

The Heavens 371

Chapter 371: Concocting a Nascent Soul like Concocting Pills!

Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he watched Yan Song fade away. He reached out to take the wooden slip that hovered in front of him, then turned and left.

He didn't quite trust the man, so he had used his Demonic Qi Clone to meet him.

Of course, Yan Song actually feared Meng Hao quite a bit thanks to the Thorn Rampart. As such, he had also used other means to meet, and hadn't come in the form of his true self.

"Considering neither of us trust each other, why would he invite me to come along...?" thought Meng Hao as he walked back the way he came. "Of course, there's no great enmity between us, so why would he go to the trouble of trying to trick me? Could it be that there is a bit of truth to everything he said?"

It was very late at night, and this eastern section of the city was very quiet. The hustle and bustle that had existed before the war started was now gone. Almost everything was in ruins.

He had barely walked three hundred meters, when suddenly he stopped and retreated three paces.

Even as he did, green ripples suddenly emanated out from the spot he had just been standing in. At the same time, the distorted image of a person became visible within the ripples. It was impossible to see the figure clearly; however, within the greenish glow, Meng Hao could sense the emanations of a totemic aura.

"Western Desert Cultivator!" he thought. "The Thorn Rampart isn't complete in this area! So, Yan Song did have ulterior motives for inviting me here!" A cold light appeared in Meng Hao's eyes. He shot backward, golden light shining out from his body. His right hand clenched into a fist as he struck out at the incoming green glow.

A boom filled the air. Meng Hao's fist did not strike anything; however, a powerful attack shot out, toward the green glow. It seemed preparations had been made specifically for Meng Hao, though. Before his fist attack could strike the green glow, it split into multiple dots of light that spread out

into the air. They then shot together, congealing into the image of a green whip that lashed out toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao grunted in surprise. This was the first time he'd encountered anything that could evade a strike from his right fist. True, the fist attack had been illusory, but for his opponent to dodge it showed that he was definitely beyond ordinary.

“This person didn't come with Yan Song. Yan Song hid himself, and was clearly aware that I didn't come in person. However, this Cultivator avoided my fist attack... in a way that made it obvious he wasn't aware that it was an illusory strike. Therefore, he doesn't know that this isn't my true self! If that's the case, then clearly running into him here was a coincidence.... The chances of randomly running into this guy here of all places in this big city, are not high. From that, I can deduce that however he got into the city... he must not be alone!” Meng Hao let out a cold snort as he allowed the whip to wrap around his body.

A boom filled the air as Meng Hao collapsed into countless Qi fragments that dissipated into the air.

A sound of surprise could be heard as the green whip retreated backward. A bad feeling suddenly welled up in the heart of the Western Desert Cultivator.

However, even as he began to back up, the fragmented Qi that had made up Meng Hao suddenly shot forward and formed back together into a new Meng Hao. His left hand stretched out to grab the whip, which he then pulled toward him.

“Get over here!”

A rumbling roar filled the air. The whip pulled tight, and as it did, the vague image of a fleeing person could be made out within the green ripples.

Meng Hao pulled hard on the green whip, and as he did, it began to wither, and then suddenly turned into flying ash.

Meng Hao watched the ripples disappear into the distance, and coldness flashed in his eyes. “It seems quite certain that it has nothing to do with Yan Song. However, no one can just attack Meng Hao and then run away!” His body grew blurry, then suddenly split into ten more Meng Haos. Immediately, they headed off into different directions in pursuit.

Meanwhile, back in Meng Hao's courtyard, his true self sat looking at the lotus flowers. Everything here was quiet and peaceful, and he wasn't paying very much attention to what was going on outside with his Demonic Qi clones.

After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, he rose to his feet, his expression the same as ever. He walked out slowly into the night, strolling down the street at a steady pace. Soon, he was about three hundred meters away from his courtyard.

It didn't take long for him to reach a random remote street corner, where he stopped, apparently waiting for something. After the space of two breaths passed, a collection of ripples shot through the air toward him. Behind the ripples were ten figures that looked exactly like him, their faces cold as they pursued the ripples.

Wu Mu was scared witless. He was a member of the Crow Scout Tribe from the Western Desert, and a member of the forces participating in the Black Lands Palace's great war [1]. He was one of the several hundred Cultivators who had survived the Thorn Rampart earlier. Because he possessed wood type totems, he had been dispatched into the city this night on an assassination mission.

There were a dozen or so who came with him. He wasn't too sure the level of their Cultivation bases, but he was in the late Core Formation stage. That, coupled with the secret techniques of his Tribe, and his wood type totems, made it so that even a Nascent Soul Cultivator would have a hard time piercing his concealment technique.

How could he ever have imagined that as soon as he entered the city, the first person he ran into would be none other than Grandmaster Meng, the person who had summoned the Thorn Rampart? He had assumed that because of his wood type totems, the Thorn Rampart wouldn't be able to detect him, and as such, had chosen to attack.

In his view, if he was able to kill the mysterious Grandmaster Meng, it would count as an incredible battle achievement. After returning to his Tribe, he would definitely be well rewarded. Even if he wasn't able to kill him, he could at least wound him. Either way, he was completely confident of the safety of making an attack.

How could he ever have guessed that what he attacked was not Grandmaster Meng's true self, but rather a clone? That in itself caused him to gape in astonishment, and filled his heart with fear. He had fled at top speed, cursing Meng Hao for coming out in the middle of the night in clone form.

After that, his fear had grown even greater when suddenly ten clones of Grandmaster Meng appeared, all of whom chased him relentlessly, cutting him off at every turn. If it weren't for his

special techniques used for concealment and retreat, coupled with his wood type totems, he would have been captured already.

It was as he went all out to flee from the clones when he suddenly saw Meng Hao standing up ahead.

“Dammit,” he thought, “this Grandmaster Meng doesn’t just concoct pills, he also has a lightning technique AND is proficient with using clones. How could someone as inhuman as him exist in the world!?”

He cursed inwardly as he looked at Meng Hao, who stood there with a look of contempt in his eyes.

“Well, he might have some weird techniques, but he’s not good enough to capture me!” Wu Mu snorted coldly, his body flashing as he waved his sleeve, causing the ripples surrounding him to shoot out toward what he assumed was another clone. This was the same method he had used previously to disperse other clones.

As Wu Mu descended upon Meng Hao, he suddenly heard him speak. “There really is a lot to learn about the Dao of totems.”

Before Wu Mu could react to the words, he saw the Meng Hao in front of him lift up his hand and point toward him.

A boom resonated out as an invisible, tearing force surrounded Wu Mu. His heart filled with astonishment, and he was about to retreat when suddenly, a bloody glow filled the area. The glow permeated his body, ripping away the layers of invisibility around him, revealing him to the world.

“Not a clone!” he thought, his mind spinning. His face was ghastly pale, and he was about to employ another magical technique, when Meng Hao gazed into his eyes. His gaze seemed to contain the power of Time; Wu Mu’s mind reeled, as if he had lost the ability to even think. Everything suddenly seemed to slow down, as if the Time within his body had suddenly changed.

