

## The Heavens 271

Chapter 271: Soul Emergence Sword, Slay the Lone Star!

The boom which sounded out could be heard for fifty kilometers in every direction. The tens of thousands of Southern Domain Cultivators looked on in shock. Even the screen above the Dao Geysir flickered.

As the boom reverberated through the air, popping sounds could be heard as cracks filled the shield surrounding Meng Hao. Finally, it collapsed into countless pieces which then drifted away.

A bit of blood seeped out of the corner of the azure-masked Cultivator's mouth. In the process of destroying Meng Hao's Nascent Soul blood shield, he had lost six life swords. This had cost him his Core Qi; it would not be able to recover for the time it takes half an incense stick to burn.

However, the azure-masked Cultivator didn't care. From what he could tell, as long as this Fang Mu didn't have the protection of the Nascent Soul blood, then he could be killed with little difficulty.

His Core Qi would recover in the time it takes half an incense stick to burn. After all, it was produced as a product of his cultivation, and belonged solely to him. In his opinion, if this Fang Mu hadn't possessed the Nascent Soul blood the previous year, it would have been simple to capture him.

"Let's find out how long you can last against me without that blood!" laughed the azure-masked Cultivator. He slapped his bag of holding to produce what appeared to be a ball made of intertwined hair. He flung it out with his left hand.

"Distilled Fiends!" As the man's gruff voice rang out, the hair suddenly expanded into a massive black net, fifty meters wide. It emanated an intense killing aura that shot up into the sky; in the middle of the net could be seen multiple phantom souls. Their faces were filled with agony, and they emitted soundless wails.

A buzz of conversation immediately arose among the tens of thousands of Southern Domain Cultivators. It seemed many of them recognized the treasured item which the azure-masked Cultivator had produced.

“Black Lands Distilled Fiends Net!! That’s one of the three great treasures of Black Lands Cultivators! Any Black Lands Cultivator can create it, but each one will be different, based on the personality of who created it. The power of each treasure will also be different.”

“It’s definitely a Black Lands Distilled Fiends Net, created from living souls. Living people are distilled down into souls, which are then sealed into hair and then weaved into a net. It’s a shocking, sordid treasure which is so sinister that it is impervious to all poisons under Heaven.”

“I can’t believe that Black Lands Cultivators really are all so cruel and merciless! That net must have over a thousand souls in it....”

Meng Hao’s eyes narrowed. The killing aura of this Distilled Fiends Net rose into the sky, and the silent screams of the souls filled the air. Looking at it, Meng Hao felt as if his own soul were about to be torn from his body.

“So,” he thought, “he’s using this treasure to counter my Dao of poison!” He lifted his right hand and waved it in front of him. The pill bottles in front of him flew out and then exploded in mid-air. Massive quantities of colorful mist poured out, filling the surroundings. Anyone who looked at it would be immediately shocked; it clearly contained multiple types of poisons.

As the mist roiled out, the Distilled Fiends Net flew through the air. As soon as the two ran into each other, hissing sounds emanated from the poison mist. In the blink of an eye, the souls within the Distilled Fiends Net began to consume the mist.

At the same time, the net began to spread out, surrounding Meng Hao.

The azure-masked Cultivator’s hands flashed with relentless incantation gestures, and he would occasionally gesture with a finger. The souls within the Distilled Fiends Net shrieked and consumed the poison mist. At the same time, the net drew closer to Meng Hao, threatening to envelop him completely.

The azure-masked Cultivator’s eyes were cold. There were many magics that he could use, but he had opted for the Distilled Fiends Net. This was not only because he feared Meng Hao’s poisons, but even more so because he wanted him to die screaming. The more miserable and shrill his cries, the more his own anger could be sated.

The mist was rapidly diminishing and the Distilled Fiends Net was shrinking. It was now less than fifty meters away from Meng Hao. Meng Hao’s eyes flickered. He could sense the Cultivation base

breakthrough Qi inside of him growing larger as he battled against Core Formation. It circulated rapidly, and seemed that at any moment, his ninth Dao Pillar would appear.

“Just a little bit more!” he thought, his eyes glittering coldly. He lifted his right hand to produce one of several poison pills that he had concocted after becoming a Furnace Lord in the East Pill Division....

Poison Flame Pill. Meng Hao crushed the pill between his fingers and then waved his hand. A green Flame Sea immediately roared up.

At the same time, he flung out his left hand, sending more pills soaring into the air. When they hit the green flames, they melted. In the blink of an eye, they transformed into a blue Water Screen. This was Sourceless Alchemy Water!

Water and flame cannot coexist. However, the Water Screen and the Flame Sea both seemed to be working in unison. They spread out with a roar, making a beeline for the Distilled Fiends Net.

“Sourceless Water sets spirits adrift!” Meng Hao’s eyes glittered as the Sourceless Alchemy Water reached the Distilled Fiends Net. It gently passed through the net, covering the souls within. They seemed to stick to it as if it were glue, seemingly about to be pulled completely away from the net.

As the souls were torn away, the green Flame Sea landed, its heat radiating out in all directions.

All of this takes some time to say, but the azure-masked Cultivator reacted in the blink of an eye. Eyes narrowing, he immediately made an incantation gesture with his right hand and then lifted his finger. At the same time as it descended, Meng Hao produced ten black medicinal pills from his bag of holding.

These medicinal pills emitted no medicinal aroma, and in fact emitted a shocking aura. The original pill had not been concocted by Meng Hao, but rather, won from Chen Jiayi. Furthermore, they had not been concocted by a scarlet-robed alchemist of the World Pill Division, but rather a rank higher than that, a golden-robed alchemist who could concoct magic pills. The name of the pill was Magical Thunder Peal!

Chen Jiayi had only possessed one, which had been gifted to him by his Master to study. After winning the pill, Meng Hao had realized how incredible it was and thus made a few copies.

His eyes shone with a cold light as he waved his arm, sending the Magic Thunder Peal pills flying out.

“Thunder, detonate!” he cried suddenly. As his voice echoed out, the ten Magic Thunder Peal pills suddenly exploded. A massive roar filled the air, which transformed into a shocking attack. The Distilled Fiends Net began to tremble, and the souls began to emit miserable shrieks.

Thunder magic can restrain all types of apparitions. Therefore, the Magic Thunder Peal pill was not very useful against Cultivators, but was incredibly powerful when used on souls.

“Fang Mu, how dare you!!!” The azure-masked Cultivator’s heart dripped; he had spent many years refining the Distilled Fiends Net. It was only one step away from turning from a net into a flag, whereupon it would be even more powerful. The net contained a thousand souls, and normally couldn’t be damaged by a Magic Thunder Peal. However... Meng Hao had led with a poison mist, then poison water, then poison flames, and finally the thunder magic. Because of all of these reasons, the souls in the Distilled Fiends Net were being destroyed.

The azure-masked Cultivator’s eyes were filled with veins of blood. A vicious aura blazed from his eyes. He lowered into a half horse stance, then stretched his arms down. He lifted his head, and then stretched his arms out as if he were grasping something. Then he suddenly straightened up.

“Shade Horses, charge!”

Everything grew dark, and gasps could be heard from the tens of thousands of surrounding spectators. Suddenly, in front of the azure-masked Cultivator, nine black horses appeared. A pulsating aura of death emanated off of them.

The nine horses’ flesh was decomposing. They were clad in armor, and emanated a damp coldness. They raised their heads to the sky and neighed as they charged toward Meng Hao.

There were only nine horses, but as they charged, it seemed more like an army of ten thousand horses. In fact, it seemed that riding atop the Shade Horses were intangible spectres. A cold wind screamed out, blasting across Meng Hao.

His eyes flickered. Even as the Distilled Fiends Net dissipated around him, he squinted his eyes. He was filled with a sense of imminent danger, but at the same time, he could also sense the Qi strand within him becoming even more active. It rotated furiously, and he sensed that soon he would be able to achieve a breakthrough in his Cultivation base.

From what he could tell, he was only half a step away from the breakthrough!

He knew that the only way to take that half step was... to fight!!

Without hesitation, he advanced forward. As the nine Shade Horses approached, he lifted his hands, five fingers splayed, and struck forward. Coldness radiated out of his eyes.

“Eighth Demon Sealing Hex!” Meng Hao could suddenly see ghost images springing up everywhere. Everything was overlapping, as if the entire world were filled with duplicates of itself. The ghost images folded in toward the approaching Shade Horses, pushing down onto them.

The Shade Horses suddenly stopped moving and began to tremble. Previously, their eyes had been red and blank, but now they filled with fear. They trembled so hard that it seemed they might disintegrate at any moment.

The sight of it struck fear into the heart of the azure-masked Cultivator.

“Damned Foundation Establishment pup. It’s time to end this fight!” The azure-masked Cultivator’s mind filled with fury. No matter how he attacked, he couldn’t kill his opponent. The battle was being witnessed by the tens of thousands of Cultivators, making the whole thing incredibly embarrassing. His killing intent grew more intense, and he suddenly raised his right hand and pushed down onto his forehead. His eyes began to glow with a crimson light.

“Core Soul Emergence Slaying!” he said suddenly. The indistinct image of an Orange Core began to coalesce out of the top of his head.

“Soul Emergence Sword, Slay the Lone Star!” The azure-masked Cultivator’s body trembled, and he closed his eyes. The instant he did, a fissure appeared on the Orange Core, from which emerged a golden glow. It coalesced into a flying dagger which shot toward Meng Hao.

Atop the dagger was the faint image of a soul, which had the appearance of none other than the azure-faced Cultivator.

This sword disdained all defenses. It looked down on all magical techniques. Its power came from shocking killing intent. Once it emerged, it demanded a slaying!

## Chapter 272: Massive Cultivation Base Breakthrough!

This sword could rock Heaven and Earth!

This sword shook the tens of thousands of Cultivators!

This sword embodied the fury of the azure-masked Cultivator. His desire to kill Meng Hao could grow no higher!

A sense of danger had existed in Meng Hao's heart since the beginning of the battle. However, the moment it had appeared, the Qi strand inside of him had begun to grow rapidly. Soon he would be able to experience a Cultivation base breakthrough.

Currently, Meng Hao had a very strong feeling that if he could stand up to this attack... then he would be able to have that breakthrough. The ancient battle Qi would give rise to his ninth Perfect Dao Pillar; he would be the first Cultivator in ages to be of the great circle of Perfect Foundation Establishment!

Determination filled Meng Hao's eyes. The Soul Sword approached, splitting the air as it raced toward him. Meng Hao suddenly stretched out both of his arms. His eyes were crimson as he called:

"Five Clones of Blood! Come!" Five blood-colored figures suddenly appeared around him. These were none other than the five Blood Clones Meng Hao had created.

The instant they appeared, ghost images sprung up around them as they transformed into their clone essence: the meat jelly skin!

They transformed at almost the same instant as the azure-masked Cultivator's Soul Sword arrived, filled with killing intent. Instead of slamming into Meng Hao's forehead, it hit the meat jelly skin!

A massive explosion filled the air. The five pieces of meat jelly skin were sent flying back, undamaged, but unable to control the force of the impact. They slammed into Meng Hao, causing him to spin backward like a kite with its string cut, blood spraying from his mouth.

The Soul Sword whistled through the air, looking a bit dimmer than before. Obviously the obstruction of the meat jelly skin had shaken it; however, it was nothing more than a pause before it once again shot toward Meng Hao.

Although Meng Hao coughed up some more blood, everything was actually happening just as he had predicted. He retreated backward and, having no time to wipe the blood from his mouth, drew out the Wooden Time Sword.

A ferocious look covered his face, and intense killing intent radiated out. On the surface, it seemed that this battle with Core Formation was an even match; only he knew that the slightest mistake on his part would result in instant death.

It was astounding that he had been able to last as long as he had. The most critical aspect of the fight had of course been when he used the jade pendant to nullify his opponent's powerful Core Qi!

The resulting temporary weakness in his opponent was what had allowed Meng Hao to hold on to this point.

The resulting life-or-death battle was causing the Cultivation base breaking Qi inside him to grow. Every attack he had made caused the Qi strand to grow many times faster than it had in his previous fights with Foundation Establishment.

Therefore, he would not flinch from this battle.

The Time Sword had arrived in the Southern Domain; exactly how powerful it was, Meng Hao wasn't sure. It had whittled away some of Luo Chong's longevity, but he was merely a Foundation Establishment Cultivator, and Meng Hao had expended almost no effort in the attack. He had not even attempted to draw more power out of the sword. But now, he was up against Core Formation.... Meng Hao's eyes filled with decisiveness; the entire battle now rested upon this treasure!

As he lifted up the Wooden Time Sword, he zoned out everything around him. All of his concentration was focused upon the sword. It was as if he were the sword, and the sword were him!

