

## The Heavens 1281

Chapter 1281: The Angry Chu Jia

“What?! You wish to modify the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation?!” Chu Jia leaped into the air and yelped in shock when she heard the news from Shang Xia after she returned from Star Beast Nest No.2

Shang Xia didn't quite understand her reaction, but he quickly explained, “The formation was used to help a third tier True Immortal break through to the fourth tier and become a high-level True Immortal. Patriarch Kou has already broken through without the formation and we don't need it anymore. However, we can't possibly waste the Ruined World... After all, that's a territory closely connected to a vassal of the Essence Ming World.”

Chu Jia snapped at him the moment he spoke, “After our institution completed its rank six grand formation, there was the matter of establishing the Five Element Teleportation Formation to the Bing and Jiao Continents. Then came the Star Beast Nests... Right after, I went to Star Beast Nest No.2 to deploy a grand formation. Now, the great powers of our world requested that I build Five Element Teleportation Formations between our world, the Spirit Tinkle World, and the Spirit Thistle World. Who knows how long it will take?! Now you came back and decided to cause trouble again! What do you mean to modify the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation? Do you think I'm so free?”

Shang Xia was surprised by her sudden outburst, but he also understood why Kou Chongxue was in such a rush to leave earlier.

It was a shame Shang Xia couldn't really put off any matter and could only pretend to comfort her, “Won't the most capable people get the most work to do? It's a shame the Spirit Thistle World, Spirit Tinkle World, and us can't find 3 rank six Formation Grandmasters despite our best efforts and you're still our best choice. You're the only one who knows how to lay down the Five Element Teleportation Formation since you came up with it... Even if others wanted to try, they don't have your ability to do so...”

Chu Jia snorted softly and turned her head away, no longer looking at Shang Xia.

Helpless, he didn't know what else to say. A mighty high-level True Immortal could only stand there and watch Chu Jia pouted to herself.

It took some time for her to finally compose herself and she muttered in a cold voice, “If the Five Element Teleportation Formation is able to allow us to cross space and connect to the Spirit Tinkle World and Spirit Thistle World, do you know what effect this will bring to the many worlds connected to the Star Origin Dao Field?”

It didn't matter if it was a teleportation formation or a spatial tunnel, it was used to facilitate communication between the various worlds.

The method to connect the various worlds had always been in the hands of the Star Origin Dao Field, and that was how they became the central hub. It allowed them to prosper while remaining detached from the other worlds.

Other than the Star Origin Dao Field, the various worlds didn't have a way to communicate. Even if they wanted to invade other worlds, they would have to send their fleet through the chaotic space or they would require powerful Martial Void Realm experts to create spatial tunnels to send their high-level experts through.

The Star Origin Dao Field was stealing world origin from the various worlds through the spatial tunnel they set up, and that was no secret among the great Spirit Worlds. Because they needed the connection to the Star Origin Dao Field and the amount of world origin taken was so little that they chose to accept it.

However... After the War of the Spirit Tinkle World where the Star Origin Dao Field stole so much world origin to help Zhuo Gudao break through to the grand completion stage of the Martial Void Realm, the various worlds developed deep fear for the spatial tunnels connected to the Star Origin Dao Field.

From what Shang Xia learned, even though the various worlds didn't completely destroy the spatial tunnels, they moved the spatial tunnel into a region of space many times further than before. They even increased their defenses around it. Most of them isolated the spatial tunnel such that cultivators were no longer able to freely enter the Star Origin Dao Field as they pleased.

Feng Ziyong's visit had many purposes and trying to win over the Spirit Luxuriant World was only 1 of them. There was another purpose and it was to request the Spirit Luxuriant World open up the spatial tunnel to allow more interaction with the Star origin Dao Field.

After all, the Star Origin Dao Field's prosperity was built on the exchange of resources through those spatial tunnels. Be it the Star Origin Guards or Star Origin Lord Manor, they gained a lot through it...

If the Spirit Luxuriant World, Spirit Thistle World, and Spirit Tinkle World established Five Element Teleportation Formations between them, even though it was because they were forced by the circumstances, at the end of the day, they would be trying to shake the foundations of the Star Origin Dao Field.

Chu Jia naturally understood the implications...

However, Shang Xia didn't plan to back down on this matter. He put on a serious expression and said solemnly, "It doesn't matter what the implications are. Only with the Five Element Teleportation Formations can our worlds help each other in times of need and remain safe."

Chu didn't seem to care about Shang Xia's stance on the matter but she changed the topic back to the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation. "Anyway... Who is going to be using the modified Essence Refining Void Returning Formation?"

Shang Xia grunted once and mumbled, "Patriarch Kou no longer wishes to use the formation after his advancement. Ge Qingzhu and Sun Haiwei won't be strong enough even if they break through, so I'll be the one to use it..."

Chu Jia nodded once in response. "Alright then. I'll find some time to quickly complete the modification of the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation."

"..."

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As soon as the 21st year of the Spirit Luxuriant Calendar rolled around, the skies above the Liang Continent experienced a powerful heavenly phenomenon. Yifan of the Eternal Palace swallowed his advancement medicine and successfully branded his soul into the world to become a True Immortal. He became the eleventh True Immortal of the Spirit Luxuriant World, and the Eternal Palace finally welcomed their first Free True Immortal.

Before the mysterious Yifan entered the Martial Void Realm, very few people heard of him. Clearly, he was a Martial Void Realm candidate the Eternal Palace raised in secret.

3 or so months later, the World Origin Source of the Qing Continent started to tremble and the True Immortals of the world quickly noticed the change. Even several stronger experts in the Martial Dipper Realm felt the change.

Elder Jiuqing of the Spirit Capital Sect also successfully entered the Martial Void Realm with the support of Li Jidao, branding his soul into the world through the Qing Continent's World Origin Source. He became the twelfth True Immortal of the Spirit Luxuriant World and the first Free True Immortal of the Divine Capital Sect.

The Eternal Palace and Divine Capital Sect were situated in the Yong Continent, but they chose to rely on other continents for their breakthrough.

That wasn't because both sides were willing to give in to each other. It was just because they wished to avoid a full-blown conflict.

Actually, the various factions of the Spirit Luxuriant World had a certain understanding of how a True Immortal was born, and all of them were waiting for the Eternal Palace and Divine Capital Sect to fall out with each other and become the laughing stock of the world.

Of course, the Tongyou Institution was a part of those who had already prepared some snacks to watch the show play out. After all, they were the ones who stopped the plan of the 2 great Elysiums by establishing the Hai Continent. The Eternal Palace and Divine Capital Sect couldn't split up the Yong Continent like they had planned.

#### Chapter 1282: Shang Xia's Recount

By the time the Eternal Palace and Divine Capital Sect produced their new True Immortals, Shang Xia had already returned to Star Beast Nest No.2.

Actually, Shang Xia had always been thinking about going back since returning from the Spirit Tinkle World.

Because his clone was stationed there, nothing happened to the Star Beast Nest despite his disappearance.

Even though members of the Dachen Dynasty, Wanyun Association, and Qingling Palace came to visit from time to time, they were sent away with the excuse of Shang Xia being in seclusion. The other side didn't suspect anything either.

After he returned, he quickly started to craft rank six talismans. At the same time, he also made preparations to infiltrate the Essence Xing World.

If he had his concerns when infiltrating the Essence Xing World in the past, everything disappeared after Kou Chongxue became a high-level True Immortal.

During the War of the Spirit Tinkle World, Shang Xia and Kou Chongxue made use of several rank six talismans. It didn't matter if it was the Abyss Prison Emptiness Talisman, Ice Ruins Talisman, or other rank six talismans. They were extremely useful in battle and allowed them to gain as much as they did.

What Shang Xia didn't think of was that less than half a year passed since he returned to Star Beast Nest No.2 when new True Immortals were born in the Eternal Palace and Divine Capital Sect. He was a little surprised.

“When we first became the Spirit Luxuriant World, the Eternal Palace and Divine Capital Sect attempted to birth new True Immortals but failed. They wasted everything. 2 swordsmen on par with Patriarch Kou in the past lost their lives... I didn't think that they would be so lucky this time!” Shang Xia sighed with melancholy.

Hai Yuanyuan, who was standing nearby, couldn't help but chime in, “This just proves that their foundations are really strong... Isn't it especially so for the Eternal Palace? True Immortal Yifan appeared out of nowhere and we never heard of him in the past. Only True Immortal Jiu Jing of the Divine Capital Sect was known and he has already been an elder in the sect for a long time. With his experience, it comes as no surprise he managed to break through...”

