

## The Heavens 311

Chapter 311: Now That is a Cultivator!

Meng Hao's face was grim as he looked around at the roiling fog. He immediately bit down on the tip of his tongue, spitting up some blood. As soon as it flew out into the air, it transformed into a blood mist beneath Meng Hao's feet.

This helped him to amplify his speed by several times; he immediately reappeared five kilometers away, next to the shrinking Immortal's corpse.

The instant he did, he coughed up a mouthful of blood, and his once black hair was now white. Just now, he had used one of the multifarious forbidden techniques of the Blood Immortal Legacy. A Core Formation Cultivator could use this technique to instantly gain speed far beyond the normal capability of his body.

It wasn't quite a minor teleportation, but considering the short distance involved, there wasn't much of a difference. Minor teleportation was a divine ability of Nascent Soul Cultivators. As for Core Formation Cultivators, they could use this forbidden art only three times throughout their life.

As Meng Hao's body disappeared, the position he had just occupied collapsed, the air shattering because of the forbidden technique. He would never be able to do something like this using only his own skill and power.

This was the only way to avoid death!

The entire area was locked down with restrictive spells, making teleportation impossible. However, this forbidden art was not a minor teleportation, but rather an explosive increase in speed. However, it caused him to cough up blood, indicating that he had sustained injuries to internal organs. In addition, cracking sounds could be heard from his legs.

His face was pale white. However, he didn't hesitate in the slightest. His pupils glowed violet as he drew from his longevity to heal his injuries.

Meng Hao's longevity had increased after reaching Core Formation; ordinarily speaking, he would be able to live to around four hundred years. However, as of now, he had already wasted a significant amount of that longevity.

Because of this price, he still looked young, but his face was pallid, something that could not be altered by the Violet Pupil Transformation.

"They're still gaining." Around Meng Hao, the Nascent Soul Cultivators from the Ji and Li Clans, despite having been restricted to the great circle of Core Formation, were whistling toward him at top speed.

Meng Hao had evaded them just now, causing the eyes of this collection of Elders to flicker. The fact that he had avoided death just now filled them with surprise.

Han Bei, Chu Yuyan and the others were watching from a distance, hearts filled with shock.

Xu Qing's hands were balled tightly into fists, and she was gnawing on her lower lip. She watched Meng Hao, her face pale, desiring to help him. However, the panting Meng Hao had just made eye contact with her, and within his gaze was the clear message that he forbade that.

Don't make all my painstaking effort be for nothing, he told her through the look. She watched on, trembling, tears welling up in her eyes.

One of the old men from the Li Clan shot forward, glaring at Meng Hao. "It's not that I look down on you, junior," he said with a cold laugh. "No wonder you were able to kill our Dao Child. But today, you will not be able to escape! You'll compensate with your life!"

"What a load of crap!" replied Meng Hao, slapping his bag of holding. The blood red mask appeared, and he slipped it on without hesitation. As it melded with his face, a bloody killing aura emanated out. All who saw it were instantly shaken.

Chen Fan and the others were shocked, too, but not too badly. As the sinister Blood Qi enveloped the area, they retreated backward a few paces. On the other hand, the faces of the elders from the Ji and Li Clans immediately changed.

Meng Hao's green robe was suddenly bathed by the red light, making it seem as if he were clothed in blood itself. The crimson glow and the red mask, which was featureless except for the two eyes,

immediately caused the Nascent Soul Cultivators to recall depictions they had seen in their Clans' ancient records.

The Blood Immortal of the Ancient Doom Clan!

It looked exactly the same!

Intense killing intent, boiling murderous desire, immediately erupted above Meng Hao's head into a red-colored Core Qi. It roiled, emanating out in all directions.

Beneath Meng Hao, the Immortal's corpse had shrunk down until it was little more than thirty meters high.

The dozen or so old men from the Ji and Li Clans were still approaching at high speed. One of the eight Ji Clan elders, eyes flashing with intense killing intent, said, "You overestimate yourself!"

In order to ensure his own safety, he had resolved to personally slay Meng Hao. Without any hesitation, nor having any compunctions about damaging his reputation by bullying someone weaker than him, he shot forward ahead of the others, his killing intent billowing to the heavens.

"DIE!!" he cried, his voice sinister. He quickly lifted up his right hand. Normally, Meng Hao wouldn't even have been able to make out his movements because of the speed. Now, though, he could make out a blur of motion.

The man was approaching with rapid speed!

"Without a face!" Meng Hao's eyes were bright red as he waved his right hand. His hair was completely white; however, because it was inundated by the crimson glow, it actually looked red!

The Core Qi seethed, immediately transforming into an enormous face. The left eye was bizarre in appearance, whereas Meng Hao existed in the right eye. It flew out, heading directly toward the Ji and Li elders. A boom filled the air.

Put life and death on the line! End the opponent to assure your own existence!

The instant the boom could be heard, the ground heaved. Everything shook, even the black fog. The explosion was audible even outside of the basin.

The eyes of Patriarch Violet Sieve of the Black Sieve Sect glittered. Behind him, the Spirit Severing Patriarch of the Black Sieve Sect had a similar expression. They flew up, and were about to head into the black fog, when suddenly, the two Spirit Severing Patriarchs from the Violet Fate Sect disappeared. When they blinked back, there were directly in front of the two from the Black Sieve Sect.

“If you take another step forward, don’t blame us for killing you,” said one of the Violet Fate Sect Patriarchs, his voice grim. His eyes glowed with killing intent and fury.

Back within the black fog, the boom continued to echo out. The enormous face which surrounded Meng Hao disintegrated. Blood sprayed from his mouth as nearly half the bones in his body were broken. Countless lacerations shredded his flesh, from which blood spilled out, causing his clothes to truly turn red. The redness of his garments was no longer caused by the crimson glow in the air; now he was actually wearing a robe of blood!

His body tumbled backward, falling down onto the Immortal’s corpse. Trembling, he gritted his teeth and rose to his feet. Right now, Meng Hao looked very much like he had when he faced up against Wang Tengfei back in the Reliance Sect. His stubbornness, his tenacity, and his powerful heart would always exist, regardless of whether or not his body was on the verge of collapse!

A reddish glow flickered in his eyes. Blood dripped off of his body down onto the Immortal’s corpse beneath his feet, which was now less than fifteen meters tall.

As for the Nascent Soul Cultivator from the Ji Clan, his body trembled, and his face had fallen. He was not injured, but he looked at Meng Hao with a serious expression. His attack just now had been backed by the power of the great circle of Core Formation. Even that bit of power should have been more than enough to destroy a Core Formation Cultivator. And yet Meng Hao... was not dead!

Immediately, intense killing intent flickered in the man’s eyes, along with greed.

He could clearly see that Meng Hao’s Cultivation base was merely at the early Core Formation stage; for him to be able to wield the power he had just now... was only because of the blood-colored mask!

He wasn't the only person who realized this; all of the others at his side began to look toward Meng Hao with flashing eyes.

Meng Hao's attack now had seriously injured himself. However, considering the level of his Cultivation base, the fact that he could withstand an attack from even a suppressed Nascent Soul Cultivator showed how incredibly powerful the mask was.

You could easily say that with the mask on, Meng Hao was absolutely, completely different than before.

However... despite that, he was still not a match for his opponent. His body was on the verge of collapse, like an oil lamp with no oil left in it. Beneath the mask, his face was pale and covered with wrinkles. And yet, his eyes burned with frenzy, and emitted a violet glow.

Again, he burned his longevity to heal himself.

He looked at the dozen or so incoming Cultivators, and then suddenly lifted his head to the sky and laughed. His expression contained unyielding pride, the kind of obstinacy which indicated that he would never bow his head.

He was Grandmaster Pill Cauldron! He was the Ninth Demon Sealer! He was Fang Mu! He... was Meng Hao!

He was born a scholar, but today, he was a Cultivator of the Core Formation stage. He was fighting against a dozen or more experts with Nascent Soul Cultivation bases. They were suppressed, and because of the blood-colored mask he was almost inhuman. But when you consider the Southern Domain as a whole, for the past thousands of years, he was the only person who could possibly do this!

Therefore, Meng Hao laughed. It was a laughter of no regrets, a laughter filled with lofty sentiment, a laughter filled with stubbornness that soared to the heavens!

Damaging his life force to heal himself, his face beneath the mask rapidly aged. His hair had long since grown completely white. However, from the perspective of an outsider, beneath the crimson glow, his hair was bright red!

Such an image immediately burned a deep impression into everyone who was watching. As all of the Chosen of the Southern Domain teleported out from the crumbling mental realm, the first thing they saw was Meng Hao. The image was branded into their minds, something that they would never forget for a hundred years, for a thousand, for their entire lives!

At this moment, he was like the sun burning in the noon sky, the representative of a generation. Never again would someone like him appear. Never would someone be able to outmatch Meng Hao.

This was what each and every one of them was thinking.

Chosen? Dao Child? Wearing his mask, his crimson hair fluttering, facing up against more than ten Nascent Soul Cultivators and laughing.... The rest of them were like insects!

“Now that... is a Cultivator!” It was hard to say who muttered the words first, but it only took a moment for them to resonate throughout the minds of all the Chosen.

Note from Er Gen: Cultivators have what it takes to stand up to Heaven and Earth. Cultivators have the stubbornness to never bow their heads, no matter how bloody the battle. That is a Cultivator. To me, a Cultivator is someone who stands, covered in blood, hair snow white, facing a host of enemies. And yet, no matter the danger, no matter how difficult the path, a Cultivator will grit his teeth, lift his head up and laugh! In this manner, he will become a legend! That is what a Cultivator is to me.

Chapter 312: Because This Person, Is Filled With Insanity!

Amidst the laughter and the whipping red hair, Meng Hao lifted his right hand. There between his fingers was a violet-colored medicinal pill! This pill contained a devilish will, and the instant it appeared, rumbling filled Heaven and Earth.

An indescribable aura seethed out from it to fill the surroundings, causing all onlookers' faces to flicker. Without hesitation, Meng Hao placed the pill into his mouth.

The violet-colored pill dissolved with shocking speed, staining his internal organs as if with ink, filling his viscera.

ARRRGHHH!

Meng Hao lifted his head toward the sky and let out a shocking roar. Beneath the mask, his face twisted and distorted. His crimson eyes filled with insanity and billowing killing intent. The blood-colored mask seemed to approve of the aura which surged throughout his body; it caused it to spread out even more intensely!

Pain!

Incomprehensible pain!

His entire body felt as if it were being slashed into pieces, as if he were being punished with death by a thousand cuts. As this happened, it released all of the potential of his latent talent and Cultivation base. It was as if a treasure chest within his body had been opened. A final intense pain rushed through him; it felt as if someone had ripped open his chest, pulled out his beating heart and lifted it up to the sky!

Chaos!

Earthshaking chaos!

An indescribable power seemed to take all of the memories in his head and crush them to dust. His will and his consciousness were thrown into disorder. Within the disorder and chaos, strands of intense and incomparable killing intent filled him!

One strand, one hundred strands, one thousand strands, ten thousand strands, one hundred thousand strands... all the way to ten million strands of killing intent!!

The killing intent sent Meng Hao's mind into chaos. It crushed his Core, sent his soul into insanity, staining it with terrifying frenzy!

The insanity transformed into world-shaking killing dementia. It toppled his thinking ability, melted his mind into nothing, filling him with a devilish will. It turned into a self-destructive desire, which in turn caused his Cultivation base to climb upward.

Mid Core Formation, late Core Formation, great circle of Core Formation.... Meng Hao's roars filled the area, filling everyone with complete shock.

Meng Hao was not experiencing a burning of the soul; this superseded that, because this pill... was the Bedevilment Pill! And this will, was a devilish will!

This person, was filled with insanity!

The Cultivation base burned, releasing the soul. The frenzied will and the desire for self-destruction, transformed into devilish insanity. This was Meng Hao!

His eyes were crimson, filled with blood, with devilishness, with imperceptible malevolence. Beneath the mask, he was growing older. His red hair whipped around him unrestrained.

The image of Meng Hao in this moment was indelibly branded onto the eyes of everyone who was watching.

At the moment, the ten or more Nascent Soul Cultivators, still suppressed into Core Formation, approached Meng Hao. They outnumbered him, and their Cultivation bases were inherently greater than his by far. So they still closed in, each and every one preparing to attack.

It was as if each feared that they would not personally be able to exterminate him, and would thus incur trouble within their Clans.

Their killing intent billowed up to the heavens as they whistled through the air. No one was there to help Meng Hao. In this moment, he was completely alone; the only person who could help him, was he himself. The only person he could rely on, was himself!

Meng Hao's laughter was filled with insanity. It echoed through the air, and as it did, he waved his right hand in front of him.

“Without a face!”

Heaven and Earth shook, and the enormous face once again appeared around Meng Hao. It was larger than before, and even more substantial than before. It did not seem illusory in any way now, but real.

The face towered up, blood flowing from its eyes. The sight was startling and shocking. Like a mad devil, it shot roaring toward the dozen or so incoming Nascent Soul Cultivators.