It was hard to tell whether his body followed the movements of the sword, or if the sword followed the indications of his will. Right now, Meng Hao had complete and utter faith in the sword. He had faith that the sword could turn the tide of death!

This faith seems fantastic, but actually, after his mind entered the sword, he underwent a type of spontaneous enlightenment. It was like he was practicing cultivation... that resulted in faith!

The wooden sword did not emit any kind of brilliant light, nor did it send out shocking ripples. It merely rose up and then slashed toward the incoming Soul Sword.

The azure-masked Cultivator's Soul Sword shook.

For the first time in the battle, the azure-masked Cultivator sensed a profound feeling of danger. As he floated there within the soul, he suddenly thought about what had happened to Dao Child Luo Chong.

And yet, he didn't retreat. He was unwilling to retreat, because if he didn't slay Fang Mu, then it would be hard to recall the soul. So he pushed forward at top speed, slamming into the descending Wooden Time Sword.

There was no roaring sound. No boom. Instead, a shocking wind of Time rose up, filling the entire area. It was a song of ages, a glow of life that seemed like some kind of illusion.

An archaic Qi filled the air and then melded with the surroundings. When the Soul Sword and the Wooden Time Sword collided, the azure-masked Cultivator's soul emitted a blood-curdling shriek that no one but he could hear. He had suffered no wound, but instead, was filled with indescribable pain. It was as if... his life force had been injured, as if life itself had been sucked away. Suddenly, he was incomparably weak.

The feeling of weakness filled him with unprecedented fear. It only took an instant for him to realize that the Wooden Time Sword had caused him to lose a full sixty-year cycle of longevity!!

This was the result of only one blow of the sword. Before a second blow could land, the azure-masked Cultivator's soul let out a fierce shout. The Soul Sword shot forward, stabbing completely through Meng Hao's chest and then disappearing in the resulting shower of blood.

Blood sprayed from Meng Hao's mouth, and his face went pale white. His body turned into a beam of colorful light as he fell down toward the Dao Geysir, and the glowing screen.



When the Soul Sword disappeared, the azure-masked Cultivator's body shook. Blood sprayed from his mouth as his eyes opened. As he staggered backward, his body aged. He coughed up more blood. His mask suddenly fell off, revealing the pallid face of an old man, completely devoid of blood.

After entering the Core Formation stage, this man had never met someone as difficult to slay as Meng Hao. He panted, his face pale. He didn't let his guard down at all, though, and was just about to charge again. This was because he knew... the sword had not pierced through Meng Hao's heart. At the last minute, Meng Hao had moved to the side, causing the sword to miss the vital spot.

Suddenly, shock covered his face as he looked toward Meng Hao.

Below, the tens of thousands of Cultivators also looked shocked. They saw everything that had happened, including the sword piercing Meng Hao through the chest. Now, though, their eyes went wide with disbelief.

All eyes were fixed on Meng Hao!

He had been falling, but then he stopped in mid-air. He floated there, and when his eyes opened, they radiated an icy glow. His wound was serious, and even the restorative power of the Violet Pupil Transformation wouldn't enable him to recover in a short period of time.

What was so shocking to the unmasked Cultivator and the other tens of thousands of Cultivators, had nothing to do with that. What shocked them to core was that Meng Hao was currently floating... in the exact same position as the figure on the glowing screen! Their bodies were superimposed.

A powerful feeling suddenly surged through Meng Hao. He could clearly sense the Qi strand exploding out with the power to cause Cultivation base breakthrough.

This explosive Qi caused incredible shock to fill all hearts: that of the unmasked Cultivator, Wang Lihai, the Black Lands Dao Children, and everyone else!

A Cultivation base breakthrough in the midst of battle!

Even as everyone felt shock running through them, Meng Hao took a deep breath. He had been waiting for this moment for a long time. In order to achieve this breakthrough, he had even been willing to battle against the Core Formation stage. Finally, the ancient battle Qi erupted within him.

Finally, Meng Hao could sense the indescribable speed with which his ninth Dao Pillar was forming.

Ten percent, twenty percent, thirty percent....

He didn't need the approval of Heaven and Earth to form his ninth Dao Pillar. However, he needed Spiritual Energy. At the moment, the eight Dao Pillars within his body were emitting shocking amounts of spiritual power, all pouring into the ninth Dao Pillar.

Forty percent, fifty percent, sixty percent....

Meng Hao's aura grew more and more powerful. As it did, his body emitted a blinding violet light that shot up into the sky and filled the surroundings. A mighty pressure emerged from him, pressing down onto the tens of thousands of Foundation Establishment Cultivators, shaking their minds and spirits. Their Cultivation bases became unstable, and their Dao Pillars trembled. It was beyond their control! It was as if Meng Hao's presence was causing all of the other Dao Pillars to bend in worship of him.

It seemed as if Meng Hao were the sovereign of the Foundation Establishment stage. The massive pressure he exuded seemed capable of causing the rest of Foundation Establishment to be nothing more than mortals.

The aura grew more and more intense, causing everyone's minds to reel. The heart of the now unmasked Cultivator filled with an intense feeling of danger.

"I can't let him get any stronger," he thought, his face twisting. "Dammit, he's in the midst of the Dao Geyser enlightenment!" Without hesitation, he began to fly toward Meng Hao at top speed.

However, as he neared, a roaring sound suddenly rose up from the Dao Geyser. In front of the shocked tens of thousands of Cultivators, it erupted with boundless spiritual energy!

Massive amounts of it shot up, and the nexus of the eruption was none other than Meng Hao himself. Immediately, the unmasked Cultivator was forced to stop. He didn't dare to approach, and could only watch as Meng Hao was enveloped by the spiritual energy, and then disappeared.

"Fang Mu gained enlightenment! The Dao Geyser only erupts with spiritual energy when someone gains enlightenment!!"

“But... it’s erupting with so much spiritual energy...”

“When Li Shiqi advanced to the Core Formation stage, there was only about thirty percent as much spiritual energy as this. It was the same with Li Daoyi. Fang Mu... just what stage is he breaking through to? There’s so much spiritual energy!!”

The tens of thousands of Cultivators were in an uproar as they watched the spiritual energy exploding out and then pouring into Meng Hao’s forming Dao Pillar.

It seemed as if this spiritual energy no longer belonged to Heaven and Earth, but to Meng Hao himself!

Seventy percent, eighty percent, ninety percent....

Finally... one hundred percent!

However, just as the ninth Dao Pillar was complete, a tremor of shock ran through Meng Hao. He had assumed everything was over. He felt an unprecedented amount of power inside of him. However....

A look of shock and disbelief filled his face as he noticed that the spiritual energy coursing through his body was actually forming...

A tenth Dao Pillar!

Chapter 273: Tenth Dao Pillar, Form!

Nine was the ultimate number in Heaven and Earth. But ten was perfect!

Meng Hao’s mind and spirit trembled. In all the ancient records he had researched, he had never read anything that mentioned a tenth Dao Pillar in Foundation Establishment. Even in ancient times, Cultivators never had more than nine.

Because of the change in the Heavens, the path of the Qi Condensation stage had been broken, making the tenth level of Qi Condensation disappear. That information was recorded in the ancient records. However... there was no such information about a tenth Dao Pillar!

As a Furnace Lord of the East Pill Division, he was required to have a deep understanding of history. As such, it was very beneficial to comb through the ancient records looking for clues about the ancient Dao of alchemy. After becoming a Furnace Lord, he had browsed through a vast amount of the Violet Fate Sect's ancient records.

Despite all of that, he had never encountered any information regarding a Cultivator with a tenth Dao Pillar during Foundation Establishment.

And yet, Meng Hao could clearly sense... a tenth Dao Pillar was now forming!

Only Meng Hao was able to sense this tenth Dao Pillar, anyone else would be unable to. In much the same way that no one could sense which Cultivator the Nascent Soul blood he possessed came from, Meng Hao made sure that no one could pick up any clues about his Dao Pillars.

The only thing people could see was the increasing amount of spiritual energy erupting from the Dao Geyser. It showed no sign of lessening; it continued to envelop Meng Hao and he continued to absorb it.

As he absorbed the spiritual energy, the outline of the tenth Dao Pillar grew clearer.

Ten percent, twenty percent, thirty percent...

Dao pillar energy roared within Meng Hao, filling him with a power he had never experienced before. A shocking feeling filled him, as if he were soaring to the highest heavens.

Power! Unprecedented power!

His Spiritual Sense continued to increase exponentially. Before, it could spread out over roughly two hundred fifty meters; now, five hundred, one thousand....

His mind was filled with clarity, and as the spiritual energy poured in, he could sense everything around him. His perception of everything was different than it had been before, clearer, as if

everything was in more detail. This clarity was even deeper than what he had experienced in the moment when he acquired the Perfect Foundation.

“This... is this the true Perfect Foundation?” he murmured to himself. The world outside of the spiritual energy vortex was not visible, but with his Spiritual Sense, he could see it clearly.

His heart began to race. A feeling of resolve and excitement welled up within him. He took a deep breath, intense anticipation and steadfastness filling his eyes as the spiritual energy surged into him.

He slowly lifted his hand up, then looked down at it, closing it into a fist. As the fist tightened, he felt strength.

Unprecedented strength!

It felt as if his blood and flesh were reforming, filling with a power that shook his mind.

The shocking level of this power was such that Meng Hao felt as if he could tear magical treasures to pieces with his bare hands. This was a similar transformation as that which had occurred when he entered the tenth level of Qi Condensation. It felt like a baptism of sorts; the power of the tenth Dao Pillar was completely transforming him, making his body more suitable for cultivation, turning his body itself into a treasure!

Meng Hao had the strong feeling that at the moment, he could crush all Foundation Establishment Cultivators without the aid of any magical techniques. Even Dao Children and Cultivators of the great circle of Foundation Establishment could be destroyed bare handed.

Meng Hao began to pant. From the moment he had entered the Cultivation world, he had thirsted for power, had dreamed to stand at the pinnacle. One thing after another had happened to cause him to grow stronger, all the way to this day. Meng Hao clenched his fists. He knew... that he was striding the path he had dreamed of!

Only the strong could tread this path, and now, there was no turning back. He could only stubbornly continue!

More spiritual energy erupted from the Dao Geyser, inundating Meng Hao, growing his Spiritual Sense, feeding his body, growing his Cultivation base.

The range of his Spiritual Sense increased, his body grew stronger, and his Cultivation base shot upward. His tenth Dao Pillar was rapidly solidifying!

Forty percent, fifty percent, sixty percent....

The surrounding Southern Domain Cultivators watched on dumbstruck and panting. The indescribable spiritual energy erupting out of the Dao Geyser left them in a daze. The sheer amount of spiritual energy dwarfed that seen during the enlightenment experienced by anyone in the past.

This was especially true of the following ten or so breaths. The spiritual energy was not subsiding, but growing even more abundant, as if all of the power of the Dao Geyser were exploding out.

Black Lands Dao Children Luo Chong and Xu Fei panted in shock. Wang Lihai and the other Southern Domain Dao Children also watched on in disbelief.

“Is he... is he going to reach Core Formation?”

“It doesn’t look like Core Formation, but... the spiritual energy seems without end! It seems like an ordinary Core Formation Cultivator couldn’t even match up!”

Conversations buzzed endlessly among the surrounding Cultivators. The person with the most unsightly face of all was none other than the unmasked azure-masked Cultivator. His aged face was now filled with shock. He could only stare fixedly at the shadow of Meng Hao within the dense spiritual energy.

The sense of impending crisis within him grew even more intense. The shadowy figure within the spiritual energy seemed to be transforming into something from his nightmares.

“I can’t let him continue!” the man said, gritting his teeth. His eyes filled with ferocity and determination. He lifted his hand to push against his forehead. A booming sound rolled out as the Core Qi, which had previously dissipated, once again seemed to ignite into being. The image of a sword once again appeared within the Core Qi. At the same time, the unmasked Cultivator flashed incantation gestures with both hands. The Core Qi sword screamed forth, heading directly toward Meng Hao, who was still enveloped with spiritual energy.

The sword moved with incredible speed, almost immediately reaching the spiritual energy vortex. A massive boom sounded out, but the sword was incapable of penetrating more than a teeny bit into the spiritual energy!!

The unmasked Cultivator was of the Core Formation stage, but the density of the spiritual energy erupting from the Dao Geyser was such that even his Core Qi sword couldn't pierce through it.

The sword was stuck part way into the spiritual energy vortex. It began to tremble, as if it might be swept away at any moment.

It was at this moment that Meng Hao's tenth Dao Pillar reached seventy percent completion!

