

The Heavens 1281

Chapter 1281: Take No Prisoners!

The Seventh Mountain and Sea was coming!

The entire army didn't arrive immediately. However, the first wave of invading cultivators immediately began to reinforce the rift between the two Mountains and Seas.

That gap was how they could enter the Eighth Mountain and Sea, and as soon as they appeared, they began to set up numerous spell formations, almost like garrisons. They also attacked the rift itself in an attempt to open it wider.

Even more impressively, a large group of Seventh Mountain and Sea cultivators joined forces to summon an enormous nine-headed dragon. It was pitch black, and when it roared into the gap, it began to grow in size, causing the rift to rip open wider and wider.

Winds screamed, echoing out through the entire Eighth Mountain and Sea, carrying with them the voice of the Lord of the Seventh Mountain and Sea.

"I am the great Sima Dao, Lord of the Seventh Mountain and Sea! Today... I declare war on the Eighth Mountain and Sea! All ye, shall either surrender, or die!" His voice was as cold as ice as it rang out through the entirety of the Eighth Mountain and Sea.

Of course, the Lord of the Seventh Mountain and Sea would not leave his home Mountain and Sea at this time. He would wait until the majority of the warrior cultivators from the Seventh Mountain and Sea were deployed before making his appearance.

However, he would most certainly call out... and declare war!

His shocking words caused the Eighth Mountain and Sea to tremble. All cultivators and all sects heard him, and they were left in a state of shock and disbelief.

"This.... This...."

“The Seventh Mountain and Sea is invading!!”

“A Mountain and Sea War. A legendary Mountain and Sea War! I can’t believe it’s actually going to happen right now!!”

“This is too sudden. How could this be happening? The Seventh Mountain and Sea is actually inciting a Mountain and Sea War. But we’ve hardly had any dealings with them at all!”

Everyone in the Eighth Mountain and Sea was shocked, especially the Heavengod Alliance. Orders were immediately dispatched calling for everyone to assemble as quickly as possible.

The auxiliary branches of the Heavengod Alliance were included in that, as was the other of the Eighth Mountain and Sea’s great clans, the Han Clan. Grand protective spell formations were activated, and all stations were manned.

A great storm was coming!

These preparations began in the very instant that the Seventh Mountain and Sea began to come through the rift. At the same time, back in the Meng Clan, the invading cultivators were cowering in front of Meng Hao. But then they sensed what was happening, and their expressions flickered with excitement and even joy.

“Reinforcements from the Seventh Mountain and Sea are coming!!”

“Hahaha! The Mountain and Sea War is about to begin. We’re on the side of the Seventh Mountain and Sea, and they’re definitely going to win the war!”

“You in the Meng Clan, war will soon be upon you! Why haven’t you surrendered yet?!” The shouts of the invading cultivators turned into sound waves that rolled out across the cultivators of the Meng Clan, including Grandma Meng and the five seriously injured Dao Realm Patriarchs. The Patriarchs’ faces fell, completely draining of blood.

As for the traitorous members of the Meng Clan, they threw their heads back and laughed uproariously. They sounded arrogant, and in very high spirits. They had just been quite cowed by Meng Hao, and now that the reinforcements from the Seventh Mountain and Sea were on the way they had gained their confidence back. In their minds, the threat of Meng Hao was not so deadly now.

They firmly believed that both the Meng Clan and Meng Hao would now be struck with indecision, an indecision which... would ensure their own safety.

The invading cultivators weren't stupid. The first to fall back were the black-robed men from the Seventh Mountain and Sea. They knew that since reinforcements had come, they were already in the superior position. Since they could not wipe out the Meng Clan immediately, they needed to consider their own safety first.

In their minds, since the Meng Clan was hesitating, it was the perfect chance to retreat. Certainly, the Meng Clan wouldn't dare to pursue them now.

That was what the other invading sects were also thinking, as were the traitorous Meng Clan cultivators. Soon, everyone was falling back, preparing to leave.

Actually, their predictions were completely correct. The Meng Clan cultivators, including the five Dao Realm Patriarchs, stood there silently, not daring to continue the fight or attempt to prevent their enemies from leaving. When they thought about the imminent Mountain and Sea War, and the arrival of reinforcements from the Seventh Mountain and Sea, the entire Meng Clan was struck with stifling pressure.

However, the invaders had miscalculated regarding one person in particular, and that was... Meng Hao!

"Did I say you people could leave?" he said coolly, hovering there in the starry sky. The Meng Clan was worried about the Seventh Mountain and Sea, as was the Heavengod Alliance. Meng Hao, on the other hand, couldn't care less.

The only people he cared about in the Eighth Mountain and Sea were his Grandmother and her people. Whether or not everyone else lived or died didn't have anything to do with him. Nor could he really do anything to stop what was happening. He knew that soon, a massive and shocking war would strike the Mountain and Sea Realm. The two ancient forces outside of the 33 Heavens were coming, and that war... was unavoidable.

The words he had just spoken were like an icy wind that filled the invaders' hearts with shock. They looked back at him.

A cold voice rang out from within the crowds, “The reinforcements from the Seventh Mountain and Sea are already here. You’re going to have your hands full defending your Meng Clan, do you really think you can spare the effort to stop us from leaving?”

Meng Hao’s expression was calm as his eyes scanned the crowd.

It only took a moment to find the cultivator who had just spoken, and the power in Meng Hao’s gaze suddenly rocketed up. A moment later, the man exploded. Meng Hao then leaped forward, waving his hand to summon the howling Blood Demon, which instantly slashed into the enemy forces.

The blackpod imps screeched as they began to unleash slaughter. The Blood Spirit and the mastiff also joined in, murderous auras raging.

“You had the gall to invade this place, so you won’t be leaving. I don’t really care about some war between the Eighth and Seventh Mountain and Sea, but I can tell you that I hate traitors.

“Whether you are a traitor to your clan or a traitor to the Mountain and Sea in which you live, it’s all the same.” Meng Hao’s voice was cold as he once again waved his hand, unleashing his Ancient mana to summon numerous mountains, which began to descend from all directions.

These mountains no longer surged with Immortal qi, but rather, had an ancient and archaic feel to them, as if they had existed for many, many years. These were ancient mountains, and as they appeared, they sent powerful ripples out into the starry sky.

Meng Hao looked coldly out at the Meng Clan cultivators, including the five Patriarchs. When his gaze fell on those Patriarchs, they immediately began to tremble. “Meng Clan,” he roared, “what are you doing standing there!? ATTACK!”

They had seen Meng Hao’s terrifying Ancient Tribulation, had watched as Xiao Yihan fled on his heels, and had personally witnessed Meng Hao’s horrifying power. Gritting their teeth, they decided to comply with his orders.

Roaring, the five Patriarchs charged forward. “Cultivators of the Meng Clan. ATTACK! Slaughter all of the rebels and invaders!”

The other clan members hesitated for a moment, then joined voices in a powerful battle cry as they shot forward in attack.

The battle resumed. However, this time, the Meng Clan was not in the weak position. Instead, the blood of the rebels and invaders flowed. Miserable screams rang out as endless lives were cut short.

Meng Hao took a step forward and vanished. When he reappeared, he was in front of a black-robed man, one of the old Dao Realm cultivators who had come along with Xiao Yihan. As soon as Meng Hao materialized, the old man bit his tongue, spraying out a mouthful of blood as he fell back at top speed. However, even as he did so, Meng Hao waved his finger.

It was simple motion, but the result was that the starry sky shook as an invisible force coalesced around the man, instantly weighing down on him with incredible pressure.

It was like the power of the Mountains and Seas themselves smashing down onto the old man, invoking a bloodcurdling scream. Even as the sound left his mouth, he was crushed to a bloody pulp.

“Mountain and Sea power,” Meng Hao murmured. He could now more clearly sense the power of the Mountain and Sea Realm inside of him, and also knew how to control some of it.

When the other Dao Realm experts saw what he had just done, they were shocked. Just as they began to flee, Meng Hao turned to look at them and stepped forward, appearing in front of another Dao Realm expert. He waved his hand, causing an explosive wind to shoot out. Wherever it passed, screams rang out and powerful experts were wiped out of existence regardless of how they tried to defend themselves.

“Run! Run away!!”

“A jinx! This guy is an evil jinx!!”

“Dammit, the Seventh Mountain and Sea is going to wipe out the Meng Clan eventually!!” As the screams rang out, the beleaguered invaders and the Meng Clan traitors were overwhelmed by the fear of being killed, and could think of only one thing: how to escape.

Soon, only half of the original force of tens of thousands remained behind. Everyone was scattering, fleeing as quickly as they had ever moved, even using secret magics. The Meng Clan cultivators were hard-pressed to catch them, and soon, the invaders had completely scattered.

“When I wage war, I don’t leave survivors,” Meng Hao said coolly. He stamped down with his right foot, causing a sea of flames to roar out. It was none other than Essence of Divine Flame, and it rapidly spread out with complete mercilessness.

It only took the blink of an eye for the Divine Flame to sweep out, surrounding the fleeing cultivators. It moved far, far faster than they could, and soon formed a ring around them.

Meng Hao waved his hand, and the ring of fire transformed into a flaming wall, completely trapping the enemies and locking them down. Now, all avenues of escape were sealed off.

“Take no prisoners,” Meng Hao said, his voice cool. He waved his sleeve, causing a fierce wind to kick up. At the same time, the Meng Clan cultivators’ eyes turned bright red, and they charge forward in attack.

Miserable screams rang out without end, and the sounds of slaughter rose up. Meng Hao focused on the Dao Realm experts, and let the members of the Meng Clan handle the general slaughter, which also served the purpose of getting them used to fierce fighting and warfare.

One side fought brilliantly, the other screamed in terror. This was not a large-scale battle, and considering how mismatched the forces were, it only took a few hours for the traitors and invaders to be... completely put to death!

The Meng Clan had paid a heavy price, and suffered many casualties. However, the survivors had experienced the baptism of battle, and had been transformed. Although they still felt fear, the fire of slaughter burned in their eyes. Soon, quietness spread out across the battlefield, and slowly, all of the members of the Meng Clan turned to look at Meng Hao.

It was hard to say who said it first, but soon, everyone was kowtowing toward Meng Hao.

They joined their voices together and called out from the bottoms of their lungs, causing everything to shake. Surrounded by the mangled corpses and skeletons of their enemies, they shouted out in the starry sky: “Greetings, Patriarch!”

Chapter 1282: Cleansing the Lands With the Fire of War!

Even the five wounded Patriarchs were staring at Meng Hao with looks of awe. His valiant and terrifying performance, and his deadly decisiveness, caused even their hearts to grow cold with fear.

Grandma Meng was there in the crowd, and she was also completely shaken. This was her own grandson who had shocked her over and over again.

“I’m not your Patriarch,” Meng Hao said coolly, looking out at all the members of the Meng Clan. “Neither am I Meng Chen. My name... is Meng Hao.

“I’m from the Fang Clan of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.” His words caused all of the Meng Clan cultivators to stare in shock. Suddenly, the five Patriarchs recalled a certain matter, and their eyes went wide.

All eyes were on Meng Hao as he began to walk toward his grandmother. People respectfully made way for him, and soon he was standing directly in front of her. An emotional look could be seen on her face as Meng Hao gazed at her softly, clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Grandma Meng,” he said.

When the members of the Meng Clan heard him address her in the manner of a maternal grandmother, they turned their shocked gazes upon her. After a moment of thought, people began to clasp hands and bow to her.

Even the five Patriarchs did so.

After this battle, Meng Hao’s grandmother and her people truly became the primary bloodline. Those who remained alive in the Meng Clan, regardless of what bloodline they came from, voiced not a single word of dissent. In fact, they all approved, from the bottoms of their hearts.

The five Patriarchs felt the same. It made sense, considering that the Seventh Mountain and Sea had arrived, and a Mountain and Sea War was beginning. The fact that a terrifying figure like Meng Hao was there to take the lead made them feel as if they were being protected by a magic talisman.

With that talisman in place, the Meng Clan could be safe in the war, and in fact had an incredible advantage that would help them in moments of life and death. At this point, personal position and power within the clan had ceased to be important.

Strength was everything!