Shang Xia simply chuckled in response and he didn't think otherwise of her conclusion.

He worked with Yifeng and Jiu Du in the past. Both of them were known as the greatest swordsmen back then.

It could be said that they were the most elite batch of experts in the Martial Dipper Realm back then. Maybe they couldn't be compared to a freak like Kou Chongxue, but they were certainly much stronger than Jiu Jing of the Divine Capital Sect.

Also... Yifeng and Jiu Du's attempted breakthrough wasn't a complete failure. At the very least, Yifeng had a chance to live. The only reason he died was because he was unwilling to let Yang Taihe sacrifice himself and become an Elysium True Immortal.

As for Jiu Du's failure... The Divine Capital Sect didn't breathe a word of what happened to anyone, but from how things seemed, there were many suspicious points.

Whatever it was, most of the True Immortals of the Spirit Luxuriant World could pretty much guess that Jiu Du's failure had something to do with Li Jidao. At the very least, from how successful the 2 factions were at producing True Immortals, Shang Xia felt that things weren't as simple as they seemed.

Indeed... Another report came from the Spirit Luxuriant World after half a month and confirmed Shang Xia's guess.

“When True Immortal Yifan and Jiu Du broke through, world origin from the Yong Continent was used to supplement the Liang and Qing Continents...” Hai Yuanyuan read the report while looking at Shang Xia in shock. She quickly continued, “Can they actually do something like that? Aren't they draining their foundations by doing so? Or did they realize that they couldn't put all their hopes in the Yong Continent any

longer and decided not to fight each other at the moment and use other continents to produce their True Immortals?"

Shang Xia chuckled softly in response, "You're not exactly wrong, but there's something you didn't think of. The world origin that flowed out of the Yong Continent might not have caused too many negative effects to them."

Hai Yuanyuan's eyes widened in shock as she waited for his explanation.

Smiling, Shang Xia snorted once and continued, "You were born too late. Even though you didn't experience the world ascension, you should have heard about the matter regarding the border continents and the 5 Institutions..."

Nodding slowly, Hai Yuanyuan muttered, "We have history lessons in the institution and the Tongyou Institution was part of the 5 Border Institutions which was established by Patriarch Kou and the 4 deputy patriarchs. Even though the 5 institutions are still present, only our Tongyou Institution grew to our current level to become the strongest faction in the Spirit Luxuriant World."

As she spoke, she couldn't help but puff her chest out subconsciously. She was clearly proud of their institution's achievements.

"Pretty much." Shang Xia nodded slowly and he continued, "But... Do you know why our institutions were created in the Azure Origin World in the first place?"

After thinking for a moment, Hai Yuanyuan replied, "It's said that during the invasion of our world, our continents were damaged and its foundations were shaken. Because of that, the institutions were established to gather the remaining strength of those left to resist the invasion of the Azure Spiritual World."

"You're right, but do you know why we were invaded in the first place?" Shang Xia laughed.

Thinking for some time, Hai Yuanyuan heard a lot of rumors about what happened in the institution and she had her guesses. However, she wanted to hear the real answer from Shang Xia and she quickly shook her head. "No, I don't..."

Shang Xia saw her reaction and he mused to himself. He could tell that she knew a thing or two, but he eventually turned serious and started to explain, "Behind the invasion was the Eternal Palace, Divine Capital Sect, and Northern Sea Mystic Sect. They were pushing for the fusion of our worlds and during the process, our continents suffered catastrophic damage. It was especially so for our You Continent which suffered the greatest loss. More than 90 percent of the population was lost and we were only left with 2 cities..."

"Also, when everything was falling apart, the World Origin Source that was connected to our continents was split up by the 3 Elysiums other than those used to create the Battlefield Between the Two Worlds!" Shang Xia concluded.

Seeing the look of shock on Hai Yuanyuan's face, Shang Xia laughed softly, but anyone could hear the bone-chilling intent hiding behind it. "You're not wrong to say that they have strong foundations, but where did they get it from? They didn't build it themselves..."

“So... That’s how the Northern Sea Mystic Sect produced True Immortal Zhang Jianzi so quickly after Lu Wuzi left! The Eternal Palace and Divine Capital Sect were also able to quickly nurture True Immortals because they had the world origin they stole from the various continents...” Hai Yuanyuan gasped.

Shang Xia replied, “Yeah, but from the looks of it, the Eternal Palace and Divine Capital Sect seem to be in a rush. They used the world origin stored in the Yong Continent and I’m sure they used the world continent stored in their Elysium to produce a new True Immortal. Yang Taihe and Li Jidao would definitely be weaker after this.”

Hai Yuanyuan mumbled, “They’re in a rush to produce Free True Immortals?”

Shang Xia nodded but added, “They are also afraid...”

Seeing the confused look on her face, Shang Xia explained, “Our Spirit Luxuriant World has been growing stronger continuously, but everything seemed to be led by me and Patriarch Kou. Even Lu Wuzi had been on the Tongyou Institution’s side. The Yuanchen Sect which wasn’t part of the 3 oldest Elysiums also had a second tier Free True Immortal, Huang Jinghan, and even Yin Jingxu of the Heavenly Star Palace followed us to the Spirit Tinkle World to take part in the war. He should be breaking through to the second tier soon...”

“Even with Yang Taihe and Li Jidao’s strengthening cultivation because of the World’s Will blessing, they definitely used up a good portion of their accumulations. If everything keeps up, how long will they be able to continue using up resources without any replenishment? They seemed determined to push for the development of another True Immortal, even if they had to weaken the foundations of their Elysiums. They might need another True Immortal to fight for experts for their Elysiums, but this might also indicate that they might not be able to grow stronger anymore...” Shang Xia muttered.

When Shang Xia first entered the Five Element Realm, Kou Chongxue described what happened back then to him. Now that Hai Yuanyuan had consolidated her foundations in the Five Element Realm, Shang Xia felt that it was his responsibility to remind her of what happened.

Actually, ever since Shang Xia and Kou Chongxue became True Immortals, they had been intentionally, or unintentionally, going against the 3 oldest Elysiums. However, because of the threats they faced after their world ascension, they couldn’t possibly fight among themselves. As such, they had to continue working with the True Immortals of the other great powers.

Of course... The main reason they hadn’t actually done anything yet was because neither of them had the confidence to completely uproot the Eternal Palace or Divine Capital Sect for what they had done in the past to the You Continent.

Hai Yuanyuan might have felt that Shang Xia was intentionally making them look even worse than they were, but she knew his true intent of telling her the secrets behind what happened. She seemed to have thought of something and asked, “Since the Eternal Palace and Divine Capital Sect nurtured Free True Immortals, what about the Northern Sea Mystic Sect?”

Chapter 1283: Absolute Trust

Shang Xia wasn't able to create talisman paper on his own, but he had a friend who could! Moreover, Ren Huan was extremely knowledgeable when it came to crafting them.

After Shang Xia understood the principles behind the Myriad Tinted Cloud Talisman, he called Ren Huan to Star Beast Nest No.2 and provided him with the special talisman paper from the Wanyun Association. He wanted to see if the talisman paper could be replicated.

However... It seemed as though Ren Huan hadn't made much progress in the development of the special talisman paper.

As for the Wanyun Association, Dajun Dynasty, and the Qingling Palace, they haven't stopped requesting talismans after learning that the mighty rank six Talisman Grandmaster had learned the way to craft the Myriad Tinted Cloud Talisman. They were pretty much seeing how much they would be able to get from him...

It was especially so for the Wanyun Association. They never stopped requesting for Myriad Tinted Cloud Talismans and they had been providing rank five talisman paper ever so often. They even managed to get him to make another 2 Myriad Tinted Cloud Talismans for them.

Originally, Shang Xia thought that after the Wanyun Association had dealt with their problem which nearly caused the extinction of their sect, they would slow down and continue to accumulate resources. However, as time continued to pass and with his continued interactions with them, he managed to piece together what was truly going on from the bits and pieces of information he received. He had long since determined that the Essence Xing World's conflict had reached a state that they would no longer be able to control. The situation the Wanyun Association was facing didn't actually take a turn for the better either.

Everything only made him anticipate infiltrating the Essence Xing World more.

Of course... When he was providing them with high-level talismans, he also obtained a lot of essence crystals and cultivation resources from the mighty factions. He received a lot of treasures the Spirit Luxuriant World was poor in and greatly increased the quality and types of resources in the Tongyou Institution's warehouse.

During that period of time, he had also been crafting rank six talismans he might need. Other than those provided to the Essence Xing World, he ignored the requests that came from the Tongyou Institution. He even stopped accepting requests from the other Spirit Worlds.