To the onlookers, Meng Hao seemed like a moth willingly flying into a conflagration, seeking death. And yet in doing so, he unleashed all the splendor of life, causing everyone's hearts to twinge with emotion.

A moth flies into the flame seemingly because the moth loves the flame. It wishes to be reborn within the flame. To onlookers, it would seem that death was unavoidable; however, who could possibly know that this moth had no love of flame? Instead, it wished to use its life to extinguish the flame!

A boom filled the air, rocking everything. Blood sprayed from Meng Hao's mouth as the massive face collapsed. Despite the fact that his Cultivation base was climbing up because of the Bedevilment Pill, he was facing the combined attack of ten or more people. How could he possibly measure up to that?

As the blood shot from his mouth, massive injuries wracked his body. His eyes were listless and a wan smile covered his face as he flopped backward like a kite with its string cut. The faces of his more than ten opponents all flickered as they attacked again. Their intense killing intent were like sharp arrows preparing to stab through Meng Hao.

However, even as they surged forward in attack, Meng Hao's listless eyes, shone with unbridled frenzy.

"A single word!" he cried, his voice hoarse. Shockingly, he was using the fearsome power of the Bedevilment Pill to fuel the divine ability of the Blood Immortal Legacy.

As the words left his mouth, the collapsing face immediately ceased disintegrating. The cracks which covered it seemed to seethe with ferocity as vast quantities of red mist poured out from them.

The red mist spread out in front of Meng Hao. The massive face seemed to be rapidly passing through time; it began to shrink, and the cracks disappeared. It was complete once again. And then... in the place where previously no mouth could be seen, two lips appeared.

The mouth opened and seemed to be speaking, although no one could hear the sound it uttered. However... as soon as the noiseless sound appeared, the ten or so old men all felt their minds shaking. Streaks of blood instantly covered their bodies, as if they would be ripped to pieces in an instant.

It was at this exact moment that Meng Hao spoke the third sentence.

“The flames of war unify!”

Without a face, a single word, the flames of war unify!

This was the first of the three divine abilities of the Blood Immortal Legacy, forcibly pushed into motion by Meng Hao. Immediately smoke rose up from all directions, along with flames of war, twisting, spiralling, surrounding Meng Hao with a massive swirling pillar of fire. The roaring of it lifted up to the heavens.

More of Meng Hao’s bones snapped. Blood showered out from his body as his body was swept off of its feet and sent rolling onto the ground. The recoil of power caused the mask to be violently ripped off his face.

Meng Hao’s features were like that of an old man. His face was pale as he lay there on the ground; however, devilish frenzy still flickered within his eyes.

His Cultivation base was already at the point of shattering. His body seemed on the verge of complete ruin. Too much of his longevity had been wasted. However, his heart would not give up. It was with full conscious effort that he chose to continue the burning.

Roars filled the air as the pillar of fire expanded out. The ten or more Nascent Soul Cultivators were slowly pushed away. Shockingly, three of them immediately coughed up blood.

The intense power of this divine ability of Meng Hao’s was incredibly shocking.

“The Blood Immortal Legacy is incredible....” said one of the Nascent Soul Cultivators. The expressions of all of the ten or more old men were grim, especially the three who had sustained injuries. Their injuries were not serious, but they were collectively attacking a single Core Formation Cultivator. For this to have happened to them was something they found hard to accept.

“It’s over,” said another of the old men. They looked at their opponent; he had no power to fight back; he had sustained severe injuries throughout his body. He was like a lamp with no oil left to burn. They slowly advanced toward him, preparing to end this troublesome confrontation.

Xu Qing was trembling. She was just about to rush out when Han Bei reached out and grabbed her arm, holding her back with incredible power.

Xu Qing turned to look at Han Bei, when suddenly Meng Hao laughed.

His skin was pale white, and his features aged; he was no longer young. However, there was something visible inside his face that had always existed there..

His laughter contained something strange, something fierce; it was filled with intense killing intent!

“Awake, my mastiff!” he said. He struggled to raise his right hand and place it gently onto the blood-colored mask. As he spoke the words, his eyes filled with warmth and anticipation.

The moment Meng Hao had reached core Formation, he had been able to sense the mastiff slumbering. He also knew that although it must remain sleeping, it was possible for it to occasionally awaken from sleep for just a moment.

All he need to do was call to it, awaken it. This... was his true killing intent. In fact, everything Meng Hao had been doing up to now had merely been to buy time to allow the mastiff to awaken. The entire time, he had been calling to it silently, over and over again.

Starting within the mental realm, all the way until now, all the way until the fierce and deadly fighting, he had been silently calling to the mastiff. He had been calling it the entire time, all the way up until the moment just now when he finally lost all power to fight back. It was then that the mastiff... finally began to show signs of movement.

The signs of movement contained anxiety, as well as a frenzy similar to that which filled Meng Hao. It seemed as if the mastiff were using all the power it possessed to fight against the slumber which held it. It woke, filled with the same desire it had in the Blood Immortal Legacy tournament; it would protect its master.

The ten or more old men shot forward, and as they did Meng Hao reached out to touch the blood-colored mask. Then, he spoke the words calling the mastiff. The mask instantly began to tremble; it flew up into the air with incredible speed, stopping to hover in front of Meng Hao.

Suddenly, a massive blood-colored screen appeared, over three hundred meters in diameter.

The blood-colored screen looked like an enormous mirror of blood. When it appeared, the surface of the mirror filled with countless ripples, as well as growling sounds which emanated out from within.

The sound of the growling shook heaven and earth, and immediately caused the faces of the dozen or so old men to fall. It sounded like the mastiff had found an enemy, and was threatening it. The echoing sound filled the air, passing through the black fog to the world outside of the basin.

The Ji Clan Spirit Severing Cultivator who had been stranded by the Wang Clan Patriarch suddenly opened his eyes. His pupils constricted. In front of him, the Wang Clan Patriarch let out a light gasp of surprise.

A frenzied, heaven-shaking roar sounded out from within the blood-colored screen. It was the roar of a wild beast, filled with insanity and billowing killing intent. As the roar filled the air, the ten or so old men in front of Meng Hao immediately experienced unprecedented feelings of life-or-death crisis floating up from their hearts.

It was at this moment that the surface of the blood-colored screen distorted. It protruded... as if something were trying to break out!

Chapter 313: She's... an Immortal!

The intense feeling of life-or-death crisis caused the elders from the Ji and Li Clans to feel shaken at heart. Their eyes shone with intense astonishment.

Considering their Cultivation bases, age, and vast experience, there were not very many things in the world which could truly cause them to be astonished.

But now, deep feelings of danger welled up simultaneously within their hearts.

For Nascent Soul Cultivators to feel crisis like this also filled them with vast terror.

It was extremely difficult to practice cultivation all the way to the Nascent Soul Stage. Many, many people fell while treading such a path; for these men to reach this point meant that they possessed good luck and had experienced plenty of fortunate circumstances. Now, however, facing this life-or-death crisis had a profound effect on their hearts and minds.

For the first time, these more than ten men suddenly felt regret....

However, before they had the chance to retreat, an intense roaring sound poured out from the three hundred meter wide blood-red screen. It seemed to be filled with enough power to destroy any obstacle in its way.

The sound of it filled the air, causing everyone that heard it to be completely shaken in heart and mind. Some people with less powerful Cultivation bases coughed up blood. The ten or so old men watched on in shock as the massive blood-colored screen suddenly seemed to be rent open.

From within billowed a massive glowing red light. Within the red light... could be seen....

An enormous, paw, stretching out toward them!

It was only one paw, something that belonged to a gigantic wild beast. It possessed long, razor-sharp claws, and was covered with thick, red fur. It carried with it an indescribable, demonic aura. It was only one paw, about thirty meters in size, that emerged from the blood-red screen; it ignored the force which was suppressing Cultivation bases, and shot out.

The instant the claw appeared, an intense, terrifying aura also could be clearly sensed. It exploded out, filling the area, causing the faces of the dozen or so old men to fill with shock. Their pupils constricted, and they retreated backward, minds reeling.

“That’s....”

“The aura of Spirit Severing!!”

“Dammit! How could this Meng Hao have a Spirit Severing aura with him!?!?”

The scalps of the ten or so old men immediately went numb, and the sense of crisis grew even stronger. In the very instant in which they attempted to flee, the paw which had emerged from the blood-colored screen raised into the air. Then, it struck down toward them.

This was of course the paw of the sleeping Blood Mastiff. During the fleeting ten years which had passed, it had been incapable of awakening. However, after Meng Hao reached Core Formation, a greater connection had appeared between them. Meng Hao's repeated calls, and the critical moment of life-or-death he faced, were an intense provocation that caused the Blood Mastiff to suddenly wake up.

In this moment, all it could do was extend its paw into the world and strike down.

A roaring sound filled heaven and earth. The mastiff, which had already evolved to the Spirit Severing level, sent its paw whistling down. Three of the elders from the Ji Clan had expressions filled with insanity as, unable to evade, their Cultivation bases exploded.

The three men emitted blood-curdling screams. Blood sprayed from their mouths, and their bodies began to collapse. Their Nascent Souls made to flee, but before they could get very far, were shattered by the paw.

Among the elders from the Li Clan, there were four who were too slow to evade. This slowness resulted in their instant death.

A boom could be heard as the Blood Mastiff's massive paw descended onto the four of them. Their bodies were instantly turned into mutilated flesh; their Nascent Souls were incapable of fleeing, and were immediately crushed into powder!

This scene caught everyone by surprise. In the blink of an eye, of the dozen or so Nascent Soul Cultivators, seven had been instantly slain!!

These seven men were incapable of withstanding even a single blow from the paw of the Blood Mastiff, and were thoroughly and instantly exterminated. This instantly caused the rest of the old men to be filled with fear; the blood drained from their faces, their hearts began to race, and their scalps went numb. The only thing they could think of at the moment was to flee as quickly as possible.

Everything was going opposite to expectation, and was exceeding the limits of their imagination. How could they possibly have predicted that Meng Hao, a trifling Core Formation Cultivator, would be... so difficult to kill!

They had no way of knowing that to Meng Hao, reaching Core Formation was merely the first stepping stone on his path to the top. After reaching Core Formation, he had a vast array of magical techniques and other methods that he could employ.

You could say that Meng Hao had saved up everything for an explosive finale!

The boom was still echoing out as the mastiff's paw slowly began to fade away. The massive blood-colored screen also began to disappear. Meng Hao grabbed the mask as it fell toward the ground.

At the moment, Han Bei and the others seemed to be incapable of even breathing. They stared at the oilless lamp which was Meng Hao. None of them had ever imagined that events could turn about in the way they had.

“Blood Divinity!” breathed Li Shiqi, trembling. “That was a Blood Divinity!!” The others immediately thought back to the Blood Immortal Legacy tournament, and the blood-colored mastiff.

Back then, they'd had no idea who the mastiff belonged to. Now, you could say that they understood, but had little time to think about it. Seeing everything that they just had, with their own eyes, caused their minds to spin.

Clutching the blood-colored mask, Meng Hao produced some medicinal pills, which he consumed. Gritting his teeth, he struggled to his feet. He looked over at the group of people. His gaze lingered on Xu Qing for a moment, and then, he turned and continued to head toward the Rebirth Cave with as much speed as he could muster.

“Fang Mu....” cried Chu Yuyan. Seeing him turn to leave, she suddenly realized she had no way of knowing when she might see him again. If she didn't call out, perhaps she would never have another chance to do so.

Meng Hao's body quivered slightly, but he continued onward.

He was well aware that the Nascent Soul eccentrics had been intimidated by the sudden appearance of the Blood Mastiff, and its slaying of their seven compatriots. However, it wouldn't take long for them to realize what was really going on. After a moment's hesitation, they would surely see that Meng Hao might seem strong on the outside, but was actually incomparably weak. Then, it would only be moments before they went after him again.

As for the Blood Mastiff, after attacking just now, it had instantly fallen back into slumber. Now, it didn't matter how many times Meng Hao called to it, it wouldn't be able to awaken.

“All paths to the outside are sealed tight. My only option is... the Rebirth Cave.” Gritting his teeth, Meng Hao whistled forward through the air.

It was at this point that the remaining seven or eight old men who had not been slain, suddenly ceased their fleeing. Their expressions were now filled with hesitation. It seemed they were analyzing everything that had just happened. Considering their age and experience, it only took the space of about ten breaths for them to grasp the situation. Unsightly expressions appeared on their faces; they immediately turned and headed back.

In the blink of an eye, all of the fleeing Nascent Soul Cultivators once again headed in pursuit of Meng Hao.

Meng Hao was only about twenty-five kilometers from the Rebirth Cave, when from within it, a soft sigh could suddenly be heard.

It was the sigh of a woman. The sound was completely unexpected, but the instant it filled the air, the faces of the remaining Nascent Soul Cultivators flickered, and they coughed up blood as they tumbled backward, bodies shaking. Dumbstruck looks filled their faces; it seemed that whatever they had just encountered was even more intensely powerful than the Blood Mastiff.

Within their trembling bodies, their Nascent Souls also shook, and their fear climbed to the pinnacle.