Grandma Meng didn't reject Meng Hao's words, and as such, became the acting Clan Chieftess, taking the place of the missing Grandpa Meng, and able to wield his authority. Numerous orders were transmitted. The Meng Clan had survived the battle, expelled the traitors, and now had a new lease on life.

The nine auxiliary continents were reorganized and transformed into a new clan spell formation. The ancestral mansion was also completely renovated.

Meng Hao chose to go into secluded meditation there in the Meng Clan. Although he was itching to go to the Fourth Mountain and Sea, right now the Meng Clan needed him.

Before beginning his meditation, he looked out into the starry sky. It was almost as if he could see Xu Qing, oh so far away in the Fourth Mountain and Sea. He sat there quietly for a moment, then closed his eyes, crossed his legs, and began to perform breathing exercises.

According to the Seventh Mountain and Sea's original plan, the Meng Clan should have been wiped out by now. It was a big defeat for the invaders, and when Xiao Yihan returned to the location where their main force was garrisoned, the rift between the two Mountains and Seas, he reported what had happened. After his report was given, few questions were asked about Meng Hao, nor did anyone try to press the matter.

Meanwhile, in the Heavengod Alliance, nearly 50,000 cultivators had already gathered together into an army. Numerous powerful experts were given command positions, and they soon left the Heavengod Alliance and headed... toward the very rift where the Seventh Mountain and Sea was encamped.

The true first battle between the Eighth and Seventh Mountains and Seas was about to begin, and it was the focus of much attention. The Han Clan and the Meng Clan both dispatched cultivators to observe first hand what would happen in the battle.

It didn't take long; the fighting started three days later, right outside of the rift.

Cultivators had been pouring out nonstop through the rift from the Seventh Mountain and Sea, and by now they had a force 60-70,000 strong. When the fighting started, it was incredibly intense.

No one held back, and the sounds of battle raged constantly. The Eighth Mountain and Sea went all out, mobilizing some of their ultimate weapons and magic treasures, as did the Seventh Mountain and Sea, and the fighting went on for seven days straight. Booms filled the starry sky, and as the seven days passed, the reek of blood spread out through nearly half of the Eighth Mountain and Sea.

Countless people died on both sides, even some Dao Realm experts. Occasionally, people chose to self-detonate, sending the sounds of explosions out in all directions.

The bitterness of the fighting was unmatched....

After seven days, the Heavengod Alliance... suffered a major defeat!

Of the 50,000 cultivators who had marched into battle, only about 2,000 returned. The casualties suffered by the Seventh Mountain and Sea were visibly less. In fact, cultivators seemed to be constantly pouring in from the Seventh Mountain and Sea, until tens of thousands of reinforcements had arrived.

That first battle completely rocked the Eighth Mountain and Sea. The sects of the Heavengod Alliance were badly shaken. What had been fought was a true battle, and the resulting loss was a very heavy blow to the Heavengod Alliance.

If that were all there were to it, it might not be a big deal. But the cultivators of the Seventh Mountain and Sea took advantage of their victory to dispatch a force of 70,000... to slaughter their way into the Heavengod Alliance.

The war... had truly begun!

Outside of the Heavengod Alliance, the Han Clan was on complete lockdown, and had cut off all communication with anyone on the outside. They focused not on attacking the enemy, but only on protecting themselves. However, the only result of that was that a month later, the Seventh Mountain and Sea attacked them.

An entire division of the Seventh Mountain and Sea's army was sent against them.

The flames of war raged in the Eighth Mountain and Sea. There was endless slaughter and bitter fighting. Especially significant was that the cultivators of the Seventh Mountain and Sea were adept at using curse power. Furthermore, they had body cultivators, all of whom seemed virtually indestructible, and whose valiant power led to wholesale slaughter.

The cultivators of the Seventh Mountain and Sea also used enormous beasts in battle. Those beasts could unleash shocking power, and had a huge influence on the fighting.

The only force that didn't seem to be affected at all was... the Meng Clan. It was as if the Seventh Mountain and Sea viewed their territory as a restricted area. Throughout the month during which the Mountain and Sea War was fought, the Meng Clan was like a utopia. Unexpectedly... not a single cultivator from the Seventh Mountain and Sea entered that area.

Although they would occasionally pass by, whenever they did, their faces flickered and they would hasten past as quickly as possible.

This point was not lost on the Han Clan and the Heavengod Alliance. Although they were shocked, there was no time to investigate the matter, not in the face of the deadly offensive of the Seventh Mountain and Sea.

Meng Hao took it all in stride. He remained in a hidden chamber set aside for him in the Meng Clan, meditating. That chamber was of course located within the huge statue in the middle of the clan, a place where Meng Hao could sense even more of the qi flow of the Mountain and Sea Realm than before. It was of great assistance to his practice of cultivation.

He wasn't worried at all about the war going on outside; he was focused on cultivation, and on experiencing the difference between Immortal power and Ancient mana.

He also spent time observing his 33 Soul Lamps. With every moment that passed, they grew stronger, and Meng Hao's desire to begin to extinguish them grew stronger as well.

Although the Meng Clan was not participating in the war, they were gathering intelligence about what was happening on the outside. Those intelligence reports were passed on to Meng Hao, which he would examine to stay up to date on what was happening. After all, Meng Hao was well-aware that everything that had occurred so far was merely the beginning.

“I’m afraid the true war... is almost here,” he murmured, thinking about how nervous and fidgety the parrot had gotten in recent days.

Things were peaceful and quiet in the Meng Clan. The clan members focused on cultivation, although they would occasionally look up into the starry sky, their eyes glinting coldly.

Time passed. Another half a month went by. Soon, the war between the Seventh and Eighth Mountains and Seas had been going on for two months. No longer were tens of thousands of cultivators involved, but rather, hundreds of thousands. And then millions.

The starry sky rumbled constantly, to the point where it even echoed out in the Meng Clan. The reek of blood spread out everywhere. The energy of Heaven and Earth was thrown into chaos, something that any Immortal Realm cultivator could detect.

Eventually, almighty experts in the other Mountains and Seas could sense that a Mountain and Sea War was underway in the Eighth Mountain and Sea.

In fact, Meng Hao was even able to sense that the qi flow of the Mountain and Sea Realm as a whole was slowly dissipating, almost as if from sorrow.

“Is it sorrow because, despite the impending arrival of the Outsiders... there is war within?” Meng Hao murmured. “Yet you aren’t putting a stop to it... Is it that you feel the same as me, that the greater war cannot be stopped and therefore, this Mountain and Sea War is like a crash course to acclimate us to the ways of warfare?” He looked down at a jade slip, which had just been delivered by someone from the Meng Clan, a report about the war situation during the last month.

Half a month before, the teleportation planets of the Heavengod Alliance had all been destroyed, and a million cultivators from the Seventh Mountain and Sea had begun to fight their way to the center. The cultivators of the Heavengod Alliance experienced one major battle after another. Soon the war came to a deadlock, and both sides hunkered down, as if they were building up towards one final battle, a battle the conclusion of which could be predicted by no one.

However, smaller battles continued to be fought constantly.

Five days ago, the Han Clan... had been breached. After sustaining heavy casualties, the survivors had fled, but were being pursued relentlessly by the Seventh Mountain and Sea.

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Meng Hao looked up silently into the starry sky and thought about Han Qinglei, and then, his eyes suddenly flickered.

Off in the distance, near the border of the area controlled by the Meng Clan, he saw a force of several hundred cultivators flying along at top speed. There were men and women, young and old, and all of them were injured, with looks of grief and hopelessness on their faces. Occasionally, blood would spurt out of various wounds. They were being led by two old Dao Realm cultivators, both of whom had ashen faces, and appeared to have suffered grievous injuries.

Astonishingly, Han Qinglei was right behind those two old Dao Realm cultivators, a vicious expression on his face. Although he radiated killing intent, his complexion was unusually dark, as if he had been infected by a curse. His body was also very gaunt, and apparently, still in the process of being withered up.

These people were the Han Clan cultivators who had managed to flee after their clan had been destroyed.

Behind them were three enormous beasts, each one fully 3,000 meters long. They were gigantic spiders, emerald green in color and completely vicious.

Sitting atop each of the spiders were more than a thousand cultivators, whose faces were filled with coldness and contempt as they pursued the cultivators from the Han Clan. On the central-most spider, a young man sat on an emerald green throne. One of his legs was resting on the back of a trembling young woman who knelt in front of him on all fours, and his arm was wrapped around another woman, a female cultivator.

The young man's eyes glowed with emerald light, and cruelty.

"Hear the words of the Young Lord," he said, a cold smile twisting his lips. "I want Han Qinglei alive. As for everyone else, feed them to the giant Demon beasts!"

Chapter 1283: Marquis Lu!

The young man in the emerald-green robe sat atop a huge spider, which could apparently understand the words he spoke. As soon as the words left his mouth, it roared, and a rapacious gleam appeared in its eyes.

The other two spiders also roared, which caused the energy of the entire group to surge.

Not too far off, the fleeing Han Clan cultivators heard the three roars, and their faces fell. There were even some faces which were filled with complete and utter hopelessness.

One of the two old Dao Realm cultivators next to Han Qinglei anxiously said, “Qinglei, are you sure about what you said? I must know! If you’re wrong, then we’re dead for sure. The Han Clan... will truly be exterminated!”

“The Meng Clan is our only hope,” Han Qinglei said through gritted teeth. “Once we get there, we’ll be safe!” After the invasion of the Seventh Mountain and Sea, it didn’t take long before nearly everyone in the Eighth Mountain and Sea learned that the Meng Clan was not fighting in the war.

Also, the armies of the Seventh Mountain and Sea wouldn’t even set foot into the area controlled by the Meng Clan. Most of the sects and clans found this unthinkable, and some even came to the conclusion that the Meng Clan had betrayed the Eight Mountain and Sea.

When the Han Clan was attacked and destroyed, Han Qinglei had watched in shock as virtually the entire Senior generation of the clan died in battle. Several of the most powerful Patriarchs were killed, and only the two 1-Essence Patriarchs had survived, both heavily wounded. They managed to lead the few survivors into escape. Of course, that slight bit of hope was granted to them only because the clan’s most powerful Patriarch died to buy it for them.

However, there had been nowhere for them to run. In the boundless sea of stars, there was no hope to be found. The Eighth Mountain and Sea was fully immersed in the flames of war, with no safe haven to be found anywhere....

In that critical moment, Han Qinglei thought about the Meng Clan!

He also thought about how he had never been able to track down Meng Hao in the 33 Hells, only a random young Meng Clan cultivator. However, he refused to believe that Meng Hao could be so easily killed. After contemplating the matter later, he grew more and more sure that the young man he had encountered... was definitely connected to Meng Hao.

Then, the Meng Clan unexpectedly didn't fight in the war. Then, word began to leak out that a huge battle had been fought there just when the Seventh Mountain and Sea had arrived. That only further fueled Han Qinglei's speculations.

With nowhere else to go, he decided to bet that Meng Hao was indeed in the Meng Clan. He was gambling that everything which had occurred with the Meng Clan was because of Meng Hao.

When the surrounding Han Clan cultivators heard Han Qinglei's words, they exploded with all the speed they could manage. Rumbling sounds could be heard as they flew toward the Meng Clan's territory, the three gigantic spiders hot on their tails and growing closer by the moment.

It was only when Han Qinglei and the others reached the border of the Meng Clan's territory, that they realized the Meng Clan was surrounded by a ring... of floating bones.

Those bones had been magically organized, as if to form a literal border. This... was the true border of the Meng Clan's territory, and those bones were naturally the bones of the enemies which had invaded them.

As soon as Han Qinglei saw these bones, his mind trembled. The other Han Clan cultivators gasped. However, it was without the slightest hesitation that they all passed into Meng Clan territory.

In that instant, the three gigantic spiders sped towards them from off in the distance, then screeched to a halt at the border. Suddenly, looks of hesitation appeared in their eyes as they looked at the Meng Clan continents off in the distance.

Seeing that the spiders had stopped, the young man in the emerald-green robe frowned. Next to him was an old man who suddenly spoke in a low voice, "Young Lord, that... is the Meng Clan. Our Mountain and Sea Lord issued orders that we shouldn't provoke them lightly."