For a Talisman Grandmaster at his level, if he didn't actively limit the requests for talismans, the people who would look for him would probably be able to form a massive line from the Spirit Luxuriant World all the way to the Star Origin Dao Field.

Whatever it was, when Shang Xia was completing his preparations to infiltrate the Essence Xing World, Kou Chongxue's visit disrupted his plans.

"Why did you come?" Shang Xia asked when he saw Kou Chongxue looking around the Star Beast Nest in interest.

Shooting him a grin, Kou Chongxue explained "I'm planning to take your place here for some time."

“Why?” Shang Xia frowned. “Did the plan to craft teleportation formations around the Spirit Worlds run into some problem?”

Shang Xia understood that since the alliance of the Spirit Luxuriant World, Spirit Thistle World, and Spirit Tinkle World was established, communication and interaction between them were of utmost importance. Kou Chongxue remained in the Spirit Luxuriant World the entire time to oversee the process.

Kou Chongxue chuckled softly, “The matter of constructing the Five Element Teleportation Formation between our worlds has already been set. We have to work together in order to survive. The formation will allow us to communicate or help each other in times of need. Once they verify the use of the formation, the only thing left to do is to determine how much resources our worlds will have to provide. Of course, I don’t have to stay behind for such matters... There will be someone to deal with the negotiations for me.”

Shang Xia clearly understood the implications. The Five Element Teleportation Formation might be something created by Chu Jia and unique to the Tongyou Institution, but the distance was too far and the resources required to deploy it would be a colossal amount.

With the expansion of the institution and their accumulations in recent years, they would be able to endure the consumption of resources even if they had to connect all the continents in the Spirit Luxuriant World. However, establishing the Five Element Teleportation Formation to the Star Beast Nests already required the other powers to chip in. If they wanted to establish the formation to other worlds... the cost would be too damn large and the 3 Spirit Worlds would have to bear the cost in order for them to be successful.

After hearing Kou Chongxue’s response, Shang Xia was even more confused. He couldn’t help but ask, “Then... Why are you here?!”

No longer keeping him in suspense, Kou Chongxue laughed, “Hurry up and head over to the Ruined World outside the Spirit Faith World. Little Chu and the members of our Formation Hall are waiting for you there.”

Shang Xia was greatly taken aback and he gasped, “Did they already complete the modification of the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation? Why didn’t anyone tell me? And... How did they send the resources required to modify the formation there?”

The knowledge of the Ruined World was only known to a few people in the institution, despite their desire to make use of it. Kou Chongxue and Shang Xia also planned to keep it that way. After all, the matter of the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation concerned the secret of the Star Origin Dao Field. They wouldn’t allow any other faction in the Spirit Luxuriant World to know what they were doing.

As such... There was no way they could send resources over on a large scale through Star Ships or stuff like that.

Also... The region around the Spirit Faith World had fallen under the jurisdiction of the Essence Ming World, and if the members of the Tongyou Institution wished to enter or exit Star Beast Nest No.1, they would definitely alert the members of the Essence Ming World standing guard there.



As such... For the Formation Hall and Kou Chongxue to complete the preparation of the Ruined World, they would have to pass through the chaotic void in order to get there. Moreover, they had to avoid the other powers of the Spirit Luxuriant World and the Essence Ming World while doing so.

Kou Chongxue laughed while explaining, "Actually, since you saved me from the experts of the Essence Ming World back then, I had already ordered the Stargazers to look for a safe route through the chaotic space. Because of the many problems that happened along the way, including the War of the Spirit Tinkle World, our world has been on edge. We sent many Star Ships into the sea of stars around our world and I arranged for our own ship to blend in and take the route we discovered to the Ruined World bringing resources and members of the Formation Hall there. As for Little Chu... Well, she didn't know what was happening since she had been here the whole time."

Shang Xia gasped in shock, "Even if they found a safe route, without a True Immortal to lead the way, you dared to let them make their way over... Aren't you afraid that the Formation Hall would be wiped out if anything went wrong?"

Shang Xia was sure that Kou Chongxue wasn't the one escorting the Star Ship to the Ruined World. After all, he was the patriarch of the Tongyou Institution and he recently broke through to a high-level True Immortal. There were countless eyes on him and he didn't have the time to hide from all of them to escort a Star Ship.

Kou Chongxue revealed a craft smile in response. "Who said there wasn't a True Immortal leading them there?"

"Did you send a clone? No... That's not possible, your clone wouldn't be able to do it..." Shang Xia's tone dropped slightly but his eyes soon lit up in realization, "Is it Feng Ziying? How can it be him? You don't seem to doubt him at all... Weren't you afraid anything would go wrong?"

Kou Chongxue stared at Shang Xia with a profound gaze. "Well, if I send anyone else, they might mess up, but in this specific instance, I have absolute trust in him."

#### Chapter 1284: One Big Step

After Shang Xia secretly returned to the Spirit Luxuriant World, he avoided being detected by any of the True Immortals of the Spirit Luxuriant World before learning of the path they had discovered to the Ruined World. His journey there was smooth, and he arrived without any problems.

The second he saw the Ruined World, he discovered that Chu Jia and the rest had already deployed a formation to hide their resources and presence while they hurried about modifying the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation.

Seeing that Shang Xia had come, Chu Jia quickly arranged for the rest to take over her responsibilities before dragging him into a secluded location.

He could feel the strange looks thrown his way by the rest of the Formation Masters and Formation Grandmasters of the Formation Hall, and even as a True Immortal, he felt a wave of discomfort.

Chu Jia didn't seem to care though. After bringing him away, she looked at him sneakily and asked, "Hurry up and tell me... When did our Tongyou Institution produce another True Immortal?! Who is he?!"

Shang Xia wasn't surprised by her question. After all, he expected Feng Ziying to not tell them anything anyway. He simply laughed in response to her questions, "Did he already leave? Patriarch Kou arranged for all of this and you should ask if you wish to get the answers to your question..."

"Hmph, hmph." Chu Jia pouted softly, "He left the moment we arrived. Also, you better not think I don't know you're pushing the question to Patriarch Kou while pretending you don't know who he is. You definitely know his identity!"

Shang Xia laughed and quickly changed the topic, "How long more do you guys need to complete the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation?"

Rolling her eyes, Chu Jia grumbled, "When Patriarch Kou found this place, he had already made his preparations. Even though we had been studying the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation back then, we were able to have quite a good idea of it and could determine the general outline. That was why Patriarch Kou could use what we made before, saving us a lot of time. From our current progress, we should be able to complete the modification in slightly more than a month. We would be able to start testing after another half a month and if everything goes well, you would be able to utilize the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation 2 months from now."

"That's fast..." Shang Xia gasped.

Chu Jia raised an eyebrow and muttered casually, "Really? Actually, most of the time taken to deploy a formation is in its preparation phase. The moment the general outline of the formation is done, all we need to do is to deploy it. How long do you think it will take?"

The reason the rank six grand formation around the Tongyou Institution took so long to be completed was that Chu Jia was only a rank five Talisman Grandmaster back then. She had to feel her way around deploying the formation while modifying any parts that were lacking. That was why it took longer than expected."

The successful deployment of the rank six grand formation around the Tongyou Institution laid the foundation for her as a rank six Formation Grandmaster!

Hearing that it would be done so quickly, Shang Xia quickly praised, "It's no wonder you're our mighty rank six Formation Grandmaster..."

"Don't give me that." Chu Jia's tone softened, but she continued pouting, "Actually, we were in a rush and we simply covered the core portion of the Ruined World and nothing else. If you give me a little more time, I would be able to widen the area even more and it will be much more beneficial for your cultivation!"

Shang Xia chuckled in a hoarse voice, "It's enough. We should know when to stop in case we waste all our efforts in a moment of greed..."

After he spoke, he continued to warn her, "No matter what, this isn't our territory. The Spirit Faith World might be far, but the moment we activate the formation, the commotion will be massive. The longer we use to deploy the formation, the greater our risk of being discovered..."

Chu Jia glanced at him and mumbled, "Do you think I don't know that? Why the hell are you becoming like the patriarch, nagging at me all the time? Relax... Stop doubting everyone."

Shang Xia was stunned by her sudden evaluation and he didn't know how to respond. However, she left before he could think of a better comeback.

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A Formation Divine Artifact's importance to a Formation Grandmaster far surpassed the use of a Divine Weapon to a True Immortal.

Shang Xia knew as much when the various worlds invaded the Azure Oddity World back then.