His face unsightly, the unmasked Cultivator flashed an incantation sign with his right hand and then pressed down on his forehead. He then opened his mouth and spat out a mouthful of blood. The blood rapidly began to coalesce into the shape of another sword.

"Core Soul Emergence Slaying!" roared the unmasked Cultivator, his eyes glowing brightly. His right hand formed an incantation gesture and then waved forward. Immediately, his eyes bulged and a tremor ran through his body. Ghost images of his own face suddenly flickered into existence. This was none other than his soul.

The soul flew out of his body, merging into the blood, solidifying into the form of a blood sword.

The sword buzzed, emitting a power seemingly capable of destroying anything. The blood sword shot out to merge with the Core Qi to form... a real sword!

The blood was an embryo, the soul was the sword spirit, and the Core Qi formed the blade. This was... the Cultivator's Consummate Life Force Sword! It emitted a shocking scream as it pierced into the spiritual energy vortex and headed directly toward Meng Hao.

It slowly approached him. Its speed was not great, but it showed no signs of stopping. It seemed it wouldn't stop moving until Meng Hao was dead. It approached at a crawl: one hundred meters, fifty meters, twenty five meters, fifteen meters....

Meng Hao closed his eyes. He floated in the midst of the vortex of spiritual energy, his tenth Dao Pillar now eighty percent complete!

The unmasked Cultivator's body trembled and his face was pale. It seemed as if his life force was being suppressed; a death aura appeared. Despite this, he continued to exert maximum power, using his soul to power the Consummate Life Force Sword closer to Meng Hao.

The soul within the sword let out a deep howling noise. In the blink of an eye, the sword was now only ten meters from Meng Hao. The unmasked Cultivator could now clearly see Meng Hao floating there, eyes closed. He could also sense something awakening within Meng Hao, something that seemed like an ancient wild beast.

No one would interfere in this magical battle. It didn't matter that Meng Hao was at a critical juncture of a Cultivation base breakthrough. It didn't matter that the unmasked Cultivator's actions were virtually a sneak attack. This battle was between the two of them, and the two of them alone.

The other azure-masked Black Lands Cultivators did nothing to assist their compatriot. Nor did the Southern Domain Cultivators do anything to block him.

Within the space of a moment, the sword was three meters away from Meng Hao. It glittered coldly, heading directly toward his forehead....

Meng Hao's tenth Dao Pillar was rapidly congealing. It was now ninety percent complete!

"DIE!!" screamed the unmasked Cultivator's soul shrilly. The Consummate Life Force Sword emitted a roaring sound as it approached Meng Hao. Three meters. One meter. Half a meter....

Soon, it was only a few centimeters from Meng Hao's forehead!!

It was at this moment that an incredible, heaven-shaking roar filled Meng Hao's body. His tenth Dao Pillar was now one hundred percent complete!

Meng Hao slowly lifted his right hand, clasping two fingers down onto the tip of the Consummate Life Force Sword, which was only half a centimeter from his forehead.

"This is the true Perfect Foundation!" Meng Hao murmured to himself. His eyes suddenly snapped open, revealing frigid iciness and shocking killing intent.



This gaze contained a cold, callous aura.

This gaze was filled with a shocking, threatening glow.

This gaze erupted with an unbelievable domineering aura.

At the exact same time, Meng Hao could sense something within his bag of holding. Something inside was suddenly calling out with an incredible thirst.

This call came from within the blood-colored mask. It was coming from that which Meng Hao previously had been unable to even touch... the flag of three streamers!

Chapter 274: The Flag Flies; Destroy the Three Incarnations!

During this explosive moment, all of the spiritual energy in the area poured into Meng Hao. It only took a few moments for it to disappear, having been completely absorbed by Meng Hao. Not a scrap remained.

The Dao Geyser had ceased its eruption and, in fact, seemed to be drying up. The Dao Projection in mid-air flickered, then completely disappeared. The Dao Geyser was indeed... thoroughly exhausted.

The tens of thousands of surrounding Cultivators watched on in silence. The Dao Geyser, which had been the focal point of such shocking events for the past year in the Southern Domain, dried up and turned into ash, which then disappeared into the air. Nothing remained.

Meng Hao had apparently exhausted all of the spiritual energy it contained. There was no more enlightenment to be gained, so it disappeared.

A deathly silence filled the air. The tens of thousands of Cultivators looked on with blank expressions... however, it didn't take long before they were thrown into an uproar.

“The Dao Geyser... is gone?”

“It should have lasted for a few more days, but... it's been completely dried up!”

“Just what sort of breakthrough did Fang Mu have? He obviously hasn’t reached Core Formation. But he’s... he’s clearly... caused the Dao Geyser to dry up early!!”

Black Lands Dao Children Luo Chong and Xu Fei were panting. To them, this visit to the western region of the Southern Domain had been shocking to the extreme. The cause of this shock was none other than a single Cultivator.

This Cultivator was... a Furnace Lord from the East Pill Division of the Violet Fate Sect!

The two other azure-masked Cultivators from the Black Lands watched on, seemingly unaffected. However, great waves of shock surged through their hearts, not because of the drying up of the Dao Geyser, but because of Meng Hao’s attacks earlier.

This was the first time they had ever witnessed Foundation Establishment battling Core Formation. Furthermore... while Meng Hao was clearly at a disadvantage, he had not suffered defeat. Even more astonishing, Meng Hao had experienced a Cultivation breakthrough in the midst of battle. That was something rarely seen. Something even more rarely seen, was how Meng Hao was currently clasping a Life Force Sword between his fingers!

“A Foundation Establishment Cultivator shouldn’t even be able to touch a sword like that.... Is he... is he really an alchemist?” This was the shocking question which floated in the minds of both of the azure-masked experts.

As the conversations buzzed out, the tens of thousands of Southern Domain Cultivators stared up at Meng Hao, their eyes filled with a variety of complicated expressions.

Meng Hao’s expression was the same as ever. Despite being the focus of tens of thousands gazes, not an ounce of change touched his face.

He wasn’t sure how powerful his ten Dao Pillars were, but deep in his heart he knew that... before, despite his caution, he really was no match at all for even the early Core Formation stage. Now, however... things were different.

He now faced a Core Formation Cultivator whose longevity had been damaged and whose soul had been injured. He wasn’t completely sure he could come out victorious, but this Cultivator had sustained severe internal injuries... killing him shouldn’t be too difficult!

A cold glow filled his eyes. He pinched down on the sword which he held between his two fingers. Power rose up within him, and his ten Dao Pillars rotated. Unprecedented power flowed through his arms and into his fingers!

Popping sounds rang out from the sword, and suddenly, cracks covered its surface. Within the space of a few breaths, it completely collapsed into dust.

The soul within it emitted a blood-curdling shriek and then vanished.

As the soul vanished and the sword disintegrated, tears of blood ran down the face of the unmasked Cultivator. Blood also poured out of his nose and ears as he staggered backward, coughing up a mass of blood. He lifted his pale face, and it was filled with ferocity, appearing to the onlookers to be even demented with insanity.

He lifted his right hand to slap his bag of holding. A black statuette appeared; it appeared to be a dragon, and yet not a dragon, like a python and yet not a python. This was none other than a Flood Dragon!

It had a single horn jutting out of its head, and two clawed arms on its abdomen. Its body was bluish black. The instant it appeared, a fiendish aura filled the area, causing the previously sunny sky to fill with dark clouds.

A faint cry rose up that seemed to come from ancient times, echoing out to shake the minds of the tens of thousands of Cultivators.

As the cry echoed out, the ancient Flying Rain-Dragon Core within Meng Hao's first Dao Pillar suddenly seemed to wake from slumber. It began to tremble.

A moment later, the air behind Meng Hao began to ripple, and an enormous, illusory ancient Flying Rain-Dragon appeared. It glared down at the statue of the Flood Dragon as if it were looking at... food!

In ancient times, Flood Dragons were nothing more than food for Flying Rain-Dragons!

The phantom image of the Flying Rain-Dragon was invisible to the onlookers. Suddenly, the roar of the Flood Dragon statue seemed to cease.

The unmasked Cultivator glared at Meng Hao. One word at a time, he said, “Transform Core Qi into a Flood Dragon Ancestor! Open a great Dao with Cultivation base blood. Feed this dragon spawn with the body. Use the soul to give birth to slaughter!” The man bit down on the tip of his tongue and spit out a glob of blood onto the statuette.

“I draw on my power to call upon the Flood Dragon Ancestor!” His body trembled as he raised his head to the sky and howled. In an instant, cracks covered the Flood Dragon statue. Popping sounds filled the air, and the surrounding tens of thousands of Cultivators watched as the statuette crumbled to pieces.

It disintegrated, and before the countless bluish black fragments could scatter, a wind sprang up, gathering them together, distorting them, transforming them into the image of a Flood Dragon.

The image was extremely lifelike, and when it appeared, a vast coldness sprang up and spread out. The unmasked Cultivator’s expression was vicious as he glared at Meng Hao.

“Flood Dragon Ancestor, I request that you slay this man!”

As soon as the words were out of his mouth, the phantom Flood Dragon turned. Two cold dots that resembled eyes appeared on its head. It stared at Meng Hao for a moment, seemingly itching to attack. Suddenly, it sprang into action, shooting directly toward Meng Hao.

As it approached, the coldness soared to the heavens; it seemed as if everything around it would be frozen in an instant.

In the blink of an eye, it was three hundred meters from Meng Hao!

Meng Hao’s eyes shone brightly. He didn’t retreat or evade; instead, he took a deep breath, lifted his hand and began to slice his fingers. Five fingers were soon covered with blood. He closed his eyes, bent down, and stretched his hand out.

“Blood Death World!” he cried, his voice filled with an aura of blood and gore. The instant the words rang out, his vision turned the color of blood.

At the same time, a bloody aura emanated from his right hand, enveloping the surroundings, causing everything within three thousand meters to turn the color of blood!

The Flood Dragon, too, was enveloped within this world of blood.

This unique world was... the third magical art from the Blood Immortal Legacy, the one he had previously been incapable of unleashing... the Blood Death World!

As soon as the Blood Death World appeared, five blood phantoms appeared around Meng Hao. These were none other than... his five indestructible Blood Clones!

A boom filled the air, filling the hearts of the tens of thousands of Cultivators with shock. The unmasked Cultivator's face was pale white; it goes without saying that the appearance of the Blood Death World filled his heart with astonishment.

This was especially true because the Flood Dragon, which he previously thought to be incredibly astonishing, was now emitting a miserable shriek as it struggled within the Blood Death World. It seemed to be fighting against some invisible power that it just couldn't shake off.

As its shrieks rang out, Meng Hao slowly straightened up. He began to clench the fist of his right hand.

As his fist slowly closed, the Blood Death World suddenly shrank, seemingly following the movement of his hand.

As its borders shrank, they slammed into the shrieking Flood Dragon, carrying it with them. In the blink of an eye, the Blood Death World had disappeared, completely shrinking into Meng Hao's fist. A faint aura of blood seeped up from between his fingers.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever. He slowly loosened his fingers, and as he did, chunky bits of bluish-black dust floated off his palm to dissipate in the wind.

Gasps could be heard as people recognized the powder as... the remnants of the Flood Dragon statuette!

The unmasked Cultivator stared at Meng Hao, his eyes filled with fury. “Today’s battle will end only in your death. The Foundation Establishment stage... is simply incapable of challenging the Core Formation stage.” He lifted his left hand and used his fingernail to scratch three bloody streaks onto his face, forming a triangle.

Bone was visible beneath the cuts, which oozed blood. The sight was shocking, but the unmasked Cultivator showed no signs that it hurt even the slightest bit. He glared at Meng Hao with even more ferocity than before.

Hoarse-voiced conversations immediately sprang up among the Cultivators below.

“That’s....”

“That’s a forbidden technique of the Black Lands, the Yellow Springs Three Incarnations Seal!”

As the word spread among the Cultivators, the unmasked Cultivator’s sinister voice filled the air: “Three incarnations are carved out within the yellow springs, three incarnations that can destroy all incarnations! Yellow Springs... Three Incarnations Seal!” A bizarre aura filled the eyes of the unmasked Cultivator. This was his most powerful magical technique. Utilizing this technique would come at no small cost to him, but at the moment, he didn’t care. The three bloody lacerations on his face began to burn, branding deeply into his face. They began to turn into scar tissue, filling his eyes with even more demented ferocity.

As the words left his mouth, he raised his right hand toward Meng Hao, then chopped it down into the air. At first, it seemed as if nothing had happened. However, Meng Hao’s heart trembled.

Meng Hao’s gaze was like lightning as he gazed at the unmasked Cultivator. His brow was furrowed. He had been able to exterminate the Flood Dragon because of the might exerted upon it by the Flying Rain-Dragon within the Blood Death World. As such, it had been dispersed when the Blood Death World dissipated.