It wasn't just them. All of the Cultivators outside of the basin also heard the sigh, and it sent their minds and heart shaking. Blood sprayed from their mouths. Unprecedented looks filled the faces of the Spirit Severing Patriarchs from the various Sects.

“That's...”

Their faces fell and blood erupted from their mouths; they appeared to have received severe internal injuries!



Within the fog of the basin, the Spirit Severing Cultivator from the Ji Clan also coughed up blood. The astonishment on his face could not be any more intense as he heard the sound from the Rebirth Cave.

This was not the voice of one of the strange life forms that existed there; this was the sigh of a woman!

Within the fog, the Wang Clan Patriarch, who was invisible to everyone, felt his entire body shaking. “Who is that...? She’s... an Immortal!!” It was as if a violent storm had kicked up within him; an intensely somber look filled his face, and his eyes glowed brightly. Threads of dread and shock filled his eyes as he looked toward the Rebirth Cave.

It was at this moment that the voice of a woman could be heard coming from the Rebirth Cave.

The voice was warm, and accompanied by another soft sigh. “Years ago, you accidentally loosened the seal which held me. That counts as sowing Karma.... You cannot come to the Rebirth Cave today. Go, I’ll help you to escape. This counts as reaping Karma.” As the voice echoed out from the cave, a white, glowing light could suddenly be seen flying out.

It was a scale!

A fish scale!

Even as it flew forth, it suddenly also appeared to be a feather.

The feather of a roc!

The scale-like feather flew out with incredible speed, almost immediately appearing directly in front of Meng Hao. As it did, it immediately branded itself onto his forehead. Meng Hao’s entire body shook as a warm power surged out from the scale-like feather, filling his entire body.

Immediately, his Cultivation base became stable. It was no longer burning and collapsing. Instead, it was completely restored. As before, he was at the early Core Formation Stage. In the blink of an eye, his wounds were healed by nearly twenty percent.

In fact, even his longevity was increased by a bit; Meng Hao's face was no longer that of an old man. It looked young, as it had before. The paleness of it, however, could not be changed.

The whiteness of his hair was also not possible to change.

"I will lend you the power of a roc. Go. Leave this place...." As the voice echoed out, Meng Hao's body suddenly felt an incredible power pushing at him, sweeping up against his body, propelling him. Suddenly, he began to shoot forward like a roc.

The eight Nascent Soul Cultivators hadn't the slightest inclination to block him. The voice of the woman from the Rebirth Cave was enough to send terror into the hearts of anyone in the area.

Meng Hao had no time to think as he suddenly shot out of the basin and appeared in the outside world, in front of the eyes of the Cultivators of all the Sects and Clans of the Southern Domain.

What they saw was something like a shooting star. Within the shooting star was Meng Hao, his hair white, his robe the color of blood.

Meng Hao's eyes glowed with confusion, but only for a moment, and then was replaced with understanding. He knew who it was that was helping him.

"The roc.... She's the roc that was flying toward the Rebirth Cave that year.... But why is she saving me? How exactly did I sow Karma with her...?"

"Everyone in the League of Demon Sealers is heartless...." she said with a sigh. "You're on your own now." As her words echoed in his ears, his eyes went wide.

Chapter 314: Art of Righteous Bestowal

In the years to come, the Cultivators outside the basin of the Rebirth Cave would be unable to forget the events they had witnessed.

In their memories, they would always be able to see that shooting star flying out from the fog within the basin. It seemed to be ablaze with heaven-shattering fire, emitting a bright glow that they would never be able to forget.

Within that flame and glow was, of course, Meng Hao.

Legacy Apprentice of the Violet Fate Sect; fourth Grandmaster of the Southern Domain, Pill Cauldron; owner of the Sublime Spirit Scripture; inheritor of the Blood Immortal legacy. Any one of these would be enough to make a Cultivator famous.

But for all of them to be embodied in a single person... would cause that person to become a legend in the Southern Domain.

By now, Meng Hao was absolutely a legend. His Cultivation base was not very high, and he had not been in the Southern Domain for a very long time. That didn't matter, though. He could not prevent himself from shining brightly; from that day forward, he was like the sun in the noon sky!

No one would be able to forget that shooting star, nor the massive image of the roc which appeared in the air. The roc was massive, and Meng Hao seemed to make up its nucleus. It shot out from the basin, flying over the staring Cultivators.

They watched him soar out from the basin, charge through the blockade of Nascent Soul Cultivators from the Ji and Li Clans, and shatter through the swirling sealing spells. The seals collapsed behind him as the shooting star and the roc soared through Heaven and Earth!

Thousands of kilometers off in the distance, they disappeared from the region of the Rebirth Cave, fading off over the horizon.

Soon after, a vortex appeared, into which he flew. Then he was truly gone.

The Cultivators from the Violet Fate Sect, including the two Spirit Severing Patriarchs, looked off into the distance as Meng Hao disappeared. They saw with their own eyes that he had made it to safety, and, deep in their hearts, heaved sighs of relief.

Wu Dingqiu stood there, a complicated look on his face. In his heart, he sighed with emotion, thinking back to Meng Hao in the State of Zhao. He thought about the first time he'd seen him, and the events regarding the iron spear.

It seemed like a dream. As he thought back to it all, Wu Dingqiu almost couldn't believe it was real.

Eccentric Song looked up into the sky, and his expression was as emotional as Wu Dingqiu's.

Next to him was Song Jia, who had appeared some time earlier. She was silent as she looked off toward the horizon. As she watched the man who was ostensibly her husband, and yet with whom she had never exchanged even a single word, her furrowed brow revealed the bitterness that she had been unable to dispel throughout the years.

Patriarch Violet Sieve also looked on silently. He shook his head with a bitter smile. The Black Sieve Sect was quite familiar with Meng Hao. Because of the events in the ancient Blessed Land, and the matter of Ultimate Vexation bonding him as master, the Black Sieve Sect was truly in a hopeless deadlock with Meng Hao.

However, regardless of any of that, Meng Hao, wearing the face of Fang Mu, had dared to swagger back into the Black Sieve Sect and engage in an alchemic battle. Then he even concocted pills for them.

As Patriarch Violet Sieve thought of all of these things, he felt admiration deep in his heart.

The members of the Solitary Sword Sect, the Golden Frost Sect and the Wang Clan all had various expressions on their faces. Fortunately, Wang Tengfei was not present; if he was, his complicated emotions would overwhelm him like floodwaters.

Throughout the years, all of the five great Clans and three great Sects had unknowingly become familiar with either Meng Hao or Fang Mu.

Han Bei sighed. Images of Meng Hao and Fang Mu spun in her mind, gradually overlapping with each other, to create an image of a man in a red robe, wearing a mask, lifting his head and laughing toward the Heavens. It created a truly profound impression on her.

Wang Youcai was also silent as he thought back to Mount Daqing, and Yunjie County.

Chu Yuyan bit her lip, unable to determine what exactly she was feeling. It seemed that inside of her was pain, melancholy, and disappointment. It was like something had slipped through her fingers. She felt as if... she had suddenly lost something.

Ye Feimu lowered his head, refusing to look up into the sky. However, within his eyes was the glow of stubbornness. He had faith that Meng Hao would rise to prominence in some other location. That

meant that he could not slack off. There would be a day in the future when the two of them would meet again; when that day came, he would gain victory over Meng Hao in the Dao of alchemy.

Chen Fan let out a light sigh. He now knew that he and his little Junior Brother from the Reliance Sect had long since begun to tread vastly different paths.

In his heart, he held deep admiration for Meng Hao. He didn't envy his identity, but rather admired his life. It seemed that Meng Hao's life was... vastly more wonderful than his own.

"Perhaps, he is a true Cultivator...." murmured Chen Fan.

A look of astonishment blossomed in Li Shiqi's eyes. She thought back to what the mysterious Patriarch had told her the day she left the Sect to come here.

"Will we meet again?" she thought with a slight laugh.

Some distance away, Xu Qing was gazing off at the horizon. "We'll definitely meet again," she murmured inwardly. Her personality was simple, and her features cold. She wasn't very intelligent, but her stubbornness ran much deeper than the average person.

Her stubbornness was such that it transformed into a promise.

"I'm waiting for you...." she said in her heart. Then she sighed.

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The Milky Way Sea divided the lands of South Heaven into two parts: east and north, west and south.

The Great Tang in the Eastern Lands, the Qiang Di flute of the Northern Reaches, the outstanding heroes of the Southern Domain, the totems of the Western Desert.

The Great Tang in the Eastern Lands was known for its power, the Northern Reaches for its intrepid barbarians, the Southern Domain for its many outstanding heroes. As for the Western Desert, well, it

was known as the Barbarian West with its Western Devils. In fact, its name actually represented madness.

Chaos was the normal state of affairs in the Western Desert. There were no Sects there, only countless Tribes. Some Tribes formed alliances, and then larger coalitions of power.

Because of the infertility of the land, and the scarcity of resources, as well as the deplorable condition of the environment, the Western Desert Cultivators lived a life of merciless killing. They cultivated the power of their totems, longing for the day when they would take over the Southern Domain.

The two great wars between the west and the south had resulted in great sealing spells that separated the two powers. The regions left unsealed became the Black Lands. They belonged to the Southern Domain as well as the Western Desert. As such, there was more freedom there, as well as more ruthlessness.

Some areas there were infertile, but some were the opposite, creating a polarizing effect. Killing occurred at the slightest pretext, causing the land to constantly be filled with the reek of blood.

At this very moment, at a spot roughly a day's journey from the Black Lands in the Southern Domain, was a vast plain overgrown with weeds. It was midday, and a bleak wind blew across the leaves, causing them to rustle slightly.

Suddenly, a vortex appeared, with a gaping mouth like that of a black hole. As it appeared in mid-air, it emitted no sound.

The sudden appearance of a vortex like this would naturally arouse quite a bit of attention. However, few Southern Domain Cultivators ever came to this area.

Moments later, someone emerged from the vortex of the black hole. He staggered forward, then looked back at the vortex, causing his white hair to whip around his head.

On his forehead could be seen a mark that looked both like a scale and a feather.

This was none other than Meng Hao.

Using the powerful momentum of the roc, he had activated his good luck charm to teleport away from the region of the Rebirth Cave, to reappear here.

He floated in mid-air, watching the vortex disappear, a look of confusion covering his face. Everything around him was quiet, except for the sound of the wind.

After some time passed, he produced a jade slip, and looked down at it with a serious expression. Having confirmed his current location, he let out a sigh. He turned toward the direction of the Violet Fate Sect and gave a deep bow.

He held the bow for the space of several breaths. When he looked back up, the confusion in his eyes was gone, replaced instead with determination.

“I spent roughly ten comfortable years in the Violet Fate Sect,” he murmured quietly. “I’ve almost forgotten what it’s like to live life as a lone Rogue Cultivator.” He waved his right hand, causing a violet-colored seed to fly out and burrow into the ground. Suddenly, the dirt heaved, and a mass of thick vines flew up to circle around Meng Hao.

He sat down cross-legged in their midst. Eyes glittering, he passed his will into the vines, and they surged forward, carrying him toward the Black Lands.

He closed his eyes as he traveled as quickly as possible away from the Southern Domain. He would not allow any delays. However, his Cultivation base was unstable at the moment, and he had been seriously injured. His life force and longevity had been restored somewhat by the scale-feather. However, what remained was still less than a sixty year cycle.

Unless it were absolutely necessary, Meng Hao had no desire to waste or consume it.

“I’ll be in the Black Lands soon; once I’m there, I can find a suitable place to treat my injuries.... It’s impossible to say for sure how long it will be before people from the Ji Clan come looking for me to kill me.” His expression was calm as he traveled along, sitting cross-legged atop the vines. He permitted them to move forward at the fastest speed possible, which allowed him to spend some time tending to his wounds.

He slapped his bag of holding to produce the copper mirror. He glanced at it for a moment, then put it back.

“As soon as I reached Core Formation,” he thought, “I got the feeling that all I had to do was calm myself and cast my sense into the mirror. With that, I would be able to awaken the spirit within.... Unfortunately, the circumstances were far too dire at the time.” He wasn’t sure what would happen when the spirit within the item emerged. Now, his mind was not at peace, so it wasn’t the best time to attempt to communicate with it; he would wait until after he was fully healed.

Next, he produced Ji Hongdong’s bag of holding. The first thing he noticed was a magical sealing mark on its surface. It wouldn’t be easy to open. After a moment’s consideration, he put it back. With the flick of a hand, he next produced a small bell.

This bell was the magical item Ji Hongdong had used. Meng Hao examined it for a moment, then closed his eyes and focused on dealing with his injuries.

As of dusk of the following day, he had encountered nothing startling or dangerous. Meng Hao’s vines carried him into the Black Lands, which was an easily identifiable area. The ground here was black, as were most of the plants that grew in the area.

This was the reason it was called the Black Lands.

However, the instant Meng Hao entered the Black Lands, the ancient voice of the Demon Sealing Jade suddenly appeared in his mind.