When he came to his senses, he saw Meng Hao’s right hand ripping through the air to latch around his throat. Everything went black as Wu Mu passed into unconsciousness.

Meng Hao held Wu Mu up in his hand. The entire time, his expression hadn’t changed. He slowly walked back down the street. Behind him, the ten Demonic Qi clones faded into nothing. At the

same time, a wooden slip flew over, which Meng Hao took. He glanced at it, then walked off into the distance, carrying Wu Mu in one arm.

It was not a peaceful, quiet night in Holy Snow City. Over fifty assassinations occurred; even some members of the Frigid Snow Clan died.

Eventually the four Grand Elders unleashed the power of their Cultivation bases. Explosions rang out in the night sky, all the way until morning.

The chaos outside didn't affect Meng Hao in his courtyard. He extracted some blood from Wu Mu and also vivisected his totem tattoos to study them.

He wouldn't give up on his desire to understand totems. He had the feeling that they were the key to the path of the Perfect Nascent Soul.

“Wood-type totems... can evade the Thorn Rampart. It must have something to do with its wood characteristics.” Meng Hao held a vial in his hand which contained some of Wu Mu's condensed life force. It emanated wood characteristics, which caused Meng Hao to look down at the man, and the green-colored leaf totem tattooed on his arm.

“Wood is one of the five elements,” he thought, various thoughts congealing in his mind. “Metal, wood, water, fire, earth. Five elements, five colors. White, green, black, red, yellow. Perfection is a Five Colored Nascent Soul.... A wood Nascent Soul would be green. If I could acquire five totems of different properties, cultivated to the ultimate level, then it would be similar to using the five elements pill concoction technique! With five colors, I could concoct a Five Colored Nascent Soul!” This was the result of all the research he had done into totems.

He had come up with the basis of this idea some time ago, but after his recent research, he felt more confident.

“It's also in accord with my Dao of alchemy. My body is the furnace, my heart is the formula. I will concoct a grand pill of Heaven and Earth, a Five Colored Nascent Soul!” His eyes shone with a bright light. The idea of concocting a Nascent Soul in this fashion was something no one before him had ever done.

Other people used cultivation to produce a Nascent Soul. Meng Hao's decision, though, was to use pill concocting techniques to concoct a Nascent Soul!

“That is the only way to achieve Perfection!” he thought, his expression one of intense anticipation.

Chapter 372: Did You Forget?

Half a month isn't a very long time. However, as far as Wu Mu was concerned, the fact that he had encountered a certain Cultivator entranced with the idea of studying totems made it an unprecedented period of suffering. From his blood to his bones, from his totem tattoos to his techniques, his entire body was under the complete control of Meng Hao.

The more deeply Meng Hao studied the matter, the more confident he grew regarding the matter of concocting a Nascent Soul. Wu Mu seemed to have been destined to help Meng Hao understand how to fuse the Dao of alchemy with his Cultivation base. At the end of the month, it got to the point where he wasn't learning anything new from the man, so instead of causing further trouble for him, Meng Hao released him.

Before he left, Wu Mu looked at Meng Hao, trembling. He vowed to himself that he would never run into this man again, then fled as fast as he possibly could.

“I need more totems to corroborate my line of thinking,” thought Meng Hao as he watched Wu Mu leave. Rumbling could be heard from outside the city walls. During the past half month, reinforcements from the Black Lands Palace and the Western Desert had continued to arrive. Every day, it seemed hundreds came whistling through the air to join the force outside.

Currently, there were around five thousand Cultivators amassed outside the city. Holy Snow City was thoroughly isolated. Beasts attacked from the sky, and glowing chariots charged on the ground.

The Thorn Rampart, during the one month in which it would survive, was impervious to any attack laid against it. Eventually, though, under the relentless attacks and explosions, it began to show signs of falling apart. Clearly, it wouldn't last for very much longer.

A few days later, a contingent of nearly two thousand Black Lands Palace Cultivators appeared, whistling through the air. They were led by a Cultivator wearing a gold mask. It was none other than Black Lands Palace Dao Child Luo Chong!

His eyes were grim, and filled with a faintly discernable turbidness. His entire person exuded a strange aura. He had been a vile mood as of late. After being poisoned that year, he had returned to the Black Lands Palace and used every method he could think of to cure himself. Unfortunately, he

was unable to dispel the poison. The situation filled his heart with dread; he had the feeling that his life or death all rested in the hands of the person who had poisoned him.

Not daring to publicly reveal that he had been poisoned, he had attempted every method possible to cure himself, all to no avail. After sensing the poison, his Master had even taken an interest in it.

He had invited an Eastern Lands alchemist to examine him. After doing so, a serious expression covered his face and he'd said, "This poison cannot be dispelled by Cultivators. It can only be diffused with medicinal plants."

The mysterious Demon Lord who had poisoned him became something like a nightmare to him. Every time he thought of the man, intense coldness would fill his heart.

Of course, he had been careful to strictly comply with the man's instructions, and did not step foot within three hundred kilometers of him.

In order to prevent any mishaps, he had holed up in the Black Lands Palace for quite some time. This was actually the first time he had left since being poisoned. In his estimation, though, there was no way he would possibly run into the fearsome Demon Lord in this backwater location.

He did the best he could to hide the depression in his heart, but some of it still managed to slip out.

"I heard this Frigid Snow Clan has a beauty named Hanxue Shan," he thought, his eyes shining with debauchery.

Behind him was an old man wearing a silver mask, who emanated the shocking power of the Nascent Soul stage. His presence increased the number of Nascent Soul Cultivators in the battle force to five.

It was difficult to describe how much the addition of one more Nascent Soul Cultivator would change the circumstances of this conflict.

As Luo Chong and the others arrived, quite a few of the Black Lands Palace Cultivators flew up into the air to receive them.

Beneath his golden mask, Luo Chong's face was filled with a proud look as he gazed at the Thorn Rampart and the heavily damaged Holy Snow City.

“Fellow Daoists of the Frigid Snow Clan. Ladies and Gentlemen of Holy Snow City. I am Luo Chong, Dao Child of the Black Lands Palace. I am not here today to join in the battle, but rather, to issue a challenge to all of the heroes under Heaven!” He strode forward until he was standing right in front of Holy Snow City.

“Anyone who is not of the Frigid Snow Clan that can hold their own against me, Dao Child Luo Chong, for the space of ten breaths, will be allowed to leave unharmed!” His words echoed about in the city.

He was surrounded by a group of Cultivators from the Black Lands Palace, as well as a few from the Western Desert, the most powerful ones present. The five Nascent Soul Cultivators were also there, a short distance away. Should the Nascent Soul Cultivators in Holy Snow City suddenly dare to attack, the five would be ready to deal with them.

“It is an historic moment!” continued Luo Chong, a lofty expression in his eyes. “Within half a month's time, the Black Lands Palace will topple this city. The day that happens, anyone who remains inside will be buried along with the Frigid Snow Clan!”