The young man snorted. He looked at the bones, then looked at the rest of the Meng Clan's territory, and at Han Qinglei and the others fleeing off into the distance. Then, a cold flicker appeared in his eyes.

"The Mountain and Sea Lord said not to provoke them lightly. He didn't say to never provoke them. Onward!" The old man hesitated in response to the coolly-spoken words. For a moment, he thought of intervening, but then considered how powerful the forces of the Seventh Mountain and Sea

already were in this early stage of the war, and decided that breaching the borders of the Meng Clan probably wasn't a very big deal.

Rumbling sounds echoed out in response to the young man's words, and the three spiders immediately advanced into Meng Clan territory, where they madly pursued Han Qinglei and the others. In the blink of an eye, they were bearing down on the small group.

When the Han Clan cultivators realized that their pursuers didn't care about retaliation from the Meng Clan, their faces flickered. Before they could even react, the three giant spiders opened their mouths and spit out massive quantities of spider silk, which instantly transformed into a massive net that threatened to envelop the Han Clan cultivators.

The young man in the emerald-green robe looked on with a merciless gleam in his eyes. As for the other cultivators of the Seventh Mountain and Sea, they radiated intensely murderous auras.

The two Patriarchs from the Han Clan turned with bloodshot eyes, roaring as they prepared to fight back. However, it was at this point that suddenly... a cold snort echoed out through the void. Instantly, the descending spiderweb began to tremble and emit cracking noises. Moments later, it exploded.

The three spiders let out agonized shrieks, and didn't dare to advance any further. In fact, they even started backing up. The cultivators on their backs were shocked. Not only had that cold snort shattered the spiderweb, it left their minds reeling, and some of them even found blood oozing out of their mouths.

The Young Lord's face flickered, and suddenly, three old men appeared next to him. All of those men were in the Dao Realm, and their faces were grim as they stared at a young man who was currently materializing up ahead in the void.

That young man wore a long white robe, and looked like a scholar. However, there was also a certain ancientness to him. It was, of course, Meng Hao.

"Meng Hao!" exclaimed Han Qinglei.

"Brother Han," Meng Hao said with a slight smile. "I trust you've been well since we last met." He clasped hands and bowed.

The other Han Clan cultivators also clasped hands and bowed to Meng Hao, except for the two Patriarchs, who simply looked at him, then looked around the area. When they confirmed that Meng Hao was alone, their hearts sank, and they were just about to say something when the Young Lord in the emerald-green robe rose to his feet and spoke in a cold voice, "What outrageous gall you have! How dare you interfere with our Seventh Mountain and Sea. Meng Hao... I'll give you two choices. One, get the hell back to your Meng Clan, and I won't exterminate your people.

"Two, I wipe you and your clan off the map this very day!" This so-called Young Lord's voice was cold and sinister, and his words were wildly arrogant. In the months that he had been in the Eighth Mountain and Sea, he had seen far too many local cultivators do nothing but tremble in fear when they faced him.

Because of that, his heart had swelled with arrogance. Although he knew that his own Mountain and Sea Lord had given orders not to provoke the Meng Clan, he still looked down on them.

As soon as the words left the young man's mouth, the Han Clan cultivators' faces flickered with fear, and they thought back to the fierce fight that had ensued when their clan was attacked. This Young Lord had only been in charge of only one of many divisions in the battle to exterminate the Han Clan, however the fact that this corps contained a force of 3,000 cultivators meant that its battle strength was quite potent.

Furthermore, the Seventh Mountain and Sea clearly had the upper hand in the war, which ensured that the Young Lord was even more threatening.

The 3,000 cultivators on the backs of the spiders all rose to their feet and rotated their cultivation bases. A murderous aura exploded out, transforming into a tempest. As for the three old men surrounding the young man, they frowned, but also unleashed their cultivation bases. Those three old men were 1-Essence cultivators, not Dao Lords, but considering they represented the Seventh Mountain and Sea, almost no one in the Eighth Mountain and Sea would dare to provoke them.

"Pipe down!" Meng Hao said coolly, waving his right hand. That simple motion caused a massive pressure to weigh down from the starry sky. When the pressure slammed into the Young Lord, he screamed miserably. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and his expression instantly changed from one of arrogance to one of astonishment.

It was as if the starry sky itself was crushing down on him. In the blink of an eye, he was on the verge of being squeezed into a shapeless mass. However, it was at this point that a gray light erupted out from him, which attempted to fight back against the pressure of the starry sky.

That gray light transformed into the image of a middle-aged man, a man in black war armor. Behind him stretched a huge starry battlefield filled with countless fighting cultivators.

“Anyone who dares to harm my dear son is seeking an early death!!” roared the man. Shockingly, he erupted with the power of a 4-Essences Dao Realm expert.

Meng Hao’s face was completely expressionless, and he didn’t even bother to look at the man. In fact, the man’s voice was still echoing out when the gray light was shattered into pieces, and the Young Lord was crushed by the weight of the starry sky, transformed into nothing more than a bloody pulp.

It happened so quickly that the surrounding cultivators could do nothing but stare in shock.

“Y-you....”

“You actually dared to kill the son of Marquis Lu! You...” The thousands of cultivators on the spiders could barely speak they were so shocked. The three Dao Realm experts’ faces went pale, and without the slightest hesitation, they charged toward Meng Hao.

They were well aware of how terrifying Marquis Lu could be, and they knew that if they didn’t kill Meng Hao immediately, then the three of them would suffer his wrath. As they flew out, their cultivation bases flared to life.

“Kill this man, all of you!” The three old men’s voices were laced with a secret magic that caused the three spiders to instantly roar, then pounce toward Meng Hao. The cultivators on their backs also flew out, unleashing a variety of divine abilities and magical techniques as they tried to kill Meng Hao.

The Han Clan cultivators gasped in shock as they watched Meng Hao standing up to 3,000 cultivators single-handedly.

Meng Hao looked calmly at the incoming cultivators, the three Dao Realm experts, and the three vicious spiders. His eyes flickering coldly, he slowly raised his right hand into the air and then...

Viciously clenched it!

A boom rang out, and the starry sky shuddered. It was as if an enormous hand thousands and thousands of meters wide was stretching out into the void... to grab the 3,000 cultivators!

Chapter 1284: The Power of the Mountain and Sea Realm!

In that one astonishing moment, Han Qinglei and the other Han Clan cultivators were completely shaken. Meng Hao's gesture caused an enormous illusory hand to appear in the starry sky, stretch out to cover the entire area occupied by the cultivators from the Seventh Mountain and Sea, and then clench down viciously.

A boom could be heard, and the void shuddered. Looks of shock appeared on the faces of all the cultivators, and many of them began to scream.

Each and every one, regardless of the level of their cultivation bases, felt an intense, indescribable pressure weighing down all over, mixed in with a power of expulsion.

It was as if the starry sky had rejected them, and wished to expel them. It was as if they were being rejected... by the Mountain and Sea Realm!

The cultivators with cultivation bases lower than the Ancient Realm simply couldn't take the pressure. Screams rang out as their bodies distorted under the pressure, until they didn't even look human. Then they exploded into clouds of gore!

Next were the early Ancient Realm cultivators, who began bleeding out of their ears, eyes, noses, and mouths. After holding on for a short time, expressions of terror and despair flickered on their faces, and they were crushed to pulp.

Bitter laughter rang out, as well as angry roars and even pleas for mercy. Those came from the mid Ancient Realm cultivators. Seeing everyone around them with lower cultivation bases than themselves being crushed to bloody paste, and smelling the reek of gore, caused their hearts to explode with intense feelings of hopelessness. Many of them unleashed divine abilities or magical items. But the divine abilities were destroyed as soon as they appeared, and the magical items shattered.

These cultivators lasted for only a few breaths of time before they were crushed into a jumbled mixture of bone and bloody flesh.

Next were the late Ancient Realm cultivators and those in the great circle. Before they could flee, they were also destroyed in body and spirit. As for the three enormous spiders, cracking sounds echoed out from them, and their legs began to twist. As their bodies were squashed into indiscernible shapes, green blood sprayed out.

And last... were the three Dao Realm experts. They watched wide-eyed as the 3,000 cultivators were reduced to bloody pulp, and boundless ripples emanated out into the starry sky. They were in a hell of gore, and they started trembling and coughing up blood; they too were being crushed under the pressure.

“NO!!” One of them began to laugh bitterly as he reached the point where he couldn’t hold on any longer. He produced all of the magical items he possessed, and even spit an enormous bell out of his mouth as he tried to fight back. But all of his magical items were crushed, and his body began to distort.

The other two Dao Realm cultivators laughed bitterly as they chose to self-detonate. Flight was impossible, as the starry sky had already been locked down tight. There was simply no chance for them.

Rumbling filled the air as the two Dao Realm Patriarchs’ power of self-detonation was overwhelmed by the gigantic hand, and then crushed.

All of this takes some while to describe, but actually happened within a few blinks of an eye. The area previously occupied by 3,000 cultivators from the Seventh Mountain and Sea was transformed into a mist of blood as all of them were crushed to death!

Countless cultivators and magical items were squashed together along with the bodies of the spiders, forming a huge bloody paste, a swirl of green, white, and red fluid. The sight was spine-tinglingly shocking.

Han Qinglei’s face was ashen, and the two Han Clan Patriarchs, despite having participated in many bloody battles, began to shiver and look over at Meng Hao with dread.

Everyone else was staring with wide eyes and open mouths. Some of the women even vomited. When they looked at Meng Hao, their eyes flickered with the fear that you might expect to see if they were staring at a fiendish, bloodthirsty beast. Meng Hao was even more terrifying than the Seventh Mountain and Sea.

“What power was that...?” Han Qinglei murmured. He looked at the horrifying bloody paste, then back at Meng Hao, and realized to his bitterness that at some point, Meng Hao had long since surpassed him. Surpassed him to the point where he could never catch up.

“The power of the Mountain and Sea Realm,” Meng Hao said quietly. Ever since entering the Ancient Realm and igniting his Paragon Soul Lamp, it had become much easier for him to sense the Mountain and Sea Realm.

Before, he had been forced to stimulate the Paragon’s blood inside of him to summon the power of the sun and moon. Now, he didn’t need to do that. A mere thought on his part could unleash the power of the Mountains and Seas.

Although he couldn’t use much, he was certain that as his cultivation base grew, and more importantly, as his Demon Sealer’s aura grew stronger, the day would come when a single thought on his part could determine whether the entire Mountain and Sea Realm would continue to exist.

That was because he was... the Ninth Generation Demon Sealer, and also... the Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm!

Meng Hao smiled at Han Qinglei and said, “Brother Han, welcome to the Meng Clan. You’ll be safe here. Please, follow me!”

Mixed emotions could be seen in Han Qinglei’s eyes. After a moment, he clasped hands and bowed deeply to Meng Hao, then followed him, along with the rest of the Han Clan cultivators, back to the Meng Clan ancestral mansion. After formally meeting Grandma Meng, the survivors from the Han Clan were given some land in the ancestral mansion on the central continent, a place where they could multiply and rebuild.

In the following days, Meng Hao spent most of his time cultivating in the huge statue, although he would occasionally visit Han Qinglei to reminisce about old times.

The land that had been given to the Han Clan had an frosty lake in it, which was filled with Jedefrost Fish. Jedefrost Fish happened to have a lovely flavor that Meng Hao fell in love with as soon as he tasted it, so he often spent time at that lake, fishing with Han Qinglei.

It was a quiet respite from the brutal war which was being fought outside in the Eighth Mountain and Sea. Han Qinglei often grew absent-minded, and sometimes even forgot about the war outside.

“Brother Meng, mm... with the level of your cultivation base, why is it that you’re not helping the Eighth Mountain and Sea drive out the invaders from the Seventh Mountain and Sea?” It was a question Han Qinglei had pondered for some time, and had been refraining from asking for many days. But one day, as he sat next to the frosty lake with Meng Hao, fishing, he finally gave voice to it.