“Time to end things,” he said softly, his brow relaxing. He raised his right hand to smack his bag of holding. Instead of retrieving an object, however, he sent his Spiritual Sense into the blood-colored mask. It circled around the flag of three streamers, which he previously had never been able to use.

This was a precious treasure from the Blood Immortal Legacy.

As his Spiritual Sense hovered over the flag of three streamers, it began to sway, then suddenly unfurled. It entered his body, filling him with enlightenment. He raised his right hand and then waved it.

Behind him, surrounding him, in all directions...

Filling the sky, covering the land, appearing tattered and yet still emitting a power of Heavenly might... was one streamer from the flag of three streamers!!

It appeared dilapidated, and was gray, but stretched out seemingly without end.

As it stretched out... the yellow springs seemed to dry up, the three incarnations were exterminated, everything sank halfway to hell!!!

Chapter 275: The Difference Between Meng Hao and Fang Mu!

Meng Hao hovered in mid-air, his eyes closed, concealing the veins of blood which filled his eyes. His mind was reeling; he'd never imagined that taking out the flag of three streamers would unleash such heaven-shaking power.

Furthermore... this was only one streamer. In addition, the full flag of three streamers hadn't truly been unfurled; this was only a shadow of the treasure, projected by means of Meng Hao's Spiritual Sense.

However, even this projected power of the dilapidated flag was able to blot out the sky and cover the entire land. It completely filled the vision of the tens of thousands of Cultivators. Heaven and Earth were filled with darkness.

At this moment, Heaven and Earth seemed to be split in two. Heaven was Heaven, Earth was Earth. The flag existed beneath the Heavens, an Earth of its own, and above the Earth, a Heavenly Flag!

The world was covered with darkness; spirits faded, the Cosmos itself was pitch black.

An indescribable pressure roiled out, and an unprecedented sense of calamity filled the hearts of all the Cultivators. It was impossible to dispel, as if an enormous boulder was crushing down onto their bodies.

The entire world was suddenly plunged into deathly silence.

A gray aura began to emanate from the bodies of everyone present. It curled up into the air, forming a mist, outside of which only the fluttering, dilapidated flag was visible. It twisted beneath the Heavens and the Earth, stretching out seemingly for hundreds of kilometers in all directions. It seemed as if it had replaced the Heavens, changed its will....

This dilapidated flag used one side to change the Heavens, and the other side to change the Earth.

A long time passed, or perhaps it was only a moment; the sky's normal color returned, and that which covered the earth disappeared. The gray mist dissipated, and the shocking flag that had appeared in the sky... disappeared without a trace.

Only Meng Hao remained floating in mid-air. No living thing existed alongside him. The Black Lands Cultivators remained, as did those from the Southern Domain. However, the appearance of the undulating flag up in the sky had caused their bodies to tremble and begin to sink down into the ground.

In addition to Meng Hao, the only thing left in the sky was a headless corpse which was slowly beginning to fall down to the ground. This corpse was none other than the unmasked Cultivator!

As of this moment, everything was over.

In the space of a breath, all eyes came to rest on Meng Hao. And then, the astonishment in everyone's hearts exploded out.

“The azure-masked Black Lands Cultivator... is dead....”

“A Foundation Establishment Cultivator just exterminated a Core Formation Cultivator. This is... this is....”

“How can Fang Mu possess such battle power? He dried up the Dao Geyser! Just what kind of good fortune was he able to seize?!?!”



“He’s an alchemist, a Furnace Lord of the East Pill Division. But he was able to challenge Dao Children. In the future, he’ll... he’ll definitely be the number one figure of his generation in the Southern Domain!”

“More importantly, just what magical technique did Fang Mu just use? It’s a technique that can slay Core Formation!”

Conversations buzzed. The Black Lands Cultivators, Luo Chong and Xu Fei, were pale-faced beneath their masks. They stared blankly at Meng Hao. Before this battle, they had believed themselves to be Chosen of Heaven; they truly thought that few people within the Foundation Establishment stage in the Southern Domain could possibly exceed them. At the most, perhaps someone existed who could match them in battle.

But now, they found that it didn’t matter if it were them, or other Chosen from the Southern Domain, they were all simply foils that accentuated the magnificence of Fang Mu.

Even if they grew more powerful, even if they could be considered Chosen within their various Sects, all of them... were merely ordinary when compared to Fang Mu.

Fang Mu floated like a blazing sun in the sky. He was too bright, dazzling, causing all the surrounding stars to fade. They might be unwilling, they might be unconvinced, but it didn’t matter. They had no choice....

An inhuman Cultivator had appeared in the Foundation Establishment stage who could exterminate Core Formation Cultivators. Everyone of his generation had no choice but to be shaken and feel suppressed.

Wang Lihai’s face was pale, and he stood there silently. Han Shandao shook his head with a bitter smile and sighed inwardly. The Golden Frost Sect Dao Child, Song Yunshu of the Song Clan, and the others of various clans who considered themselves to be at the peak of Foundation Establishment, all looked up at Meng Hao, their eyes filled with deep veneration.

They were in awe of his Cultivation base, and they revered him for his status as a Furnace Lord of the East Pill Division. Because of all of this, it was impossible for them not to understand that in the future, the name of Fang Mu would be matchless in the Southern Domain. From now on, he would be a critical element within the Southern Domain!

Fame had come with one battle!

All eyes were fixed upon Meng Hao as he floated there in mid-air. No roars filled the air, only silence.

Such silence, such deathly emptiness, usually represents intense fear...

The various Cultivator's eyes' were filled with conflict, shock, reverence, admiration, and envy....

Such a variety of looks seemed to transform into a sharpness which circulated around Meng Hao. In fact, if Meng Hao hesitated at all, it seemed like the sharpness might transform into killing.

Meng Hao's astonishing power caused many hearts to fill with a disastrous level of jealousy. This was one of the reasons he had chosen to change his appearance so often in the past, and had been so careful to not accidentally reveal himself.

If it weren't for the fact that this battle had been key to his breakthrough, then he would never have openly revealed so much about himself.

The death of the azure-masked Cultivator would not be closely investigated. Neither the Black Lands Dao Children nor the azure-masked Cultivators would look into the matter too closely, not with Meng Hao at the height of his power, and surrounded by the shocked Southern Domain Cultivators.

However... he was in a precarious situation. The looks being cast by many of the surrounding Cultivators caused the two azure-masked Cultivators' eyes to glitter slightly.

Their gazes came to fall on Meng Hao. So did that of Wang Lihai, Dao Child of the Wang Clan. His right hand seemed to be resting casually at his side, but only he knew that he was slowly preparing the Wang Clan's Vermillion Bird Three Fingers.

Han Shandao of the Solitary Sword Sect narrowed his eyes. Even his normally forthright face began to fill with a slightly sinister expression.

The Golden Frost Sect Dao Child, as well as the Chosen from the other Sects, had all been defeated by Meng Hao recently. Their eyes began to flicker as they looked at him too.

They didn't dare to attack... although, if they knew he was Meng Hao, then surely they wouldn't have so many misgivings. The Black Lands Cultivators would have none whatsoever, and would definitely immediately attack. However, this wasn't Meng Hao... this was Fang Mu!

A Furnace Lord from the East Pill Division of the Violet Fate Sect!

As people grow in life, they form nets to fall back on. To avoid the problems that result from killing someone, you must first sever that person's nets. That is the only way to prevent future consequences. Acting in any other way is equivalent to killing oneself.

Before, Meng Hao was only Meng Hao. He had no such nets, and as such, anyone who wished to kill him could simply attack.

But now, his identity as a member of the East Pill Division was his biggest safety net.

Meng Hao gained enlightenment of this when he had first joined the Reliance Sect. Having someone to rely on is in fact one of the greatest safety nets that can exist in a person's life.

Wang Lihai didn't make a move. However, one of the other Wang Clan Chosen suddenly took a step toward Meng Hao.

That step seemed to fall upon the hearts of the surrounding Cultivators. Luo Chong suddenly moved!

The two Black Lands azure-masked Cultivators also began to advance...

Amidst the stifling deathly silence, the seemingly peaceful scene was actually filled with incredible danger. As Meng Hao floated in mid-air, his closed eyes suddenly snapped open.

The instant this happened, the Wang Clan Chosen stopped in his tracks. Luo Chong also stopped moving, as did the two azure-masked Cultivators.

Everyone looked at Meng Hao, their looks even more thoughtful than before.

His expression was the same as ever, cold and detached. The coldness of his gaze was even thicker than before, and deep within could be sensed an aura of ridicule.

Not even the slightest injury could be seen on his body, making it seem as if this wasn't his first time exterminating a Core Formation Cultivator!

He suddenly spoke, his voice cool: "My enlightenment from the Dao Geyser included a divine ability. I am a Furnace Lord of the East Pill Division, unfamiliar with magical battle. However, because of the profundity of the enlightenment, I was unable to control myself. Fellow Daoists from the Black Lands, please forgive me." With that, he waved his hand, causing his azure-colored robe to disappear. It was replaced with the alchemist's robe of a Violet Fate Sect Furnace Lord, black, with a faint violet aura glowing within. The sight of it instantly caused everyone to be filled with shock.

He floated there in mid-air, looking coolly about at the crowds of people.

It seemed as if an appointed time had arrived. The two azure-masked Cultivators gave deep looks to Meng Hao, then turned and transformed into beams of light that shot off into the distance. Apparently, Meng Hao's identity as a Furnace Lord was their greatest misgiving. It was well known that anyone who trifled with one of Pill Demon's alchemists could arouse the wrath of the entire Sect!

Luo Chong and Xu Fei gave a final glance at Meng Hao, and then departed.

The departure of the Black Lands Cultivators caused the previously stifling atmosphere among the Southern Domain Cultivators to slowly relax. The pressure eased, and they began to grow excited. Even as everyone began to discuss this Fang Mu, Meng Hao clasped hands and bowed deeply to everyone.

"Many thanks for your assistance, Fellow Daoists," he said. "I, Fang Mu, am very moved. Now, I need to deeply analyze and meditate upon my recent enlightenment. Furthermore, I recently received orders from the Sect, calling me back. Next time you are able, call on me in the Violet Fate Sect, I will most happily receive and entertain you." With that, he gave another deep bow. Most of the surrounding Cultivators understood that as a Foundation Establishment Cultivator, it was an astonishing thing to have slain a Core Formation Cultivator. Of course, the divine ability which had appeared was a projection of some magical item that no one had actually seen. Clearly, he had incredibly mysterious magical techniques and divine abilities at his disposal.

The confidence instilled by this achievement in battle would give birth to an ever-present confidence. It would help in everything in the future, be it in terms of cultivation or magical techniques.

As they digested his words, Meng Hao once again clasped hands to the Dao Children of the various Sects and Clans, thanking them deeply for their assistance. Clearly having no intention of staying behind any longer, he turned into a beam of light that shot off into the distance.

Wang Lihai and the others frowned as they watched Meng Hao disappear. They had no choice but to eventually just look away. Now as before, there was no way for them to truly understand the level of Meng Hao's profundity. Because of the Violet Fate Sect, it was impossible for them to make any rash moves. They could only sigh inwardly.

Meng Hao flew away at top speed. After a day passed, his face was completely pale, and he coughed up a mouthful of blood. His aura was incredibly weak. Gritting his teeth, he found the mountain where... he had just recently spent so much time in secluded meditation.

He entered the Immortal's Cave, coughing up more blood, and immediately sat down cross-legged. Popping a medicinal pill into his mouth, he waved his sleeve, sending out a vast amount of poison pills. They immediately turned into a mist which completely surrounded him.

#### Chapter 276: Stop Fooling Around

Meng Hao's face was pale as he sat cross-legged in the Immortal's Cave. A few days later, he finally opened his eyes. They shone with a brilliant light. However, his brow remained furrowed for quite some time before finally relaxing.

"I injured my soul...." he murmured. He could sense a sinister coldness within him, an iciness which filled him through and through. In the cultivation of Foundation Establishment, the Cultivation base is related to the Dao Pillars. Spiritual Sense is born, as well as the Sea of Perception and the Cultivation soul.

That soul would become the foundation for the future Nascent Soul.

Right now, though, Meng Hao could faintly sense that his soul had been pulled out of place, a price paid for the use of the flag of three streamers. Such an injury would be difficult to recover from. An injury of the flesh would naturally recover through rest and recuperation, or through the use of medicinal pills. However, an injury of the soul could not be healed in such a way.

Battling and slaying Core Formation had been an impressive feat, but as far as Meng Hao was concerned, the level of difficulty was far too high. Even with a tenth Dao Pillar, it had been extremely difficult.