“An Immortal of the Ninth Mountain; the pinnacle of brushwork; magical symbols of all creatures; collapse of the Heavens.... The power is fused within this land, transformed into destruction, and filled with Demonic life force. This land... can be used to cultivate... the art of Righteous Bestowal!”

Meng Hao’s mind shook, and his eyes immediately snapped open.

He snatched out the Demon Sealing Jade; as soon as he touched it, an icy coldness poured into his fingers, filling his mind. It transformed into a mnemonic, a unique divine ability of the League of Demon Sealers!

Righteous Bestowal, impart Demonic power upon any living creature!

Chapter 315: The Immortal’s Cave of Huang Daxian [1]



It was dusk in the Black Lands. The sky was pocked with darkness, the land beneath was pitch black. Everything felt desolate.

No mortals could be seen; it was difficult for them to survive in an environment like this. This area was occupied for the most part by Cultivators. If you did occasionally encounter mortals, they would be descendants of Cultivator Clans, powerfully built, with hearty Qi and blood.

When Meng Hao entered the Black Lands, he looked back for a moment, and a flash of suspicion appeared on his face. For some reason, he had the feeling that upon entering this land, there was some sort of invisible thread attached to his body that had been covered up.

Before entering the Black Lands, he had been unable to detect it; however, as soon as it was covered up, he could.

Meng Hao muttered to himself thoughtfully as the vines carried him forward at high speed. Moments later, he cleared his thoughts. His eyes glittered as he cast his Spiritual Sense about.

The region three hundred meters in all directions suddenly appeared in his mind.

“I need to find a quiet place where I can recuperate.... I remember that Zhou Dekun here. I wonder if I’ll be able to refine one.” Meng Hao once again produced Ji Hongdong’s bag of holding. The magical symbol on it was by no means weak. Meng Hao was able to suppress it slightly, but was unable to open the bag. He could tell that if he was able to suppress the seal for long enough, then he would be able to.

A long time passed, after which Meng Hao once again closed his eyes. He allowed the vines to continue forward without rest. Soon, more than a month had passed.

Occasionally he would encounter some Black Lands Cultivators. They were for the most part skinny and bony, with an intensely fiendish aura. They were usually alone, or rarely, in groups of three or five. To Meng Hao, most of them seemed like lone wolves.

This was very different than the Southern Domain.

It seemed people here were used to treading the line between life and death. The only way to ensure continued existence was to soak one’s hands in blood.

However, despite their ferocity, when the local Cultivators saw Meng Hao, their pupils would constrict. Meng Hao's white hair was very conspicuous as it billowed around his head. Combined with the paleness of his face, it left people with a very ghastly impression.

When you added the vicious-looking vines, the entire picture was one of powerful maliciousness. Meng Hao emanated the aura of Core Formation, as well as the reek of blood. Anyone who saw him would immediately come to the conclusion that he was someone not to be trifled with.

Even some Cultivators of the same level as he, after sensing the aura of his Cultivation base, would hesitate for a moment and then get out of his way.

In the Black Lands, killing was a constant part of life, and it was common to see bodies laying about.

As Meng Hao traveled, he saw dozens of vicious magical battles between Cultivators. He also saw quite a few deaths. Based on his observations, he quickly came to a better understanding of the Black Lands.

What he found the strangest was that after a month passed, despite his constant vigilance, no one from the Ji Clan came in pursuit of him. He couldn't help but think of the invisible thread that had been covered up the moment he entered the Black Lands.

He hesitated for a moment, uncertain of exactly what was going on. "Could it be that the thread appeared after I killed Ji Hongdong? Is it a mark that the Ji Clan can use to track me down? If that's the case, why would it be covered up when I entered the Black Lands?"

Time slowly passed. Soon, another month had gone by. Compared to the Southern Domain, the Black Lands wasn't very large. As he traveled, though, Meng Hao found that there weren't very many cities, which made everything seem much further spread out.

Nearly everything was empty and desolate. The soil was pitch black, permeated with oppressive, deathly stillness. Even fewer places were filled with spiritual energy. Thankfully, Meng Hao currently didn't have any strong requirement for spiritual energy. One day as he sat cross-legged on the vines, he suddenly opened his eyes to look off into the distance.

With his Spiritual Sense, he could see a short mountain about forty kilometers away, as well as a simple Immortal's cave. The Immortal's cave wasn't located within the mountain, but rather, underneath it, almost like a burrow. Next to the mountain was a spring, the waters of which had pooled together to form a cistern.

The waters of the cistern were muddy and foul, and the whole area was littered with animal droppings and weeds. The place looked abandoned. If Meng Hao weren't specifically looking for a place to rest and restore his health, he would most likely have overlooked a location like this.

"Actually, it's not that bad," he thought. He transmitted his will to the vines, and they moved off in the direction of the short mountain.

Soon thereafter, he arrived in the area. He approached on foot, allowing the vines to burrow down into the soil and conceal themselves.

Meng Hao walked through the weeds, passing the cistern. As he did, he noticed a small, black creature drinking from its waters. It looked up at him, emanating a cruel and vicious air.

Meng Hao ignored it, flying up in the air to inspect the mountain. Afterward, he flew toward a wide fissure on the surface of the mountain, a look of satisfaction on his face.

The jagged fissure led downward, and it took only a moment for the main door of the Immortal's cave to appear in front of him. Meng Hao waved his hand, causing the door to tremble, then slowly open.

The Immortal's cave wasn't large; almost everything inside was covered in dust. Apparently it hadn't been occupied for some time, although some aura of the fifth or sixth level of Qi Condensation still lingered inside. It appeared that the original owner of the cave didn't have a very high Cultivation base.

After looking around for a moment, Meng Hao flicked his sleeve, causing a wind to spring up that instantly cleared away the dust and the damp.

Next, he sat down cross-legged and took a long, deep breath. A thoughtful look filled his eyes, after which his hand flashed in an incantation gesture and he waved his finger toward the main door. It slowly closed, after which magical symbols appeared on it, sealing it.

“My injuries are currently about fifty percent healed. I really was seriously hurt this time...” He produced some medicinal pills, consumed them, and then closed his eyes to meditate. Slowly but surely, his injuries began to recover.

As a Grandmaster of the Dao of alchemy, he was naturally able to concoct the optimal pills for treatment of his own injuries.

Time passed slowly and peacefully. It was quiet inside the Immortal’s cave, and dark as well. He sat alone for some time. When he finally awoke from his trance, he opened his eyes and looked out at the darkness. For some reason, the events from his time in the Violet Fate Sect appeared in his mind.

“The Ji Clan...” A bright glow appeared in his eyes, which he closed once again.

Three months slowly went by, although Meng Hao wasn’t very aware of the passage of time. His wounds were mostly recovered now, at least eighty percent so. According to his calculations, within a few months, he would be completely recovered, and back at the peak state he used to be in. In fact, he might even be able to make a bit of progress.

The absolute strangest thing to him was that in the past three months there hadn’t been the slightest bit of pursuit on the part of the Ji Clan. Meng Hao couldn’t help but draw some of his own conclusions about this.

He suddenly thought of something. “Could it be because of Master...?” He thought silently about this for a while.

Finally, he sighed, closed his eyes, and continued to focus on his injuries. After a moment, though, his expression suddenly flickered, and he focused his attention outside of the Immortal’s cave.

About fifty kilometers away from the short mountain was an emaciated man of about thirty years of age, walking along with utmost caution and prudence.

His Cultivation base was not very high, perhaps at the sixth level of Qi Condensation. A savage gleam could be seen in his eyes. Were this the Southern Domain, few people of the same level would be able to come out victorious against this man.

“I really struck it unlucky this time,” grumbled the man through gritted teeth. “What the hell was that place anyway!? Kept me trapped for two years!” His eyes flitted about as he proceeded at top speed toward the small mountain.

Seemingly out of routine, the man took a circuitous route toward the small mountain, glancing this way and that the entire time. Assured that he was in no danger, and seeing no one following him, he hopped into the fissure and made his way down.

“From now on, I’m never going to that damned place ever again. Thankfully, even though I was trapped for two years, at least my life wasn’t in danger. Anyone else would most likely have been killed.” He sighed, muttered to himself as he climbed down into the fissure. Having seen so much death, he had reached the point where he was perhaps not numb, but at the least took it all as a normal part of life.

“Unfortunately, I still have no medicinal elixir,” he muttered. “However, considering that I have my own Immortal’s cave, I definitely count as someone who has a lot of good fortune.” Looking complacent, he relaxed a bit. Finally, he was back to his Immortal’s cave, where he could rest. He lifted up his right hand and produced a command medallion which he tossed toward the door.

His eyes immediately went wide as he watched the medallion clatter to the ground. The main door of the Immortal’s cave didn’t budge.

“Is it broken?” he thought, gaping. He walked forward, picked up the command medallion, and then looked over it carefully. He was about to try to use it again, when suddenly he noticed some marks in the dust on the ground that made it obvious the door had been opened recently.

Fury immediately burned in the man’s eyes. How could he not understand that his Immortal’s cave had been stolen by someone!

“I don’t know where you came from, you stupid ignoramus!” he immediately shouted. “But this is the Immortal’s cave of Grandpa Huang! Get the hell out of there this instant!” In his estimation, the spiritual energy in the Immortal’s cave had long since dried up. High level Qi Condensation Cultivators would obviously have little interest in it, let alone anyone more powerful than that.

Furthermore, he had occupied this Immortal’s cave for many years. Sure, some people had attempted to take it from him before, but all of them were people of a lower level than him, and he had exterminated each and every one. In the end, he was definitely the master of this tiny Immortal’s cave.

However, now it seemed obvious that in the two years he'd been away, someone had indeed come to seize it.

“Open the door! Your granny! This is Grandpa Huang’s territory, and Grandpa Huang’s Immortal’s cave. Everyone in the entire area knows that I’m the Eight-armed Dragon King, Huang Daxian!”

Within the Immortal’s cave, Meng Hao frowned. The place had looked abandoned before; he’d never imagined that someone was actually living here....

“You’ve got some big aspirations and the guts of a leopard to try to steal Grandpa Huang’s Immortal’s Cave!” howled Huang Daxian. Seeing no response coming from inside, he gave a cold snort and then began to perform an incantation with his right hand. He stretched out his finger, and, face flushed, sent a tongue of fire shooting out. It transformed into a Fire Globe which shot toward the main door of the Immortal’s cave.

A boom filled the narrow fissure, after which Huang Daxian immediately began shouting again, “Open the door! You damned....”

Before he could finish speaking, the main door quietly opened a sliver. Huang Daxian gave a cold harrumph, congratulating himself on intimidating his opponent with his magical technique. He was filled with fury, but he didn’t immediately charge inside. A look of caution gleamed in his eyes.

He slowly opened the main door. Inside, he saw that there was no dust; instead, Meng Hao sat there peacefully.

Seeing Meng Hao alone, he said, “Your grann...” However, in the midst of his fury, he suddenly looked into Meng Hao’s eyes. Within their profundity was an icy dignity.

His hair was completely white, and he emanated a shocking, terrifying aura. His skin was pallid, as if he needed more blood to make it look normal again.

All of this caused Huang Daxian to feel as if a bucket of cold water had just been dumped onto his head. He immediately began to shiver.

“Fellow... um, Fellow Daoist....”

## Chapter 316: Meng Hao's Virtue

“Uh... Fellow Daoist....” Huang Daxian could not stop the pounding of his heart. His face was pale white, and as he trembled, he pasted a benevolent smile onto his face. Without even thinking about it, he began to edge away.

“Haha, greetings.... What a lucky coincidence that we meet each other. Fellow Daoist, if you want to live here, well, no problem... no problem.” Body quivering, Huang Daxian immediately made to leave.

However, as he did, Meng Hao's calm eyes swept over him, coming to rest on his feet. A tremor ran through Huang Daxian's body. He didn't dare to move even an inch. Beads of cold sweat began to bead up on his forehead and then drip down his pale face. It seemed almost like as soon as Meng Hao's gaze landed on his feet, they suddenly didn't belong to him any more.

Eventually, Meng Hao's gaze rose up and he looked Huang Daxian in the eyes. Huang Daxian's brain felt like it was convulsing, as if his soul had fled his body. An intense feeling of dread completely submerged him.

“Foundation Establishment.... This is definitely Foundation Establishment....” The most powerful person Huang Daxian had ever faced in his entire life was of the Foundation Establishment stage. The terror he felt because of Meng Hao was nearly unfathomable; this in turn caused him to think of the most powerful person he had ever seen.

Before Meng Hao even said a single word, a flopping sound could be heard as Huang Daxian dropped to his knees, his face devoid of blood.

“Senior, please spare my life. Sir, I spoke rashly just now, I was mistaken. Senior, you are a great man, and truly magnanimous. Please spare my life....” Huang Daxian's appearance was that of the ultimate supplication. The back of his garment was already soaked with cold sweat.

Meng Hao hesitated for a moment. There was no need to cause trouble for this tiny Qi Condensation Cultivator. Furthermore, if the Immortal's cave did indeed belong to the man, then it meant he truly had stolen it.

As soon as Huang Daxian saw his hesitation, it immediately filled him with even more terror.

