed icily, and he gave a cold harrumph as he once again battered the white wall, shattering it. He burst through, assuming he was now outside of the Heavengod Alliance, only to find that directly ahead of him was a second white line, which was... a second white wall!

Just looking at it, it was possible to tell that there was not just a second white wall, but beyond it, a third one and a fourth one.... They went on and on, packed together one after another. Unexpectedly, there were no less than 100,000 walls!

Meng Hao’s face instantly turned unsightly.

“The Heavengod Alliance is not a place where people can just come and go as they please. The Noble Ran might have helped you, but you still... have no way of escaping.”

Even as the old man spoke, the light of numerous teleportations began to shine up in the area. A total of fifteen teleportation formations could now be seen, with the shadows of countless individuals forming inside of them.

Once they fully appeared, it seemed as if Meng Hao would have no other choice but to attempt to flee.

However, the old man had underestimated Meng Hao. In almost the same instant the teleportation light began to shine, Meng Hao suddenly looked over at the illusory face.

“So, it turns out you can’t come here personally, nor can you actually kill me. All you can do is control the power of the Heavengod Alliance’s border....” The old man’s expression flickered as Meng Hao’s cultivation base suddenly exploded with the power of an Allheaven Dao Immortal, and his peak fleshly body. Rumbling sounds could be heard as, unexpectedly, he didn’t flee, but instead shot toward the teleportation portals.

As soon as he closed in, he unleashed the God-Slaying Fist.

The fist landed on a teleportation portal that was just about to complete its teleportation. When Meng Hao struck it, it distorted, and then the cultivators inside shouted out in astonishment.

“Break,” Meng Hao said coolly. Instantly, the teleportation collapsed, and the cultivators inside began to distort as the teleportation magic was destroyed. As for the cultivators inside, only the most powerful were free from danger, and yet, even they were now incapable of completing the teleportation.

“Child!” the face roared angrily, and yet it was powerless to do anything. Meng Hao pretended as if he hadn’t heard anything at all. His body flickered as he unleashed another fist strike!

One punch!

One punch!

Rumbling could be heard as three teleportation portals were destroyed in quick succession. As for the other eleven, the people inside were materializing. Meng Hao laughed coldly, then raised both hands high into the air. As he lowered them, he cried, “Paragon Bridge!”

RUUUUUUMMMMBLLLLLE!

The Paragon Bridge then exploded out from inside Meng Hao, bursting through the starry sky with crushing pressure. Instantly, four more teleportation portals were destroyed, and a moment later, five.

There were only two teleportation portals which actually managed to finish their teleportation. Before they could be destroyed, the people inside of them charged out.

There were a total of about a hundred cultivators, led by two people. One of them wore a long, blood-colored robe, and the other was the young man shadowed by the Heavengod image, who had his hands clasped behind his back. After looking around for a moment, their scalps went numb, and they actually wished that they hadn’t successfully teleported here to begin with.

Of the fifteen teleportation portals they had begun with, only two had managed to teleport their passengers successfully. The two leaders’ hearts began to pound. Looking over at Meng Hao, they began to back up.

They had come here to chase Meng Hao down and kill him, but now they were the ones who were running away!

Meng Hao looked over at the enraged illusory face and said, “Since you won’t let me leave, then... I guess I’ll just stick around and have my fill of slaughtering your people for a while!”

Laughing coldly, he shot toward the newly-arrived cultivators.

The hundred or so cultivators’ scalps were all numb from the sight of Meng Hao charging them, his energy surging. The cultivators’ minds reeled, and they fell into retreat. If they had a bit more of an advantage in terms of numbers, and if they had some Dao Realm support, then they would be able to surround Meng Hao and bombard him from all sides. But now, they were facing Meng Hao by themselves, and it instantly drained their courage.

After all, the person who had completely exterminated the Blacksoul Society was the type of person who left them completely terror-struck.

“Think you can just leave?” Meng Hao asked, killing intent flickering in his eyes. He was already completely fed up with being chased, so he transformed into an azure-colored roc and shot toward the nearest cultivator. A talon that could shatter metal or rock slammed into the man’s head, and a cracking sound rang out. Blood spurted out in all directions, but by then Meng Hao had already appeared in front of another cultivator, whereupon he flapped his wings and transformed into a beam of azure light.

Everywhere he went, blood-curdling screams rang out. The young man in the leadership position was terrified, and completely regretted coming to this place as his Heavengod image suddenly shattered. A popping sound could suddenly be heard from the other young leader, who instantly transformed into a red mist.

“So, it turns out it was you!” Meng Hao eyed the red mist. Completely ignoring the young man with the Heavengod image, he shot forward in pursuit of the red mist.

Chapter 1230: Initial Contact with the Meng Clan!

“It’s not me!” cried an alarmed voice from within the red mist. This was indeed the same person who had appeared a month before. At that time, the Daoist priest had ended up taking Meng Hao away, and therefore, this young man had managed to avoid meeting a calamity.