There was simply too great a difference between Foundation Establishment Cultivators and Core Formation Cultivators, especially those who had cultivated Core Qi. In truth, he was not really qualified to challenge a Core Formation Cultivator.

Even with a Perfect Foundation and eight Dao Pillars, his fight with the azure-masked Cultivator had been too challenging. He had used every trick he could think of just to hold his opponent off. It seemed as if he hadn't been defeated, but in truth, the power had existed to destroy him. If any more time had passed, then he would have been vanquished in spectacular fashion.

Thankfully, his ninth Dao Pillar had appeared, and then the situation changed for the better. Of course, that is what Meng Hao had been aiming for; the intense life or death struggle was what had caused the Qi in his body to multiply, enabling him to break through the bottleneck and increase his Cultivation base!

The need for battle was what had prompted Meng Hao to attack in the first place!

Without the tenth Dao Pillar, and completing the great circle of the Perfect Foundation, he would have been incapable of killing the Core Formation Cultivator. At best, he would have been able to fight a bit longer.

Once the tenth Dao Pillar appeared, however, the vast gap between Foundation Establishment and Core Formation, which was like that between Heaven and Earth, had been narrowed by perhaps half.

That jump caused the battle prowess of his Cultivation base to leap up, far exceeding that of Foundation Establishment, and approaching Core Formation.

The fact was, even with power reaching halfway to Core Formation, the most he could do would be to tangle with a Core Formation Cultivator. He would never be able to slay one. Similarly, although his opponent would occupy a superior position, they wouldn't find it easy to slay him.

What had truly changed the tide had been the flag of three streamers, that precious treasure which resided inside the blood-colored mask.

The treasure had existed for an indeterminable period of time within the Blood Immortal Legacy zone. One of its streamers was sealed with the character Ji. Its power was clearly enough to shake Heaven and Earth, and the Blood Immortal of the Ancient Doom Clan had desired to use it to drink the blood of the Ji!

Meng Hao remembered the meat jelly's shocked reaction upon first seeing the flag. Considering all of that, how could Meng Hao not realize how astounding it was?

In reality, he did not have the requisite Cultivation base to even touch the treasure, let alone employ its power. However, once his tenth Dao Pillar appeared, he had been able to sense the parched call of the flag of three streamers.

Now that he thought back, he realized that its thirst... was a thirst for destruction!

In fact, instead of saying that Meng Hao had employed the power of the flag of three streamers, it would be more accurate to say because of Meng Hao's new qualifications, the flag was able to borrow his hands and his power to appear once again in the sky.

Furthermore, instead of saying that Meng Hao had slain a Core Formation Cultivator, it would be more accurate to say that the flag of three streamers was the one to exterminate the azure-masked Cultivator!

Even the appearance of just one of the flag's three streamers caused Meng Hao's Cultivation base to wither, and had injured his soul. That moment in which he had hovered in mid-air, facing down the Black Lands Cultivators and the crowds from the Southern Domain, everything about him had appeared normal. In reality, he had been extremely weak.

Thanks to the transformation powers of the meat jelly, he had been able to force out the sensation of a powerful aura. No one had been able to sense even the slightest clue as to his true state. Considering that and their other misgivings, no one had dared to make a move against him.

In addition, the flag of three streamers hadn't even fully appeared. It had only been a phantom image that appeared to be a divine ability. Therefore, most people had assumed that it was not a magical treasure, but some technique. Furthermore, no one had made a connection between him drying up the Dao Geyser, and the appearance of the flag.

Upon waking up just now, he had spit up a glob of impure Qi, and his eyes had begun to shine. His Cultivation base was now recovered by eighty to ninety percent. Based on how fast it was going, it wouldn't be long before it was completely recovered. The injury to his soul, however, was impossible to deal with. He could only exercise caution and not cause any further injury.

“Injuring the soul is like sowing Karma. If the day comes in which I can break into the Nascent Soul stage, then the Karma will be reaped.” Meng Hao sat there thoughtfully for a moment, then took a deep breath and slowly stood up. He walked out of the Immortal's Cave to find that it was raining again. The murmuring rain carried with it the cold of autumn. Meng Hao stared off into the distance, his long azure robe fluttering in the rainy wind.

“Core Formation....” His eyes glittered. There was really no need to think of the difficulty of reaching the Nascent Soul Stage. Suddenly, he thought of Wang Tengfei's Dao Protector, the Core Formation Cultivator Wang Xifan.

All those years ago, a mere glance from him had nearly killed Meng Hao. As of now, Meng Hao was confident that if he faced him again, the man would be stunned.

Lost in thought, Meng Hao recalled Grand Elder Ouyang and He Luohua from the Reliance Sect. He also thought of the other Core Formation Cultivators from the State of Zhao. Gradually, his eyes began to gleam.

“I have ten Dao Pillars and a perfect Foundation. I can even battle the Core Formation stage.... I may be cut off from the spiritual power of Heaven and Earth, but in return, I am the most powerful person in this stage! I must continue down this path! I have a Perfect Foundation, next is... a Perfect Gold Core!” The thought of it left him panting. “As for the injury to my soul, that will just have to wait until later.” He was no longer the youngster he had been when he began practicing cultivation, and now had much deeper comprehension of all that was involved with it. For example, he now knew that in the cultivation world of the Southern Domain, the Core Formation stage was divided into three levels. Violet as placed on top, beneath which were Orange, Crimson and Green; at the very bottom as Mixed.

Based on various methods, and the variety of latent talent, different Cores could be formed. For instance, the Violet Fate Sect's Violet Qi from the East was able to produce a Violet Core. As for other Sects and Clans, they naturally had their own secret magics that gave their Chosen Disciples a chance to produce a Violet Core.



Different Cores would produce different Core Qi. Of course, the higher the level of the Core, the more likely it would be to produce Core Qi, and sooner. Obviously, the Core Qi would be much more powerful as well.

Generally speaking, among Cultivators with a Violet Core, ninety percent would be able to cultivate Core Qi in the early Core Formation stage. For Orange, Crimson and Green Cores, they were monochromatic Cores, and would generally produce Core Qi during the mid Core Formation stage. As for the three azure-masked Black Lands Cultivators, they were obviously Chosen, and had somehow been able to force the superior power of a Violet Core out of their Orange Cores.

Regarding Mixed Cores, they contained a variety of colors and were the lowest of the entire stage.

Of course, Meng Hao knew that when it came to the Perfect Core, it was Gold!

Just as there had been a Perfect Foundation Pill, there was also a Perfect Gold Core Pill. After forming a Violet Core, and then consuming the Perfect Gold Core Pill, he would have a high likelihood of rising to a Gold Core.

When that happened, he would have to face Tribulation Lightning.

Before, such things had been far away for Meng Hao, but now that he had ten Perfect Dao Pillars and had completed the great circle of the Perfect Foundation, Core Formation was just around the corner.

He looked thoughtfully out into the windy rain. Finally, he flicked his sleeve to gather together the poison mist from within the Immortal's Cave. It collected into the palm of his hand, after which he placed it into his bag of holding. Then, his body flickered as he moved off into the distance.

Several days later, Meng Hao hovered in mid-air, frowning. On his head, the meat jelly, transformed into a hat, was jabbering on and on. "Bullies. Three bullies. Meng Hao, you're picking on me! You've taken advantage of my feelings. You're taking advantage of my assistance...."

It had come out two days ago, relentlessly requesting bullies. However, out here in the western region of the Southern Domain, there were no Cultivators. They'd all left after the disappearance of the Dao Geyser. Meng Hao hadn't been able to find any new bullies.

Therefore... the meat jelly was furious.

“How can you be so immoral, so wrong? It’s unconscionable.... My bullies! My three bullies!” The more it talked the more wronged it sounded.

Meng Hao coughed lightly. His face was unsightly, but after all those years, especially after his time in the Violet Fate Sect, he had gotten used to the meat jelly’s frequent harassment. Therefore, he simply allowed it to chatter on endlessly.

After three more days of garrulous talking, the meat jelly finally paused for a moment. Meng Hao cleared his throat and began to speak: “Didn’t you say once that the parrot can emerge from the copper mirror after I reach Core Formation?” He had been waiting for three days to be able to ask this question.

“Correct!” the meat jelly screeched. “After reaching Core Formation, that damned, evil, shameless, low-down, despicable bastard will appear. I’ve been waiting for that day for a long time! In this life, I will definitely convert it!” In a frenzy, the meat jelly began to chatter away ceaselessly. Now, instead of blabbering about bullies, it was talking about the mystical parrot.

Meng Hao relaxed a bit. At long last he had figured out a way to handle the meat jelly. All you had to do was keep giving it conversation topics. Usually, one or two topics later, it would forget about what it had been concerned about previously. Leading it back and forth in this way was the easiest method to deal with it.

Meng Hao flew along as the meat jelly hat prattled. The buzzing went on for seven days before it finally paused to rest for a moment.

Before it could, Meng Hao said, “Who do you think is more incredible, you or that parrot?”

It seemed Meng Hao’s words had offended it, and it once again went crazy. Trembling, its fury rose to the heavens. “Me, of course! Obviously it’s grand, handsome, extraordinary, intelligent me! That shameless bastard of a bird is nothing but a bird. I’m gonna to convert it, I’m gonna knock him down!”

“How is the Li Clan Patriarch doing lately?” Meng Hao quickly asked. “Has he been obedient?”

The meat jelly gaped for a moment. “The Li Clan Patriarch? Damnation! Damnation! He hasn’t been obedient at all recently. His immorality, his evil, is without limit! I have to go lecture him for a

bit!” It seemed to have suddenly realized how to give vent to all its anger. A bang sounded out as it disappeared in a puff of smoke into Meng Hao’s bag of holding and the mask, filled with ardor and sincerity.

Meng Hao was finally able to breathe a long sigh of relief.

“At long last, some peace and quiet....”

He looked around. He didn’t intend to immediately head back to the Violet Fate Sect. Instead, he would visit some Cultivator cities and find some Pill Auctions where he could earn some Spirit Stones.

However, even as he was sizing up the surroundings and figuring out which direction he would travel in, his expression suddenly flickered. He looked down at his bag of holding for a moment, and then pulled out his Furnace Lord medallion. It was emitting a flickering, violet glow. He pressed down on the medallion, and suddenly an archaic voice filled his head.

“Hey kid, have you had enough fun? It’s time to stop fooling around. I want you back in four days. Trial by fire for Violet Furnace Lord promotion begins then in the Celestial Land. The frequency of these trials by fire is completely up to my mood. It starts four days from now, and everyone who joins has a chance to become a Violet Furnace Lord. If you don’t get back ASAP, then you’ll lose your chance to participate.”

Chapter 277: Eastern Emergence Mountain

Meng Hao opened his eyes and stared blankly at the Furnace Lord medallion for a moment as the voice faded from his mind. For some reason its tone made it seem that whoever was speaking was very familiar with him.

The tone had been one of idle chit-chat, which left Meng Hao even more surprised.

However, the voice was clearly that of a stranger; Meng Hao was sure he had never heard it before.

He frowned for a moment, then transformed into a beam of light and shot forward. Before he had flown very far, he suddenly stopped and looked down at the Furnace Lord medallion. His eyes narrowed for a moment, then began to shine. Within the shining glow were bits of fury.

“I know who that voice belongs to. The only person who has the authority to start a trial by fire for Violet Furnace Lord promotion... completely based on his mood.... Other than the Violet Furnace Lords themselves, the only person who could transmit a message from such a distance is....

“Pill Demon!” Meng Hao ground his teeth. He had really had no option but to go.

“My Bedevilment Pill! My 200,000,000 Spirit Stones....” Thinking about the vast amount of Spirit Stones made Meng Hao’s heart seize with pain. It was as if someone had taken a valuable treasure right out of his pocket and dangled it in front of his face, while he was powerless to resist.

Within the Violet Fate Sect, Pill Demon was the only one other than the Violet Furnace Lords who might possibly know that he was Grandmaster Pill Cauldron. The Bedevilment Pill might be able to fool others, but definitely not Pill Demon.

Considering Pill Demon’s position within the Violet Fate Sect, if he wanted to know something, it would be virtually impossible to keep the information from him.

Actually, Meng Hao hadn’t really done anything to conceal his identity as Grandmaster Pill Cauldron. He had simply not taken the initiative to proclaim who he was. After all, his original intention in participating in the Pill Auction was to increase his reputation a bit. He had never imagined that the Bedevilment Pill would cause such a stir. His subsequent caution had caused the entire Southern Domain to begin to speculate as to who Grandmaster Pill Cauldron really was.

As he looked at the Furnace Lord medallion, he recalled the voice that had just entered his head and let out a soft sigh. Obviously, Pill Demon had known all along that he was Grandmaster Pill Cauldron.