“He wants to kill me!!” he thought. “I’m finished. Finished! I’ve heard of these Foundation Establishment Cultivators. They kill people all the time, and I’ve even heard that some of them have the habit of eating raw human flesh....” As he thought of this, Huang Daxian’s vision suddenly began to grow dim. His heart filled with grief and indignation. He suddenly realized he would rather stay stuck in the place he had just escaped from than be here. At least there his life hadn’t been in danger. But now....

Suddenly, Huang Daxian gave a start. He didn’t want to die and therefore, several ideas suddenly sprang to being in his mind. Just as it seemed Meng Hao was about to say something, Huang Daxian let out a shout and said, “Eee? Is this actually my Immortal’s cave? How strange, it seems the spiritual energy here is much too dense! Furthermore, everything is so glittering and translucent; it really feels like the dwelling place of an Immortal!

“Senior, you truly are an amazing person! See, this Immortal’s cave used to be so ordinary, but once you started living in it, your presence lent it a graceful glitter. It’s like some sort of Celestial wonderland!” Hearing Huang Daxian’s words caused Meng Hao to gape.

His gaping caused Huang Daxian’s spirit to be roused. It seemed he had managed to grasp hold of a chance at survival. Therefore, he went at it with even more gusto.

“After seeing this Immortal’s cave, I don’t think I could possibly ever calm down!” He looked around at the extremely ordinary Immortal’s cave as if he had seen some type of miracle. His eyes filled with passion and reverence. “Now I suddenly understand what I have been missing, which is nothing other than your stubborn persistence in cultivation, sir, as well as your transcendent temperament which gives birth to such impressive dignity.

“Sir, you truly have the air of a transcendent being. I really can’t help but bow to you in my heart. With each bow, my excitement rages out of control, and even my Cultivation base leaps with joy!” The more he spoke, the more excited Huang Daxian became, until spittle flew from his mouth. He seemed to be sparing nothing in his efforts to ingratiate himself to Meng Hao.

Meng Hao stared, dumbstruck, and once again hesitated for a moment. Finally, his face began to grow red.

“I was thinking,” gushed Huang Daxian, “perhaps this is the will of Heaven. The will of Heaven has caused senior to appear here. Sir, I have no other request than to simply be able to stand in front of you and be touched by your Immortal Qi. Senior, I beg that you allow me this one request.”



Glistening teardrops poured down his cheeks as he stared earnestly at Meng Hao, looking feverishly hopeful.

All of his words had caused Meng Hao's scalp to grow numb. He had always thought he had learned quite a bit about flattery back in the Reliance Sect, and was more than equal to the task. However, he suddenly came to the realization that there were many more capable people in the world than him.

One such person existed here in the Black Lands.... Unfortunately, such words were useless on Meng Hao. He looked at the Cultivator standing in front of him, his expression solemn.

The solemnity immediately caused Huang Daxian's heart to tremble once more. Bracing himself, he spoke once again.

“Senior, you have another virtue, your greatest, and that is, when the moment of truth arrives, you are not swayed by flattery. All fawning words are like a slight breeze hitting a mountain. If you wish to get angry, you get angry. You are efficient and decisive. You are truly a great hero, a towering figure.”

At this point, Meng Hao couldn't take it any more. He laughed, and the laugh loosened some of the pressure that had been weighing down upon him because of all of the events back at the Rebirth Cave.

Interrupting any further ass kissing on the part of Huang Daxian, Meng Hao said, “Very well. I'm accustomed to quiet. Since this Immortal's cave belongs to you, I won't occupy it for free. Whatever you require, I will provide to you as rent.”

Huang Daxian's head was soaked with sweat, but finally he felt somewhat relaxed inside. In order to save his own little life, he had used all the mental power he could muster; hearing Meng Hao's words just now, how could he possibly speak out any sort of requirement?

“Senior, since you've taken a liking to this Immortal's cave, how could I possibly ask for anything? Sir, there's no need, really. Please live here without any hesitation whatsoever.”

Meng Hao looked at Huang Daxian for a moment, muttering to himself for a moment. What he lacked most now was Spirit Stones. He slapped his bag of holding to produce a Qi Condensation Pill that was not marked with a pill cauldron.

This was a Qi Condensation Pill that he had concocted a very long time ago, and was of ordinary medicinal strength. It was one of the types he had concocted before becoming famous, and he actually didn't have many left in his bag of holding.

As he pulled the pill out, Meng Hao got the feeling that it wasn't very much to offer. He was about to put it back and pull out something else, when suddenly he heard ragged panting.

Huang Daxian's eyes went wide, and he was breathing heavily. He stared fixedly at the medicinal pill in Meng Hao's hand, his eyes filled with intense anticipation. His body trembled, not from fear, but from excitement.

To him, the medicinal pill appeared to be shining and beautiful, plump to the extreme. Its appearance instantly filled the entire Immortal's cave with thick spiritual energy.

The spiritual energy enveloped the Immortal's cave, immediately causing all of the pores on his body to open up; his Cultivation base immediately seemed to grow, causing Huang Daxian's mind to spin.

"Medicinal... that's a medicinal pill!!" His mouth and tongue were dry, and he seemed to have lost his faculties, as if at any moment he might lunge forward and try to snatch the pill away from Meng Hao.

In his entire life, he had only been fortunate enough to consume one medicinal pill. That was long ago when he was with his Master. Upon receiving a serious injury, he and his Master had fled. On his death bed, his Master had bequeathed him with a dark, bumpy medicinal pill.

That medicinal pill had been highly valued by his Master. It was also the first medicinal pill Huang Daxian had ever eaten, and, in fact, the only one.

However, that pill had absolutely no way to compare to the one he was looking at right now. One was the Earth, the other was the Heavens!

The Black Lands were barren and the Cultivators there lived arduous lives. Medicinal plants were not easy to grow, and there were virtually no alchemists, therefore, medicinal pills were extremely hard to come by. Of even more relevance was the polarization of the Black Lands. One half of it

was part of the Southern Domain, the other half was of the Western Desert. Cultivators here either never saw medicinal pills, or, like Huang Daxian, caught sight of one once or twice in their lives.

Generally speaking, Cultivators here relied on medicinal elixirs, which were created by repeatedly breaking down medicinal pills until they formed a liquid. Such medicinal elixirs were not incredibly effective, but they were something that Black Lands Cultivators couldn't live without.

“Senior, are you... are you going to give me that medicinal pill?” asked Huang Daxian, his voice quavering. He stared at the pill, panting.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered. He had been in the Black Lands for several months, but hadn't had much dealings with the outside world. He had seen much while traveling, and had come to understand quite a bit; however his thinking regarding the value of objects was still based on his time in the Southern Domain.

Now, he understood everything. He waved his hand, sending the medicinal pill flying into Huang Daxian's hands.

“One medicinal pill to rent your Immortal's cave for a period of time,” said Meng Hao coolly.

Huang Daxian clutched at the medicinal pill as if it were some sort of treasure. He looked at Meng Hao, his face filled with intense veneration. He bowed deeply, then remembering how Meng Hao had said he valued quiet, suddenly was worried that Meng Hao might change his mind. He quickly took his leave, hurrying out of the Immortal's cave. When he was away from the short mountain, he took a deep breath, and his eyes gleamed with the excitement he had been holding back just now.

“I've struck the jackpot!” he thought. “This medicinal pill... it's a miracle!” He hurried away, preparing, not to consume the pill, but to break it down into medicinal elixir, which could be used for quite some time.

Meng Hao sat cross-legged in the Immortal's cave, his eyes filled with thoughtfulness. His experience with the Qi Condensation Cultivator had helped him to realize how scarce resources really were for the impoverished Black Lands Cultivators.

“I still have quite a few medicinal pills in my bag of holding,” Meng Hao thought. “Most are marked with a pill cauldron, but I can erase that. Considering my lack of Spirit Stones, though, I need to be careful. There are no alchemists in the Black Lands, so a sudden influx in medicinal pills would definitely arouse suspicion.” He continued to think about the matter for a while. He had left a

bit of Spiritual Sense on the Qi Condensation Cultivator; if the man tried to plot against him, he could immediately activate the Spiritual Sense and kill him.

Eventually, Meng Hao closed his eyes and focused once again on treating his injuries. As far as the damage to his longevity, Meng Hao wasn't too worried about it. That problem would be easy to solve, either with the Outlander Pill or the Primordial Heavenly Replenishing Pill, one of the three great pills of the ancient Dao of alchemy.

Time passed, and eventually, Meng Hao's wounds were fully healed. He opened his eyes, which glittered as he retrieved the copper mirror from within his bag of holding.

“Upon reaching Core Formation, the spirit within this copper mirror should awaken.” He looked at the mirror, which he had acquired all those years ago in the Reliance Sect; it had been with him all the way until this day.

Now, it was time for the spirit within to awaken!

Chapter 317: I am an Ancient Celestial Bird!

You could say that without this treasure, Meng Hao would not have the Cultivation base he did. Nor would he have been able to travel to the Southern Domain, or join the Violet Fate Sect. He would still be in the State of Zhao, floating with that old turtle Patriarch Reliance, off in some unknown location.

Memories flitted through Meng Hao's eyes. So many things had happened since he had acquired this copper mirror that so loved to emit an aura that browbeat creatures of fur and feather. Furthermore, it had a Heaven defying ability of duplication.

Then there was the painful abhorrence the meat jelly showed toward it. The meat jelly had gone so far as to take the form of a parrot, in which it constantly chattered and gnashed its teeth.

Meng Hao thought back to the time he had left the Blood Immortal Legacy tournament, and had touched the blood-colored mask. Thanks to the Li Clan Patriarch, he had almost lost control of his mind; it was only the bird call from within the copper mirror that had enabled him to avoid calamity.

Then there was the time in the ancient Blessed Land, when the power of the copper mirror had enabled him to step foot into the square cauldron, despite the fact that he did not possess an ancient bloodline.

The instant Meng Hao had reached Core Formation, he had felt an aura awakening within the copper mirror.

“Parrot...” he said, his eyes glittering. His Violet Core began to rotate as he drew on the power of his Cultivation base. Guiding it with his will, he sent it through his right hand and into the mirror.

The mirror gradually began to emit a mysterious glow. The light grew more intense, and then suddenly the meat jelly flew out from the blood-colored mask in his bag of holding. It emerged in a beam of light, and the face of the old man appeared on its surface.

Its eyes glistened with stubbornness, determination and sincerity, as if it were about to face its greatest enemy. Its expression also contained a bit of holiness, as if it were its mission to participate in a great battle that would decide the fate of all the stars in existence.

“Evil archenemy, you finally appear,” it said, its face filled with a sacred air. “I’ve been waiting for you for a very, very long time. This time, the first thing you’ll see when you awaken is me. I will definitely convert you. I will bring you back from the path of wickedness.” The meat jelly actually seemed a bit less long-winded than before. A pedantic air slowly began to grow thicker and thicker around it.

Ignoring the meat jelly, Meng Hao concentrated, focusing on his Cultivation base and sending a continuous flow of power into the copper mirror, which seemed like a bottomless pit. Time slowly passed by, and soon Meng Hao was using nearly sixty percent of his Cultivation base.

It was then that the glow in the mirror exploded out. A phantom image began to appear above the surface of the mirror.

It was still very blurry.

“Come out, my archenemy!” said the meat jelly solemnly. “Come out! We are destined to fight this battle. Come out! Uh... hey, Meng Hao, push a littler harder. He’s almost out!”

Hearing the meat jelly's voice caused Meng Hao to remember something, and he cleared his throat. Actually, one of the main goals in causing the spirit to emerge from the mirror was because he wanted it to deal with the meat jelly. Perhaps it would be able to suppress the thing's chattering.

He took a deep breath, and then sent out more power from his Cultivation base. Seventy percent, eighty percent, ninety percent....

The image above the mirror began to grow clearer. It was now obviously the shape of a bird. It was covered with colorful feathers, gaudy even. Its eyes were closed, and it had a curved beak and sharp claws. Actually, its appearance wasn't perverted in the way the meat jelly's had been when it assumed the parrot form. Instead, it exuded an air of extreme, wild arrogance. Even asleep, the arrogant aura seemed to buffet against Meng Hao's face.

"What an evil aura," said the meat jelly, trembling. "That's it! That's its aura. The appearance is dead on! This is my archenemy. This is my mission in life. I will convert it!" The air of holiness swirled around the meat jelly even more thickly.

Meng Hao suddenly felt weak inside. It caused him a bit of alarm; perhaps it hadn't been the best decision to call to the spirit after having just recovered from his injuries. If he sustained any injuries now, then he wouldn't be able to provide the power the copper mirror needed. That would result in further nasty injuries to himself.

Time passed. Just as Meng Hao's Cultivation base was almost completely pouring into the copper mirror, suddenly, a shrill cry echoed out from within. It contained vast arrogance and immense bossiness.

The sound of it echoed about, in such a way that would cause any living creature that heard it to bow in veneration.

As the cry echoed out, the parrot above the mirror suddenly opened its eyes. A bright light shone out, along with a blast of aura that felt like Immortal Qi; it emanated out, filling the entire Immortal's cave.