Coming from him, a Dao Child, these words were powerful and impressive as they settled down over Holy Snow City.

“Therefore, tell me? Which of you dares to face off against me in honorable battle!?”

Some of the Cultivators at his side began to call out taunting provocations.

Inside the city, the faces of the several hundred Cultivators not of the Frigid Snow Clan were unsightly, although it was impossible for anyone to tell whether or not they were considering the offer.

The four Grand Elders and other Frigid Snow Clan members stood there thoughtfully. They obviously couldn't hold anyone back from leaving; if they did, it would most likely lead to even greater repercussions. Furthermore, Luo Chong was a Dao Child of the Black Lands Palace, an incredibly high position. His Cultivation base was not at the Nascent Soul stage, but as a Dao Child, he directly represented the Black Lands Palace.

After a moment's thought, First Elder sighed. In a hoarse voice, he said, "Fear not. To each his own. Our city is under threat, and anyone who does not have the will to stand and fight, should not stay. Any Fellow Daoist who wishes to leave will not be stopped. You have already shown great favor to the Frigid Snow Clan."

Meng Hao stood in the crowd. He looked through the Thorn Rampart at Luo Chong floating there in mid-air, and a slight smile spread across his face. The poison in Luo Chong had not been dispelled. Meng hao had personally concocted it, and he was confident that few people in the world other than himself would be able to do so.

Silence filled Holy Snow City. Suddenly, someone shot forward. It was a middle-aged man, someone Meng Hao recognized. He had come before to request pill concocting services, and had a Cultivation base in the mid Core Formation stage. Among the Holy Snow City forces, he could be considered quite powerful. In the outside world, his Cultivation base would put him the position to be quite domineering.

Right now, his face was somewhat wan. The pressure he had come to feel in recent days had pushed him to the breaking point. He shot out through the Thorn Rampart, then let out a sigh.

"I've done everything I can," he thought. "I've definitely paid back the Frigid Snow Clan for their magnanimity that year." He shot forward, clasping hands toward Luo Chong and then said, "In accord with your will, Dao Child, I will battle you to save my life!"

The instant the man's words left his mouth, a vicious light gleamed in Luo Chong's eyes. At the same time, three Cultivators standing next to Luo Chong shot into the air at high speed. The approaching middle-aged Cultivator's face twisted.

He immediately flashed an incantation gesture, and the gleam of a magical technique rose up. A rumbling filled the air as a black sword aura glittered into being. After the space of five breaths passed, the three men returned to Luo Chong's side. Shockingly, one of them held the head of the middle-aged Cultivator in his hand, which he then presented to Luo Chong.

"What a pity. He didn't last for ten breaths." Luo Chong laughed, holding the head up high into the air and then crushing it.

"Is there anyone else who wants to give it a try? If not, then I'll give you another option. Bring me the Frigid Snow Clan's number one beauty Hanxue Shan. Whoever does so will not only be exempt

from the death penalty, but will also receive a great reward!” He laughed again as he looked toward Holy Snow City. Inside, there was complete silence. All of the Cultivators had grim looks on their faces.

This was especially true of the Frigid Snow Clan members, and Hanxue Shan. Her phoenix-like eyes flashed with killing intent. She was a pretty girl, and the look on her face was instantly noticed by Luo Chong. His eyes flashed and he laughed. “The most beautiful woman in the land is here. It turns out my trip here wasn’t a waste!”

The Cultivators in Holy Snow City couldn’t hold back from crying out in ridicule.

“You’re a Dao Child from the Black Lands Palace! How could you be so despicable!?”

“You said you would fight a duel, but it was nothing more than a low-down trick. You people from the Black Lands Palace are all the same!”

As the voices drifted out from the city, Luo Chong continued to laugh, his eyes filled with arrogance. He didn’t give a whit about whether these people lived or died. He had just been toying with them. He knew that Holy Snow City wouldn’t mount any sort of offensive while the Thorn Rampart still existed, so he figured he would take advantage of the situation to have some fun.

“Alright, alright,” he laughed. “I won’t cause you any more trouble. How about this. Fellow Daoist Hanxue, why don’t you warm my bed this night. If you do, then I’ll take these two thousand Cultivators I came with and leave. That should take a bit of pressure off of Holy Snow City. What do you think?” His eyes gleamed as he looked over Hanxue Shan’s beautiful figure, and his heart burned.

Hanxue Shan was so angry she was trembling. She glared murderously at Luo Chong, but her heart was filled with sorrow. Some of her surrounding Clan Members were looking at her. None of them said anything, but she could see in their eyes what they were thinking, and it filled her heart with pain.

She smiled bitterly, and then, without even thinking about it, she looked at Meng Hao. It was as if she was wondering what he would do about the situation.

Meng Hao’s eyes narrowed as he looked at the three Cultivators who had just charged forward to fight. One was a Western Desert Cultivator. He was the one who had slain the middle-aged Cultivator, and the totem tattoo he had used was that of a sword!

It was a sword totem that created a magical manifestation of a sword, and emanated extraordinary power.

“I wonder if that’s a Metal-type totem?” he thought. Suddenly, he took a step forward and then shot up into the air, his gaze coming to rest on Luo Chong.

His appearance attracted quite a bit of attention. Cultivators quickly clustered around Luo Chong to impart to him information regarding Meng Hao. Luo Chong’s eyes shone, and a vicious smile appeared on his face beneath his mask.

“I’d heard about this Grandmaster Meng who has risen to fame in recent days,” thought Luo Chong, his eyes shining with killing intent. “Eliminating him will ensure that the city falls in a matter of days!” The gazes of the five Nascent Soul Cultivators came to rest on Meng Hao. Once he emerged from within the Thorn Rampart, they would instantly attack.

However, before Meng Hao passed outside of the city walls, he stopped. He hovered in mid-air, an enigmatic smile on his face as he looked at Luo Chong.

“Luo Chong,” he said. “I seem to remember I told you to stay at least three hundred kilometers away from me. Did you forget?”

Chapter 373: How Could It Be Him!?

No one in Holy Snow City understood what Meng Hao was talking about. They could tell that he must have some sort of history with the Black Lands Palace Dao Child, but they didn’t understand any of the details.

However, as soon as the words entered Luo Chong’s ears, his mind instantly began to reel. Beneath his mask, his face filled with a look of complete disbelief. There were two people he feared most in life, one was Fang Mu of the Southern Domain, the other was the Demon Lord of the Black Lands.

When he heard Meng Hao’s words, he instantly understood their meaning. His pupils constricted immediately.

“It’s him! It’s definitely him! He’s the only one who knows about that incident. Dammit, how could it be him!?” Luo Chong began to pant, and his eyes grew wide as he recalled the scene from that

day. His heart trembled as he remembered the nightmare his life had become after he went back to the Black Lands Palace to try to dispel the poison.