Meng Hao was suddenly furious. “So you knew the whole time that I was famous in all of the Southern Domain. Any Sect would love to have me work for them as Grandmaster Pill Cauldron. In that case, why didn’t you give me my Spirit Stones?!”

There was little to do about it, though. Pill Demon was like a Patriarch in the East Pill Division. If he wanted to cheat him, there was really nothing Meng Hao could do about it. He couldn’t simply up and demand to have Spirit Stones.

“Back in Yunjie County, the Stewards were always miserly. If they weren’t taking advantage of people, they took it as losing money! It seems the same principle exists in the Cultivation world.

The more Spirit Stones they have, the stingier they get!” Meng Hao sighed, then once again proceeded forward in a beam of light.

“You owe me 200,000,000 Spirit Stones. Right now I don’t even have a single Spirit Stone left...” thought Meng Hao, his face long. When he thought about his empty bag of holding, and the 200,000,000 Spirit Stones, he just couldn’t keep his cool.

“Four days to get back to the Sect. I’m much further than four days away right now...” He sped up.

“Trial by fire for promotion to Violet Furnace Lord.... Could batty old Pill Demon perhaps feel guilty for taking my Spirit Stones, so he’s giving me a chance to become a Violet Furnace Lord?” His eyes suddenly began to glitter, and his heart palpitated with eagerness. He knew that becoming a Violet Furnace Lord would come with a host of benefits.

After a thousand years, the Violet Fate Sect currently only had eight Violet Furnace Lords. Finally there would be a ninth....

Meng Hao began to breathe heavily, and he pushed himself even faster.

“Four days.... No matter what, I have to get back to the Sect in four days!” He shot off into the distance, a prismatic beam charging at high speed. He had risen to prominence in the western region. His Cultivation base had climbed to new heights. Now he was being called back to the Sect. All of it seemed to smack of some hidden agenda. He decided not to be concerned about the suddenness of the whole matter.

He sighed again and pushed down his concerns. His Cultivation base was now much different than when he had left the Sect, but he could use the Dao Geyser to explain that. After considering the matter for some time, Meng Hao found it unlikely that the Sect was plotting against him.

After all, the Violet Fate Sect was one of the great Sects of the Southern Domain. If they really harbored ill intentions toward him and deigned to use some sort of tricks on him, then there was nothing he could do about it. They would be able to seize him with little effort.

Besides, he had been in the East Pill Division for more than five years. He understood the Sect fairly well and knew both the exceptional areas of the East Pill Division, as well as its shortcomings.

Thinking of all these things, his apprehension lessened quite a bit. However, he was no less cautious than ever. Taking advantage of every teleportation portal he could, he made his way back toward the Violet Fate Sect.

Every teleportation portal he arrived at belonged to some Sect or Clan. All he had to do was flash his Furnace Lord medallion and they would let him pass. They were happy to let a Furnace Lord use their teleportation devices.

Four days passed in a flash. It was late in the night of the third day, in the moment when dawn of the fourth day was about to break, that Meng Hao, windswept and covered in dust, arrived in the region of the Violet Fate Sect. He had passed through over twenty teleportation portals and had crossed nearly half of the Southern Domain.

“Batty old Pill Demon! If he gets to choose when the trial by fire starts, then why the hell did he pick four days!” Meng Hao wasn’t in a good mood, and was in fact slightly depressed. Anyone who used over twenty teleportation portals in a brief four day period would be just as completely exhausted. Thankfully, he had ten Dao Pillars and much stronger Spiritual Sense. With his previous Cultivation base, being teleported so many times in such a short period of time would have left him painfully exhausted.

Meng Hao would rather have spent the fourth day in meditation and rest, but had no time. The constant flying and use of teleportation portals wasn’t without benefit, though. Because of the constant rotation of his Cultivation base, his ten Dao Pillars were completely stable; he could now break through to Core Formation at any time.

His breathing rough, Meng Hao shot through Violet Fate Sect territory. Dawn light climbed up into the sky as he flew along. Occasionally he would encounter other Cultivators who, upon seeing his clothing, would look shocked, and then respectfully clasp hands and bow to him.

This was Violet Fate Sect territory, so all the other Sects and Clans therein were connected in some way to the Violet Fate Sect. As such, his clothing, and the identity they heralded, garnered deep respect.

Off in the distance, he could see the Violet Fate Sect and the enormous statue of Reverend Violet East. It was still early morning, but Meng Hao was worn out and in a rotten mood. As he approached the Sect, the previously still air suddenly began to ripple.

Meng Hao ignored the ripples, and continued to fly at top speed. The ripples spread out for a moment, and then soundlessly disappeared.

These ripples would instantly slay any Cultivator of the Nascent Soul stage or below who was not of the Violet Fate Sect.

Meng Hao whistled through the air within the Sect. Along the way, he ran into quite a few disciples of the Violet Qi Division. They looked at Meng Hao with expressions of complete astonishment.

Seeing the expressions, Meng Hao got a bad feeling. Suddenly, he turned a corner and found himself face to face with a Chosen disciple he knew from the Violet Qi Division, who immediately said, "Fang Mu, what are you doing back?"

Meng Hao paused for a moment, turning back to look at him. "Hey, Brother Song... I was out of the Sect to gain some experience, but now the training is over...."

"You just got back from training?" was the reply. "You'd better get to Eastern Emergence Mountain as fast as you can. All the Furnace Lords and master alchemists of the East Pill Division headed over there at dawn. The word is that there's a Violet Furnace Lord trial by fire!"

"Eastern Emergence Mountain?" An image of the mountain immediately appeared in Meng Hao's mind. It was in the eastern part of the State of Eastern Emergence, quite some distance from the Violet Fate Sect.

"Yeah! The trial by fire for Violet Furnace Lord Promotion has caused a big stir among the other great Sects and Clans. Members of the senior generation arrived quite some time ago to observe the proceedings. You..." As the words were still coming out Song's mouth, Meng Hao took a deep breath, clasped hands, and then disappeared in a beam of bright light.

He sent his Spiritual Sense out and found that there really were no master alchemists present at all within the East Pill Division. He immediately shot off into the distance.

"Batty old Pill Demon," he said through gritted teeth, "why can't you explain things clearly?!" Despite his exhaustion, he shot forward at the highest speed possible.

Eastern Emergence Mountain was the most prominent mountain within the State of Eastern Emergence. It towered up into the sky, and throughout the year, its upper half was enveloped in white clouds that appeared Celestial in nature. Many legends about this mountain existed within the State of Eastern Emergence.

Its peak was covered with ice and snow; mortals would be incapable of climbing up to such a place. Furthermore, the mountain was guarded year round by Violet Fate Sect Cultivators, making it a restricted area.

Even Violet Fate Sect disciples were not allowed to climb the mountain unless they had a special command medallion. Obviously, outsiders would never be allowed onto the mountain unless some solemn Violet Fate Sect matter was underway.

According to one rumor, ten thousand years ago, the Violet Fate Sect wasn't located where it was now, but rather, on Eastern Emergence Mountain. Eventually, because of various circumstances, the Sect had moved away.

Regardless of that, Eastern Emergence Mountain was under constant guard by the Violet Fate Sect. In fact, it was less of a restricted area and more of a holy place!

Currently, an enormous pill furnace rested on the peak of the mountain. It was covered with countless protruding magical symbols, and emanated an archaic air. An air of Time seemed to spread out from within, an air that felt thousands of years old.

Were Meng Hao here, he would recognize this pill furnace... this was the same one that appeared in illusory form above the East Pill Division, and led into the Violet Fate Celestial Land.

This was the actual pill furnace itself!

Surrounding the pill furnace were the thousand master alchemists of the East Pill division, the one hundred Furnace Lords, and the eight Violet Furnace Lords, including An Zaihai and Lin Hailong. [1] Everyone was here!

Close by were representatives of the other four great Sects, as well as the three great Clans, along with members from other Sects who devoted themselves to alchemy. Elders from all these organizations sat cross-legged atop the mountain peak, waiting.

Chapter 278: The Tenth Candidate

A Violet Furnace Lord promotion was not a grand occasion for the Violet Fate Sect only, but rather the entire Southern Domain as a whole. This was not just because a Violet Furnace Lord represented a peak position of incredible height, but also because...



A promotion to Violet Furnace Lord was actually an apprentice-accepting ceremony of Grandmaster Pill Demon!

Currently, there were eight Violet Furnace Lords in the Violet Fate Sect, and all of them were novitiates of Grandmaster Pill Demon. This ceremony was actually a way of formally becoming an apprentice!

Some disciples, such as Chu Yuyan and Ding Xin, were qualified to directly become Grandmaster Pill Demon's apprentices. However, this generally didn't meet with the approval of the alchemists of the East Pill Division. Alchemists were partial to those who relied on their own hard work, who started out as apprentice alchemists, then worked their way to become master alchemists, Furnace Lords, and then finally apprentices of Grandmaster Pill Demon, by joining the ranks of the Violet Furnace Lords.

Chu Yuyan was a bit different. Because of her skill in pill concocting, she had a good reputation in the East Pill Division. Add in her incredible beauty, and the alchemists were more easily able to accept her.

Despite that, to Chu Yuyan, promotion to Violet Furnace Lord was incredibly important. She stood there in the crowd, her eyes glowing with determination. This was her chance to become a Violet Furnace Lord, and she was determined to succeed.

Her gaze came to rest upon a man who was standing behind one of the Violet Furnace Lords. He was middle-aged, and his face was flawless and handsome. His expression was tranquil, and he wore the robe of a Furnace Lord. A faint medicinal aroma wafted off of him; he was clearly beyond ordinary.

Within his face could be seen a hint of lonely arrogance. His expression and appearance were exactly how Chu Yuyan imagined Grandmaster Pill Cauldron to be.

"He will be my biggest competition for promotion to Violet Furnace Lord...." she thought with an inward sigh as she looked at him. This proud, aloof man was like a Chosen among the Furnace Lords. His name was Ye Feimu. [1]

Among the Furnace Lords, Ye Feimu was well known as having incredible skill in the Dao of alchemy. His skill was the type only seen once in a thousand years, and he was generally acknowledged to be the alchemist most likely to be promoted to Violet Furnace Lord. Upon joining

the Sect many years ago, he had immediately caused a huge stir in the East Pill Division. Furthermore, Violet Furnace Lord Ye Yuntian took special notice of his talent and showed him favor. This was mostly because they shared the same surname, Ye.

With assistance the entire time, he became the number one apprentice alchemist at the time, then the number one master alchemist. Finally, he became a Furnace Lord, whereupon not much was heard about him for many years. According to the rumors, his skill in the Dao of alchemy had reached the peak of the Furnace Lord rank, and he was halfway to being a Violet Furnace Lord already.

Even more stunning was that it wasn't just his Dao of alchemy that was so high; he had long since reached the Core Formation stage. He hadn't cultivated Core Qi yet, but many people speculated that if he hadn't devoted himself so much to alchemy, he would already be above the mid Core Formation stage.

In this Violet Furnace Lord trial by fire, Ye Feimu was viewed as the most likely candidate to win. Second was Chu Yuyan. There were other candidates, but the general consensus was that the main competition would be between these two.

Chu Yuyan had one advantage; she was an apprentice of Pill Demon. As for Ye Feimu, his advantage, which even Chu Yuyan had to acknowledge, was that he had the support of ninety percent of the Furnace Lords, as well as five of the Violet Furnace Lords. In addition, Pill Demon himself had praised him on past occasions. All of this really put Ye Feimu in a superior position.

Even more importantly, Chosen-like Ye Feimu had been talked a lot about in the past year. More and more people outside the Sect were spreading rumors that... he was Grandmaster Pill Cauldron!

Ye Feimu never made any comments on the subject, which of course caused even more rumors to spread. Soon, everyone was convinced that Pill Cauldron was none other than Ye Feimu.

In fact, many people felt that the reason he sealed his pill with the cauldron (鼎) was because of his name, Feimu (非目)!

The characters 非 and 目 can both be seen in the character 鼎!

Even many of the Furnace Lords agreed with this, as well as a few of the Violet Furnace Lords, who began to pay closer attention to him because of it.

Chu Yuyan was very focused on the matter of Pill Cauldron. She had even gone to visit Ye Feimu to ask about it. While he hadn't openly admitted that he was Pill Cauldron, he had vaguely implied that such was the case. How could Chu Yuyan not have understood his meaning?

After finally resolving the issue, she actually felt a little bit disappointed. It was an indescribable feeling, sort of like waking to find that reality was very different from the dream world you had just been in.

“Even if he is Grandmaster Pill Cauldron, I will fight with everything I have to become a Violet Furnace Lord,” she thought, taking a deep breath and deepening her resolve. For some strange reason, as soon as she made her mind up, the image of another person suddenly appeared in her mind. Fang Mu.