With Chu Jia becoming a rank six Formation Grandmaster as an example, she managed to transform the Five Element Ring into a Formation Divine Artifact, allowing her to display the true achievements in her dao of formations.

A month or so passed and a dozen or so Formation Masters above the third rank who were sent to the Ruined World and even more members sent to assist them completed the modification of the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation.

One had to say that along with the growth of the Tongyou Institution, many of the divisions experienced rapid progress. For example, the Formation Hall could already send out more than 10 rank three Talisman Masters or higher. Their strength and foundations could be said to have risen to the top spot in the institution, surpassing even the Talisman Hall!

During the time that passed, Shang Xia maintained his condition at its peak state while patrolling the region around the Ruined World to prevent anyone else from seeing what they were doing there.

Fortunately, the Tongyou Institution seemed to have lucked out as he didn't discover any anomalies even after the formation had been properly modified.

When he was summoned back to the core region of the Ruined World, he discovered that a giant Five Element Ring was floating high in the air.

Naturally, he knew that wasn't the actual artifact and it was a ring made from the Five Element Qi it had drawn from its surroundings.

Shang Xia had once been in the Five Element Realm and absorbing the power of the Five Element would prove to be of no difficulty.

"Hey, you seem to have transformed this formation into something new entirely! I recall the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation shouldn't be like this when activated..." Shang Xia couldn't help but ask Chu Jia, and he seemed a little apprehensive of it.

Rolling her eyes at him, Chu Jia snapped, "Don't ask strange questions if you don't know much about formations. You know nothing about my achievements in the dao of formations, hmph..."

"Alright, alright... I'll listen to your arrangements..." Shang Xia could only admit defeat.

"Go over to the giant ring. I replaced the foundation of the formation with the Five Element Ring and it can greatly increase the efficiency of your cultivation!" Chu Jia instructed.

The Five Element Ring wasn't designed for Chu Jia in the first place. She was its main user, but the other person who had full control over it was the man himself, Shang Xia.

Arriving at the core of the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation, Shang Xia looked at the giant ring hovering above him and noticed the strand of world origin that had been extracted from the Ruined World.

He didn't know the difference between the world origin refined by the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation and the world origin of other worlds. However... He had a lot of world origin from the Spirit Tinkle World left in his Crimson Soul Tablet after stealing so much from the Star Origin Dao Field.

Even though he could use them to cultivate, the efficiency was extremely low. At his current level, it wasn't great.

That was also why Shang Xia decided to give Ge Qingzhu and Sun Haiwei a portion to revitalize the Hai Continent.

As Shang Xia stood under the massive ring of energy, Chu Jia activated the formation and gathered all the energy extracted by the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation into him. He quickly understood why the formation was able to assist in his cultivation.

That was because of the strength of the World's Will contained in it!

Even though the Spirit Tinkle World was heavily damaged, it was a powerful Spirit World that had existed for hundreds of years. The loss of several continents wouldn't cause its World's Will to collapse, and even in the world origin obtained, the Spirit Tinkle World's Will that it contained was strong.

If Shang Xia wanted to cultivate with that world origin, he not only had to slowly grind away at the Spirit Tinkle World's Will it contained, but he also needed to infuse his inner qi to transform it into something he could use. That was why it was nearly useless at his current level, as it took more effort for him to make use of the world origin.

Of course, when Shang Xia used the world origin from the Spirit Tinkle World to revitalize the Hai Continent, it clashed with the Spirit Luxuriant World's Will.

However, getting rid of some remnant World's Will was nothing to the Spirit Luxuriant World's Will operating at full strength!

The Spirit Emptiness World where the Ruined World once stood had been destroyed a long time ago, and the World's Will had dissipated. Even if there were some remnants, they were refined by the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation such that only pure energy was left for him to absorb and strengthen his cultivation.

The other use of the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation was to help cultivators break through to the bottleneck to enter the next tier.

To be able to do something like that, the formation had to be aligned to the user's cultivation when deployed!

In other words... Every Essence Refining Void Returning Formation would have to be customized to the user's unique characteristics.

When Chu Jia had been laying down the formation, she actually referenced Shang Xia's Six Harmony Flawless Rod Technique...

Chapter 1285: Probing

Shang Xia remained in the Ruined World for 6 whole months.

In the time that passed, he had been immersed in the circulation of his Six Harmony Flawless Rod Technique as he continued to absorb the energy produced by the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation.

He could tell that in 6 months of cultivation, he gained enough energy to rival 20 years of bitter cultivation. It far surpassed the effectiveness of Three Lights Water.

What he didn't know was that after the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation was modified by Chu Jia, it was able to refine the remaining energy of the Ruined World at a terrifying pace. The speed of energy pouring into the True Immortal using the formation wasn't something ordinary experts would be able to withstand.

Even if a similarly high-level True Immortal were to use the formation, they wouldn't be able to fully utilize the energy produced by the formation and would waste a lot of pure energy.

However... The monstrous Shang Xia was different. As he circulated his Six Harmony Flawless Rod Technique, not a single strand of energy went to waste!

It was a terrifying achievement!

Shang Xia had no one to compare to, and he hadn't interacted with many high-level True Immortals. As such, he didn't think that his Six Harmony Flawless Rod Technique was anything special.

Even though he gained 20 years of cultivation from the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation and around 6 years from his use of Three Lights Water, along with his random cultivation, he hadn't reached the peak of the fourth tier. Of course, with such a large boost, he could also tell that he wasn't too far away from reaching that level. As long as he continued to cultivate, it wouldn't be long before he would be able to attempt another breakthrough.

With the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation completely extracting the essence of the Ruined World, there was no way he would be able to break through there.

Since the energy was almost used up, Shang Xia felt that there was no point in continuing to cultivate there. He left the core region and started to consolidate his strength due to his sudden increase in cultivation. At the same time, he would be able to protect Chu Jia and the others since he was no longer cultivating.

They had been making their preparations to scavenge whatever was left after he was done and now that he emerged, they quickly channeled the energy of the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation into refining essence crystals.

This time... It didn't take Shang Xia long before he discovered experts hiding in the distance to observe what they were doing.

He quickly restrained his aura and tore through the void to rush towards where the spy was hiding.

He had to admit that the other party was extremely careful. The moment he discovered spatial fluctuations, he knew that he was exposed. He discovered the exit of the spatial tunnel the other expert created and saw that it was right beside him, indicating that they had absolute confidence in their control of space and their ability to suppress the enemy.

Not bothering to intercept the enemy as soon as they emerged, he turned to flee.

It was a shame... No matter how much he tried to prepare himself for the overwhelming strength of the expert who would appear, he still underestimated Shang Xia...

The second Shang Xia emerged, his Stone Rod was already swinging at the spy. There was no technique involved and he simply swung it with all his might. It tore through the void and came crashing down behind the spy.

The spy didn't think that the enemy would immediately attack with their weapon the second they emerged, but he was confident he could deal with it. Turning into countless shadows, he escaped from the blow while mocking Shang Xia for even trying to hit him. Increasing his speed suddenly, he tried to leave.

While hiding back then, he discovered that some people had created a massive formation in the Ruined World around the Spirit Faith World. It was clear that those people invested a large amount of resources and manpower into it.

For them to deploy such a massive formation... The hidden expert was sure they had a huge scheme. With how he was being chased, he knew the other side truly valued the region.

Just as he was storing energy to open a spatial tunnel to flee, he heard a deep growl in his ears. "Seal!"

The void around him froze instantly. That wasn't all. What was even more terrifying was that his body also remained stuck in space, and his inner qi came to a halt. He even lost the ability to blink.

It could be said that other than his consciousness, everything fell completely motionless.

A sense of terror overwhelmed him, but he realized he couldn't even move his fingers.

The next thing he felt was a strange fluctuation appearing behind him before everything regained its ability to move. He didn't even have time to turn around to launch a desperate attack when he felt a finger on his back.

The spy felt all energy leaving his body as his dantian was sealed by a strange power.

"I know the True Immortals of the Spirit Faith World and the Azure Worlds that used to be around them. However, I don't know you. Seems like you should be from the Essence Ming World." An emotionless voice came from behind him, and he could tell from his tone that the speaker was a young man.

The hidden spy might have lost the ability to resist, but he had vast experience as a cultivator. He didn't lose his bearings and didn't lose himself to panic. He slowly turned around and looked at the person hovering in the void before him. When he saw who it was, his eyes widened slightly in shock. "True Immortal Shang of the Spirit Luxuriant World?!"

A light flashed in Shang Xia's eyes. "I didn't think that someone from the Essence Ming World would recognize me..."