Meng Hao didn’t answer at first. He jerked on his line that had been cast out into the lake, and immediately a large, jade-colored fish was yanked out of the water. He reeled it in, and it turned out to be well over a meter long. He pointed at it, whereupon a nearby Meng Clan cultivator approached and wrestled with the struggling fish, pinning it to the ground and then placing it into the fish basket.

“Brother Han,” he said quietly, “this war... is not going to end. Furthermore, even if the Seventh Mountain and Sea hadn’t made a move, one of the other Mountains and Seas would have....” After entering the Ancient Realm, something had changed about Meng Hao’s voice, and it somehow seemed more ancient.

He sighed and looked up into the sky, toward the border of the Mountain and Sea Realm, the 33 Heavens. “I’ll make my move, but now is not the time.

“Did you ever notice that the starry sky seems to have a lid covering it? And that that ceiling is slowly getting closer?” Meng Hao’s words caused Han Qinglei to gape in surprise. He suddenly looked up into the boundless sky, and the endless stars, and began to breathe deeply.

“You mean... the 33 Heavens?!”

After a quiet moment passed, Meng Hao looked out at the frosty pond and calmly said, “I’m afraid that before too long, the 33 Heavens will likely descend.”

Han Qinglei’s face fell. He had been among the group that had gone to the Windswept Realm as Meng Hao had. He clearly remembered what the 33 Heavens represented, and knew that there were terrifyingly powerful experts there.

“Well... what are we going to do?” Han Qinglei asked bitterly. Before, he had taken the invasion of the Seventh Mountain and Sea to be some shocking and profound thing. But now he realized that it was merely a prelude. And yet, the Han Clan had almost been wiped away in that mere prelude, a

prelude that to him already felt like the end of days. If war broke out with the 33 Heavens... then he wasn't sure what he should do. He stared out into space, completely at a loss.

Meng Hao looked over at Han Qinglei, and then, his expression completely earnest and serious, said, "Get stronger! It doesn't matter what war we're talking about, the invasion of the Seventh Mountain and Sea, war with other Mountains and Seas, or even the arrival of the 33 Heavens. Even... the return of the two powers who destroyed the Paragon Immortal Realm oh so long ago. What you need to do in any and all cases... is get stronger!"

"War cannot be avoided. Perhaps paradise exists somewhere, but definitely not in the Mountain and Sea Realm.

"The true war will come sooner or later. And we will all be fighting in it." Meng Hao's eyes slowly began to shine with a brilliant light. Finally, he tapped his finger down onto the ground, causing a ripple to spread out and eventually fill the entire continent.

It was something he had done frequently in the past months. Even when he was in secluded meditation, he had often sent his divine sense out, fusing his cultivation base with the lands, outlining an enormous spell formation.

Meng Hao didn't actually know much about spell formations. However, the particulars of this underground spell formation wasn't what was important, what was important was that the power that formed the framework of that formation was Meng Hao's... power of the Mountain and Sea Realm.

"Almost finished," he murmured to himself.

Han Qinglei sat there silently, with a bitter look on his face.

"I still don't understand, though," he said finally. "You could do something in the war right now. With your cultivation base, you could stop it! If fewer people died, then the Mountain and Sea Realm would be more powerful in the future!"

"Furthermore, right now there are enemies lying in wait for us on the Outside, and yet we're at war amongst ourselves. There's no point in fighting amongst ourselves!"

Meng Hao was silent for a moment, then finally said, "It's not the right time. The right time is coming. Soon."

He actually didn't explain the reason why he was not fighting in the war.

Only he knew that the reason he wasn't fighting was because... he wasn't alone here in the Eighth Mountain and Sea. He had the Meng Clan to look after.

Even if he didn't care much about all the other members of the Meng Clan, he cared about his grandmother. And his grandmother and her people cared about the clan in general. If Meng Hao went out and fought in the resistance against the Seventh Mountain and Sea, he would definitely suffer retribution at their hands. And in the end... he was only one person.

In the end, he could choose to defend against the Seventh Mountain and Sea's retaliation, or to escape, but the Meng Clan could not make that choice. As long as the Meng Clan existed, if Meng Hao stepped in... then the clan would be dragged into the conflict and be exterminated.

That was why he had not stepped in, and the Seventh Mountain and Sea surely realized that. Therefore... that was why they had chosen not to provoke him, and why he and they had been able to maintain a sort of fragile impasse.

Chapter 1285: The Spell Formation Stirs!

[/expand]

Meng Hao might be the future Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm, but as far as he was concerned, the Heavengod Alliance wasn't very important. They had even tried to track him down and kill him, so in some respects, they even counted as an enemy.

In fact, were it not for the invasion of the Seventh Mountain and Sea, after Meng Hao's identity was revealed within the Meng Clan, perhaps the Heavengod Alliance would have besieged them.

Whatever happened, Meng Hao didn't have strong feelings for this place. After all... it wasn't the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

And yet... there was someone in the Heavengod Alliance that he cared about, his Master the Noble Ran, who had passed the Seal the Heavens Incantation on to him. Furthermore, after entering the Ancient Realm, he had begun to vaguely sense certain fluctuations from the Eighth Mountain, which he knew belonged to the Lord of the Eighth Mountain and Sea.

Those fluctuations seemed very familiar, and in fact reminded him of... the aura on his Grandpa Meng's command medallion, which was tucked away safely in his bag of holding.

He hadn't mentioned any of those things to his grandmother, because he actually did plan to eventually fight in the war, both for the Noble Ran, and for... those familiar fluctuations he felt coming from the Eighth Mountain.

Because of those things, he felt that he had no choice but to join the war effort.

However, before he jumped into the fray, he needed to make sure that there was nothing that could be used against him. That was why, for the preceding two months, he had been constantly pouring power from the Mountains and Seas into the ground, to make... a spell formation!

Of course, all of these were things that Han Qinglei would have no way of knowing.

Meng Hao didn't want the Meng Clan to become... the next Han Clan. He didn't want his grandmother to worry about such things either, nor did he want her to feel the pain of seeing fellow clan members die. Most importantly, he didn't want to see her hurt even a tiny bit.

His Grandma Meng was a relative, one of the people he cared most about in the world.

"Soon. The spell formation will be finished soon," he murmured to himself, looking out into the sky.

Another half a month passed, during which the war in the Eighth Mountain and Sea intensified. Reports came in on a daily basis from various members of the Meng Clan, each of which Meng Hao studied in minute detail.

The Heavengod Alliance had finally begun a counteroffensive... which was still under way. Both sides were taking heavy casualties.

One of the most important bits of news was that among those killed were not just 1-Essence or 2-Essences Dao Realm experts. There were already Dao Lords among the dead.

Many of the sects in the Heavengod Alliance were no more. One planet after another was destroyed. If the Heavengod Alliance met complete defeat, then the remaining cultivators would have no choice but to fall back to the Eighth Mountain itself.

Recently, more and more voices were pleading for the Lord of the Eighth Mountain and Sea to come out.

Unfortunately... he never appeared.

The only people who did appear were cultivators of the Heavengod Society. In fact, the Chief Dharma Protector of the Heavengod Society convened a war council to coordinate the fighting.

The number of cultivators coming through the rift from the Seventh Mountain and Sea was growing increasingly fewer. However, there was a burning life force within that rift that even Meng Hao could sense from his position in the Meng Clan, and it was growing more and more distinct.

It was a vigorous life force, a flame that could light up the entire starry sky. And it was slowly getting closer to the Eighth Mountain and Sea. It belonged to an entity who occupied a position of supreme power, and had a terrifying cultivation base. Because of that, passing from one of the Mountains and Seas to another was a slow process for this person.

That person was none other than... Sima Dao, Mountain and Sea Lord from the Seventh Mountain and Sea!

Meng Hao could sense him just as much as he could sense that awakening entity on the Eighth Mountain.

Simultaneously, both that entity and Sima Dao could sense the existence of the person entrenched in the Meng Clan... Meng Hao!

Three days later, Meng Hao's eyes snapped open, and at the same time, the surrounding nine continents of the Meng Clan began to emit droning sounds that sounded like earthquakes, as if some incredible power were rising up from the lands.

It was a big shock to all members of the Meng Clan, and no one had any idea what was happening, not even the five Dao Realm Patriarchs, who immediately sent divine sense out.

What they discovered shocked them; the nine continents were filled with a Heaven-shaking, Earth-shattering power, a power which was building up toward an inevitable eruption.

“Is the Seventh Mountain and Sea coming!?!?”

“What’s going on!?” Everyone in the Meng Clan was astonished, including Han Qinglei and his people.

As the alarm spread, Meng Hao emerged from secluded meditation and appeared within the ancestral mansion, in his grandmother’s courtyard. The moment he appeared there, his grandmother walked out, looking quite apprehensive.

“Hao’er, what’s happening?” she asked. In the recent days, she had been administering affairs in the Meng Clan, and had transformed them into a clenched fist; they were no longer in a state of disorganized chaos like before.

Now that Meng Hao had come out, the five Patriarchs hurried over, along with other powerful experts from the various bloodlines.

Han Qinglei wasn’t a member of the Meng Clan, but because of his relationship with Meng Hao, the Han Clan wasn’t excluded, and they also hastened over to Meng Hao.

Meng Hao looked around at everyone, then finally turned to his grandmother, clasped hands and bowed deeply.

After Grandma Meng saw the complex expression in his eyes, she understood what he was thinking, and she shivered. “Hao’er, you....”

Meng Hao looked up at his grandmother and began to speak softly, “Grandma Meng, I failed to comply with one of your previous orders, and took it upon myself to take care of a certain matter.

“The Eighth Mountain and Sea has been struck with war. It’s a war that I normally wouldn’t fight in. I would rather stay here to protect the Meng Clan. However... because of a certain person, I must intervene.

“However, if I do fight in this war between two great Mountains and Seas, then the Meng Clan will also get dragged into the matter, and could end up being wiped out by the Seventh Mountain and Sea....

“Grandma Meng....”

Grandma Meng looked at him silently for a moment, then sighed softly. How could she not have come to realize what had been going through Meng Hao’s mind lately? She actually had no desire to see him fighting in the Mountain and Sea War either. He might be very powerful, but in her eyes, he was still only a member of the Junior generation.

It might be a selfish decision to ask him not to fight, but to Grandma Meng, family was more important than politics, and the Meng Clan was more important than the Eighth Mountain and Sea. However, she had overlooked his feelings in the matter, and therefore, after another long moment passed, she spoke, her voice somewhat hoarse, “I understand. You... already made your decision. If you want to go, then go. Can I help in any way?”

Somehow, Grandma Meng seemed much older after those words left her mouth.

Meng Hao looked at her for a moment. Then, smiling slightly, he stepped forward and embraced her.

“Grandma,” he said softly, “I want to send the Meng Clan to the Ninth Mountain and Sea. There is no war there yet, so all of you will be safe.”

Grandma Meng was quiet for a moment, then slowly nodded. At the same time, she reached out with her wrinkled hand and gently stroked Meng Hao’s cheek, her eyes glowing with love. “You’re a good kid. You’ve done so much for me already. Perhaps my previous decision was a bit selfish. But... you have to promise me that you’ll stay safe....”

Meng Hao nodded, then looked back at the others present, and his face darkened a bit.

“Ladies and gentlemen, I’m going to send all of you to the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Let me remind you, though, that as long as I live, if you dare to harbor any evil thoughts regarding the people I care about... you will regret it.”

Meng Hao's words caused everyone to suck in a deep breath, even the five Dao Realm Patriarchs. Although they were struck deeply with fear, they were also quite moved by the fact that Meng Hao planned to send them to safety in the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

"Brother Han, how about the Han Clan go to the Ninth Mountain and Sea. What do you say?"

Han Qinglei's jaw dropped in response to Meng Hao's words. All of a sudden, he understood what Meng Hao had said half a month before about waiting for the right time to fight in the war.

It wasn't that he planned to hold back forever. He really was... waiting for the right time. And that time... was now.

"Many thanks!" Han Qinglei said, clasping hands and bowing deeply. For the Han Clan, the chance to go to the Ninth Mountain and Sea was an amazing opportunity. After all, they were no longer in a position to fight in the war.

Of course, it was difficult enough for one person to pass between two Mountains and Seas, let alone an entire continent and all its people like Meng Hao claimed he would do. Everyone was completely shocked.