Every month, there was a period of a few days in which his entire body felt like it was being stabbed all over. The pain was difficult to bear, and the only thing he could do was wail constantly in terror. Even his Master was powerless to help him, and all the Eastern Lands alchemist could do was sigh. All of that exploded out in Luo Chong's mind, overwhelming him.

His mind buzzed, and went blank. Fear filled his eyes. Never could he possibly have imagined that after all his efforts to avoid the Demon Lord, the first time he went out to some remote location, he would run into that very nightmarish figure.

He stood there blankly, his heart filling with indescribable remorse. He wanted to roar out that he was innocent, he really didn't know that the Demon Lord was here. Had he known, he wouldn't have come even under the threat of being beaten to death.

Then he thought about all the things he had just said, as well as the instructions not to come within three hundred kilometers of the Demon Lord, and his entire body began to shake. An unspeakable dread rose up from his heart like a tempest.

He thought about the fearsomeness of the Demon Lord, the feeling the man gave off like that of the underworld, and how he could kill him with a thought. All of these things smashed down onto Luo Chong like endless gigantic mountains.

Black Lands Palace Dao Child? Honor and glory? Face? All of these things vanished from Luo Chong. The most important thing was his life. Because of that, Luo Chong felt the ultimate level of fear.

“Dammit, how could he be here?!”

As Luo Chong's mind spun, and the fear submerged him, he stood there with a blank look on his face.

The Cultivators next to him were astonished. Meng Hao's words were filled with an overbearing tone which caused some of the surrounding Cultivators to feel somewhat anxious. Suddenly, someone strode forward and said, “What gall! This is a Dao Child of the Black Lands Palace! The only people to flee three hundred kilometers are the people running away from him, you paltry alchemist! Do you truly dare to rave in such a manner?!”

The words hit Luo Chong like a lightning bolt. His body trembled, and he suddenly recovered his senses. His heart was still filled with terror, as well as an unspeakable fury. However, before he could give vent to his fury...

Another Cultivator hurried forward, exuding a loyal and devoted aura. Angrily, he said, "Just who the hell do you think you are? Dao Children occupy positions of incredible respect. Your words just now earn you the right to die!"

Their statements entered Luo Chong's ears, causing him to tremble even more violently. His fury was now billowing to the heavens, and a feeling of infinite fear had completely overwhelmed him. That was because he could see the cold gleam in Meng Hao's eyes.

His mind felt as if it were about to explode.

Another Cultivator stepped forward. "You..." Before he could finish speaking, Luo Chong raised his head to the sky and let out a shocking roar of fury.

"Shut up! Dammit, are you trying to get a Dao Child killed!?" He shot forward and unhesitatingly slapped the Cultivator who had been about to speak.

A boom rang out, and the Cultivator tumbled back like a kite with a broken string, blood spraying from his mouth and a confused look in his eyes. Fury written across his face beneath the mask, Luo Chong next spun and flashed an incantation gesture. Immediately the glow of starlight appeared, enveloping one of the other Cultivators who had just spoken up.

A miserable shriek could be heard. It was as if this man was Luo Chong's enemy, and that he would do anything possible to kill him!

"You damned flunky!" roared Luo Chong. "You dare to plot against a Dao Child?! You're dead!" Another boom filled the air as the Cultivator exploded into pieces, exterminated directly by Luo Chong.

"If you want to disrespect me, then fine. But to disrespect the great Demon Lord is the most heinous of crimes! You all deserve to die!! You can be disrespectful to anyone in the whole world except for the Demon Lord!!" With a roar, he charged toward the first person who had spoken. The man stared in shock, his face pale. He was about to try to explain himself, but, would Luo Chong really listen?

All he wanted to do was kill the man in the hopes of avoiding any misunderstanding with Meng Hao.

He had quickly reached the decision to vent his hatred on the three. He hoped that the fearsome Demon Lord would understand that he took the words of the three as spoken with the intention of getting Luo Chong killed.

The sounds of explosions echoed out in the air as Luo Chong attacked with unprecedented might. He moved like lightning, instantly slaying the Cultivator who had been about to speak. His hair was in disarray, and his eyes red as he trembled and turned toward Meng Hao. He clasped hands and bowed deeply.

“Junior extends greetings, great Demon Lord,” he said, shaking. “Those flunkies just now were merely blabbering, junior has already exterminated them. Demon Lord I beg of you... please forgive me, Demon Lord.” He spoke quickly, but his voice was tremulous and filled with fear. Everyone in the area could hear it.

Complete silence filled the region both inside and outside the city.

The four Grand Elders stared in shock, as did Hanxue Shan and all of the other Cultivators in the city.

Outside, the Cultivators surrounding Luo Chong watched on blankly. Off in the distance, the Black Lands Palace Cultivators had strange expressions on their faces. They clearly weren't sure how to react to the strange turn of events just now.

The five Nascent Soul Cultivators' eyes were wide. Luo Chong was now acting in exactly the opposite way that he should have....

“Junior really did not know that you were in this place, great Demon Lord. Really, I really didn't know. I... I...” Luo Chong trembled as a feeling of imminent death washed through him. He knew that no one could save him, not his Master, not the Eastern Lands alchemist, not even the five Nascent Soul Cultivators.

His heart filled with regret, complete and utter regret. He should never have left the Black Lands Palace....

Chapter 374: Spirit Severing Descends

Hanxue Shan stared, her phoenix-like eyes wide with intense astonishment. Feeling awe for the powerful was one of the laws of the land. After all of the things that had happened, Meng Hao's visage was now even more intensely imprinted onto her heart.

That was even more the case considering that in her mind, what Meng Hao had done just now had been for her sake.

Suddenly, her face flushed, and the look in her eyes as she gazed at him was completely different than before.

The four Grand Elders of Holy Snow City all gasped when they saw the inestimably noble Black Lands Palace Dao Child Luo Chong virtually prostrating himself before Meng Hao. They suddenly realized that Meng Hao was even more enigmatic than they had imagined.

This mysterious aura gave the Grand Elders a completely different feeling than they'd had for Zhou Dekun. Meng Hao seemed... far more frightening!

Meng Hao's Dao of alchemy, which they had personally witnessed, his catalyzing and awakening of the Thorn Rampart, and the fear he inspired in the Black Lands Palace Dao Child, all caused their esteem of Meng Hao to increase to an unprecedented level.

"Since you didn't know I was here, I'll forget the matter," said Meng Hao coolly, looking at Luo Chong. "But only this one time. Don't take this to be a precedent." When he heard the words, Luo Chong felt as if he had been given a new lease on life. His body relaxed. Trembling and excited, he bowed deeply to Meng Hao.

He had felt wronged, but now that he saw Meng Hao's understanding, that feeling transformed into gratefulness. Of course, he had been poisoned by Meng Hao, so he really should hate him. Complex feelings filled him, and he swore to himself that in this life... he would never again come into this man's presence.

Of course, if he knew that Meng Hao was also Fang Mu, then he would no doubt swear with redoubled intensity.