With a smile slowly appearing on his face, the spy muttered, "There are no high-level True Immortals who reached their level by simply being lucky. True Immortal Gao has already informed the True Immortals of our world of you while evaluating you at an extremely high level. Moreover... For me to remain around the Spirit Faith World... I might run into the experts of your world and I naturally chose to learn about the stronger experts."

Shang Xia nodded slowly but continued to ask, "How can I address you? Why did you come all the way to the Ruined World? It's the ruins of a destroyed Spirit World... Why would that require a second tier True Immortal of an Essence World to come all the way over?"

"Isn't it worth it?" The spy might seem respectful to a high-level True Immortal like Shang Xia on the surface, but his tone was completely flat, betraying his true emotions where he didn't give half a shit about a high-level True Immortal of a Spirit World. "Like you said, it's where a destroyed Spirit World lay, but your world decided to lay down such a powerful formation over it. As for telling you my name... I guess it doesn't matter since you defeated me."

Shang Xia growled while shooting the spy a cold glance, "I don't think you know the position you're in right now."

Chuckling nonchalantly, the spy continued, "Whatever you're doing was whatever I was planning to do. You guys just managed to beat me to it."

Shang Xia narrowed his eyes and his gaze turned sharp. "Do you know what we're doing?!"

"How do you think Tong Yutang of the Star Origin Dao Field managed to step into the fourth tier of the Martial Void Realm?" The spy snorted in response.

Chapter 1286: Cleaning Up Loose Ends

"How do you think Tong Yutang of the Star Origin Dao Field managed to step into the fourth tier of the Martial Void Realm?" The spy snorted derisively.

"You... It was you guys?!" Shang Xia turned serious and growled.

With a smirk on his face, the spy didn't bother to reply.

Reaching forward, Shang Xia tried to grab the spy again but his figure popped like a bubble.

Shang Xia snorted coldly, turned his wrist, and clenched his fist, causing a miserable scream to come from the void nearby.

Casually flying over to the spot the scream originated from, Shang Xia saw the sorry figure of the spy tumbling out from the void. A talisman fell from his sleeves.

"Is this what you were relying on to escape?" Shang Xia frowned and glanced at the talisman. From the strange runes on it, he knew that he wouldn't be able to recreate it with a simple glance.

With his plan foiled, the spy was no longer as collected as he was. His face was twisted from the sharp pain he felt as though his dantian was being ripped apart. He growled, "You better not be so full of yourself now. Since the experts of my world can send me here, they'll definitely investigate my death. They'll quickly send even more experts over and your old friend, True Immortal Gao Qin, will definitely be here. Hehe... If you let me go now, the relationship between our worlds might not sour as much. However, if you dare to kill me here, you better be prepared to withstand the wrath of my Essence Ming World... Hah, you're just a cultivator from a mere Spirit World..."

Shang Xia didn't even wait for him to finish as he snorted, "You came up with so much bullshit just because you are afraid that I'll kill you, right?"

The twisted smile on the spy's face grew even wider. "That's right! Do you really dare to kill me? I bet you guys used a lot of resources to lay down the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation. With the resources your Spirit World has at its disposal... If we destroy the formation now, you will definitely suffer huge losses, right?"

Shang Xia raised an eyebrow and asked, "Wait. What was that you were asking me again?"

"What?" The spy was slightly confused by Shang Xia's sudden question, but he raged when he got Shang Xia's meaning, "I said... Do you really dare to kill me?!"

"Of course." Shang Xia spoke slowly and waved once, separating the spy's head from his body. He could still see the look of shock as the head flew.

Shang Xia shook his head slowly and waved his sleeves to collect the treasures of the dead spy. With a flick of a finger, a heaven-shaking blast came from the body of the True Immortal and it disappeared in a sea of lightning that was summoned.

When Shang Xia returned to the Ruined World, Chu Jia quickly appeared before him. She felt the strange fluctuations when he left earlier.

Shang Xia gestured slightly with his chin and told her what she had already guessed would happen. "Quickly gather everyone. We'll prepare to leave."

"Were we discovered by the members of the Spirit Faith World?" Chu Jia couldn't help but ask.

Actually, the members of the Spirit Faith World or the other worlds they used to be connected to weren't scary. She was afraid they would call over the experts from the Essence Ming World.

Shang Xia explained what he learned about the origin of the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation before sighing, "Our luck isn't great. The person spying on us was a second tier True Immortal from the Essence Ming World. He was also planning to make use of this Ruined World."

Chu Jia understood that the Essence Ming World would definitely learn of the second tier True Immortal's death and quickly head over to investigate what happened. After all, a True Immortal wouldn't just die randomly...

Quickly sending out the order to stop the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation, she also split the members of the Formation Hall out to destroy certain formation nodes before gathering the Star Ships to prepare to leave.



Shang Xia was greatly reassured when he saw that she was in command of the entire situation and he joked, “Anyway, how many essence crystals did you manage to refine?”

“We got a batch of low, mid, and high-grade essence crystals, but we failed to make a single top-grade essence crystal...” Chu Jia replied.

She couldn’t help but look at Shang Xia. For them to only obtain so few essence crystals meant that Shang Xia used up most of the energy they drew from the Ruined World.

Chuckling under his breath, Shang Xia asked, “Did you guys manage to make back the cost of the formation?”

Rolling her eyes, Chu Jia snapped, “What do you think? Whatever it is, these essence crystals will be able to make up for a bit of the resources we used up. If we leave in such a hurry, we won’t be able to retrieve a lot of equipment... Right, when do you think the experts from the Essence Ming World will come?”

“From what Patriarch Kou discovered, they would require 10 hours if they wished to fly over without using any special arts. However, they would definitely open spatial tunnels or use other skills to hurry over... Whatever it is, the death of a second tier True Immortal should scare them a little and we should have around 6 or so hours before they arrive...”

Chu Jia nodded in response. “Alright, we will have to get everything done in 4 hours to be safe. The moment time is up, we will leave immediately. Equipment that cannot be retrieved will be left behind. Anyway, the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation belongs to the Essence Ming World and there’s no point trying to hide the formation from them since they figured it out already.”

With her urging the members of the Formation Hall around, they quickly deconstructed the key nodes of the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation and Chu Jia took charge of the core of the formation herself.

As she completed the modification of the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation, she couldn’t risk the members of the Essence Ming World finding out anything about it.

Around 5 or so hours later, the void was still as calm as could be, but be it Shang Xia or Chu Jia, they didn’t hesitate to give the order to leave.

The moment the Star Ships started to move, Shang Xia left a clone to bring them back while he stayed to stop anyone who might try to hunt them down.

However, Shang Xia didn’t stay where the Ruined World was. Instead, he stationed it close to where the second tier True Immortal was slain.

Unless he had no other choice, Shang Xia wasn’t willing to let them see the Ruined World. After all, there were lots of clues left behind by their deployment of the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation. As for whether or not he would be able to escape the suspicion of the Essence Ming World... He didn’t even bother dreaming of it.

The Spirit Faith World and their once affiliated worlds were the only ones in the region along with the Spirit Luxuriant World. With the Spirit Faith World and the other worlds having submitted to the Essence Ming World, the only culprits would be those from the Spirit Luxuriant World.

Glancing in the direction of Star Beast Nest No.1, Shang Xia knew that even if they could run, the Star Beast Nest couldn't disappear. The True Immortals of the Essence Ming World would either head to where their comrade fell or to the Star Beast Nest directly.

Even though the Star Beast Nest already had a Five Element Teleportation Formation, Shang Xia still hoped that Lu Wuzi would be a little more careful and not be caught off guard in case they tried anything.

Close to 7 hours after they prepared to leave, a ray of light appeared from the void and arrived in the void hundreds of miles away from where Shang Xia was.

Looking at the person who came, Shang Xia frowned. True Immortal Gao Qin actually came alone.

"It's really you..." Gao Qin's expression sank the moment she saw Shang Xia. "Why did you kill True Immortal Sun?"

Shang Xia didn't give her an answer. Instead, he asked one of his own, "True Immortal Gao, you seem to have overestimated yourself by coming alone... Do you really think you will be able to deal with me all by yourself?"

A cold smirk appeared on Gao Qin's face. "Obviously, I won't be the only one to come. Why don't you try to guess where the other True Immortals went?"

Shang Xia's frown became even deeper and his aura that closed in on the peak of the fourth tier of the Six Direction Realm burst forth. A powerful fluctuation rushed towards the Star Beast Nest.