"It doesn't seem possible! That's a huge amount of people, plus a continent. This...."

"Piercing through will expend an incredible amount of power. In fact, it's incalculable!"

"The Ninth Mountain and Sea...."

Everyone looked at Meng Hao with even more alarm than before. If Meng Hao really could do as he said he would, then he would be even more awe-inspiring to them than he already was.

As long as he was alive, no one would ever dare to challenge his grandmother's position or authority.

Meng Hao looked over the crowd for a moment, then took a deep breath and raised both hands into the air. In almost the exact same instant, the power of the Mountains and Seas exploded out from within him. It was as if a fuse had been lit, which resulted in an enormous pillar of light shining up from one of the nine smaller continents. It shot up into the starry sky, sending out boundless ripples.

Next, a second continent exploded with light, then a third and a fourth....

Pillars of light shot up from one continent after another, radiating intense power from the Mountain and Sea Realm, power that Meng Hao had been building up for months. Obviously, he didn't have the power on his own to send a whole continent of people to the Ninth Mountain and Sea, so he had chosen to use the power of the Mountain and Sea Realm to accomplish that task.

Even with that extra help, he had spent months in preparation, so it was possible to imagine how much of a price the Seventh Mountain and Sea must have paid to invade the Eighth.

Almost in the same instant that Meng Hao unleashed the power of the Mountains and Seas, as the pillars of light shot up into the starry sky, suddenly, tens of thousands of cultivators from the Seventh Mountain and Sea appeared, radiating killing intent.

The person in the lead position was a middle-aged man... the same man whose son Meng Hao had killed... Marquis Lu of the Seventh Mountain and Sea!

The man's face was grim, and his murderous aura seethed. As he closed in on the Meng Clan, he spotted the distant pillars of light.

"You killed my son, so I'll wipe out your whole clan! I don't care what a whit about the orders of the Mountain and Sea Lord. He might have let you off the hook because of your friendship, but... you should never have provoked me!"

Chapter 1286: Seeing the Meng Clan Off!

Nine pillars of light shot up from the nine continents surrounding the Meng Clan ancestral mansion. As they pierced into the starry sky, they sent out boundless ripples, causing everything to shake.

When Marquis Lu and the others arrived, it was as the eighth pillar of light exploded up.

"This...." Marquis Lu gaped in shock, his eyes wide. Considering the level of his cultivation base, after examining the situation, he could sense the terrifying power within those pillars of light.

Marquis Lu's eyes glittered as he glanced down at a totem tattoo on the back of his right hand. Steeling himself, he gave a cold snort and then waved his sleeve. With that, he shot forward,

followed by tens of thousands of cultivators. The entire army transformed into beams of light that shot toward the Meng Clan.

As they closed in, the murderous aura they emitted caused the starry sky to shake. The aura was so intense that it seemed as if it were on the verge of taking physical form and freezing everything in the area.

“Meng Clan, whichever one of you killed my son, get the hell out here and face me!” Marquis Lu’s voice boomed like thunder, echoing out in all directions as his energy rocketed up. His cultivation base was that of a 4-Essences Dao Sovereign, and as soon as it radiated out, the natural laws in the area shattered.

By this point, the people in the Meng Clan ancestral mansion could hear his roar, and could sense the vast coldness. Their faces flickered.

Meng Hao’s expression was as calm as ever as he looked into the starry sky outside of the Meng Clan continents, then turned his attention back to what he was doing. His hands remained lifted up, and a strange gleam could be seen in his eyes as he manipulated the power of the Mountain and Sea Realm.

Nine pillars of light raged up into the starry sky. In that moment, a gigantic vortex appeared in the sky above the Meng Clan ancestral mansion, far, far above, at the apex of the pillars of light.

The vortex was vastly enormous, and was already beginning to spin faster and faster. In the blink of an eye, boundless rumbling sounds could be heard echoing out, and a vast pressure began to weigh down.

Marquis Lu’s face flickered, and he lurched to a halt, as did all the cultivators behind him. Then their eyes filled with shock as they saw the terrifying vortex appear overhead.

“What are they doing?!”

“What kind of spell formation is that?” The pressure weighing down on the group was completely shocking. It was almost as if there were some huge, invisible hand pushing them inexorably backward. Soon, the vortex was spinning so fast it looked like a black hole, sending out powerful ripples that the cultivators from the Seventh Mountain and Sea couldn’t endure, forcing them backward.

Gradually, even Marquis Lu was affected by the pressure. Considering the level of his cultivation base, he was the last one to finally be pushed back, accompanied by massive rumbling sounds.

Meng Hao floated up into the air above the Meng Clan continents, out into the starry sky where he looked back down at everyone, and especially his grandmother.

Then his right hand flashed with an incantation gesture, and he waved his finger.

That wave of a finger caused one of the nine continents surrounding the Meng Clan ancestral mansion to shatter into pieces, transforming into nothing but dust. Then, the pillar of light which had been attached to that continent exploded into countless motes, which then began to rise up into the vortex.

RUMBLE!

The vortex spun faster and faster, and the power and pressure within it grew more intense, causing Marquis Lu's face to fall.

Next, the second continent exploded, then the third and fourth. They all transformed into ash, and the pillars of light attached to them turned into motes which were sucked into the vortex.

The pressure from the vortex increased again, and Marquis Lu was shoved backward, as were all of the cultivators from the Seventh Mountain and Sea behind him.

"This...." Marquis Lu's throat and tongue were dry. As he stared at the shocking vortex, he suddenly realized what it most likely was, although that seemed impossible.

RUMBLE!

The fifth continent fell to pieces, then the sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth. The pillars of light shattered, sending countless motes of light up into the air; the pressure from the vortex increased dramatically yet again.

Now, the only thing that remained of the Meng Clan was the ancestral mansion and the continent upon which it stood. The members of the Meng Clan felt their hearts pounding; the terrifying vortex caused their minds to reel until they went blank.

Even the five Dao Realm Patriarchs were shocked, and felt their hearts thumping.

It was at this point that Meng Hao's eyes began to glow. He performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, then waved his finger toward the final main continent.

“Open the path between the Mountains and Seas!” Meng Hao's voice echoed out, causing wild colors to flash in the sky. The ash from all of the continents mixed with the motes of light and began to swirl together into the huge black hole.

In the blink of an eye, the black hole had absorbed the power of all of the continents, and all of their combined power from the Mountain and Sea Realm. As it did, it reached what seemed to be its maximum capacity, so when Meng Hao issued the order, the vortex exploded with an indescribable, shocking aura.

The intensity of that aura caused the minds of all living creatures to tremble, and their souls to shiver. Off in distance, Marquis Lu was staring at the black hole, and the huge beam of light which had just appeared within it.

That light... moved with indescribable speed as it stretched out across the starry sky toward the barrier between the Eighth and Ninth Mountains and Seas, where it then ripped open a rift!

This was an even more shocking scene than the one which had played out when the Three Great Daoist Societies created the Bridge of Immortality.

It was an amazing sight as the beam of light pierced through the barrier, going directly... from the Eighth Mountain and Sea to the Ninth.

In the Ninth Mountain and Sea, the entire starry sky lit up, and the cultivators there looked up and trembled. Regardless of whether it was the Fang Clan or the other sects and clans, everyone had the same reaction.

“What's happening!?”

“What... what is that?!?!”

“What’s that light? It looks like... maybe some kind of valuable treasure is appearing?” A buzz of conversation filled virtually all locations within the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

However, it was at this point that in the Fang clan, there were some, including Fang Xiufeng, as well as the Grand Elder and certain others, who could tell that within that light... was a bit of Meng Hao’s aura!

Back in the Eighth Mountain and Sea, Marquis Lu saw all of this happen. Falling back again, he looked blankly at the black hole vortex, and the beam of light.

“H-he ...opened t-the... the barrier... between the Mountains and Seas. His plan is to send the Meng Clan’s continents and clan members all the way to the Ninth Mountain and Sea.” With his cultivation base and powers of discernment, Marquis Lu was completely shaken by Meng Hao’s tactics and abilities, and his mind was left reeling.

He was well aware of the enormous cost that was required to open the barrier between Mountains and Seas. The Seventh Mountain and Sea had prepared for an incredibly long time, and had paid an astonishing price, to tear open that rift. But here Marquis Lu was, watching Meng Hao do exactly that same thing all on his own. How could he not be shocked?

Meng Hao looked up at the black hole and the beam of light. Then he spread both hands wide and roared. Instantly, the Meng Clan’s entire ancestral mansion and the continent it was on rumbled up into the air. It was as if a giant were shouldering it... hoisting it directly toward the vortex.

Dust flew about, and everything quaked. Meng Hao was completely focused on the Meng Clan ancestral mansion as it rose higher and higher, drawing ever closer to the vortex.

Soon, it was just on the verge of reaching the vortex, and then Meng Hao murmured, “Grandma, please get there safe and sound.”

With that, the Meng Clan ancestral mansion sank into the vortex, which seemingly gobbled it up. In the blink of an eye, the black hole vanished into the beam of light.

The beam connecting the two Mountains and Seas then began to vanish, starting from the side in the Eighth Mountain and Sea. Or perhaps it wasn't vanishing, but disappearing into the distance!

It was soon gone from the Eighth Mountain and Sea, and appeared in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. There, the starry sky rumbled, and the void distorted.

Meng Hao had successfully sent the Meng Clan off.

The Meng Clan used to reside in the Eighth Mountain and Sea, but now, nothing remained behind. The starry sky quieted, and the ripples faded away. Meng Hao hovered there alone, looking off in the direction of the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

Further away in the distance, Marquis Lu hovered there in shock. At some point, he had begun to sweat, and he suddenly realized that in trying to wipe out the Meng Clan, he had been courting death.

Now he realized why his Mountain and Sea Lord had issued orders not to provoke the Meng Clan. It wasn't because he and Meng Hao were friends. No, it was because... he truly didn't want to provoke them!

That was because, hidden in the Meng Clan, there was a supreme entity, a powerful expert who was so strong... that even Marquis Lu knew he didn't dare to trifle with him.

He had... power to open the barrier between Mountains and Seas, to send an entire continent of clan members all the way to another Mountain and Sea. He was... a shocking, almighty expert.

"Retreat!" he said without any hesitation. Then he flickered into motion, followed by the other cultivators of the Seventh Mountain and Sea, whose murderous aura had transformed into expressions of astonishment.

They didn't care about the fact that they were running away with their tails between their legs.

Anybody could tell that whatever fetters had been holding this consummately powerful expert back... were now gone.

It was as if a ravenous primordial beast had suddenly been uncaged!

Rumbling could be heard as the cultivators of the Seventh Mountain and Sea retreated en masse. However, in that exact same moment, Meng Hao looked away from the Ninth Mountain and Sea, turning so that his gaze fell upon... the cultivators of the Seventh Mountain and Sea.

“You just showed up,” he said calmly, “don’t run away yet!”

Chapter 1287: Outsider!

[/expand]

As soon as the words left his mouth, the starry sky grew incredibly cold, as if invisible ice was spreading out rapidly in all directions. Wherever it passed, the fleeing cultivators from the Seventh Mountain and Sea were filled with intense coldness, causing their souls to tremble.

Now that he didn’t have to worry about the Meng Clan, Meng Hao turned to look at the cultivators from the Seventh Mountain and Sea, and his killing intent exploded out. He actually didn’t have any personal vendetta with these people, and in fact, as the future Lord of the Mountain and Sea Realm, it would probably be appropriate to let them off a bit lightly, and not kill them all.

After all, there was a greater war coming, and the stronger the Mountain and Sea Realm was in general, the better. However, despite being aware of that, Meng Hao didn’t choose that course of action.

He was not a hero or a leader, he was just an ordinary cultivator, a former scholar who had always dreamed of being rich.

Had they not provoked him, he could have let things drop. But they had attempted to exterminate the Meng Clan, which was something he couldn’t tolerate. In fact, he didn’t even want to tolerate it.

He snorted coldly and took a step forward. When his foot fell, an incredible pressure began to weigh down, covering the entire area in the blink of an eye.