Upon this second meeting, the red mist immediately attempted to flee at top speed. However, Meng Hao waved his finger, unleashing the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex. The mist immediately lurched to a stop, and Meng Hao advanced, waving his arm, which caused the entire patch of mist to be blasted away.

Revealed inside was a young man in a red robe. Face flickering, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture and then pointed at Meng Hao. Meng Hao's blood immediately began to flow backward, and his cultivation base rotated in reverse. He stopped in place, his face bright red.

Killing intent flickered in the eyes of the young man who, instead of fleeing, turned and lifted both hands into the air. Even as he closed in on Meng Hao, an old man materialized from thin air nearby, his face grim and also filled with killing intent.

This man was obviously the younger man's Dao Protector.

Both attacked with thunderous speed, and yet, as they neared, Meng Hao merely smiled. That smile caused the old Dao Protector's heart to feel as if it had been struck by lightning.

Before he could even react, Meng Hao shot forward, unleashing one, two, three fists onto him!

A boom could be heard as the man's body exploded into fragments, and he was completely destroyed, without even being given a chance to scream!

It was an instant fatality!

The red-robed young man's eyes widened, and he instantly began to back up. But Meng Hao was already upon him, and began to unleash the same punch he had released onto the old man.

"You can't kill me! My father is the Blood Seal Sect's Sect--"

Before the young man could finish speak, Meng Hao's fist landed. A boom rang out, and the young man's body trembled. Then he looked down at himself and saw a huge, gaping hole in his chest. The terrifying explosive power continued to flood out through his body, which then began to crack and fall apart. Moments later, he was completely dead, even his soul.

“Well why didn’t you speak up earlier...?” Meng Hao said, frowning with the realization that he probably shouldn’t have killed this person. If his father was somebody important, he surely could have ransomed him for a hefty price.

Unfortunately, the young man hadn’t spoken up quickly enough.

“I originally only had one enemy, which was the Blacksoul Society. But with so many cultivators trying to chase me down and kill me, well... let’s just see who’s the last one standing!” He flicked the blood off of his hand, and turned, eyes flickering with killing intent as he vanished.

Two days later, the hunt for Meng Hao was still going on in the Heavengod Alliance’s territory. Suddenly, he ran into a squad of about a hundred cultivators. Unfortunately for them, they had no Dao Realm expert to lead them, and therefore, after about ten breaths of time passed, they were completely wiped out.

Another day passed. In another location, he ran into three hundred cultivators. They were similarly wiped out!

The Heavengod Alliance was furious, and countless cultivators were mobilized to try to chase down Meng Hao. However, any time they were able to pinpoint his location, he was simply too fast, and by the time a Dao Realm expert arrived on the scene, he would be long gone.

On the sixth day, a group comprised entirely of Heavengod Society disciples ran into him, and was completely wiped out.

That completely enraged the cultivators of the Heavengod Alliance. However, on the seventh day, something happened which caused the number of cultivators who were pursuing Meng Hao to suddenly drop by a significant number. Even the highest ranking members of the Heavengod Alliance itself were shocked!

Meng Hao killed a Dao Realm cultivator!!

That person might only have been a 1-Essence Dao Realm cultivator, but he was in that most mighty of Realms, the type of person who could be a true Patriarch. He suddenly appeared when Meng Hao was in the middle of wiping out a group of Heavengod Alliance cultivators. Meng Hao immediately stopped attacking his current target and shot toward the Dao Realm expert. They then engaged in a fierce battle in the starry sky. Although it first seemed as if it would be a protracted fight, Meng Hao killed him after only an hour!

That completely shook everyone who was chasing him, and brought them back to their senses after the intoxicating thought of the prize for catching him. In fact, many sects even issued orders to their disciples to stop going after Meng Hao and return to the sect.

That battle clearly revealed that Meng Hao's cultivation base had been restored, and furthermore, showed that his extermination of the Blacksoul Society had not been a fluke. Nor had he used some special method to make it happen. It wasn't something that could only happen once... he truly possessed that level of power!

The slaughtering was instantly reduced. And yet, there were still people chasing him. The main difference was that Immortal Realm cultivators no longer joined in, and the weakest people were in the great circle of the Ancient Realm. The main strength came in the form of Dao Realm cultivators!

In the entire Heavengod Alliance, there were only a few dozen Dao Realm cultivators, about thirty percent of which were now participating in the search!

However, because of the deadly way Meng Hao was fighting back against his pursuers, the Heavengod Alliance was no longer chasing him merely because of what had happened with the Blacksoul Society. Apparently, an undispellable enmity now existed between them!

In this, Meng Hao could not be blamed; the responsibility fell squarely on the shoulders of the Heavengod Alliance.

Soon, the actual instances of death grew increasingly infrequent. It wasn't until three days later that several Dao Realm experts caught up with Meng Hao at the same time. After an intense battle was fought, Meng Hao was forced to flee.