"I like the look of that Western Desert Cultivator over there," said Meng Hao casually. "Could you lend him to me to study for a few days? I'll give him back afterward." Actually, this was his main

purpose in stepping forward. His eyes glittered as he glanced at the Western Desert Cultivator's totem tattoos.

The young Western Desert Cultivator's face fell when he heard Meng Hao's words. Before he could retreat, Luo Chong glanced back at him. As far as Luo Chong was concerned, Meng Hao's words were orders to be followed without hesitation.

"Grab him!" he cried. The surrounding Cultivators didn't hesitate. Their hands shot out as they grabbed the Western Desert Cultivator. He struggled a bit, but it only took the space of a few breaths for them to succeed in capturing him.

The young man trembled, and fear filled his eyes.

"The great Demon Lord has taken a liking to you," said Luo Chong, his eyes brimming with viciousness. "That's good fortune for you! Don't struggle!" He didn't care that his actions might cause grudges or ill feelings with the Western Desert Cultivators. As far as he was concerned, Meng Hao's instructions were the most important.

"Great Demon Lord, you speak of lending, but please, allow me to give this person to you as a gift. I truly hope that you will accept, great Demon Lord." He indicated for the hesitant Cultivators behind him to deliver over the young Western Desert Cultivator. They immediately flew over toward the Thorn Rampart, threw the furious young man over, and then returned.

Having done these things, Luo Chong glanced at Meng Hao, who was looking quite satisfied as he hoisted the young man over his shoulder and turned to head back into the city. At this point, Luo Chong finally heaved a sigh of relief. He clasped hands and bowed, then turned and shot off at high speed. The two thousand Cultivators who had come with him, including the old man with the silver mask, all left with him. Their masks hid their embarrassed expressions as they did.

As the group was making to leave, one of the two Nascent Soul Cultivators from the Western Desert said, "The Black Lands Palace had better give the Western Desert a good explanation for this." His voice was cool, and did not contain fury, yet was filled with power.

Even as the old man's words sounded out, and Luo Chong and the others were about to leave, suddenly, a cold snort rang out, filling the air. The snort shook Heaven and Earth, transforming into a rumble that made everything vibrate. Cracks appeared on the surface of the ground, and it seemed as if the very air would be ripped into pieces.

It appeared as if the land couldn't sustain the power of the snort, and was about to fall to pieces.

The snort caused the Nascent Soul Cultivator from the Western Desert to stumble backward a few paces. At the same time, Luo Chong and the others felt their hearts shaking, and stopped moving. Luo Chong's eyes narrowed, and he started to pant.

Down on the ground, the multitude of beasts dropped onto their stomachs, quivering and wailing. The flying beasts also began to shake, and stopped moving.

The thousands of Cultivators on the ground felt their minds buzzing, filled with the sound of the snort, making them incapable of even thinking.

The sky above changed color and the ground heaved.

The countless thorns which surrounded Holy Snow City began to break apart. Shrill cries rang out as the entire city shook and filled with an enormous roaring sound. The massive city walls of ice and snow began to fall, and the star-shaped devices above the city collapsed.

All of the city's protective spell formations had previously been penetrated, but since repaired. Under the power of this snort, though, they began to shatter and transform into flying dust.

Within the city, countless residences caved in. The Cultivators on the city walls coughed up blood and their faces twisted. There were even about a hundred Foundation Establishment Cultivators whose bodies directly exploded.

If it weren't for the four Grand Elders' immediate actions to protect their Clan Members, the Clan would have sustained severe casualties. However, the price they paid for this caused them to cough up mouthfuls of blood. The old woman, Third Elder, who had already been injured, felt her Cultivation base suddenly drop. Her body grew weak, and she seemed to be even older than before.

Meng Hao's face flickered as he shot backward, coughing up four or five mouthfuls of blood. He looked up into the sky, where he saw what appeared to be a sun approaching!

This sun was black, and existed in the sky along with the normal blazing sun. If you looked closely, however, this black sun was actually a Cultivator wearing a black robe!

He appeared to be about forty years of age; however, he radiated an air of ancientness that far belied his young appearance. He was surrounded by a black glow that seemed to suck in all of the light around it. It was this that caused him to look like a black sun.

Along with him came an indescribable pressure which descended down from the sky.

Behind the black-robed Cultivator was a young man whose face was filled with reverence, even fanaticism. This young man was none other than... Hanxue Zong!

“Spirit Severing!!” Meng Hao’s eyes narrowed and he began to breathe heavily.

It wasn’t just him. The hearts and minds of everyone present began to tremble.

“Greetings, Spirit Severing Patriarch!” said Luo Chong excitedly. He immediately began to bow in mid-air. All the Cultivators surrounding him also began to prostrate themselves in shock.

Down on the ground, the thousands of Black Lands Palace Cultivators also dropped to their knees.

“Greetings, Spirit Severing Patriarch!”

The expressions of the Western Desert Cultivators changed. However, they did not kowtow, but merely bowed their heads. The two Western Desert Nascent Soul Cultivators gasped and lowered their heads in greeting.

Meng Hao’s heart sank. The arrival of the black-robed man indicated that this was definitely no longer an opening battle. A Spirit Severing Cultivator had been dispatched to bring things to an end.

Meng Hao frowned. “There are still two more months left before the Frigid Snow Larva is completed....” He sighed as he pulled the good luck charm out of his bag of holding. “Forget it. It seems there’s no way I’ll be able to get a Frigid Snow Larva. I’ll just have to figure out some other way of transcending the Tribulation.” He sighed emotionally. With a Spirit Severing Cultivator here, the situation really was doomed to end in only one way.

“If the mastiff were awake, or if my Cultivation base was at the Nascent Soul stage....” Meng Hao looked up at the black-robed Cultivator, sighing inwardly. Actually, he knew that even if he were of

the Nascent Soul stage, in front of a Spirit Severing Cultivator, he would be nothing more than an insect.

“Spirit Severing.... Gain enlightenment of the Dao, Sever the self three times....” The Spirit Severing stage was a legendary realm that could only be reached through fortune, and not through seeking. Throughout the world, there were many Core Formation Cultivators, and not a few of the Nascent Soul stage. However, Spirit Severing Cultivators were rare, even in the expansive Southern Domain. Often, they would exist only as the Dao Reserve of a great Sect.

When Meng Hao thought of Spirit Severing, he couldn't help but think of Patriarch Reliance.

As the black-robed Cultivator floated down from up in the sky, Holy Snow City was blanketed with deathly silence. Despair filled every heart and mind, both the Frigid Snow Clan members and the other Cultivators. Each and every one abandoned all hope of fighting back.

A pleased expression filled the face of Hanxue Zong as he followed the black-robed Cultivator. His gaze swept over the Frigid Snow Clan members, and a callous look appeared in his eyes.

However, as the black-robed Cultivator was still about three thousand meters above the city, he suddenly stopped moving. A profound look appeared in his eyes, as if he were in a position of ultimate authority, as if the great Dao of the Heavens gave him the right to look down on all living things.