Rumbling sounds could be heard, as if there were invisible collisions up in the starry sky. The thousands of cultivators from the Seventh Mountain and Sea all coughed up huge mouthfuls of blood, and expressions of complete astonishment and terror covered their faces.

None of them dared to fight back. They remained in place, trembling and looking with terror at Meng Hao, not even daring to make the slightest of movements, let alone flee.

Marquis Lu's face fell, but then he gritted his teeth, causing violet light to radiate out from him. It quickly enveloped him, whereupon he burst into movement, apparently intending to break out from the pressure crushing down from Meng Hao.

“Did I say you could leave?!” Meng Hao said coolly. He took another step forward, vanishing, then reappearing directly in front of Marquis Lu. He waved his hand.

RUMBLE!

An incredible force exploded out from Meng Hao, which transformed into a tempest. When it slammed into Marquis Lu, blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he tumbled backward like a kite with its string cut. A fierce expression could be seen on his face as he managed to stop in place, then glared at Meng Hao, flames of madness dancing in his eyes.

“I'm one of the three Marquis of the Seventh Mountain, Lu Yunli!” he shrieked. “If you dare to harm me, the Seventh Mountain will hunt you down and kill you, no matter where you run to!”

Meng Hao's only response was to take a third step forward, and then unleash the Life-Extermination Fist, shooting forward and slamming his fist into Marquis Lu's chest.

A boom echoed out as Marquis Lu's chest caved in, causing blood to spray out as he fell back. Cracking sounds could even be heard as a layer of magical cloth armor, which had previously been invisible, shattered.

That was one of his life-saving magical items, something which had enabled him to sweep unrivalled across the battlefield when fighting the Heavengod Alliance. He had even relied on it to kill some of the Dao Realm experts of the Eighth Mountain and Sea. And yet, Meng Hao shattered it with a single blow.

“All of you, attack immediately! Kill him!” Marquis Lu cried urgently, face ashen. The other cultivators of the Seventh Mountain and Sea around him hesitated, but about a thousand of them gritted their teeth and charged forward. They quickly formed into groups of nine, arranging themselves in special formation. Those spell formations then grouped into nines to create a grand spell formation!

Rumbling could be heard as dozens of spell formations appeared in the starry sky, which then shot toward Meng Hao. Brilliant lights flashed, and the ripples of divine abilities spread out. However, Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he made a grasping motion, which tore a rift open. The Blood Demon roared out, instantly charging toward the spell formations. Surrounded by the sounds of explosions, Meng Hao pierced through the spell formations and began to chase down Marquis Lu.

Madness could be seen in Marquis Lu's eyes. The fact that Meng Hao could simply disregard the spell formations caused that madness to grow more intense. Throwing caution to the wind, he threw his head back and roared.

"You made me do this!" he roared, extending his hand and causing the totem tattoo there to radiate violet light. It grew more and more intense, and in the blink of an eye, violet qi suddenly began to swirl around. Astonishingly, it transformed into... an enormous head.

It had eight horns on its head, its skin was greenish-black, and its face resembled that of a human. As soon as it appeared, a shocking energy burst out, causing the starry sky to tremble. Furthermore... the face emanated an aura that was not of the Mountain and Sea Realm.

It was... an Outsider!

An Outsider from the 33 Heavens!

As soon as Meng Hao saw it, he could tell where it came from. At the same time, he could sense the Mountain and Sea Realm stirring with hatred, with the desire to destroy Outsiders, to destroy anything with that blood running through their veins.

The Outsider threw its head back and roared, causing the starry sky to shatter, and a massive tempest to spring up and spin toward Meng Hao. Simultaneously, the head shot away from Marquis Lu's hand and headed toward Meng Hao as if to consume him.

"DIE!" screamed Marquis Lu, his face twisted with madness. This was his trump card, something that sucked away at his longevity every time he used it, forcing him to be very cautious about how he utilized it. It was also the entire reason he had charged into the Meng Clan's territory with complete disregard for Meng Hao.

In his mind, the totem tattoo essentially made him invincible to 4-Essences enemies, and enabled him to fight it out with 5-Essences cultivators. In fact, during the fighting against the Heavengod Alliance, he had even fought to a draw with the Heavengod Alliance's Chief Dharma Protector.

Because of that, he was incredibly confident, and his killing intent was currently surging. Now that he had sent the enormous head against Meng Hao, he was sure that Meng Hao was as good as dead.

“This totem tattoo is a precious treasure that my Mountain and Sea Lord bestowed upon me. It draws upon the soul of a Heavenly Devil from the Outside world and gives me the power to fight against five Essences! It doesn't matter who you are, you're DEAD!!

“After you're dead, the rest of the Eighth Mountain and Sea will accompany you to the Yellow Springs, and the Meng Clan that escaped to the Ninth Mountain and Sea will still be exterminated. Even the Ninth Mountain and Sea will be destroyed!

“In the coming war, nobody will be safe. You're dead no matter what!!” Marquis Lu threw his head back and roared madly, drawing upon his longevity to power the totem. Stabbing pain filled his mind, making him go even crazier, to the point where he began to lose his grip on consciousness.

And yet he still maintained control. Performing an incantation gesture, he made the gigantic Outsider's mouth open wide. Its eyes shone with a red light as it made to devour Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and he snorted coldly. As the Outsider's head closed in on him, he extended his hand and pointed at it.

It was none other than the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex!

Meng Hao had known that his Demon Sealing Hexing magic was especially effective on Outsiders. As soon as he finished waving his finger, he waved it again to unleash the Seventh Demon Sealing Hex. Then came the Sixth Hex and the Fifth Hex.

Four waves of a finger caused the Outsider to scream miserably. Black mist began to roil out from inside of it, as it twisted and distorted, howling, “Nine... Seals... Hexing... Magic.... DAMMIT!!”

It began to corrode, sending black mist out in all directions. Marquis Lu was shaking, and began to wither as his longevity was rapidly sucked away. However, instead of fleeing, he charged Meng Hao, face twisted with madness.

“Well, aren’t you interesting,” Meng Hao said, eyes flickering. He then reached out and made a grasping motion, but instead of utilizing the power of the Mountain and Sea Realm he unleashed the Star Plucking Magic.

His Ancient Mana flowed, and his 33 Soul Lamps burned brightly. Combining the power of his fleshly body with that of his cultivation base caused Meng Hao to explode with battle prowess equivalent to five Essences, and that was without the power of the Mountains and Seas!

It was... a terrifying power that was second only to that of a Mountain and Sea Lord. Rumbling could be heard as the Outsider screamed, its face twisting as it sped uncontrollably toward Meng Hao.

If Meng Hao managed to grab it, then he would have the soul’s life or death within his control. However the face suddenly screamed and began to turn blurry; apparently, it had chosen to self-detonate.

As the face exploded, it used that power to break free, blocking the hand of the Star Plucking Magic and simultaneously transforming into a stream of black mist that began to shoot back toward Marquis Lu.

Meng Hao swished his sleeve, causing a tempest to spring up. The power of the self-detonation instantly faded away, and Meng Hao took a step forward toward the black mist.

The black mist moved so fast that Marquis Lu didn’t have any time to react. It streamed into his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth, causing him to tremble and then let out a bloodcurdling scream, as if he were being possessed.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered coldly as he closed in. He was just about to perform an incantation gesture when Marquis Lu, face covered in black mist, let out an insane howl.

His energy then spiked, and his skin began to turn green and sprout scales. His head split open as eight horns grew out. Furthermore, his lips split in half so that his mouth was in the shape of a cross. In the blink of an eye, he grew to a height of thirty meters.

Vicious-looking spikes even pierced out through his clothing. Shockingly, what was standing in front of Meng Hao now was no longer a cultivator, but a humanoid beast!

It was... an Outsider!

The faces of the other cultivators from the Seventh Mountain and Sea fell, and they began to back up. Clearly, even they had not known the true origin of Marquis Lu's totem tattoo.

There were only a few dozen whose faces flickered with what seemed to be panic, but which Meng Hao saw through to the zeal and devotion toward this version of Marquis Lu that was hidden beneath.

"You're dead! DEAD, I tell you!!" The beast-form of Marquis Lu threw his head back and howled, causing his energy to rise higher and higher. Then, his eyes turned red, and he seemingly lost all control of himself, descending fully into madness as he charged Meng Hao.

Chapter 1288: Seizing All Opportunities!

In almost the same instant in which Marquis Lu turned into a beast, Meng Hao could sense a rage welling up from the Mountain and Sea Realm, which grew clearer by the second. It would be impossible for others to sense how intense it was, or perhaps they would even believe it to be a figment of their imagination, but in any case, it affected people subconsciously, filling them with a loathing toward Outsiders.

Of course, Meng Hao could plainly detect this rage, which filled him with the desire to slaughter this Outsider. At the same time, he could sense the fluctuations of the Outsider's actual body, which were coming from... the 33 Heavens beyond the starry sky.

"The rage of the Mountain and Sea Realm, huh?" Meng Hao looked at the roaring Outsider, whose surging cultivation base exceeded that of the 5-Essences Xiao Yihan. "It's a possession, and at the same time, not a possession.... It's the projected image of a powerful expert from outside in the 33 Heavens, which possessed Marquis Lu. However, the reason it was able to possess him so quickly was that he's actually been this thing's host body for quite some time already." Meng Hao's eyes flickered as he advanced, using the power of his fleshly body to slam into the Outsider.

A boom rang out, and then they separated. Blood sprayed out of Meng Hao's mouth, and it was the same with the Outsider. Furthermore, the Outsider's chest had caved in, and was leaking violet blood.

"A powerful fleshly body. However, this is only a portion of the power of the Outsider's real body.... Now that I think about it, whichever Outsider in the 33 Heavens is controlling this thing

must be someone famous.” Meng Hao’s eyes glittered. Performing an incantation gesture, he sent the Essence of Divine Flame exploding out, instantly enveloping the Outsider.

The Outsider roared, causing numerous huge wooden logs to appear, the surfaces of which were carved with mysterious magical symbols. The logs also erupted with Essence power as they shot to meet Meng Hao’s Essence of Divine Flame.

After a moment of thought, Meng Hao waved his hand, causing the Divine Flame to dissipate. Then he performed an incantation gesture and pointed out with his finger. Instantly, numerous mountains began to descend. Meng Hao didn’t stop moving, though; he unleashed one magical technique after another, all of which slammed into the Outsider, as he attempted to get a better understanding of its body and cultivation base.

The Outsider roared under the bombardment of divine abilities. Then its eyes flickered and it extended its hand toward Meng Hao, making a grasping gesture. That gesture caused Meng Hao’s heart to tremble, and he suddenly vanished. A moment later, the spot that he had occupied collapsed under a sudden onslaught of flame lightning.

That wasn’t the end of it though. Even as Meng Hao reappeared off in the distance, the Outsider’s eyes flickered with killing intent, and it threw its head back and roared, splaying its hands wide above its head, almost as if it were worshipping the sky above.

It was at this point that the starry sky began to tremble, and an aura which clearly did not come from the Mountain and Sea Realm began to spread out in all directions. The aura then began to congeal and take shape into the form... of a gigantic basilisk lizard!

It was fully 30,000 meters long and had towering energy. Meng Hao could sense the killing intent of the Mountain and Sea Realm explode to new heights. However, for some reason, it was being suppressed, and was unable to be released. It did not provoke the same type of transformations that had occurred in the Mountains and Seas when the Outsider appeared back in the Ruins of Immortality.

“True self, obliterate!” the Outsider roared. The scales on its body shattered, causing blood to spray out. The blood then shot out into the void, and in the blink of an eye, converged onto the right eye of the shocking basilisk. That scarlet-colored eye appeared to gleam with intelligence.

The eye turned to look at Meng Hao, filling his mind with intense pressure that caused his face to flicker.

“Paragon... Not 9-Essences, but at least 7-Essences,” he thought, shaken. A sensation of deadly crisis rose up, and his eyes flickered. He then made a grasping motion, summoning the power of the Mountains and Seas to defend himself.

It was at that point that a red beam shot out from the lizard’s eye, filled with terrifying destructive power. It shot directly toward Meng Hao, slamming into the converged power of the Mountains and Seas.