“Why am I thinking about him...?” She frowned, dispelling the image of Fang Mu from her thoughts.

It was early morning on Eastern Emergence Mountain. Cool sunlight fell upon the snowy mountain peak. The enormous pill furnace emitted an archaic aura of Time, and the surroundings were very quiet.

The eight Violet Furnace Lords of the East Pill Division sat cross-legged. Behind them were the Furnace Lords and master alchemists, over a thousand people altogether.

Also present off to the side were representatives from the other Sects and Clans, here to observe the ceremonies. If someone was promoted to Violet Furnace Lord, they would witness the event and then announce throughout the Southern Domain that there was a ninth Violet Furnace Lord, and that Grandmaster Pill Demon had accepted a new apprentice.

“The hour has arrived!” cried Lin Hailong, the most senior of the Violet Furnace Lords.

As soon as his words rang out, the sound of bells filled the mountain peak. The clouds above roiled, forming together to form an ancient-looking face that stared down at everyone.

At the same time, the enormous pill furnace began to emit a gentle glow. Multi-colored beams of light shot out, twisting around to fill the entire area with brightness.

From off in the distance, it looked as if the entirety of Eastern Emergence Mountain was covered by a massive, illusory pill furnace.

Ripples appeared in the air, out from which a figure emerged to stand atop the pill furnace. He wore a white robe, and his features were ordinary; however, his aura was anything but. He gave off a sense of ultimate refinement.

The air around him distorted as he appeared, as if he didn't quite belong in the world.

The sleeves of his simple robe were embroidered with images of pill furnaces. His hair was white, and his gaze soft as he looked around at everyone. A smile appeared on his archaic face.

“Fellow Daoists of the Southern Domain, many thanks for coming to attend my ceremony of accepting a new apprentice. I am unable to attend in person, so I've embodied my Divine Will to come in my place. I hope you can all forgive me for this.” This of course was the man who occupied the ultimate position in the Dao of alchemy in the Southern Domain, Grandmaster Pill Demon.

His voice caused all the disciples of the East Pill Division to salute respectfully, including master alchemists, Furnace Lords and Violet Furnace Lords. Grandmaster Pill Demon was essentially the Patriarch of the East Pill Division.

Grandmaster Eternal Mountain hadn't come, but instead, Grand Elder Xiao Xifeng, whose Cultivation base was at the great circle of the late Nascent Soul stage. He laughed, then coolly said, “No need to be so polite, Grandmaster Pill Demon. Accepting an apprentice and promoting a Violet Furnace Lord is a grand event for the entire Southern Domain, I, Xiao wouldn't think of not coming.”

He occupied a noble and prestigious position within the Golden Frost Sect, and was nearly nine hundred years old, making him a sub-Patriarch. He was not yet one thousand years old, and had not defied the Heavens. If in the next hundred years he could break through to the Spirit Severing stage, then he would truly become a Patriarch.

If not, then he would simply pass away in meditation and become one with the Dao.

Next to him were ten or more Golden Frost Sect Cultivators, including Fatty. Right now, Fatty looked extremely nervous, and didn't show the slightest hint of being lively or excited. In fact, he was acting unprecedentedly well-behaved.

The person he feared the most in the entire Golden Frost Sect was none other than Grand Elder Xiao.

“After hearing that Grandmaster Pill Demon was accepting a new apprentice, I came as fast as possible,” said Patriarch Violet Sieve of the Black Sieve Sect, smiling. “Thankfully, I didn’t arrive late.”

He sat cross-legged off to the side. Next to him was Zhou Jie as well as Han Bei, who was currently looking around, sizing up the surroundings. It seemed as if she were looking for someone.

A Violet Furnace Lord promotion was a huge event, something that hadn’t occurred for a very long time. It was only natural for the other great Sects to show up. Also present was Daoist Wu Sheng, second of the Solitary Sword Sect’s Three Swordlords, who sat cross-legged, surrounded by Solitary Sword Sect disciples. Chen Fan was there, as was the woman Shan Ling.

With a slight smile, Daoist Wu Sheng said, “You’re truly too polite, Grandmaster Pill Demon. For a Grandmaster to accept an apprentice is a legacy of the Dao of alchemy that any disciple in the Southern Domain would covet. How could I not humbly come to bear witness to such an event?” His voice was calm. He was an honored senior member of the Solitary Sword Sect who was qualified to look down on a myriad of other Sects. However, in front of Grandmaster Pill Demon, all of his pride turned into respect.

The representative from the Blood Demon Sect was a withered old man in a red Daoist robe. He had silver hair, and his skin was shriveled; he emanated a thick death aura, and his eyes had no pupils; they were completely white.

He didn’t say anything in response to Pill Demon’s words. He merely smiled and nodded his head.

This blind old man was incredibly famous in the Southern Domain. He was the third Demon of the Blood Demon Sect, Tu Luo, the Corpse Demon! The only other person from the Blood Demon Sect to come to Eastern Emergence Mountain was Li Shiqi.

The main representatives from the three great Clans were all of the great circle of the Nascent Soul stage. All of them said various words in response to Grandmaster Pill Demon.

Afterwards Grandmaster Pill Demon smiled and said, "In total, there will be ten Cultivators participating in the Violet Furnace Lord trial by fire. Candidates, please step forward." His voice was solemn, and as it filled the mountain top, Chu Yuyan, Ye Feimu, and seven other Furnace Lords stepped out from the crowd one by one. They walked over to stand in front of the pill furnace.

Including Chu Yuyan and Ye Feimu, there were only nine alchemists standing there, not the ten of which Pill Demon had spoken. The Cultivators of the East Pill Division immediately noticed this, as did the representatives of the other Sects.

Chu Yuyan and the other candidates for Violet Furnace Lord Promotion exchanged glances, silently wondering who the tenth participant was.

Before anyone could say anything, a beam of light appeared in the distance. It shot through the air toward the mountain peak, then transformed into a panting Meng Hao. Everyone looked over at him, although he didn't care about that. He glanced around, and immediately noticed Chu Yuyan and the other eight standing in front of the pill furnace, as well as Grandmaster Pill Demon.

As far as Meng Hao was concerned, Pill Demon was just some old man that he didn't recognize.

"The tenth candidate has arrived," said Grandmaster Pill Demon, his expression the same as ever. "Fang Mu, step on over."

Hearing this, Meng Hao walked over without hesitation to join the other nine. Then he looked up at Pill Demon, bottling up his frustration and helplessness.

Chapter 279: Opening the Pill Furnace

The voice that Meng Hao had just heard was exactly the same voice he had heard coming from the Furnace Lord medallion four days ago. Considering that, as well as the expressions on everyone's faces, how could Meng Hao not come to the conclusion that... this person was none other than the illustrious Grandmaster Pill Demon.

In Meng Hao's eyes, Grandmaster Pill Demon looked completely ordinary. He did not possess the demeanor of a transcendent being, nor did he emanate some powerful, domineering fierceness. He looked just like a regular old man.

Then... Meng Hao thought about the 200,000,000 Spirit Stones, and his mood worsened. Of course, he couldn't mention anything about that now. Next, he thought about how he had been told to return

in four days, but hadn't been told where to go. He had rushed over to the Sect only to be forced to scramble back in the opposite direction. It had left him completely drained.

All of these depressing thoughts caused Meng Hao's expression to flicker with a bit of anger and frustration.

Chu Yuyan looked at him and let out a light snort. She looked away, ignoring him, gazing instead at Ye Feimu. Meng Hao stood there by himself, silently.

Most of the other seven just glanced at him, and then paid him no further attention as they focused on not allowing excitement regarding the Violet Furnace Lord promotion to show on their face.

An Zaihai looked over at Meng Hao, and a barely perceptible smile touched his face. He knew that Fang Mu was Grandmaster Pill Cauldron, and he also knew how his Master felt about the young man. Pill Demon had given Fang Mu free reign to enjoy himself in the Sect, and as far as the identity of Grandmaster Pill Cauldron, if Fang Mu wanted to reveal it himself, he could. If he didn't want to, that was his business.

As far as the representatives from the other Sects and Clans, Patriarch Violet Sieve was the first one to give a friendly nod to Meng Hao. Zhou Jie's face was expressionless, but when Han Bei looked at him, she smiled, her face as beautiful as a flower. The look she gave him was noticed by quite a few others. Chu Yuyan glanced over and saw it, and then frowned, although she wasn't sure why. For some reason, she just was not in a good mood.

Fatty's eyes were wide as he looked at Meng Hao, then Chu Yuyan and then back to Meng Hao. Finally he glanced at Han Bei out of the corner of his eyes, and his expression filled with admiration. As for what he was thinking, only he himself knew.

The representative from the Wang Clan was an old woman, her face covered with wrinkles. "So, this is the Alchemist Fang who rose to fame a few days ago in the western region." Behind the old woman, other Wang Clan members sat cross-legged, including Wang Tengfei.

His expression was somber, and the entire time, he hadn't even looked once at Chu Yuyan. She reacted to this with utmost calm, and not the least bit of negativity. It seemed as if she had placed the matters from previous years completely behind her.

“A hero at such a young age!” someone laughed from within the Song Clan representatives. It was none other than Eccentric Song, who sat far off toward the edge. He laughed again as he looked Meng Hao up and down, measuring him up.

Sitting around him were a dozen or so members of the Song Clan. Song Yunshu wasn't there, but Song Jia was. She, of course was... Meng Hao's fiancé, at least theoretically speaking. There she was sitting right next to Eccentric Song. Meng Hao hadn't seen her for years now. She was slim and graceful, with an elegant expression on her face. She was beautiful, like an orchid in full bloom.

However, there was a slight furrow in her brow caused by years of gloomy thoughts. It made her entire person seem like an orchid, but a dark one.

The Li Clan representative was a senior member of the Clan, Li Guobang, who was over five hundred years of age, and had a Cultivation base at the late Nascent Soul stage. He was incredibly powerful and influential within the Li Clan. “Congratulations, Grandmaster Pill Demon, your Violet Fate Sect really has produced some amazing disciples!”

Sitting next to Li Guobang amidst the other Li Clan disciples, was Li Daoyi, who frowned as he looked over at Meng Hao.

Grandmaster Pill Demon smiled, but didn't respond to any of the comments. He looked over Meng Hao and the nine others.

“Hailong, please explain the rules.” With that, he stepped off to the side and sat down cross-legged.

Lin Hailong, the most senior ranking of the Violet Furnace Lords, hastily stood up. He clasped hands and bowed to Grandmaster Pill Demon, then turned toward Meng Hao and the others.

“Violet Furnace Lord promotion is about more than just collecting medicinal plants, concocting pills, memorizing formulas, testing the Cultivation base and gauging the Dao of alchemy. It is a trial by fire! I myself have experienced this trial by fire, as have all of the other Violet Furnace Lords you see here today. Only by rising above your peers can you achieve the rank of Violet Furnace Lord!

“However.... since ancient times, the East Pill Division of the Violet Fate Sect has held a Violet Furnace Lord test seventy-nine times. Down to this day, only seventeen of those tests resulted in a successful promotion. In other words, in the other sixty-two tests, all the candidates failed, unable to make the furnace turn violet. Therefore, despite being qualified to participate in this trial by fire,



there is a seventy percent possibility that you will fail.” A serious look was written on his face as he slowly looked over Meng Hao and the others, one by one.

Meng Hao’s face was placid. He was physically tired, but also excited. He had previously read that throughout the history of the Violet Fate Sect, there had only been seventeen alchemists promoted to Violet Furnace Lord. Two of them ended up forsaking the Sect, one of whom was Eternal Mountain; the other was surnamed Liu.

Of the fifteen others, in the past thousand years, five had perished. Two left the Sect to gain experience, and then disappeared without a trace. Grandmaster Pill Demon had personally searched for them, but hadn’t been able to turn up a single clue. The only thing he was certain of was that they weren’t dead. For some reason, though, they had disappeared from the Southern Domain.

Lin Hailong continued: “Even if you fail, you will be able to seize good fortune within the test. During the Violet Furnace Lord trial by fire, your life will not be in any danger. But... you may only participate in this test once in your life. If you fail, you will never get a second chance!

“Therefore, since ancient times, many alchemists have left personally created pill formulas and other personal information about the Dao of alchemy within the test. These things have been passed down within the test for many years, available only to those qualified to participate in the test. For example, I remember how I personally left behind information regarding my understanding and speculations of the Three Mortalities Pill....” Lin Hailong’s eyes filled with a look of recollection for a moment.