As he floated there, it seemed like the Heavens and the Earth were fused together, inseparable. And yet, at the same time, it was as if they were separated, congealed into his own Dao, making the will of Heaven impossible to expunge.

It was as if everything in the world existed because of his will. This was because he had long since reached the Spirit Severing stage, and his first Severing. As for what had been severed, only people of the same stage might be able to pick up on some of the clues.

“Fellow Daoist Hanxue, we haven't seen each other for several hundred years. Still on your deathbed? Why don't you let me see you on your way?” As his eyes swept across the land, it was as if none of the Cultivators there deserved to be within his line of sight. What he was looking at was located deep in a subterranean chamber. There, sitting cross-legged atop a star-shaped altar, was an old man. He was completely withered and looked like a corpse.

“Still sleeping?” continued the black-robed Cultivator in a grating voice. “It seems my attempts to determine whether you are still alive were nothing but a waste. Let’s end this farce.” He shook his hand and then waved his arm.

The land in all directions began to quake. A Heavenly Pit suddenly appeared in the ground, right in the middle of the city!

It was at this very moment that the same ancient voice he had heard before once again spoke into Meng Hao’s ear.

Chapter 375: Incredible Good Fortune!

The entire city began to cave in. Many people were sucked along; they wanted to fly away, but suddenly discovered that their Cultivation bases couldn’t be rotated at all, as if they didn’t even exist.

At the moment, Meng Hao’s hand was tightly clasped around the good luck charm. It still required a bit more than ten breaths of time to activate and was already emitting a glow. However, it was then that the ancient voice transmitted into his ear.

“Open your mind and connect with your Thorn Rampart. I am on the verge of death, but can bestow upon you an amazing bit of good fortune. Think of it as my way of thanking you for the kindness of protecting the bloodline of my Clan over these past months.”

The ancient, weak voice was the same one that had told Meng Hao how to control the Thorn Rampart. Meng Hao was well aware who this person was, but nonetheless, he hesitated.

With the good luck charm, he was absolutely confident of being able to leave this place safely. If he listened to the ancient voice, he would be facing up against a Spirit Severing eccentric. No matter how cautious and careful he was, it would still be a perilous situation.

“There’s no time,” continued the voice. “If I wanted to possess you, I wouldn’t have waited so long to do so. What are you hesitating for, lad? Do you really think your ancient good luck charm can help you escape from a Spirit Severing Cultivator?!”

“What good fortune is it that you plan to give me, senior?” transmitted Meng Hao, his eyes glittering. An intense power suddenly spread up from below. At the same time, miserable cries filled

the air. Meng Hao didn't need to look down; he knew that the city was rapidly sinking down into the Heavenly Pit.

Cultivation bases in the entire area were being restricted; however, Meng Hao's Perfect Gold Core was not one of them. He could still flee of his own volition if he wished.

"I'm going to give you my Spirit Severing enlightenment. It will open a door for you in the future when you reach Spirit Severing. It will also create some hope for my Clan members...."

A huge rumbling interrupted the ancient voice. Holy Snow City was now more than half destroyed by the Heavenly Pit in the ground. Not too far off in the distance, in the area where the city was crumbling into, Meng Hao could see a pitch black abyss. It emanated a sinister aura, which turned black as it circulated around.

It was at this time that Meng Hao's good luck charm finished preparing. Without hesitation, he pushed down to activate it. It was at this time that his face suddenly fell.

The good luck charm didn't work!

A boom filled the air as the rest of the city began to fall to pieces. Miserable cries filled the air. Meng Hao could feel the gravitational force from within the enormous hole growing stronger. The countless strands of black Qi were trying to pull him in.

At this critical moment, a look of determination filled his eyes.

"Junior agrees!" The instant he spoke the words, he opened his mind. At the same time, he sent out his Spiritual Sense to reestablish contact with the remnants of the Thorn Rampart that still existed within the city.

As soon as his Spiritual Sense touched the Thorn Rampart, the withered figure who safely sat cross-legged in the subterranean chamber suddenly performed an incantation gesture, causing a sealing mark to appear.

As soon as the sealing mark appeared, Meng Hao could sense the thorns that existed within the crumbling city expanding. They extended down into the subterranean chamber, which was already beginning to break apart. As they expanded down, they sprouted out with even more thorns, heading

directly toward the withered, corpse-like old man who had been sitting there for who knew how many years.

They pierced into him, instantly creating a sort of connection between him and Meng Hao. The two of them were suddenly sharing a single body!

An unspeakably powerful force exploded out into Meng Hao's mind.

A booming sound filled his mind, and veins bulged out all over his body. His face distorted, and his eyes filled with veins of blood. He began to shake, and it felt as if his body were about to be ripped into pieces. Pain stabbed into his soul, and it felt as if his Spiritual Sense were about to shatter!

An intensely powerful aura suddenly surged through him.

This aura was not that of Core Formation or Nascent Soul, but rather... Spirit Severing!!

The instant the aura exploded out, Meng Hao's mind reeled, and he heard a snarling roar.

"I am the Patriarch of the Frigid Snow Clan. I gained enlightenment of the Dao during a great tempest, and performed my First Severing a thousand years ago!"

As the voice echoed out in Meng Hao's mind, an image coalesced. Within the image, Meng Hao saw a tempest that stretched as far as the eye could see, rising from the Earth all the way up to the Heavens. Lightning crackled everywhere, shaking everything. This was a tempest which could flay a Nascent Soul Cultivator into pieces, and yet there in the middle of it all was a figure who exuded immense profundity.

It was a middle-aged man, tall, wearing a long robe. His head was raised toward the Heavens as he let out a powerful roar.

"Clan descendants, remember me! I am Hanxue Bao, sixth generation Patriarch of the Frigid Snow Clan. For my first Severing, I severed familial Love. However, I did not sever my love for my Clan! Severing Love and replacing it with the Dao, accomplished my first Spirit Severing, and incurred a half-Celestial Tempest!" [1]

The image faded, leaving Meng Hao's mind spinning. Around him, a wind suddenly appeared. The wind screamed out from within the giant hole in the ground. The city was now no longer collapsing, and the Cultivators were no longer crying out. The vortex in the Heavenly Pit suddenly calmed. The howling wind filled the hole, pushing the crumbling city back out from within.

The wind was now a tempest, sweeping across everything. An astonishing roar filled the air. The wind seemed capable of crashing through any obstacle; the sky dimmed and the earth quaked.

The beasts that spread out across the land emitted miserable shrieks and fell prone, trembling. The Cultivators from the Black Lands Palace coughed up blood, looks of astonishment on their faces.

The Western Desert Cultivators' faces filled with shock. As for Luo Chong and his group, their expressions also changed, and they began to pant as they looked at the raging tempest that swirled around Holy Snow City.

In contrast, the black-robed, Spirit Severing Cultivator up in the sky was laughing. As his laughter spread out, an unprecedented, black glow shone out from his eyes. At this moment, it really looked as if he were some type of black sun.