"Hah, it's too late to inform them now!" Gao Qin yelled as she rushed at Shang Xia. Along the way, she sent a heavy punch at him, shattering the void while she was at it.

Chapter 1287: Defeat

Shang Xia had a deep impression of Gao Qin's tyrannical battle style. He has never forgotten it ever since he saw it in the Essence Ping World.

Facing her aggression, Shang Xia didn't even think of retreating.

It wasn't as though he couldn't retreat, but he knew that from her battle style, the moment he took a step back she would immediately follow up with a stronger move, eventually forcing him into a corner. He would fall into a passive state if he didn't fight back...

As she drew closer, Shang Xia released his domain and unleashed a palm strike he couldn't be more familiar with. It was the first martial intent he ever comprehended, the Chaos Essence Lightning Palm!

Lightning bolts tore the space their attacks clashed and the forceful might contained in her punch was quickly broken down by his martial intent.

He stopped her first move, but he didn't remain in his original spot. Instead, he started to fly backwards.

Flying back on his own accord was different from retreating. He didn't lose his ground when fighting her. He was at a slight disadvantage when using his Chaos Essence Lightning Palm to greet her first round of attack, but it was enough.

What was more, his true intention wasn't to end the battle in a decisive exchange. He wanted to send a warning to Lu Wuzi stationed in Star Beast Nest No.1, and destroy the Ruined World if possible.

Even though he had already prepared himself to fight Gao Qin, he was shocked by her aggressive and tyrannical battle style now that he had to face its full might head-on.

What he didn't know was that she was even more surprised.

Several years ago, Gao Qin once came to blows with Shang Xia outside Star Beast Nest No.1. Back then, both sides were probing each other out, but they got a pretty good gauge on each other's strength.

It had barely been several years, but she could feel a sharp spike in Shang Xia's abilities. In fact, she could already tell that Shang Xia's cultivation had already surpassed her!

One couldn't see how she obtained the advantage during their first exchange, but she knew that she only managed to do so because he didn't use his strongest moves.

She found it even harder to accept the fact that he received her attack earlier with his bare hands. She wore a battle glove that was at the level of a divine artifact when fighting, and it might be so thin that the outline could barely be seen, but it was there. However, Shang Xia simply sent out a Chaos Essence Lightning Palm without the support of any artifact!

She knew that his main weapon was a Holy Artifact, and it only showed how he hadn't even gotten serious.

Why isn't he fighting me with all he got?

He knows that I didn't come alone, and my companions are heading to the Star Beast Nest... Shouldn't he be trying to end this as quickly as possible so that he can help them?

Actually, Shang Xia might have made a massive show of trying to warn the Star Beast Nest, but from his actions, it seemed as though he was buying more time for himself...

Why is he buying time here?!

The Ruined World wasn't too far away from the Spirit Faith World and True Immortal Sun should have been killed by him. That would mean that they had a run-in before...

That would mean that True Immortal Sun discovered something and was silenced by Shang Xia! Is the Spirit Luxuriant World also after the Ruined World?

They definitely set up something there and True Immortal Sun was discovered spying on them... That would mean that there is a huge batch of people in the Ruined World and he's buying time for them to escape!

With great confidence in her deduction, Gao Qin knew that even if Shang Xia was stronger than her, it was difficult if he wished to end her life.

She felt that she was right, and from how Shang Xia was holding back, he most likely didn't wish to defeat her so quickly so that she would call more people over for help.

Moving decisively, she decided to leave.

How could Shang Xia not know what she was thinking about? As she tried to turn to run, he yelled, “True Immortal Gao, where are you going?! I still have a few more moves I hope you can give me some pointers on!”

Since he couldn’t keep her there any longer, he decided to just go all in to see if he could injure her to weaken her combat abilities in case they ran into each other again in the near future.

Shang Xia’s Stone Rod appeared in his hand and with a quick shake, countless phantom Stone Rods appeared in the air to seal off her escape routes.

He unleashed his second move of his Six Harmony Rod Technique, Starry Disorder!

Unfortunately, how could it be so easy to stop a high-level True Immortal who was determined to run away?

“Break!” Gao Qin yelled and shattered the phantom rods in her surroundings, creating a path for herself.

Shang Xia was no fool. He knew that he wouldn’t be able to stop her with just that but all he wanted to do was to disrupt her momentum and to ensure she ran in a certain direction.

Wherever she struck was definitely going to be where she tried to escape from. As such... His goal was achieved!

As soon as the path was created, Shang Xia pushed the Stone Rod into the void, unleashing his third move, Void Emptiness!

It pierced through hundreds of miles of the void and went straight for her back.

At the very last second, Gao Qin twisted her body unnaturally and used both fists to strike at the Stone Rod.

With a loud blast, Gao Qin grunted in pain as she shot out with even greater speed from the impact. In an instant, she managed to put thousands of miles between herself and Shang Xia.

Shang Xia wanted to give chase, but she shattered the void with a single punch as she made her escape. Everything turned into chaotic streams of space and he quickly lost track of her.

Chapter 1288: Reinforcements, Returning to the Spirit Luxuriant World

Shang Xia wasn’t surprised that she managed to escape. After all, in a battle between experts of the same level, especially since they were high-level True Immortals, defeating the other party wasn’t going to be easy. Killing the other party was basically impossible unless the other side no longer had a route of escape.

As for whether or not Gao Qin would run to Star Beast Nest No.1 after being defeated by him... he wasn’t too worried about that.

He did whatever he needed to. The commotion during their battle was massive and the shockwaves caused by them would definitely travel a million or so miles through the void. If Lu Wuzi who was standing guard in Star Beast Nest No.1 didn’t notice it, it would only mean that he wasn’t paying attention and he would deserve to lose the Star Beast Nest.

After establishing the Five Element Teleportation Formation in Star Beast Nest No.1, they were no longer afraid that the Essence Ming World would launch a sudden attack. Even if they did, everyone

in the Star Beast Nest would be able to escape quickly while destroying the nest such that the location of the Spirit Luxuriant World wouldn't be revealed.

Also, if Lu Wuzi manages to detect the danger in time, he would be able to call for reinforcements and the True Immortals of the Spirit Luxuriant World would be able to head over to help him in a timely manner.

Considering the scale of Star Beast Nest No.1, the True Immortals sent by the Essence Ming World didn't have the ability to invade it with Shang Xia holding Gao Qin back. After all, no world would send more than 1 high-level True Immortal to attack a tiny Star Beast Nest.

Having thought of everything, Shang Xia turned around unhurriedly and went to look for the Tongyou Institution's Star Ships after he lost track of Gao Qin.

With their speed... Shang Xia estimated that they hadn't entered chaotic space.

He quickly caught up to them.

Even though dangers lurked everywhere in chaotic space, the Stargazers of the Tongyou Institution had already found a safe passage back to the Spirit Luxuriant World. With a high-level True Immortal like Shang Xia escorting them, there was basically nothing that could threaten them.

...

Several days later, the Tongyou Institution's Star Ships returned to the region of space where the Spirit Luxuriant World was located. Seeing as they were relatively safe, Shang Xia left them behind and rushed back first.

Even though he felt that as long as Lu Wuzi didn't mess up, Star Beast Nest No.1 wouldn't be in any danger, he was afraid accidents would happen. Thus, he felt that it would be best if he went back to take a look at what was happening.

It might be too late for him to return in case anything happened, but there was still a sense of guilt in his heart. After all... The Tongyou Institution's secret operation in the Ruined World was what put the Star Beast Nest in danger.

The Star Ships would take several more days to arrive, but for Shang Xia, it took him several hours to arrive back in the Spirit Luxuriant World.

As soon as he returned, he heaved a sigh of relief. He discovered that everything was operating normally and understood that the situation over at Star Beast Nest No.1 wasn't completely messed up. They still had control over it from what it seemed.

As such, he was in no rush to show himself. Instead, he sneakingly returned to the Tongyou Institution to meet up with his clone to learn about what happened recently.

It was as he expected. When he ran into Gao Qin, other True Immortals went to Star Beast Nest No.1 to cause trouble.

There were a few of them in total, some coming from the Spirit Faith World and the words once affiliated to it. Another 2 were from the Essence Ming World.

Fortunately, Lu Wuzi, whose strength lagged far behind the other True Immortals of the Spirit Luxuriant World, made up for it with extreme caution.

The moment he felt the intense shockwaves caused by the battle between Shang Xia and Gao Qin, he called for reinforcements.

The second tier True Immortal of the Yuanchen Sect, Huang Jinghan, was the first to arrive. Yin Jingxu came next. Yifan and Jiu Jing of the Eternal Palace and Divine Capital Sect came right after and 5 True Immortals of the Spirit Luxuriant World gathered in Star Beast Nest No.1.