Rumbling echoed out as terrifying ripples spread out from the red beam. The power of the Mountains and Seas faded away, and the red glow in the huge basilisk’s right eye faded away.

Meng Hao waved his right hand, summoning the Paragon Bridge, which rumbled down to smash onto the body of the basilisk. As his battle prowess erupted, he waved his right finger through the air, causing the power of the Mountains and Seas to slash into the Outsider, sending blood spraying about everywhere.

That wave of a finger caused the starry sky to tremble. Marquis Lu, in the form of an Outsider, trembled and then let out a bloodcurdling scream. Performing an incantation gesture, he unleashed all of the power he could to fight back. However, a moment later, what seemed to be an enormous invisible finger appeared, apparently converged from the power of the Mountains and Seas, which pressed down onto him.

Blood sprayed out of his mouth as he fell back, his arms shattered, his chest caved in, exploding in a mass of blood and gore. As for the basilisk projection, it was crushed by the Paragon Bridge, and began to howl as it faded away.

“It would be a real pity to let you die like this,” Meng Hao said. Even as Marquis Lu in Outsider-form began to collapse into pieces, Meng Hao appeared next to him and reached out to grab the top of his shattering head. It was a Soulsearh!

However, what he was Soulsearhing was not just Marquis Lu’s soul. Rather, he was also using it as a bridge... to connect to the soul of the almighty expert above in the 33 Heavens.

That expert might be a Paragon, but Meng Hao would still perform the Soulsearh anyway. He wanted to know... exactly how much of a difference there was between his divine sense and that of a Paragon!

RUMBLE!

Marquis Lu's head trembled, and his eyes were fixed on Meng Hao. As of that moment, Meng Hao could see all of his memories, and at the same time, he could sense a faint and fraying thread connecting Marquis Lu to the 33 Heavens above the starry sky. Without a moment of hesitation, he began to follow that thread.

In almost the exact same instant that he began to follow the thread, his mind trembled, and he sensed a powerful will on the other end, something that he couldn't match up to by even ten percent.

He only made brief contact with that entity via divine sense, and yet the backlash almost destroyed him. He shot backward, eyes gleaming. He wasn't thinking about how he had almost been destroyed, nor was he thinking about his injuries. Instead... he was thinking about the rare chance he had!

It was an opportunity to dramatically increase the power of his divine sense!

A roar was echoing out from that towering divine sense, as if the Soulsearching Meng Hao had instigated was an unprecedented provocation of the Paragon in the 33 Heavens.

Divine sense rumbled out, shooting directly toward Meng Hao to eradicate him.

All of these things take some time to describe, but this battle of divine sense actually happened in an instant. Meng Hao's divine sense began to collapse almost immediately, and he followed the tiny remaining thread back into the Mountain and Sea Realm.

At the same time, the divine sense from the 33 Heavens' Paragon followed him!

Blood instantly sprayed out of Meng Hao's mouth, and his face went deathly pale. He shot backward, and Marquis Lu's head exploded into a haze of blood. At the same time, that boundless divine sense power shot out from the blood toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered as killing intent exploded out from all directions, enveloping everything. The divine sense was instantly suppressed, and simultaneously the thread connecting it to the 33 Heavens was severed due to Marquis Lu's death.

The pressure of the entire Mountain and Sea Realm had severed the divine sense from its true form. Next, Meng Hao, eyes glittering, suddenly opened his mouth and sucked in a huge breath.

As he did, rumbling sounds echoed out, and the divine sense was absorbed into his body. His mind felt like it was about to explode, and blood oozed out of his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. However, at the same time, the power of the Dao Divinity Scripture rotated madly within him.

After cultivating the Dao Divinity Scripture, Meng Hao had long since come to realize that it was actually a supreme Daoist scripture designed to allow the person who cultivated it to consume the divine sense of others and make it their own.

However, this time, he was consuming the divine sense of a Paragon. Although it was only a bit of the entire thing, to Meng Hao, it counted as a significant increase. He was shaking, and blood was pouring out of his orifices. A mist of blood surrounded him, and pain wracked his body; he felt like he was about to explode.

He coughed up one mouthful of blood after another, and his body shook so violently it felt like it would collapse. His Eternal stratum operated madly, forcing him to stay alive. Over and over again, blood sprayed out of his mouth, and he hovered on the brink of collapse.

He was a mangled mass of blood, and the flame of his life force was teetering on the verge of being extinguished. And yet, his eyes were shining brightly.

Then, a roar echoed out from beyond the starry sky, from the 33 Heavens, a roar of rage that could destroy Heaven and Earth.

A moment later, Meng Hao shuddered, and then the collapse of his body stopped. The Paragon's divine sense had been forcefully absorbed and suppressed, but only temporarily; he needed to quickly find a suitable place to go into secluded meditation and fuse with it.

His eyes were shot with blood, and his body was incredibly weak. However, his divine sense had experienced explosive growth, and was at least twice as powerful as before...and he had just begun the absorption!

With that vastly more powerful divine sense, he looked over at the cultivators of the Seventh Mountain and Sea, who stood there trembling, not even daring to look at him. Most of them had heads bowed, and were kneeling in worship.

Meng Hao wiped the blood off of his mouth, then coldly looked up into the depths of the sky. Just now, he had experienced a brush with death; consuming the divine sense of a Paragon had been a very risky thing to do.

Even the Paragon out in the 33 Heavens had never even considered that someone would do something so wildly insane. That was because that person didn't know Meng Hao, and didn't know his philosophy that not acquiring something was the same as losing it.

Meng Hao was the type of person who, when encountering a Paragon whom he couldn't kill, would scheme to take that person's divine sense.

“Rewards come only with risk. How true, how true!” Meng Hao licked his lips.

Chapter 1289: Extinguishing the First Lamp!

[/expand]

Meng Hao ignored the reverence being offered by the cultivators from the Seventh Mountain and Sea. He turned and vanished, killing no one. The fact that they had all been so shocked by the sudden appearance of an Outsider was very telling.

However, there had been some whose eyes had revealed looks of devotion, although they had pretended to be surprised. As for those people, a moment later their heads all exploded, and they were killed in body and spirit.

The survivors looked around in shock, then slowly dispersed. None of them went back to the battlefields in the Heavengod Alliance. To them, seeing Marquis Lu turn into an Outsider was a huge shock. Because of the seed of hatred toward Outsiders which had been planted in their hearts, they began to speculate as to the implications of what had occurred.

When Meng Hao reappeared, he was far off in the distance, where he yet again coughed up a mouthful of blood. The Paragon's divine sense had once again burst out within him, breaking past its suppression. The Dao Divinity Scripture then began to operate madly, consuming the divine sense. Meng Hao gritted his teeth as blood spurted out of his wounds, and his body hovered on the brink of collapse.

He then struggled to perform a teleportation, reappearing on an asteroid some distance away. He quickly bored his way into the heart of the asteroid, where he sat down cross-legged, closed his eyes, and began to meditate.

Before slipping into deep meditation, he quickly set up layer upon layer of restrictive spells around himself. If anyone had been watching, they would have even seen the asteroid distort, and then seemingly vanish. In reality, it had merely been cloaked.

No one would be able to detect the asteroid or Meng Hao unless they had a cultivation base and divine sense superior to his.

Seven days passed by rather quickly. During that time, Meng Hao experienced numerous near-death encounters. His body almost collapsed several times, and was barely held together by his Eternal stratum, as well as the consumption of medicinal pills.

He became quite gaunt, until he was almost nothing more than skin and bones. However, his eyes shone brightly, the reason being that during the seven days, his divine sense grew vastly more powerful!

In fact, by now, it had experienced threefold growth compared to before!

Such explosive growth in divine sense enabled Meng Hao to be much more confident regarding the use of his cultivation base, and also helped him to understand his divine abilities and magical techniques much better. Not only was he able to control and use them better, but, more importantly, the increase in divine sense led him to the position... where extinguishing the Soul Lamps of the Ancient Realm was now a distinct possibility!

After the seven days passed, Meng Hao opened his eyes. His body was no longer hovering on the brink of collapse. He was weak, and yet, the flame of his life force now burned hotter than ever, and was much more stable.

“Finally, it’s all been consumed,” he said slowly, eyes shining with intense brightness. “My divine sense is now thirty percent that of the divine sense of a Paragon....”

A smile twisted his face as he waved his sleeve, causing 33 Soul Lamps to suddenly appear around him.

After examining them for a moment, he gritted his teeth and closed his eyes. Rotating his cultivation base, he began to heal himself; because of the increase in his divine sense, his Eternal stratum was now much more powerful, which made him recover even faster.

This time, it only took a single day to recover from his gaunt state. Now, his cultivation base and his fleshly body were completely recovered to their peak state, as was his soul and divine sense.

Finally, he opened his eyes and looked at his first Soul Lamp. That lamp was at its peak, and was the first of the lot to have ceased absorbing the energy of Heaven and Earth

Meng Hao studied the lamp for a while, and the decisiveness in his eyes slowly began to turn into hesitation. After a while though, the decisiveness returned, and he made his decision.

He would... extinguish his first Soul Lamp, and experience that reversal of life and death that occurred along with the extinguishing of Soul Lamps.

“I have to extinguish these Soul Lamps eventually anyway. I’m now unprecedentedly powerful in terms of my fleshly body and my divine sense. Furthermore, I can tell that power of one’s divine sense and the strength of one’s soul are critical factors in extinguishing Soul Lamps.

“At the same time, I can test out... if extinguishing the first Soul Lamp will have some effect on the other Soul Lamps’ capacity to absorb the energy of Heaven and Earth.” Meng Hao eyed the first Soul Lamp, then clenched his jaw and unhesitatingly waved his hand in the direction of the lamp.

The first Soul Lamp immediately began to sway back and forth, and the flame inside began to flicker, as if it could be extinguished at any moment. That effect was the result, not of Meng Hao’s actual waving of the hand, but rather, the fact that all his willpower was focused on extinguishing the lamp.

Only when one’s will and body are aligned, can the lamps be extinguished!

“Extinguish!” he said softly. As the words left his mouth, the flame of the first Soul Lamp... winked out!

In the moment it was extinguished, Meng Hao trembled. The Soul Lamp was absorbed into his soul, and also connected to his blood, as if it had become part of his very life. In that moment, though, the shadow of death completely covered him.

Meng Hao began to shiver as the flame of his life force rapidly darkened. His vitality waned, on the verge of winking out, and his cultivation base couldn't rotate. Even the power of his divine sense was difficult to operate, and his thoughts began to fade.

An aura of death gradually began to emanate out from him, growing stronger and stronger. His soul also withered, and his fleshly body seemed to decay.

It was a strange sight; Meng Hao seemed to be hovering on the verge of death, his aura becoming weaker and weaker.

If anyone could observe him in that moment, that is what they would see.

The truth of the matter, though, was that although Meng Hao's eyes were shut, he was looking at... a different world. The inside of the asteroid was completely gray, and in fact, everything that he could see was also gray.

He rose to his feet and was shocked to find that his body remained in the same position as before, sitting there cross-legged. What had risen up was apparently his soul, which was in the process of dispersing.

He stepped forward and looked back at his fleshly body sitting there in meditation. He could see that his body was withering, and that his blood was wasting away. He saw the thick aura of death, and realized that his soul was dispersing. All of that made Meng Hao feel as if he were right at death's door.

"So this is what it's like to extinguish the Soul Lamps of the Ancient Realm..." he murmured. It was back in the Fang Clan that he had learned about extinguishing Soul Lamps. What he had learned was that every Ancient Realm cultivator experienced something different in the moment of extinguishing. Not only every person, but every single lamp was different.

However, throughout all the years, a certain general set of rules become clear to cultivators.

“My extinguishing of Soul Lamps in the Ancient Realm will be comprised of the Seven Desolations!” he murmured, eyes shining.

“Every five lamps brings one Desolation. Few people experience the Fourth Desolation, and even rarer is the Fifth Desolation. Some people only experience the Third Desolation.... The further along you get, the more dangerous they become....

“The First Desolation is also called the Desolation of Delusion....

“Well then, this must be the Desolation of Delusion.” Meng Hao walked back, sat down cross-legged in the same position as his fleshly body, and attempted to re-connect his soul.