Five days later, two more Dao Realm cultivators caught up with him. The battle was incredible, and both Dao Realm cultivators were heavily injured. However, so was Meng Hao, who was again forced to flee.

Currently, Meng Hao was staggering along somewhere near the border of the Heavengod Alliance. Blood oozed out of his mouth, and yet, his eyes shone with cold light. He looked like a lone wolf.

His injuries were serious, and his Eternal stratum was hard at work. It had been less than a month, and he had been in numerous intense fights, the most recent of which had all been fights with the Dao Realm.

1-Essence or 2-Essences were one thing, but if they teamed up, things got difficult. That was not even to mention what happened when a Dao Lord appeared. After all, Meng Hao wasn't even in the Dao Realm himself....

“There must be something on me that they can sense, but what? They're constantly locking onto my position. Ever since I left Planet Luo River, they've been tracking me down so quickly!” Meng Hao's eyes flickered with killing intent. Suddenly, he stopped in place and looked up ahead at something that had just appeared out in the inky blackness of the void. Brightly glowing rifts!

Rifts, in between which floated dust and rubble...

There weren't many of them, only a total of 33, and they formed together into a very peculiar shape that resembled the vicious face of a ghost, floating there in the starry sky. For some reason, Meng Hao got the feeling that the ghost face was looking at him.

He even caught wind of what sounded like endless screams echoing out from tombs. His face fell, and he began to back up. As he did, he couldn't help but notice that the area encompassed by the ghost face... was expanding.

It was now larger than when he had first seen it, by about thirty percent.

“An Arcane Pocket Realm?” he thought, studying the ghost face. For some reason, looking at the ghost face filled him with a sense of intangible danger. He quickly pulled out the map jade slip from the Righteous Noble Sect, and examined it carefully. Unfortunately, there was no information whatsoever about anything special in this area.

“Something's off....” he thought, frowning. After looking again at the rapidly expanding ghost face, and then back at the map jade slip, his brow furrowed deeper.

The map was very detailed, and was a rare item that only conclave disciples of the Righteous Noble Sect would have access to. There were even many asteroids marked on the map.

According to the map, Meng Hao's current location should have had seven asteroids which formed together in a small bazaar.

Right now though, there were no seven asteroids to be seen, and the bazaar which had existed on them was also gone.

As Meng Hao studied the situation, his scalp began to grow numb.

"Did they get swallowed up...?" he thought, looking over at the 33 glowing rifts, and the dust and rubble floating there. He could well imagine that, previously, there really had been seven asteroids and the bazaar, and naturally some cultivators would have been present too.

However, these 33 glowing rifts had suddenly appeared and then swallowed up and destroyed everything in the area... this line of thinking caused Meng Hao's face to fall. Furthermore, the sensation of danger he felt grew even stronger; there was even an aura of death that gradually became quite apparent.

"The Eighth Mountain and Sea is full of one grave after another. Could this also be some sort of gravesite?!"

Without any hesitation, he backed up. This place seemed far too dangerous, so he decided to simply turn and leave.

The following moment, though, before he had flown very far, he looked out into the starry sky and caught sight of a merchant ship heading in his direction.

Just when he caught sight of it, the ship suddenly stopped in place.

A complicated expression appeared on Meng Hao's face as he noticed the magical symbols on the side of the ship, which formed together into the character Meng 孟. "The Meng Clan..."

This was his first time seeing anyone from the Meng Clan in the Eighth Mountain and Sea. He had never imagined that it would be under these circumstances. Looking away, he made to leave again, when suddenly, a bright shield of light appeared around the ship, apparently a defensive spell formation. Simultaneously, several figures flew out from the ship to stare at Meng Hao.

One of them was a young man, handsome although somewhat pallid. He looked weak, as if from excessive drinking. He wore fine silks, and had a jade slip in his hand. As soon as he caught sight of Meng Hao, his face lit up, and he crushed the jade slip.

Meng Hao scanned the ship with divine sense and found that the highest cultivation bases among their number were two experts in the great circle of the Ancient Realm.

One of them stood next to the young Meng Clan cultivator, and the other flanked another young man, who was extremely skinny but had a cold gleam in his eyes.

Meng Hao could kill all of these people very easily, even if they did have a defensive spell formation in place.

When he saw the young man crush the jade slip, Meng Hao sighed. Then he turned, transforming into a beam of bright light that began to shoot off into the distance.

But then, the young man cried out, “Meng Hao, don’t even dream about leaving! Get out there and stop him, all of you! I already notified the Senior members of the Heavengod Alliance, and they’ll be here any moment. Stall Meng Hao!”

In response to the young man’s words, a dozen or so cultivators flew out from the ship. They all looked very nervous, and yet even more nervous than they, were the two cultivators in the great circle of the Ancient Realm. When they heard the young man’s words, their faces fell.

“Shut your mouth!!” one of the old men roared.

“Moron!” said the cold, skinny young man off to the side, his expression flickering with scorn.