“Spirit Severing Will! Patriarch Hanxue Bao, I never realized you would display such courage and power on the verge of death! You transformed your Spirit Severing Will into a legacy brand which you then gave to a Cultivator who isn't even of the Frigid Snow Clan! How sad! You severed Love with your first Severing, and yet, when your son betrayed you, you showed empathy, and didn't kill him! You went against your own Dao, and destroyed yourself!

“Well, since none of your Clan members can accept the legacy of your Spirit Severing Will, it seems it will become good fortune for this member of the junior generation. Unfortunately, in the end, the good fortune will not belong to him. This brand, which contains successive generations of Frigid Snow Clan Grand Dragoners, will be mine! Only someone as powerful as me would be able to connect with more than three generations. At the most, this infant could connect with one. Any more would kill him instantly!

“Disciple, spit up some of your blood! Watch as Master eradicates your kin for you. Your Dao will be completed, and the day of your Spirit Severing will finally come!” The black-robed Cultivator laughed loudly. Next to him, Hanxue Zong had a complex look on his face. However, without speaking a single word, he slapped his chest and spit up a mouthful of blood.

As soon as the blood shot out from his mouth, the black-robed Cultivator snatched it up. He squeezed it into his hand, whereupon it formed the bloody image of a teenager, a look of fear filling his face, as well as agitation.

It looked very similar to Hanxue Zong.

As soon as the teenager appeared, his eyes filled with hatred. A bloody glow emanated out from him, and he shot down toward the tempest surrounding Holy Snow City.

As it neared, Meng Hao lifted his head up and let out a roar of pain. His will still remained, and was still his, but the instant he saw the youth, his heart filled with agony. The pain was indescribable, filled with sorrow, fury and insanity.

He could sense that the tempest around him was beginning to collapse, and that it was happening because of the blood-colored teenager.

“Zong’er...” said the ancient voice in Meng Hao’s head. It echoed about inside him, filled with deep emotions that were impossible to state clearly. All of the tens of thousands of things that needed to be said, were all said in that single name.

As it echoed about inside Meng Hao, the tempest around him began to fill with raindrops. As the rain fell, Meng Hao realized that it was not truly rain, but rather, the tears of the sixth generation Patriarch of the Frigid Snow Clan.

“Regrets...? No, no regrets!” The echoes of the voice resonated in Meng Hao’s head as finally, the shocking tempest went mad. It began to collapse, and as it did, it tore everything in its path into shreds, including the blood-colored teenager.

As the teenager shattered into fragments, a new voice suddenly boomed out in Meng Hao’s mind.

“I am the fifth generation Patriarch of the Frigid Snow Clan, Grand Dragoneer Hanxue Ding! I grasped the meaning of Will of Heaven atop a snowy mountain and performed my First Severing in the Ten Thousand Dragons Pool!” This voice was clearly different from that of Hanxue Bao’s. It was somewhat less domineering, and yet a bit more dignified. As the voice reverberated through Meng Hao, his body filled with an unparalleled, intense pain.

It felt as if his soul were about to collapse, and his body were going to be ripped into pieces. Up above, the sky grew dim, as if it were about to disappear. Suddenly, the image of an immense body of deep water appeared up above.

Ripples moved across the surface of the water, spreading out in all directions. The sound of a multitude of roars could be heard as countless black dragons burst out from the deep waters, which seemed to hang upside down above everything. The roaring dragons caused all of the beasts on the ground to wail mournfully. As for the Cultivators, looks of astonishment filled their faces, and blood sprayed from their mouths.

This was especially true of the Western Desert Cultivators, whose bodies trembled violently. One of the two Nascent Soul Cultivators looked up, and spoke in a weak voice: “The Ten Thousand Dragons Pool! According to the legends, after the Greatfather of the great Frigid Snow Tribe became a Grand Dragoner, he took the Ten Thousand Dragons Pool as his own. After that, it disappeared from the Western Desert!!”

Up above, the black-robed Cultivator’s face flickered. “So, this kid has managed to support a second legacy brand!!”

Chapter 376: Brands!

The roars of ten thousand dragons emerged from the inverted black waters up above in the sky. The roars were shocking to the extreme, causing blood to spray from the mouths of the beasts on the ground. One by one, they began to bleed from their eyes, nose and mouth. Then, they simply dropped dead.

As for the Cultivators down below, they also coughed up blood. Their bodies grew listless, their minds reeled, the flow of their Qi and blood was suppressed, and their Cultivation bases hung on the verge of collapse.

A grim look appeared on the face of the black-robed Cultivator in mid-air. He began to perform an incantation with his right hand.

“This is definitely beyond what I anticipated. He can support two generations of legacies. Well, even that will not be enough!

“Life births destruction, Yellow Springs of the Three Worlds! Flowers birth fruit, reveal the Three Worlds!” The black-robed Cultivator’s hand turned into a blur, and in front of him, a black orb

appeared. The orb began to expand and emanate a black glow in all directions as it transformed into a black sun. It burned as it shot up.

As it neared the ten thousand roaring dragons, the black sun suddenly exploded, shredding the air itself, destroying everything near it as it turned into an all-consuming black hole.

As soon as the black hole appeared, the dragons roared. A rumbling filled the air, and the ground quaked. The dragons didn't seem capable of controlling their own bodies as they were sucked toward the black hole.

“If you really were the Frigid Snow Clan's fifth generation Grand Dragoner, then I would turn and leave. But you're just a trifling legacy brand. You can't stop me!” The black-robed Cultivator's voice was cool as he flicked his sleeve. Down below, the Heavenly Pit that the tempest had filled in, once again shook and began to open.

Around Meng Hao in the city were several hundred people, the faces of whom were all pale white and filled with hopelessness. The war had reached the point that they weren't even capable of participating in it. They were like dried out leaves in a windstorm, incapable of acting for themselves.

Beneath the Ten Thousand Dragon Pool, veins bulged out all over Meng Hao's body. His face was twisted into a vicious expression as he struggled to control the pain inside of him. It surged against him like the tide, and he fought against the urge to simply fade into unconsciousness. Gritting his teeth, he held on.

The ancient, weak voice of Hanxue Bao spoke his dying words to Meng Hao: “You must not lose consciousness. When seizing the good fortune of Frigid Snow, one generation makes you a chosen son, two generations makes you a hero, and three generations makes you Chosen of Heaven. As for four, such a thing has never been seen!

“Each glorious brand consists of the most powerful expert of a generation. As the legacy joins your soul, the brand enters the world to accompany you. The more generations you acquire, the more brands. The day you enter Spirit Severing, all of these brands, these first turning points of us powerful Cultivators... will explode out to help you!

“Press on! If you are able to support the third generation legacy, then you may be able to avoid the calamity which bears down on you. This is as much assistance as I can provide. I truly hope that you succeed, and help my Clan to pass through this disaster!”

Meng Hao lifted his head up and roared. As he did, his clothing ripped into shreds. His hair whipped about, and everything around him seemed to shatter. The only thing left was his roar.

As he roared, the ten thousand dragons, regardless if they were being sucked in by the black hole or not, all joined him. A massive, glorious roar filled the air.