“The location of the trial by fire is a mountain in the Celestial Land. At the base of the mountain is the Mother of Furnaces. This Mother of Furnaces is the first stroke of good fortune of the ten of you will encounter. Inside, you will find your own Life Furnace. More precisely, at the same time that you select a furnace, that furnace will be selecting you! To complete the test, you must make your Life Furnace turn violet. If you do that, and are able to ascend to the peak of the mountain, then you will earn the right to be called Violet Furnace Lord!

“Unfortunately, only one person can earn such a right. If more than one person is able to reach the peak, then the final decision will be made by the Furnace Lords and the Violet Furnace Lords. Their approval will be critical in the decision of who becomes the next Violet Furnace Lord!”

Lin Hailong gave deep, meaningful looks to Meng Hao and the others as he spoke his final words: “The pill furnace behind you is a precious treasure forged thousands upon thousands of years ago by Reverend Violet East. Inside is a Celestial Land, and a towering Celestial Mountain. There are ten paths on the mountain, which is divided into four regions. Each of the four regions contains

different trials and tests. Use your Dao of alchemy to pass through them. Based on your achievements, the color of your furnaces will darken. I must remind you, everything you do within the trial by fire will be seen clearly by everyone on the outside.... Do your best. I truly hope that this trial by fire will result in one of you becoming... my Ninth Junior Brother in the East Pill Division!” With that, he turned to look at Pill Demon. Pill Demon gave a slight nod.

Lin Hailong flicked his wide sleeve and said, “Chant the Alchemy Scripture to open the Pill Furnace!” As his voice rang out, the eyes of all the alchemists, Furnace Lord and Violet Furnace Lord alike, immediately closed. Their lips moved slightly, and an indistinct sound filled the air. It was impossible to understand or hear clearly. Even a Nascent Soul Cultivator wouldn’t be able to comprehend it.

Only alchemists of the East Pill Division would be able to make out that this mysterious so-called Alchemy Scripture was none other than the Alchemy Dao Transmutation Incantation!

Seemingly in sync with the droning sound, Eastern Emergence Mountain began to shake. Multicolored light spread out everywhere, filling the sky. Countless faces suddenly appeared within the clouds, their expressions dignified. From their mouths emerged indistinct symbols. The sound echoed about, causing the sky to be filled with bright colors.

The land around the mountain was peaceful. However, a mist sprang up, with Eastern Emergence Mountain at its center. It roiled out rapidly, quickly covering the entire State of Eastern Emergence. All the land and all the living things in it were submerged within the mist.

As the mist spread out, Violet Qi Division disciples flew out in all directions to keep guard and maintain peace.

Up in the sky, colorful lights danced about, beneath which, clouds and mist covered the land like a sea. Eastern Emergence Mountain rose up from it like an island, towering up. Far off in the distance, the enormous statue of Reverend Violet East also towered up above the sea of clouds, looking, not like a mountain, but an enormous giant watching over the land.

“The pill furnace is opened. Enter!” cried Lin Hailong.

The pill furnace emitting buzzing sounds. In the blink of an eye, its side began to ripple and grow transparent. It looked almost like a waterfall. Ye Feimu took a deep breath, and then stepped into the pill furnace, the first one to do so. He disappeared into the rippling water, followed by Chu Yuyan, whose eyes radiated determination.

Meng Hao looked back at Grandmaster Pill Demon, who sat there cross-legged, his eyes closed. Without a word, and without the slightest hesitation, he entered the waterfall. Coldness filled his body, and it began to grow transparent. He disappeared.

The other seven candidates entered as well, vanishing immediately. Although it might seem like these seven were people of little note, in reality, to be qualified to participate in the trial by fire showed how extraordinary they were. Such qualifications meant that they were inherently famous, the best of the best in terms of both personality and the Dao of alchemy!

Chapter 280: Life Furnace?

Violet Fate Celestial Land. The holiest place in the Sect.

There were many legends regarding this particular Celestial Land. All of them, however, had something to do with the almighty Reverend Violet East, who had founded the Sect tens of thousands of years ago.

Many years after the Sect's Founding, this Celestial Land gradually came to be the location where the Violet Fate Sect grew its medicinal herbs. Eventually more types of medicinal plants came to grow there than in the entire rest of the Southern Domain put together.

That was the location of the East Pill Division's Dao Reserve. Within the Violet Fate Celestial Land, at the far end of the limitless stretches of medicinal plant fields, was a mountain so tall it seemed to have no top!

This mountain, which could be seen from an incredible distance, was known as Violet East Mountain!

According to one legend, in his later years, Reverend Violet East sat atop this mountain and slowly passed away in meditation... afterward it became a place of pilgrimage.

At the foot of the mountain was an enormous pill furnace glowing with a seven-colored light. It looked exactly the same as the furnace on top of Eastern Emergence Mountain, except somehow more real. It emanated an archaic aura.

Suddenly, the air at the foot of the mountain began to ripple like liquid. Multiple figures emerged, and when the ripples faded away, Meng Hao, Chu Yuyan, Ye Feimu and the others were all there.

In front of them was the shockingly high mountain. Starting at the foot of the mountain, ten small paths zigzagged up toward the top. Each path began there, and then took different routes to the top.

As to which path to select, that would be based on the feeling each candidate got from the paths. In any case, it was easy to see that there was little difference in the difficulty of traversing the various paths.

Meng Hao looked up toward the peak of the imposing mountain. Its higher regions were blurry, and it was actually impossible to see the peak itself. Nor was it actually possible to even estimate how tall the mountain was.

Meng Hao wasn't the only one looking up at it. The other nine people around him, including Chu Yuyan and Ye Feimu, were gazing toward it.

Other than the ten paths, the main thing that filled their vision was the enormous pill furnace!

After some time passed, Ye Feimu's eyes glittered with determination. He turned to glance over at the others. His gaze did not come to rest upon any of them. His supercilious expression seemed to say that he knew he would become a Violet Furnace Lord, and that none of the other candidates were able to match up to him.

His pride and dignity seemed to fill him with one hundred percent confidence that this title of Violet Furnace Lord belonged only to him!

He shot toward the pill furnace and sat down cross-legged in the spot directly east of it.

Chu Yuyan looked at him and took a deep breath. Her eyes also filled with the glow of determination.

"You might be Grandmaster Pill Cauldron, who I admire so much, but now the time has come for me to go up against you...." Closing her eyes, she sat down next to the Pill Furnace.

After her, Meng Hao and the others approached and selected various positions to sit down. The first phase of the competition had begun; it was time for the candidates to acquire their Life Furnaces!!

Meng Hao had no clue how to actually get the furnace. However, as soon as the ten of them sat down cross-legged around the seven-colored pill furnace, the glow around it began to flicker, and then suddenly shot out toward the candidates.

A tremor ran through Meng Hao's body, and he suddenly sensed something calling to him, murmuring within his mind. He reached out to touch it with Spiritual Sense, and suddenly his mind reeled, and he felt as if he had lost contact with his body.

He could no longer see the mountain or the Celestial Land. Instead, a strange world stretched out in front of his eyes.

It was boundless and filled with curling mists. A six-colored glow was everywhere, a glow that was missing the color violet. It pierced through the mists, shining everywhere. Meng Hao looked at everything mutely. He couldn't feel his body, but he was somehow there. He suddenly realized that by concentrating, he could move.

His body was not here in this world, only his will. The world sped by in front of him as he shot through the mists. As he moved, occasional beams of bright light would shoot past him.

It seemed like this place had no end. Everything was a blur....

Inside the Celestial Land, beneath the mountain, next to the pill furnace, Meng Hao sat there cross-legged. His expression seemed to be constantly changing, as if he were lost in a dream. All of the others around him looked exactly the same. Their expressions seemed to flicker with surprise, confusion and thoughtfulness.

Meanwhile, outside of the Violet Fate Celestial Land, atop Eastern Emergence Mountain, ten glowing, richly colored screens suddenly blossomed up out of the pill furnace. Images gradually became clear on the screens, depicting each of the people within the trial by fire.

As they sat there cross-legged, their expressions were clearly visible to all of the alchemists of the East Pill Division who sat on the mountaintop, as well as the representatives from the other Sects and Clans who had come to observe the proceedings.

Each and every action of the ten within the Celestial Land was clearly visible to everyone.

The mountaintop was peaceful, and everyone seemed to be dividing their attention between the ten various screens.

Lin Hailong looked at them and murmured to himself, “Every Violet Furnace Lord trial by fire requires the candidates to proceed through four regions and face four tests. However, before facing the tests, they must acquire their personal Life Furnaces. The Life Furnace is the key... the type of furnace acquired will depend completely on the good fortune of the alchemist...”

Meng Hao lost track of time as he proceeded on through the endless emptiness. All he could see was mist, and the six-colored glow. There was nothing else.

After a very long time had passed, Meng Hao was starting to feel tired. Suddenly, a violet glow flickered up ahead of him. Meng Hao peered forward. His attention was seized by this violet glow that suddenly appeared in a world which lacked violet.

The violet glow didn't move, but just sat there, flickering. Suddenly, a pill furnace became visible within the glow, about the size of an infant's fist.

Magical symbols circulated around the pill furnace, which emanated a violet light.

Just as Meng Hao's will moved forward to touch the pill furnace, it suddenly shot backward, streaming magical symbols. Before Meng Hao could get any closer, it sped off into the distance.

Meng Hao muttered to himself for a moment, then proceeded forward. Not much time passed before he caught sight of another violet glow, within which was another pill furnace. It looked a bit different than the other one, as it had three legs. However, as Meng Hao approached, it too disappeared off into the distance.

“So,” Meng Hao thought to himself, “I have to select a furnace, and the furnace has to select me....” He decided to stop moving, and instead calmed himself and settled his will. “I'll use my Dao of alchemy to communicate with this world created by the Mother of Furnaces. I will search the emptiness for the Life Furnace that is fated to belong to me....” With that, he figuratively closed his eyes.

Time passed, a very, very long time. Meng Hao gradually grew calmer. Soon, within his mind, he saw nine spheres of will; these nine spheres were the other candidates within the trial by fire.

He could sense them, and they, in turn, could sense him.

It was a strange feeling. They couldn't see each other, but they could feel each other. Meng Hao and the other nine relied on their Dao of alchemy to sense this world, and to attempt to draw out their own personal Life Furnace.

Gradually, Meng Hao could see one beam of glowing light after another appearing around the other nine people. Chu Yuyan had attracted seven or eight pill furnaces of various colors.

As for Ye Feimu, he had dozens spinning around him; all of them seemed to desire to be selected by him.

The other people had two or three at the minimum.

Meng Hao was the only person who only had one pill furnace in front of him. His heart sank momentarily before he calmed himself.

"In my Dao of alchemy," he thought, "my body is the pill furnace and my heart is the pill formula. Few people can conform to this philosophy, therefore, it is difficult for me to attract a suitable Life Furnace." He began to murmur, sending his will out in all directions. "Pill Furnaces, if you follow me, you will reach the pinnacle. Come with me, and become eternal!"

Suddenly an almost countless number of glowing lights appeared throughout the nothingness of the world. More than ten thousand of them flickered in all corners of the world. The pill furnaces trembled, as if they were reacting to Meng Hao's voice.

"In my Dao of alchemy, my body is the furnace and my heart is the formula. I will refine all the myriads of things in nature; I will refine the transformations of the sun and moon. Such a refining requires a furnace, my Life Furnace. Follow me for a life of transformation...." His will surged out, growing stronger, increasing the number of pill furnaces that reacted to him to over one hundred thousand. Half among them began to quiver violently, seemingly excited, and yet hesitating.

"I vow that whichever pill furnace follows me will never be destroyed. It will never shatter!" His will echoed out, growing even stronger. Among the fifty thousand trembling pill furnaces, ten thousand of them began to emit droning noises.

“I vow that whichever pill furnace follows me will concoct medicinal pills of the stars, and will give birth to Pill Spirit! This is my personal vow!” His will soared, and in that instant, within the ten thousand pill furnaces, one thousand began to drone even louder, and emit even brighter, glittering auras.

“I vow that whichever pill furnace belongs to me, when I achieve my Dao, it will incarnate a body!” His will thundered out. Among the thousand pill furnaces was a violet furnace which suddenly shot out of nowhere, heading directly toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao formless eyes opened, and in front of him, he saw a nine-legged violet furnace!

It shone with a flickering, violet glow as it floated in the air in front of him. Magical symbols emanated off of it. It was obvious from a mere glance that it was completely beyond ordinary.

“This is the Life Furnace which belongs to me, selected from within the void...” Meng Hao’s eyes shone brightly, and he slowly lifted up his hand to take hold of the furnace. It was at this exact moment that suddenly, a powerful screaming noise shook the entire world.

The pill furnace in front of Meng Hao began to tremble, as did all the pill furnaces hovering around the other nine candidates. They all seemed... terrified....

Something violent and shocking was about to happen!