It had a blank look in its eyes, as well as an archaic air. It only took a moment for haughtiness to appear; clearly, its body was that of a small bird, but anyone who looked at it would get the feeling it could split the Heavens and rend the Earth in two.

Even the very air in the area seemed to grow thicker.

The meat jelly emitted a howl that made it difficult to determine whether it was excited or furious. It immediately appeared directly in front of the parrot and looked it dead in the eye. “Look at me, my archenemy. Do you see who I am?”

The parrot looked back at the meat jelly, and a cool look of contempt appeared. Its expression was arrogant to the extreme as it tilted its head back to look at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao didn’t move or say anything. He took a few steps back, looking at the parrot and meat jelly, and also working on recovering his Cultivation base. Based on his experience with the meat jelly, he figured that his best course of action was to first observe what was going to happen.

The meat jelly gave an angry howl, then it flickered, moving to block the parrot’s line of sight.

The meat jelly stared at the parrot, and as it did, it seemed all enmity bubbled up. “Archenemy of my life, the Heavens have opened their eyes, and seen fit to allow us to meet again. You are evil! Immoral! So tell me, do you remember me?” The color of the meat jelly’s body changed into a turbulent blur as it shouted, “Speak! Why don’t you speak!? You wicked, perverted bird! Why don’t you speak!” It had waited many years; now the parrot was here in front of it, but wasn’t responding.

Then.

“Are you crazy? Screw your sister, b\*tch!” squawked the parrot, its face filled with impatience.

Immediately, the meat jelly’s eyes began to gleam; this reaction on the part of the parrot seemed to be in line with the wickedness it remembered.

“Cursing at people is wrong,” said the meat jelly solemnly. “You’ve sinned yet again!”

“Screw your granny! Screw your aunt! Screw your other granny! Screw your uncle! Screw your grandkids! Screw your sister, b\*tch!” The parrot slowly said one sentence after another, ignoring the suddenly trembling meat jelly. It flapped its wings a few times, and then flew up into the air, making a few circles around the Immortal’s cave. Eventually, it landed on Meng Hao’s shoulder and looked over at him arrogantly.

“So, you’re my master in this world? Remember my name, Lord Fifth. I’m an ancient Celestial bird. After being born, I was revered and respected. Even the Heavens bowed their head to me. Before I was born, no living creature wore clothes. After I was born, who dared not to? Before me, no spirit creatures had fur or feathers. After my birth, great aspirations burned, and furred and feathered beasts were required in Heaven and Earth. After that, which creatures in the world dared NOT grow furs or feathers!

“On the outside, I permit you to call upon my name,” it said arrogantly. “When the name of Lord Fifth is spoken, all living creatures become terror-stricken. No one will dare to offend you. That is because within the entire world, in and out of the Heavens, if anyone offends me, I screw them to death!” Its domineering air leaked out, filling the area. However... Meng Hao had a strange look on his face. From his perspective, he was looking at nothing but a colorful, boasting bird.

Off to the side, the meat jelly solemnly said, “Boasting is immoral! You’ve sinned yet again! I will convert you!” An air of righteousness shot out from it toward the parrot. However, as it neared, a look of disdain filled the parrot’s face, and its arrogance grew even thicker, as if it were the boss, and the Heavens were its assistant.

Looking at the meat jelly, it said, “Years ago, countless almighty beings refined the Milky Way into a statue for me in the Flaming Mountains. Do you want to know why? Long ago, deep within the Star Sea, I forced thirty-thousand Great Peace virgin Daoist nuns to bathe in front of me. Do you want to know why they agreed?

“Countless years ago, who was the greatest bully in all the stars? Furthermore, do you remember the fatso who ambushed you that one time, and then kowtowed to me for a hundred thousand years? Do you want to know where he is now? Do you want to learn how to count past one, two, three?” The parrot’s words came out slowly, and as they did, the meat jelly slowly began to stop moving. By the time the parrot finished, it was staring mutely, its faced filled with conflict. However, it still seemed able to suppress its curiosity.

The parrot eyed the meat jelly with a look of utmost haughtiness. “If you want to know, then you need to behave a bit better in front of Lord Fifth. Bitch, I haven’t seen you for years, and yet you’re still completely retarded!”

Witnessing all this, Meng Hao suddenly realized how the parrot was able to deal with the meat jelly. The meat jelly was incredibly curious, and this was actually its greatest weakness.



That having been said, Meng Hao had the feeling that the personality of this parrot was a bit different than that portrayed earlier by the meat jelly. He wasn't able to sense any perverted air on it, only wild arrogance.

It was at this moment that the parrot's beak suddenly clicked, and a suspicious expression appeared on its face. It looked around for a moment, then flew into the air, circling a few more times around the Immortal's cave.

"Eee?" it said suspiciously as it flew around. "This isn't right. What smell is that?"

This immediately aroused the curiosity of the meat jelly, and it also began to look around dubiously. When it saw the parrot seemingly sniffing for something, a popping sound suddenly rang out as it transformed into a big white dog. It pushed its nose into the ground and began nosing about, wagging its tail.

"What the heck is it?" the meat jelly asked after sniffing around for a while. "I don't smell anything! What are you smelling?" It looked up curiously at the parrot.

"You don't understand crap! It doesn't matter if you turn into a dog, you wouldn't be able to smell anything. I'm an ancient Celestial bird, esteemed in all the Heavens! These black colored lands have a very curious aura. I've already determined what it is. Amazing! Incredible! Ahh, now I understand what's going on." The arrogant look on its face made it seem as if it understood everything within Heaven and Earth.

The meat jelly's face twisted with unbearable curiosity. It seemed to itch with anxiety. Apparently it didn't matter which form it took, it wouldn't be able to detect this supposed aura.

Off to the side, Meng Hao watched the commotion. Hearing the dialogue between the two, he suddenly thought back to the words spoken by the Demon Sealing Jade when he entered the Black Lands, and felt a twinge of excitement.

"So what's so special about this place?" he asked.

The parrot glanced back at him; the look said that it was an ancient Celestial parrot, and that it didn't need to explain anything to him. It continued flying around, a look of arrogance on its face, as if it were matchlessly unique in all Heaven and Earth.

Meng Hao frowned and then coolly said, “Well, anybody can brag. If you don’t know the answer, there’s no need to go about pretending like you do.” He was of the Core Formation stage. On his path to becoming a powerful expert, and having experienced what he did at the Rebirth Cave, he was able to speak his words in a completely dull tone, as if he weren’t the least bit upset, and also completely confident in himself.

His words caused the parrot to immediately stop in mid-flight. All of the colorful feathers on its body stood on end, and it glared at Meng Hao, looking as if it had been woefully dishonored.

“I don’t know? I’m an ancient Celestial bird! I know about the Immortals above and the mortals below! You think there’s something Lord Fifth doesn’t know? I know everything!”

“You really don’t need to boast,” replied Meng Hao quickly. His heart trembled, and his eyes shone with a strange light.

Chapter 318: Have Faith in the Lord Fifth, Gain Eternal Life!

“Lord Fifth knows!”

“You don’t know!”

“Arrrrhhhh! Fine!” squawked the parrot, flapping its wings. “You shall know how powerful an ancient Celestial bird is!” The parrot’s eyes had turned green; its dignity had been questioned! A multicolored light suddenly blazed out from it, filling the entire small mountain in the space of a single breath.

Then, the light returned, as if it had collected something from within the mountain. The light gathered together, transforming into a pile of black soil the size of a fist.

“See?” said the parrot arrogantly, its voice shrill. “The secret of these black-colored lands can be found within this very mountain. This was refined out by me, Lord Fifth, personally!”

Off to the side, the meat jelly watched in a daze, completely quiet, as if it had just been enlightened. Despite its apparent sudden realization, however, it quickly grew more curious.

“What the heck is it?” it said. It rolled its eyes as it considered Meng Hao’s words from just now, and then the arrogant posturing of the parrot. Suddenly, it felt very excited and gushed, “You’re trying to use that crap to fool us, you old bird! You don’t have any idea at all what it is!”

The parrot looked scornfully at the meat jelly. This time, it didn’t react at all like it had toward Meng Hao, causing the meat jelly to stare dumbfounded.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered as he looked closely at the soil, which was actually a dark purplish-green. Just looking at it, he didn’t see anything unusual; in fact, it seemed quite ordinary.

“You don’t even know where this random clump of mud came from, and yet you dare to claim that you’re omniscient?” said Meng Hao coolly. It seemed that the parrot... didn’t like to be provoked by people.

Even though the meat jelly had tried this method moments ago, to no effect, Meng Hao decided to try it out one more time.

Even as the words were leaving his mouth, the parrot’s colorful feathers stood up on end, a green light shone from within its eyes, and a white Qi began to seep out from the top of its head. It seemed that its dignity had been seriously slighted, something it couldn’t accept in its arrogance.

Apparently it could ignore whatever the meat jelly said, but not even the slightest bit of provocation from Meng Hao.

“You dare to look down on Lord Fifth!?” shrieked the parrot furiously. “Lord Fifth is an ancient Celestial bird! There’s nothing I don’t know! Mountains and Seas, the Heavens, who doesn’t know that if you have faith in the Lord Fifth, you can attain eternal life!? You listen to Lord Fifth, buddy. This stuff is Immortal Sense soil! Many years ago, an almighty member of the senior generation painted a talisman out amidst the stars. He threw it down, with the intention of sealing this particular planet. However, someone else blocked it, and as the talisman entered the planet, it was burned into ash.

“However, that almighty ancient had an exceedingly high Cultivation base, and therefore, the magical symbols he painted contained divine abilities. Even though it became ash, it still contained the power of an Immortal. The ash fell down onto this very land. That’s why the soil in this place is black, because the land here contains the remnants of that burned talisman! I, an ancient Celestial bird, saw all this happen, so many years ago. How could I possibly be mistaken!?”

After hearing all this, Meng Hao's pupils constricted, and his heart trembled.

A Cultivator who wielded power great enough to be able to paint magical symbols among the stars, and use them to seal an entire planet.... Before the events at the Rebirth Cave, Meng Hao would not have easily believed that such a thing could be true. But after seeing Choumen Tai, he now had a much greater understanding of such matters.

Right now, he breathed deeply as he looked at the incensed parrot, having already been seventy to eighty percent convinced of what it was saying.

"Some almighty person capable of painting a seal that can lock down a whole planet, that's just shocking," he thought. "But for someone to interfere with it, to burn it and cause the ash to create the Black Lands... well who was that?" At the moment, the character Ji was hovering in his mind.

"It can be hard to distinguish illusions from reality," said Meng Hao coolly. "That's a nice story, but who knows whether it's true or not?" Actually, Meng Hao was mostly convinced already, but he allowed no change of expression to appear on his face.

The parrot looked even more enraged. It flew around in circles around the Immortal's cave, glaring at Meng Hao. Then, it opened its mouth and spit out a glowing green light which shot toward Meng Hao.

It happened so fast that Meng Hao had no chance to dodge. The green light entered into him through his forehead, transforming into information that branded itself onto his mind.

The information consisted of a few hundred characters. They were complex, but after examining them, Meng Hao realized what it was: a vision technique.

"Use this technique, and look again! This Celestial technique has been branded onto you, so there's no need for enlightenment or study. Just use it!" The parrot glared at Meng Hao, apparently unwilling to rest until Meng Hao believed what he said.

Meng Hao closed his eyes. When he opened them, the pupil of his right eye shrank. As it did, he felt as if Cultivation base power were suddenly being emitted out of his right eye.

In an instant, it felt as if his Cultivation base were withered, causing Meng Hao to feel quite alarmed. Suddenly, a strand of the Immortal spiritual energy within his body went toward his right eye, fusing with it.

He felt a stab of pain in his right eye, and tears flowed out of it. His vision grew blurry, but then cleared. Now, the world as he viewed it through his right eye looked very different, although it was hard to describe exactly how.

He looked down at the violet-green clump of soil.

Even at first glance, Meng Hao's mind was shaken. Slowly, pulses of a golden-colored aura became visible, floating up from the soil and congealing in the air to form faint magical symbols. The symbols, of course, were golden-colored; furthermore, they emitted an intense pressure that only Meng Hao was able to sense.

Under the influence of the pressure, the magical symbols seemed to transform into tiny people. All of them floated there in front of Meng Hao, and they appeared to be painting something.

There was only a tiny bit of pressure, but it caused Meng Hao's mind to fill with a roaring sound, and his Spiritual Sense to grow unstable. He suddenly closed his eyes, cutting off his vision and thus ending the technique. Even still, his face was pale, and it took him a while to recover his senses. When he opened his eyes, his right eye was filled with veins of blood.

"Well, did you feel it?" asked the parrot haughtily. "Lord Fifth knows everything. This is nothing but a clump of dirt with a bit of magical symbols in it. If you had encountered the ash created by the true Immortal Talisman that year, you wouldn't have been struck absentminded, you would have been struck dead!