However, nothing worked. It was as if his body were rejecting his soul. Meng Hao frowned, then stood up again. His fleshly body was even more withered than before, causing his expression to turn grim. He suddenly flickered into motion, appearing outside of the asteroid. When he looked around, he saw nothing but endless fog, swirling and churning. Everything was completely silent.

“The Desolation of Delusion,” he murmured, “The Desolation of Delusion.... Where does the ‘delusion’ part come in...?” He turned to look back in the direction of the asteroid, and suddenly realized that the asteroid had changed. It was now a huge, crimson heart, thumping and writhing. Countless faces could be seen on its surface, all of them howling at Meng Hao. Furthermore, those faces... looked familiar.

They were all the people he had killed in his life.

He looked coldly at the faces, and began to back up slowly. In that instant, a huge hand appeared, covered with blood-colored scales. It shot out from within the heart, rumbling toward him as it sought to crush him, causing everything in the area to shatter.

Its power caused the surrounding fog to writhe, and as it stretched out, it was joined by a vicious voice that echoed out from inside the heart.

“Meng Hao... I’ve been waiting for a long time.... Didn’t I say that when the time came to extinguish your Soul Lamps, I would come back!?” The roar echoed out in all directions, and the heart began to shrink. In the blink of an eye, it shattered, disappearing along with the hand.

However, the cold voice continued to echo out.

“I’ve erased the projection of your fleshly body. You’ll never find the path back now. You’re stuck here. Soon, your fleshly body will wither up completely, and your blood will run dry. Your divine sense will vanish, and your soul... will dissipate within this place.”

Meng Hao’s face darkened, and he waved his sleeve. Instantly, the shattered pieces of the heart which had been flying about stopped falling down.

“The Desolation of Delusion is this entire place....” he thought. “A desolate, illusory world which appears after extinguishing the first Soul Lamp. My soul was pulled in here, and if I can’t get it back into my fleshly body before my body withers up, then I’ll definitely die. Whoever thought that the extinguishing of the first Soul Lamp would be like this?”

“If I hadn’t consumed that divine sense from the 33 Heavens’ Paragon, then this might have been a bit of a difficult situation. But now....” Meng Hao laughed coldly. After all, despite being only a soul, his divine sense was still there. Suddenly, that divine sense exploded out, sweeping around him in all directions.

In the blink of an eye, his divine sense spread out to cover an area the size of what his previous divine sense could reach at its very limit. To him, however that was merely thirty percent of his total divine sense.

“Again!” he said, sending his divine sense sweeping out even further in all directions, sending out boundless ripples that caused the fog to seethe.

“Gotcha!” he said, eyes glittering. Astonishingly, he had just caught sight of an asteroid off in the fog, an asteroid which was the location of his fleshly body.

“Impossible!!” someone roared madly from within the fog. It was the same voice that had spoken just now, which was also the same voice he had heard during his Ancient Tribulation.

Chapter 1290: Returning to the Heavengod Alliance

“Nothing’s impossible,” Meng Hao said with a cold snort. His divine sense exploded out, and the fog within it seethed as though some gigantic, invisible hand were stirring it. It only took a moment for all of the fog to begin to spin around.

If it were possible to view the scene from high above, it would appear as if all of the fog in the world had transformed into a vortex, breaking the silence and causing rumbling sounds to echo out in all directions.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever as he hovered there in the center of the vortex, his body seemingly ethereal and illusory. At the same time, a powerful aura emanated out from him, the power of his soul, combined with the power of his divine sense!

By this point, Meng Hao's divine sense was at forty percent of the power of a Paragon.

Such power might not seem like much, but in truth, it had already reached a shocking level. After all... the power of the divine sense of a 5-Essences Dao Sovereign was only ten percent of that of a Paragon. Even the various powerful Mountain and Sea Lords would at most have thirty percent. Only 6-Essences Dao Sovereigns, at their very peak, could come close to forty or fifty percent.

Right now, though, Meng Hao already had the divine sense of a 6-Essences Dao Sovereign, and when it exploded out, wild colors flashed in Heaven and Earth, and the starry sky trembled. After all... a 6-Essences Dao Sovereign was the most powerful entity in existence beneath a Paragon!

Furthermore, Paragons were incredibly rare. For the most part, 6-Essences Dao Sovereigns could be considered invincible.

Meng Hao's divine sense rumbled out, and his energy soared. He strode forward, and when his foot fell, he was directly back in front of the asteroid!

All it took was a single step!

In that instant, a furious roar echoed out from within the void, and the huge hand with red scales stretched out to crush Meng Hao.

"Just what I was waiting for," Meng Hao said with a cold snort. As the hand closed in on him, Meng Hao raised his arms, and his eyes flickered with a cold gleam of killing intent.

"Detonate!" As soon as he uttered that single word, this entire world which was suffused with his divine sense exploded out with destructive power that began to tear away at everything, starting at the borders, with Meng Hao's location in the center.

From a distance, it would look as though the edges of the vortex were collapsing, layer by layer, growing closer to the middle. Even the body from which the huge hand extended, which was hidden within the void, was being enveloped by the destructive power of Meng Hao's divine sense.

BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOMMMM!

Massive, shocking rumbling could be heard, and the scaled hand didn't even have a chance to reach Meng Hao. A miserable scream rang out as it was overwhelmed by divine sense, and then shredded to pieces.

At the same time, not too far off from Meng Hao, within the void, an enormous figure became visible. It was just an outline, and was impossible to distinguish clearly, but it was fully 30,000 meters tall, with two horns growing out of its head. It was crimson, and was apparently a unique Greater Demon. As Meng Hao's destructive divine sense overwhelmed it, it howled.

"I'm gonna kill you!!" it shrieked, fighting back against the power of Meng Hao's divine sense, and even taking a step forward as if to approach him.

Meng Hao's expression was cold as he waved his hand at the figure.

"Scram!" All he said was a single word.

However, when that single word left his mouth, the power of his divine sense became even more explosive. Now, it didn't spread out in all directions, it was completely focused on a single point. Instead of shattering his surroundings, he used all of that power to create a tempest which swept over the enormous figure.

Massive rumbling sounds echoed out, and the huge creature howled miserably. It was no longer trying to approach Meng Hao, but instead was being shoved back relentlessly by the tempest that was Meng Hao's divine sense.

"I refuse to accept this!" the creature roared furiously. However, it couldn't prevent itself from being forced backward, and in the blink of an eye, it was far, far off in the distance.

“You refuse, and so do I,” Meng Hao said coolly. “Next time... you don’t need to come looking for me, I’ll come find you.” With that, he strode toward the asteroid, floated inside, and then found his fleshly body sitting there cross-legged.

His body was withered to an extreme degree, and abounded with an aura of death. He was clearly on the verge of dying.

Meng Hao didn’t hesitate for a moment. He quickly approached his body and then sat down cross-legged in the same position. His mind rumbled, and then he fused.

Back in the Eighth Mountain and Sea, within that asteroid that no one could see, the cross-legged Meng Hao suddenly trembled. Then his eyes snapped open, and their previously listless gray color changed to a bright gleam. At the same time, his fleshly body reverted from its withered state, and the aura of death vanished from his blood and flesh. His life force gradually began to surge.

Meng Hao took a deep breath, then slowly closed his eyes. His first Soul Lamp was now completely extinguished; a wisp of smoke curled up, which almost seemed to possess intelligence as it swirled into his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. In that instant, the extinguished Soul Lamp erupted with a shocking aura that filled Meng Hao.

He shivered as his fleshly body was fully restored, and his blood began to flow vigorously. At the same time, his cultivation base rose up. Everything except the physical aspect of him was rapidly increasing in power.

It was the same with his soul and his divine sense. Everything rocketed up. His divine sense increased, although not doubling as he had expected but, rather, increasing by a fraction. Even still, Meng Hao’s energy had now reached a completely shocking level.

His aura climbed, and he virtually thrummed with the sensation of increasing power.

Three days passed by in the blink of an eye.

Suddenly, the void distorted as the previously invisible asteroid once again became visible. Then, it collapsed, although no sound emanated out at all. The entire massive asteroid noiselessly... transformed into ash, as if it had disintegrated.

Floating within that ash was a cross-legged figure, Meng Hao. He was surrounded by 33 Soul Lamps... 32 lit, 1 extinguished!

Ripples spread out from him that caused the starry sky to tremble, but then quickly vanished. His eyes snapped open, and they glowed brightly; for some reason, even the starry sky seemed to brighten.

Meng Hao took a deep breath, causing massive amounts of the energy of Heaven and Earth to rumble into him. Then, he slowly breathed out.

“The Ancient Realm...” he said softly, “This is where cultivators can advance by leaps and bounds, a place where the rotten can be changed into the magical. What a mystical Realm!” With that, he rose to his feet, whereupon cracking sounds echoed out from inside him.

Meng Hao looked over the rest of the 32 lit Soul Lamps, then slowly shook his head. “Unfortunately, it’s not as I had speculated before. The remaining Soul Lamps will not become more powerful as I do.”

Finally, he waved his sleeve, causing the Soul Lamps to grow blurry and fade away.

“I need to finish things here in the Eighth Mountain and Sea, and then get to the Fourth Mountain and Sea as quickly as possible... to bring Xu Qing back.” He turned his head to look off in the direction of the Seventh Mountain and Sea, except, what he was looking at was not that Seventh Mountain and Sea, but rather, several Mountains and Seas beyond... to the Fourth Mountain and Sea.

“According to the memories of Marquis Lu... war... is not just being fought here.” After reviewing the information he had gleaned from the Sousearch, he realized that the Seventh Mountain and Sea wasn’t the only Mountain and Sea within the Realm which was invading a neighbor.

“The Sixth Mountain and Sea has also started a Mountain and Sea War.

“The Seventh Mountain and Sea invaded the Eighth with more than one purpose in mind. They also want use this location as a spot from which to march on to the Ninth Mountain and Sea.

“As for the Sixth Mountain and Sea, they have invaded the Fifth Mountain and Sea with exactly the same goal in mind... to lock down a position from which to attack the most powerful of all the

Mountains and Seas, the Fourth!” After a moment of thought, Meng Hao took a step forward, heading in the direction of the Heavengod Alliance.

Without having to worry about the Meng Clan, he was free to act however he wished. In his view, the best way to end the war was not to simply prevent the cultivators of the Seventh Mountain and Sea from attacking the Eighth Mountain and Sea. Instead... he needed to go to the rift between the two Mountains and Seas, to face the ever-nearing Lord of the Seventh Mountain and Sea!

His eyes flickered thoughtfully as he got closer and closer to the Heavengod Alliance. As he did, he could sense familiar fluctuations coming from the Eighth Mountain, which was located within the territory of the Heavengod Alliance.

Several hours later, Meng Hao was at one of the entrances to the Heavengod Alliance. The planet that had once existed there was gone; it had become nothing more than rubble filled with corpses and ruins.

This was a place the Seventh Mountain and Sea had long since attacked and breached. It had also become their command center, and the ruins stretching out bore strong semblance to the Ruins of Immortality.

Both were the crumbled remnants left behind by war.

Meng Hao looked around and then proceeded into the territory of the Heavengod Alliance. As he went along, he could sense the ripples that were the remnants of magical techniques, as well as the all-pervasive sensation of blood and gore.

Off in the distance, he saw a few dozen figures making their way through the ruins and rubble, searching for cultivators who were feigning death and killing them, then looting their magical items and bags of holding.

As soon as Meng Hao appeared, those figures saw him, and almost immediately, their eyes flickered with killing intent. They sent their divine sense out, and when it reached Meng Hao, they could tell that he was only in the Ancient Realm, and vicious smiles broke out on their faces.

“So it’s a leftover cultivator from the Eighth Mountain and Sea. Kill him!” As soon as the words rang out, the dozens of cultivators powered up their cultivation bases, and their killing intent surged. Their eyes were red from the months of killing they had already participated in. Unfortunately for them, their cultivation bases didn’t qualify to be able to detect how truly terrifying Meng Hao was.

Thinking him to be just another cultivator who had survived the recent battle, they closed in to finish him off.