Even though Huan Jinghan was the only expert in the second tier of the Martial Void Realm, they were confident of protecting the Star Beast Nest because of the advantage they had after managing it for so long.

Also... They were pretty aware that despite their confidence of holding the Star Beat Nest, they weren't capable of doing much more. They knew their limits, and no one suggested heading over to learn of the source of the powerful shockwaves.

The experts of the Essence Ming World and Spirit Faith World with its affiliated worlds didn't give them a chance to make the mistake of venturing out either. With Lan Zhengfeng, a third tier True Immortal in the lead, 5 True Immortals on their side descended on the Star Beast Nest and launched an attack.

Huang Jinghan and the others were prepared and stopped them outside the Star Beast Nest.

If they had to mention personal strength, the members of the Spirit Luxuriant World were definitely weaker. However, with their intense fortification of the Star Beast Nest and the many formations they laid down, they were more than capable of protecting it.

Because Shang Xia held Gao Qin back, they failed to launch a decisive attack on the Star Beast Nest. They had to gather their forces before trying to siege the nest, and they eventually surrounded it with no intention of backing away.

After they fought for some time, Gao Qin, who had been forced away by Shang Xia, arrived without warning. The arrival of a high-level True Immortal immediately turned their stalemate around as she completely suppressed the True Immortals of the Spirit Luxuriant World.

Huang Jinghan and the rest already had their hands full dealing with Lan Zhengfeng and the rest... There was no way they could deal with an additional high-level True Immortal!

Seeing as they were unable to prevent the Star Beast Nest, the only thing left to do was to destroy it and send everyone back through the Five Element Teleportation Formation.

As they were about to give the order to leave, another horrifying aura descended as a high-level True Immortal burst out from inside the Star Beast Nest.

The Spirit Luxuriant World's second high-level True Immortal arrived, and he wasn't just any high-level True Immortal. He was a swordsman whose combat strength surpassed cultivators of the same level!

Initially, Kou Chongxue took Shang Xia's place in Star Beast Nest No.2, but he soon received an emergency report from the Tongyou Institution that something might be going wrong with the Ruined World. He separated a clone and used an Illusion Talisman to make it seem as though there was another high-level True Immortal in Star Beast Nest No.2 before rushing back.

Even so... By the time he arrived, Gao Qin's appearance caused Star Beast Nest No.1 to be on the brink of being overrun.

They might have surprised him with how dire the situation was, but his arrival was even more shocking. He managed to rush out of the Star Beast Nest when no one was expecting it!

When Gao Qin and the others attacked the Star Beast Nest, it wasn't as though they hadn't considered the possibility of the third tier True Immortal swordsman of the Spirit Luxuriant World interfering. However, Gao Qin was convinced that she would be able to suppress him despite the injuries she suffered from Shang Xia earlier.

Never in her wildest imagination did she expect that the third tier True Immortal swordsman to have already become a high-level True Immortal!

Even though it was difficult to defeat an expert at the same level, that was only if both sides were aware of each other's existence and were confronting the other party in a head-on battle.

Caught off guard by a powerful assassin-level swordsman, Gao Qin suffered a massive loss. She was nearly cut right open with a single strike from Kou Chongxue!

At the very last second, she paid the price of an arm to stop his attack. With such serious injuries, she was unable to continue fighting and chose to flee.

The True Immortals who came before her were no fools. The moment she turned to escape, they followed closely behind.

Huang Jinghan and the others were no fools. The enemy might be escaping, but they didn't try to give chase in case the opponents turned back to launch a sudden attack.

The only other advantage they obtained was when Huang Jinghan borrowed the power of Kou Chongxue's remnant sword qi to heavily injure the slowest expert on the other side.

It didn't take long from the time Lu Wuzi called for reinforcements to the end of the battle. Everything happened so suddenly that Gao Qin didn't even have time to call out Shang Xia's actions, revealing his plan to the other True Immortals of the Spirit Luxuriant World.

Even after Shang Xia brought the Star Ships of the Tongyou Institution back, no one knew the real reason behind the massive battle outside Star Beast Nest No.1.

Chapter 1289: Infiltrating the Essence Xing World?

Gao Qin had already lost to Shang Xia before, and her domain suffered some damage from the third move of his Six Harmony Rod Technique, Void Emptiness.

Next, she was caught off guard by Kou Chongxue and lost an arm.

Even though recovering a severed limb was nothing much for experts at that level but waiting for it to grow back, the time required would be a massive problem. How could an arm that had been severed by another high-level True Immortal grow back so easily?

In order to get rid of Kou Chongxue's remnant sword qi from her wounds, she would already need to use up a large amount of energy. In fact, her foundations would most likely be harmed when cleaning up her wounds to not leave any hidden injuries so that she could grow her arm back!

After suffering at the hands of both Shang Xia and Kou Chongxue, they estimated that she would need at least 5 years in order to return to her peak state.

Well... That was if they didn't consider the use of any heavenly treasures to hasten her recovery...

Whatever it was, Star Beast Nest No.1 would remain safe for a period of time.

Even if the Essence Ming World sent another high-level True Immortal to take over Gao Qin's responsibilities, they wouldn't easily make a move on the Star Beast Nest considering the fact that the Spirit Luxuriant World already had 2 high-level True Immortals. The losses would greatly outweigh their gains!

With the time they gained, Shang Xia felt that his plan to infiltrate the Essence Xing World could finally be carried out.

Perhaps understanding how determined Shang Xia was, Kou Chongxue didn't try to stop him. Instead, Shang Xia was the one getting cold feet. He was afraid that he wouldn't be able to return for a long time and that the various worlds connected to the Star Origin Dao Field would experience another wave of change.

"Has there been news of the Star Origin Dao Field? Did Feng Ziyang say anything?"  
Shang Xia asked Kou Chongxue.

With a soft chuckle, Kou Chongxue explained, "The Star Origin Dao Field concentrated all their energy onto the restructuring of the Star Origin Guards. Other than that, they have been keeping a low profile. Even the frequent patrols they had been sending out in the past stopped. I heard that their criteria to become a Star Origin Guard is extremely strict now, only choosing those in the Martial Dipper Realm or higher."

Shang Xia fell deep into thought after hearing what he said. Eventually, he mumbled, "From the looks of it, before the restructuring of the Star Origin Guards is complete, the Star Origin Dao Field will probably keep their head down."

Kou Chongxue nodded in agreement before giving Shang Xia another piece of news. "From what Feng Ziyang reported, the Star Robes prepared for the new batch of Star Origin Guards are different from the original ones..."

Shang Xia grunted once and revealed a look of interest while muttering to himself, "I wonder what's the difference? Can Senior Feng bring us some samples to play with?"

"Heh... What do you think?" Kou Chongxue snorted instantly.

"Hehehe... I'm just saying..." Shang Xia chuckled with amusement. However, he seemed to have thought of something else and he quickly added, "Do you think the new Star Robes have anything to do with their requirement for all Star Origin Guards to be at the Martial Dipper Realm?"

"Do you mean to say that there are problems with the new Star Robes and the weaknesses have to be covered up by their cultivation level? It's not impossible..." Kou Chongxue frowned.



Shang Xia continued, "It would be best if we could obtain a set of the new Star Robes to make a better comparison."

This time, Kou Chongxue said nothing. Actually, if they were talking about familiarity with the Star Robes, Shang Xia might know more than Feng Ziyang, a 'legitimate' Camp Commander.

"What about news of the Spirit Mammoth World and Spirit Abundance World?" Shang Xia continued to ask. Since he wished to infiltrate the Essence Xing World, he had to ensure the safety of the Spirit Luxuriant World before he left.

Shaking his head, Kou Chongxue sighed, "We know too little about these worlds. Even though we have already sent our members in, we are still trying to form a proper intelligence channel. Everything we can come into contact with is merely superficial information anyone can obtain. We even used multiple Five Element Teleportation Talismans to send out spies in..."

After thinking for some time, Shang Xia changed his direction of questioning. "What about the Spirit Tinkle World and Spirit Thistle World? Do they have news of the 2 great Spirit Worlds?"

"The Spirit Thistle World sent news that the 2 great Spirit Worlds are licking their wounds, and they are restrained by the Star Origin Dao Field. The Spirit Tinkle World might have lost several continents, but it's not like the 2 great Spirit Worlds didn't suffer any losses. Actually, they seem to be preparing something big..." Kou Chongxue sighed before he continued, "The Spirit Tinkle World sent over a more detailed report that the 2 great Spirit Worlds created more spatial tunnels out of their world. Something might have happened when they recalled so many high-level True Immortals to attack the Spirit Tinkle World. Actually, they might have been invaded and their high-level True Immortals are handling the problem..."