"You know, soil like this is everywhere in this black-colored land. You can't say there's a huge amount, but there is quite a bit. People like you who can actually gaze upon the will of the Immortal Talisman, well, let's just say you're as rare as phoenix feathers and unicorn horns. Were it not for the fact that this area is suppressed, it wouldn't have lasted until now.

"If this soil is taken away from this land, then it will become useless. Oh, and let me tell you another secret. If you possess enough fortune and luck, you can collect more soil like this, and then you might gain enlightenment regarding some of the divine abilities within the magical symbols of that almighty senior. Now, please repeat after me in a loud voice: Have faith in the Lord Fifth, gain eternal life! When the Lord Fifth appears, who dares to cause strife! Many years ago, countless

people chanted these very lines!” It looked at the pale-faced Meng Hao even more egotistically, apparently more and more convinced of how powerful it was.

Meng Hao ignored the parrot. “Such a powerful aura... especially considering this is just a tiny clump of soil. And yet, it contains such shocking power. To think that there is more of this dirt throughout the Black Lands....” He began to breathe deeply, and his eyes glowed.

He suddenly thought of the words of the Demon Sealing Jade.

“An Immortal of the Ninth Mountain; the pinnacle of brushwork; magical symbols of all creatures; collapse of the Heavens.... The power is fused within this land, transformed into destruction, and filled with Demonic life force. This land... can be used to cultivate... the art of Righteous Bestowal!”

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered. The method for cultivating the art of Righteous Bestowal already existed in his mind. During his time focused on healing his injuries, he’d had no time to work toward enlightenment, but having seen this clump of soil, he suddenly found himself lost in thought.

Time slipped by. Soon, half a month had gone past. The parrot and the meat jelly had disappeared somewhere, and were no longer in the Immortal’s cave. The interchanges between these two old enemies usually involved the meat jelly provoking the parrot in some way. However, the parrot was always able to respond with only a few words that would send the meat jelly shrinking in on itself.

Meng Hao was focused on the art of Righteous Bestowal. Occasionally he would use the vision technique to examine the soil; each time he would come up lacking in some aspect of enlightenment or another. As he continued to study it, he would sometimes take out Ji Hongdong’s bag of holding. The magical sealing symbol was still there, but it was growing weaker. After a few attempts at breaking it, Meng Hao got the feeling that it wouldn’t be long before he would be able to open the bag.

Time slowly passed. Other than research, he spent his time thinking. He didn’t consume the Outlander Pill that Master had given him. True, it could extend longevity, but more importantly, it could be used to suppress the Resurrection Lily.

He could only consume three in his life, and did not wish to squander those opportunities.

As for the Primordial Heavenly Replenishing Pill, it could also extend longevity, but he only had one. At the moment, he didn't have enough Spirit Stones to duplicate a copy, so after a moment's thought, he sealed it back up. At the moment, he was completely recovered; his longevity was significantly shortened, but it wasn't an extreme emergency.

For now, what he was most worried about was the Heavenly Tribulation that would come with his Perfect Gold Core. Right now, he had all the ingredients he needed to make the Perfect Core Pill, except for one plant.

The plant he needed wasn't extremely rare; Meng Hao guessed that even in the Black Lands, he would most likely be able to get ahold of one.

However, after thinking for quite a long time about the Heavenly Tribulation, Meng Hao still had no idea how he would deal with it, other than the meat jelly.

On one particular day, after gaining a bit of enlightenment regarding the Celestial soil, Meng Hao's mind suddenly quivered. He sent his Spiritual Sense out roughly fifty kilometers out from his Immortal's cave. There, he could see Huang Daxian, very cautiously leading a group of grim, malevolent-looking Foundation Establishment Cultivators in his direction.

"Seniors," he said in a low voice, "up ahead, the four of you will be able to see the place where that guy is staying." His nose was bloodied, and his face swollen, and it seemed he was even missing a few teeth. His expression was very dispirited.

"Cut the crap," said one of the four Foundation Establishment Cultivators with a cold snort. "Keep leading the way!"

"I really want to see if this guy truly has the superhuman abilities you claim!" said another. "And then there's the supposed medicinal pills!"

The four Cultivators' eyes glittered with avarice. Among the four, one was surprisingly of the great circle of Foundation Establishment. The other three were in the mid Foundation Establishment stage. These four held sway over the region with iron fists, and they were quite well-known. Their bodies were festooned with what could almost be called totem tattoos, very similar to those of Western Desert Cultivators, although not quite the same.

The four of them exchanged glances and began to converse in hushed tones.

“We’ll need to be careful. With so many medicinal pills, he must not be an ordinary person. Make sure not to damage his bag of holding before he dies, otherwise this trip will have been in vain.”

“Right. We’ll all attack at once, and wipe him out. Don’t give him a chance to destroy his own bag of holding before that!”

Huang Daxian looked furious, but didn’t dare to say anything other than to mumble in agreement with them.

Meng Hao retracted his Spiritual Sense. Huang Daxian was branded with his Spiritual Sense, so Meng Hao was aware of all of his activities, including the disaster he had brought upon himself because of the medicinal pill, and how he had been captured.

If he wanted to, Meng Hao could just exterminate all of them. However, after thinking about the Celestial soil which contained the Celestial talismanic symbols, he changed his mind and allowed Huang Daxian to lead them here.

“I need enough Celestial soil. The more the better. That will increase my ability to achieve full enlightenment.” Meng Hao closed his eyes.

Chapter 319: A Booming Voice from the Rubble

It requires a bit of time for Foundation Establishment Cultivators to travel fifty kilometers.

While he waited for them, Meng Hao sat meditating. He had now gained more experience in researching the art of Righteous Bestowal. As far as enlightenment regarding the Celestial soil, there was no need to be anxious. It would require slow and steady progress. By gradually increasing his collection, he would have time to study it properly. In that way, he would be able to slowly supplement whichever magical symbols he lacked.

He currently sat cross-legged, examining his Violet Core as it slowly rotated. In the blink of an eye, it would send out a massive pulsating aura throughout his body, which would then retract.

It was like lightning; extend, retract, a cycle. This allowed him to burst forth with a type of Cultivation base power completely different and far more formidable than that of the Foundation Establishment stage.



“Master said that after reaching Core Formation, I would be able to fuse the Everburning Flame with my Core. Then I would be able to utilize my personal alchemic flame...” Meng Hao’s eyes glittered. To accomplish that would of course require painstaking effort in secluded meditation.

He hadn’t even been in the Black Lands for a year, and yet his time spent recovering in secluded meditation had led to a complete lack of mental focus. However, the matters of the Celestial soil, the art of Righteous Bestowal, igniting his alchemic flame, and Ji Hongdong’s bag of holding were all things that he needed to allocate time for now that he was in the Core Formation stage.

Because of his concerns of being tracked down by the Ji Clan, he was constantly on guard. This entire time, he hadn’t been able to relax. However, he already had an inkling as to why no one from the Ji Clan had come after him yet.

He made his decision. “It seems I need to stay in secluded meditation for a bit longer. When I’ve accomplished everything I need to, I can go out and track down the final medicinal plant I need to make the Perfect Gold Core Pill.”

He lifted his head, and within his eyes could be seen a cold glow. His lips twisted into a meaningful smile that had a touch of a demonic air. It seemed to be filled with frigidness.

At the moment, the four Foundation Establishment Cultivators were flying through the air toward the short mountain. They approached without hesitation, and reached the fissure in the mountain in only a moment, and then shot down inside.

Huang Daxian’s face was pale and fear filled his heart. However, he also had an idea. Gritting his teeth, voice trembling, he loudly said, “Just... just down here....”

The Foundation Establishment Cultivators looked at him with killing intent springing from their eyes. “Quiet!” said one.

The four of them reaching the bottom of the fissure in an instant. They looked at the Immortal’s cave, and their expressions changed to fill with vigilance.

This was because the door of Meng Hao’s Immortal’s cave was not closed. Instead, it was wide open, allowing them to see Meng Hao sitting inside cross-legged. He slowly raised up his head; his expression was that of complete calm.

He wore an ordinary green robe, but considering how it strikingly framed his white hair, it immediately caused an intense fear to push down onto their hearts.

In addition, his face seemed devoid of any blood. That, combined with the icy coldness of his gaze, made the temperature in the area seem to instantly plummet beyond freezing.

The four Foundation Establishment Cultivators all gasped. Meng Hao's appearance immediately caused an intense feeling of crisis to rise up inside of them. It made the man sitting in front of them seem to be, not a Cultivator, but an ancient wild beast. His gaze seemed as if it would consume them whole.

Cold sweat immediately began to pour down their foreheads. Their mouths and tongues went dry, and their minds seemed almost lost. They stood there, not moving a muscle.

Meng Hao didn't say anything. Deathly silence filled the mountain fissure; not even the sound of breathing could be heard.

The silence gradually transformed into an intense pressure, as if the entire mountain were weighing down on the hearts of everyone present. The feeling seemed to place them at the border between life and death; Meng Hao's gaze filled them with the profound impression that if they moved, they would be dead instantly.

Finally, though, one of the four Foundation Cultivators, the one with the lowest Cultivation base, couldn't take the pressure any longer. Unable to stay standing there, he let out a howl and shot upward toward the mouth of the fissure.

Even as he began to fly up, Meng Hao lifted the finger of his right hand. "Pipe down."

Two words, one sentence, and a miserable shriek rang out. A corpse fell down to land directly in front of the three other Foundation Establishment Cultivators, causing their faces to grow even more white, and their bodies to tremble even harder.

The corpse that had just fallen down had a bloody hole on its forehead, out from which fresh, red blood gurgled. The corpse's eyes were wide open, and clearly filled with dread and despair.

The scene transformed into a new pressure that caused the remaining three Foundation Establishment Cultivators to be filled with awe. Although they had done their fair share of killing, they knew that it wasn't a simple thing to be able to slay a Foundation Establishment Cultivator. All of them instantly began to shake violently.

“Core Formation.... This guy is definitely in the Core Formation stage!”

“Dammit, why did we have to provoke a Core Formation expert!?”

The three of them exchanged glances filled with bitterness and desperation.

Huang Daxian was trembling even harder than they were, and anxiety filled his face. He had guessed that Meng Hao was powerful, but he had never imagined that his power had reached the level that he could exterminate a mid Foundation Establishment Cultivator.

Some time passed, and the three Foundation Establishment Cultivators grew so nervous and frightened that it seemed their hearts might explode. Being forced to wait such a long time under the threat of death was something that ordinary people usually can't endure.

Finally, another among the remaining three couldn't take it any more. Seeing that Meng Hao had long since closed his eyes, the middle-aged man gritted his teeth and suddenly flew up into the air. At the same time, he crushed a jade slip, which caused a mist to surround his body and explosively increased his speed. As he seemed on the verge of making his escape, Meng Hao didn't move; he didn't even open his eyes. A look of excitement appeared on the face of the escaping Cultivator, causing the remaining two to hesitate momentarily and consider following him.

Suddenly, the rocks on either side of the mountain fissure suddenly seemed to loosen. A dark violet vine suddenly erupted out, emanating an intense viciousness. The end of the vine split into a jagged, gaping, bloody mouth. The Foundation Establishment Cultivator let out an astonished scream as he was instantly swallowed up whole as if by a giant snake. After swallowing the man down, massive amounts of gooey fluid flowed down the vine. At the same time, even more vines burrowed out through the mountain rocks.

There were dozens of them, writhing about. They sealed off the mouth of the fissure, and then stretched out to point in the direction of Huang Daxian and the remaining two Foundation Establishment Cultivators.

Huang Daxian's face was pale white and completely blank.

The two Foundation Establishment Cultivators were left panting. The scene just now replayed in their minds, and suddenly they had the intense sensation that they were currently in hell.

“S-s-senior... spare me...” said the Cultivator of the great circle of Foundation Establishment, his voice trembling as he dropped to his knees and kowtowed to Meng Hao.

“Senior, I was in the wrong, please spare me,” said the other Foundation Establishment Cultivator, also plopping to the ground and kowtowing.

Both of them were scared out of their minds.

Meng Hao slowly opened his eyes and coolly gazed over the two of them, as well as Huang Daxian. He had long since taken notice of the totems tattoos on their bodies. They weren't the same as those of the Western Desert Cultivators, but they appeared to be able to move just as fluidly.

“Are you here to request medicinal pills?” asked Meng Hao. He lifted his hand, and two medicinal pills appeared in his palm. They were bluish black, and emitted no medicinal fragrance whatsoever. In fact, faintly visible on the surface of each pill was the image of a ferocious, writhing centipede.

At a glance it was obvious that these were poison pills.

Before the two Foundation Establishment Cultivators could respond to his question, Meng Hao flicked his sleeve, and the two pills shot out like lightning toward their mouths. They had no time to react; the pills slammed into their teeth and then entered their throats. In the blink of an eye, they had dissolved.

The two men's faces changed immediately. However, they didn't do anything to resist. They could only let out bitter sighs; they knew that at the very least, they were being allowed to live a bit longer.

“Think of this pill as a punishment,” said Meng Hao calmly. “I want the two of you to take Huang Daxian and look around for soil that looks like this. The more you find, the faster I'll dispel that poison. In fact, if you find enough, I'll even give you some medicinal pills.” He glanced over at Huang Daxian for a moment.

Huang Daxian immediately gave a start, then loudly voiced his consent.

Meng Hao flicked his sleeve, sending a bit of violet-green soil shooting out to each of the three of them. Then, the Immortal's cave slammed shut with a boom. The tentacles sealing off the fissure drew back, and everything returned to normal. With bitter smiles, the two Foundation Establishment Cultivators let out quiet sighs. They weren't sure what extraordinary properties were contained in the soil given them by the powerful man in the cave. However, it actually seemed to them that they had come across a bit of luck. Their eyes gleaming, they exchanged a glance, then shot out of the cave, taking Huang Daxian along very politely.

According to Meng Hao's requirements, they went searching for the soil.

Time passed by. Soon, it was half a month later. During that time, Meng Hao had become much more familiar with the art of Righteous Bestowal. The power of the art was difficult to fathom. It was similar to being able to touch something and make it become demonic; however, instead of using the word "touch" it used the word "bestow!"

Bestow Demonism upon any living thing, and use it. It also contained the character "righteous," which was the opposite of "evil." And yet, the art itself was clearly very aggressive and oppressive. It seemed like... receiving the Righteous Bestowal of a Demon Sealer gave the beneficiary some sort of official approval!

Furthermore, every time Meng Hao rotated his Cultivation base, he could feel a faint aura in existence. It seemed that if he wanted to... he could use this aura to perform the Righteous Bestowal and perform Demonic transformation.

The resulting demon would have no spirit, only an involuntary aura; however, Meng Hao would be able to control it. It would be a strange sensation, similar to the astral projection Meng Hao had read about in the ancient records of the Violet Fate Sect.

"Compel any living creature to become demonic...." Meng Hao eyes gleamed with a mysterious light. He lifted his hand and gazed at his finger. After a moment's thought, he pushed his finger down against the floor of the Immortal's cave.

"Righteous Bestowal!" he said. Immediately, ghost images sprang up throughout the Immortal's Cave. Immediately he was able to sense a faint aura inside of the Immortal's cave, set free from within the short mountain.

This aura was strange and filled with variations. Meng Hao's senses couldn't tell clearly exactly what it was. However, it didn't take long for him to understand that this was... Demonic Qi of living things!

His eyes flickered as he sent his Spiritual Sense into the aura. A roaring filled his mind, and suddenly his field of vision expanded rapidly; he was now able to see everything for 150-200 kilometers around the short mountain.

By concentrating on the fusion of his Spiritual Sense and the Demonic Qi, he could sense everything in the area. Just when he was about to retract his vision, he suddenly saw something off to the northwest, what appeared to be a field of rubble. Ordinarily, he wouldn't take note of it, but in this unique state, he suddenly heard a voice coming from within the rubble.

A mournful, archaic voice suddenly boomed out. "Heavens of Ji do not die; I do not die... Heavens of Ji.... You've been suppressing me for thirty thousand years, but I still refuse to step foot onto the Immortality Bestowal Dais!" As the voice echoed out, it suddenly said, "Who are you!?" Meng Hao felt as if a gaze as powerful as the Heavens had suddenly fallen upon him.

Chapter 320: Igniting the Alchemic Flame

Meng Hao's heart trembled as his eyes snapped open. He pulled his fingers back from the ground; he felt as if some incredible force had battered him out of the strange state he was in just now.

His eyes glittered as he raised his head, allowing his gaze to pass through the rock walls of the Immortal's cave to look toward the field of rocky rubble.

"So it's another enemy of the Ji Clan. However, this person seems different from the square cauldron in the ancient Blessed Land. The fact that he noticed me shows that his will is still here!" After collecting his thoughts, Meng Hao rose and left the Immortal's cave. Moments later he emerged from the fissure in the small mountain.

It was midday, and the sun burned brightly overhead, baking the land until it seemed it would bubble with grease. After leaving the mountain, Meng Hao looked in the direction of the field of rubble. After a moment of thought, he flicked the sleeve of his robe and shot off toward it.

It didn't take long before he floated in mid-air above the field of rubble, looking down at it. It wasn't a very large area, perhaps several dozen kilometers wide in either direction. The entire area was strewn with bizarrely shaped rocks, some of which were more than half sunken into the soil. Some, on the other hand, lay on the surface of the ground.

It gave off a very bleak air, as if each and every stone in this place had been here for ages.

Meng Hao didn't get too close, choosing instead to remain up in the air. However after some time passed, he still had no idea what this place was. It seemed completely ordinary. Maintaining his attitude of vigilance, he sent out his Spiritual Sense to investigate further, but yet again came up empty handed.

"Of course," thought Meng Hao. "This is exactly how you would expect it to be. Outsiders wouldn't be able to notice anything unusual, not even me. If I hadn't been in that unusual state, I would never have sensed anything strange here." He decided not to rashly proceed forward, instead choosing to turn and leave.

Absolutely nothing happened as he left.

Back in the Immortal's cave, he thought back to the powerful, archaic voice which had pierced into his mind, and the bone-deep rancor it had expressed regarding the Ji Clan.

"Heavens of Ji..." thought Meng Hao. After all of his experiences, his curiosity had been suppressed for far too long. However, he knew that in the Cultivation world, each step can be fraught with peril; a lack of caution can lead to mistakes that can never be righted.

Therefore, after thinking for a bit longer about the archaic voice, he decided to ignore it until he had a more powerful Cultivation base. At the moment, he was only at the early Core Formation stage, and as such, the situation was just too risky. Even though this person claimed to be an enemy of the Ji Clan, that didn't necessarily mean he wouldn't harm Meng Hao.

"With the help of this Demonic Qi, my Spiritual Sense can be amplified by several times.... Who knows the extent to which I can cultivate the art of Righteous Bestowal? I wonder if I can combine my will with the Qi to produce an Incarnation of myself?" Giving no more thought to the powerful voice, Meng Hao focused his attention onto the art of Righteous Bestowal. His first test of the art had left him with the sense that this technique was definitely beyond ordinary.

"I wonder if it might have something to do with cultivating the Dao Divinity Scripture, and how it made my Spiritual Sense far beyond that of any Cultivator of my same level." Meng Hao continued to analyze the matter calmly. Eventually the sky outside began to turn dark, and Meng Hao closed his eyes. Enlightenment regarding the art of Righteous Bestowal swirled within his head. He had the feeling that this technique was something extremely important to him.

A month passed, during which time Meng Hao never opened his eyes. One day, he sensed ten or more Cultivators outside of the Immortal's cave.

They wore deferential expressions, and were kowtowing just outside the cave. Each of them possessed some of the violet-green soil, and two of their number were the Foundation Establishment Cultivators from before.

During the past month, they had returned a few times. Each time, Meng Hao dispelled some of their poison, to the point where it was more than half gone. He had even bestowed them with medicinal pills. They had long since forgotten their other two Fellow Daoist friends who had been killed. In order to earn even more medicinal pills, they had recruited others they knew, and the group had formed a small-scale power base.

A few in the group had harboured ill intentions. However, after the ground shook and fierce tentacles burst out to rip them to shreds and eat them, anyone else with similar thoughts put them to rest.

When you added in the fact that Meng Hao gave out real medicinal pills as rewards, which to these Cultivators were extremely rare, it arose a zealous fanaticism among them.

In addition, the fact that Meng Hao's Cultivation base was deeply unfathomable to them also had something to do with it.

As for Huang Daxian, even though his Cultivation base wasn't very high, he held a special position within the group. At the moment, he stood outside of the Immortal's cave looking complacently out over the group of people. The meat jelly was perched on his head and the colorful parrot on his shoulder.

"I shall impart to you the words of the Patriarch," he said. "You did well, and this is your reward." He produced a small bottle, from within which he distributed a tiny medicinal pill to everyone present. As the Cultivators received their medicinal pill, their faces lit with excitement and they immediately consumed the pills.

Meng Hao didn't have a lot of low level medicinal pills such as these in his bag of holding. Seeing the increase in the number of people during his month of secluded meditation, he had taken a single medicinal pill and refined it into dozens of smaller pills.



Even still, to these Cultivators, something like that was like a precious treasure, as different from the medicinal elixirs they usually consumed as Heaven was from the Earth.

It was thus not difficult to understand why the area around Meng Hao's Immortal's cave attracted a dozen or more Cultivators in one short month, all of them willing to join the group.

In fact, they had settled in the area, constructing simple houses that surrounded the Immortal's cave and the small mountain. Eventually the mountain itself came to be a sort of holy ground....

Meng Hao had never anticipated that something like this would happen. However, this small-scale power base was providing him with more and more of the soil that he needed.

Because of this soil, Meng Hao ignored everything else. Based on his experience, the Cultivators who took up residence here were doing it not just for the sake of the medicinal pills, but also for protection.

Meng Hao was a formidable person, and although these people hadn't seen much directly, the ferocity of the vines had been personally witnessed by quite a few eyes. People were able to draw the connection between the two; whoever was able to raise something like the vines must be terribly frightening.

Therefore, they believed this place to be safe.

In the Black Lands, safety was an invaluable treasure.

Actually, at one point during the month, a group of a dozen or so Cultivators belonging to a different local power group showed up. They desired to slay Meng Hao and take his medicinal pills by force. A single cold snort echoed out from within the Immortal's cave, causing Heaven and Earth to shake, and instantly killing half of the group.

The other half coughed up blood and sustained serious injuries. The most powerful of their number was a Pseudo Core Formation expert. His shock was extreme, and he immediately retreated five kilometers. However, at that point he suddenly lost control of his own body; a powerful force bound him up and dragged him back. After seeing this, other Cultivators immediately swore fealty.

Shocked, even the Pseudo Core Cultivator gave in and became a member of Meng Hao's group.

On one particular day, Meng Hao sat cross-legged in his Immortal's cave, a strange light shining in his eyes. Within his pupils, something appeared like a burning fire. This was none other than the East Pill Division's Everburning Flame legacy.

"Feed it with your Core, ignite the Everburning Flame. With this flame, the Spirit Summoning Incantation can be used, and a great path of the Dao of alchemy can be opened." Meng Hao took a deep breath and closed his eyes. As he did, tongues of flame appeared on his Violet Core.

They appeared weak, but they did not burn out, and as they flickered there, they gradually grew stronger.

At the exact moment in which Meng Hao ignited his alchemic flame, off in the Southern Domain, within the East Pill Division of the Violet Fate Sect, Pill Demon sat in the limestone cave next to the Everburning Flame, his face devoid of blood.

"So you ignited the Everburning Flame, huh...? Good. With the legacy of the flame passed on, if I, your Master, end up returning to the dust, then I can smile on his way to the underworld." Pill Demon smiled, a smile filled with kindness, and even more exhaustion. Clearly, he still hadn't recovered from his battle with Ji Fang.

Pill Demon lifted his head to look at the East Pill Everburning Flame, and memories seemed to flicker within his eyes. "So long as this flame before me is not extinguished, then neither shall I be!"

More time passed, three months. In his Immortal's cave in the small mountain in the Black Lands, Meng Hao was thoroughly engrossed in stoking the alchemic flame. No flame burned on his body, but a broiling heat surrounded him. His skin was as pale as before, but the Violet Core within him was now a ball of fire, burning oh so slowly.

This was none other than Meng Hao's alchemic flame!

Three more days passed, and when Meng Hao opened his eyes, flames flickered within. They quickly disappeared, and as they did, Meng Hao turned his head to look toward the Southern Domain.

“These three months were like a dream,” he thought. “I dreamed of the look of kindness and praise on Master’s face.” As his alchemic flame had kindled brighter during the months, he could sense his Cultivation base growing stronger. He was now definitely at the peak of the early Core Formation stage.

After some time passed, he sent his Spiritual Sense sweeping about, and instantly gaped in shock.

He could see that the area surrounding his Immortal’s Cave was inhabited by dozens and dozens of Cultivators. Most were of the Qi Condensation stage, and six or seven were of the Foundation Establishment stage!

This was no longer a small-scale power, but a medium-scale power. They surrounded the small mountain in all directions; neatly arranged houses had been constructed, and the entire place was quite bustling.

Huang Daxian was now at the ninth level of Qi Condensation, close to Foundation Establishment. With a Foundation Establishment pill, it would not be difficult for him to break through.

That, of course, would require a stroke of luck, or perhaps assistance from totemic power. In the Black Lands, totemic tattoos were a common sight, just like the ones he had seen on those Foundation Establishment Cultivators earlier.

Now Meng Hao understood. Cultivators here who wanted to enter Foundation Establishment, but who did not have a Foundation Establishment Pill, had no other choice than to use totemic power to increase their chances of doing so.

Meng Hao had observed a bit of totem cultivation, and had even made some inquiries about it. The initial process didn’t seem difficult. Apparently, you simply had to kill some creature, then use its life blood to inscribe an image onto your body. Then, you would be able to wield totemic power.

Such a method seemed problematic. However, Meng Hao didn’t understand totemic arts too well, so it was difficult for him to analyze the specifics.