Shang Xia raised an eyebrow and seemed to think of something, and Kou Chongxue couldn't help but ask, "Did you think of something?"

Shang Xia eventually voiced his concerns, "Like how we created spatial tunnels to the Star Beast Nests we controlled back then... I'm sure the Spirit Tinkle World and Spirit Thistle World also control Star Beast Nests of their own. How many do they have? In the past, the various worlds had high-level True Immortals to defend those Star Beast Nests, but the Spirit Tinkle World lost 3 high-level True Immortals in the war. Wouldn't their Star beast Nest run into some problems?"

Kou Chongxue shook his head in response. "They might have other methods to deal with it. At the very least, from what the Spirit Thistle World said, the Spirit Tinkle World produced 3 new True Immortals even after losing 6 continents. They have a total of 12 True Immortals right now and they're on par with us in terms of the number of True Immortals. The distribution of their strength is also much more balanced than ours. At the very least, they have more second and third tier True Immortals..."

"How did they produce so many True Immortals so quickly? That's 6 continents they lost..." Shang Xia frowned.

Kou Chongxue explained, "Actually, they managed to recover 2 continents worth of land and True Immortal Ban probably established new continents with them. They would be able to be quickly

replenished with world origin by the World's Will, considering they were fragments of the world in the first place. It's like how you provided Sun Haiwei and Ge Qingzhu world origin for the Hai Continent... Also, with their long history, do you think they won't be able to produce several rank six advancement medicines?"

"Yeah..." Shang Xia frowned but agreed with Kou Chongxue. Eventually, he nodded and said, "In that case, I can leave for some time without worrying about things here."

Chapter 1290: Talisman Paper, Star Map, Dark Star Pirates

Before he left, Shang Xia gave Kou Chongxue some treasures from the second tier True Immortal of the Essence Ming World he killed.

He kept anything that would be useful for himself before dumping the rest on Kou Chongxue.

After going through what Shang Xia provided, nothing much caught his eye either. However, the treasures of a second tier True Immortal were still very desirable for mid to high-level experts of the Tongyou Institution. It was especially so for records or guides he made. It would help the Tongyou Institution learn a lot more about the Essence Ming World.

Among the treasures that caught Kou Chongxue's eye was a rarely seen inheritance. It was a rank six evasion art, called the Universe Drifting Body.

Shang Xia had once looked at the evasion art, and it was what the second tier True Immortal used to try to escape from Shang Xia back then. It was a shame he was completely outmatched and still failed to live.

Even though True Immortal Sun died in his hands, Shang Xia didn't think that the evasion art was useless. Rather, he held it in quite high esteem. What's more, the Tongyou Institution didn't have too many rank six inheritance and they weren't in any position to be picky about the techniques they obtained.

As for why Shang Xia didn't learn the evasion art himself, it was because he had always been trying to perfect his Five Element Evasion Art. Judging the quality alone, his evasion art would still be stronger than the Universe Drifting Body.

Other than the inheritance, the only things of value to Kou Chongxue were 3 rank six spiritual treasures and several high-level medicines. Naturally, they wouldn't randomly eat those medicines and would only be willing to use them after their Alchemy Grandmasters managed to verify they could be used safely.

Looking at the rest of the random stuff left in the spatial artifact, along with the assortment of essence crystals, Kou Chongxue asked, "Damn brat, what did you take anyway?"

Shang Xia laughed to himself and he didn't intend to conceal anything. "I got 3 items. The first is a strange rank six talisman that is able to free the user when being bound, and their opponent wouldn't be able to detect that they had already escaped. Unfortunately for him, the second tier True Immortal I killed wasn't too lucky. I sealed his dantian, and even though he managed to escape some distance away, I still located him."

Kou Chongxue nodded slowly. "It has to be a special talisman since it's able to shake your Void Seal off. However, can its effects be superimposed onto your Six Harmony Teleportation Talisman? And what is the name of that talisman?"

Shang Xia shook his head in response, "The effects are too different. The Six Harmony Teleportation Talisman can allow a cultivator to escape an entire region of sealed space. However, if the user is already bound, the effects of the Six Harmony Teleportation Talisman would be greatly reduced. This talisman is different. Even when sealed, it works perfectly."

As he spoke, he thought about how True Immortal Sun managed to use the talisman even without moving. It didn't just send him away. It left a realistic clone in his place even Shang Xia failed to detect it immediately.

"As for the name of the talisman... I don't know..." Shang Xia continued.

Seeing how Kou Chongxue wasn't speaking anymore, Shang Xia continued, "The second item is a Star Chart."

"Star Chart? What's that?" Kou Chongxue's interest was piqued and he immediately asked.

Chuckling to himself, Shang Xia wasn't surprised at Kou Chongxue's reaction. He continued, "It's not at the level of the Star Map yet, and it should be a map drawn by the second tier True Immortal himself..."

After a short pause, Shang Xia continued under Kou Chongxue's expectant gaze, "It's a Star Chart that records the path from the Essence Ming World to the Spirit Faith World!"

"Give me that!" Kou Chongxue burst into laughter and reached his hand out to take the treasure from Shang Xia.

When Kou Chongxue explored the Ruined World in preparation to lay down the Essence Refining Void Returning Formation, he had once ventured too deep into the void, which was how he ran into the experts of the Essence Ming World and was hunted down.

Since the Spirit Faith World wouldn't be able to leave the region of space, and Kou Chongxue got his hands on the Star Chart recording the route between the Essence Ming World to the Spirit Faith World... He decided to complete it with a path back to the Spirit Luxuriant World.

Shang Xia pressed his lips together before handing Kou Chongxue a scroll made from talisman paper.

With a deep frown, Kou Chongxue grumbled, "Isn't this a copy you made? Why do you need to keep the original chart?"

"The original Star Chart was recorded on high-level talisman paper of the Essence Ming World and the way it's made is different from how we make talisman paper. It is also a completely different style from the Essence Xing World. I plan to get rid of the Star Chart on the original copy before giving the paper to Ren Huan for research purposes. At the same time, we should be able to cut out a portion to be used as talisman paper directly." Shang Xia chuckled.

With a strange look on his face, Kou Chongxue asked, "Is the talisman paper of an extremely high quality?"

"It's similar to the special talisman paper the Wanyun Association provided." Shang Xia nodded seriously.

Kou Chongxue nodded along. "I guess this is the true strength of an Essence World..."

"It's alright. Our Spirit Luxuriant World will catch up to them eventually." Shang Xia tried to comfort.

"Do you think I need you to make me feel better? Hurry up and tell me what the third treasure is!" Kou Chongxue chortled in response.

This time, Shang Xia didn't explain anything. Instead, he took out a small palm-sized metallic medal.

Inspecting it carefully, Kou Chongxue couldn't help but ask, "Is this some sort of token or something?"

There was a carving of the bow of a ship on it, and there seemed to be several specks in the background, depicting the sea of stars. There are 2 more words that seemed to exude an aura of unruliness as they were carved in a tyrannical manner, 'Dark Star', on it.

"Patriarch Kou, have you heard of the Star Pirates?" Shang Xia asked suddenly.

Slightly taken aback, Kou Chongxue frowned. "The Star Origin Dao Field used to have news of Star Pirates. However, it's rare to run into them around the Star Origin Dao Field. From what Feng Ziyang says, the Star Origin Guards' main purpose when they were first established was to get rid of the Star Pirates within the Star Curtain!"

With his eyes widening in shock, Kou Chongxue continued, "Now that the Star Origin Guards are restructuring, they are unable to threaten those Star Pirates any longer... Do you think that the worlds connected to the Star Origin Dao Field will be attacked by those pirates?"

Shang Xia scratched the back of his head and mumbled, "The situation around the Star Origin Dao Field isn't exactly advantageous to us. If there are Star Pirates in the area, we shouldn't care about them unless they try to attack us!"

"Hmm... Looks like sending out more experts to patrol the sea of stars around us is of utmost importance..." Kou Chongxue mumbled before handing the token back to Shang Xia. "For you to keep this token... Do you think that the second tier True Immortal of the Essence Ming World is a Star Pirate? Or do you think you can make use of it somehow? However... You're heading to the Essence Xing World, not the Essence Ming World!"

Shang Xia kept the token before chuckling, "Whatever it is, it's a new identity for me. What if I need to use it?"