The black-robed Cultivator frowned, then flashed an incantation with his right hand. He then spread his hand out and pushed his palm down toward Meng Hao.

“Ashes to ashes, dust to dust. That which has passed away, shall pass. What remains, remains for eternity.” As the black-robed Cultivator’s words echoed out, the ten thousand dragons exploded into pieces one by one. Up above, the Ten Thousand Dragons Pool also collapsed.

It seemed as if everything was ending, just as the black-robed Cultivator had said.

However, it was at this moment that a tremor ran through Meng Hao’s body. Whereas his eyes had been scarlet moments ago, they were now pure white.

When the black-robed Cultivator saw this, his face flickered again, revealing an expression of disbelief.

“Impossible!”

Even as his mind was rocked, the voice of a third person could be heard in Meng Hao’s head. This voice was venerable and ancient, and filled all of Meng Hao’s consciousness.

“I am the fourth generation Patriarch of the Frigid Snow Clan, Hanxue Hui of the Yellow Springs. I awoke to myself in a land of ashen death. I gained enlightenment in a forest of bones. I conceived the concept of spawning the silent spirit. I cast away my body to become a Dao Spirit. This was my First Severing! I am Hanxue Hui, fourth generation Grand Dragoneer!” As the voice echoed out, an unprecedentedly strong death aura suddenly appeared in front of Meng Hao. It spread out, filling the area, causing both the sky and the land to turn gray. [1]

Suddenly, countless roars could be heard in the gray sky. The roars soon took on shape; countless phantom souls appeared. They looked ancient, filled with rancor and madness.

On the ground, all of the beasts that had died just moments ago suddenly began to twitch and then rise to their feet. A gray light shone in their eyes as they lifted their heads up and howled. The ground trembled as all the dead bodies on the ground rose up, even those of the Cultivators, who stood with eyes blank and vacant.

Up above in the sky, a rumble filled the air as an enormous skeletal dragon roared into being. Down below, a gigantic skeletal snake burst up through the soil.

The entire world had become like a world of death. It was at this moment that behind Meng Hao, a yellow river suddenly appeared out of nowhere. If you looked closely at the surging waters, you would say that they were actually composed of... countless ghosts.

These were no yellow river waters. These were the Yellow Springs!

The Yellow Springs had appeared, something stupefying to the extreme.

Atop the Yellow Springs floated a pagoda composed of eighteen levels, just like the eighteen levels of hell!

The grayish death aura circulated around Meng Hao, causing his face to look pale. A death aura even began to radiate off of his body. Suddenly, he opened his eyes!

When he did, it was like a clap of thunder. A rumbling boom rose up to the Heavens as he stared out with his pure gray eyes.

“Yellow Springs Grand Dragoner!!” All of the low-level Cultivators in the area suddenly went pale in the face. They looked as if they had lost their minds. Their bodies were stiff as if their life force were being obliterated.

It was the same with the Western Desert Cultivators. The two Western Desert Nascent Soul Cultivators stood there, bodies trembling as they looked at Meng Hao floating in mid-air. The looks of stupefaction on their faces exceeded those when the tempest and the Ten Thousand Dragons Pool appeared.

“Six thousand years ago,” said one of them, “the legendary Yellow Springs Grand Dragoner single-handedly caused a foul wind and a rain of blood to pass over the Western Desert; it was a reign of terror! He enslaved millions of dead beasts and even raised a level 10 neo-demon!!

“According to the legend, the number of lives he took before he himself perished, was impossible to count!! He founded the Land of Bones.... He established the Gray Mountains.... He....” The minds of the two Nascent Soul Cultivators were filled with absolute disbelief.

“Dammit,” said the black-robed Cultivator. A look of concentration filled his eyes. Behind him, Hanxue Zong looked like he was about to go crazy. His heart filled with intense jealousy, and inwardly, he was screaming that all of this belonged to him!

“So, you can support three generations of brands!! Your piddling Core Formation Cultivation base does seem to have quite a bit of potential. How rare.... Too bad that still won’t be enough!” With that, the black-robed Cultivator flashed another incantation and then waved his hand out.

“I gained enlightenment of the Dao in the blackness of night, under the spinning Cosmos. For my First Severing, I severed Daytime!” His eyes gleamed as he raised his right hand and pointed toward the sky. A lightning bolt suddenly appeared in the grayness. A boom echoed out as the lightning bolt descended directly toward the right hand of the black-robed Cultivator.

This color of this lightning was pitch black!

The black-robed Cultivator snatched it, and as he did, it transformed into a twisted Lightning Blade which stretched all the way up into the sky. The black-robed Cultivator swung the Lightning Blade, seemingly intending to rend the gray sky in two!

A huge boom echoed out as the gigantic Lightning Blade slashed down. A massive breach appeared in the sky as the blade chopped down, directly eradicating the grayness of the world.

Meng Hao’s body shook as pain stabbed through him. Even as the Lightning Blade descended, Meng Hao subconsciously lifted his hands up into the air. As he did, all of the dead creatures began to float up to form a gigantic sphere of bones!

All of the gray Qi in the area shot toward the sphere of bones. In the blink of an eye, the sphere was infused with the grayness, and began to emanate a shocking power as it flew to meet the Lightning Blade.

A massive explosion ripped out that caused all of the Cultivators below the Nascent Soul stage to instantly pass out. Some of them even exploded.

As the sound of it continued to reverberate out, the sphere of bones collapsed into pieces, unable to stand up to the Lightning Blade.

Blood sprayed from Meng Hao's mouth as he fell and slammed into the ground. Once more, the Heavenly Pit opened up beneath Holy Snow City. Again, the city began to collapse and fall. Meng Hao laughed bitterly. Three generations were his limit; even that was not enough to allow him to secure victory over a true Spirit Severing expert.

Up above, the black-robed Cultivator breathed in deeply. Blood oozed from the corners of his mouth as he looked down to where Meng Hao had fallen. A strange light gleamed in his eyes.

“The Frigid Snow Clan's Six Generations of Legacy Brands certainly live up to their reputation. Once I get my hands on them, I'll definitely be able to perform my Third Severing. Then I will complete the great circle of Spirit Severing.” His eyes radiated determination as he lifted his right hand. Just as he was about to reach down to grab Meng Hao, his face changed for a third time.

Complete shock filled him!!

Even as Meng Hao landed on the ground, a mark appeared on his right hand!!

The “Hui” in his name is the character for “ash” or “gray”

Chapter 377: Agarwood!!

This mark was not unfamiliar to Meng Hao. It was the same one that had appeared when he reached Foundation Establishment and Core Formation!

When the young woman from the Fang Clan saw the mark, her expression had changed. Instead of striking Meng Hao, she changed the direction of her blow.

Images from all of these scenes played out in Meng Hao's mind.

And now... the mark had appeared again!

He felt an intense heat radiating out from the back of his hand. It turned into a stinging pain that spread throughout his body until he was completely submerged in it. Finally, he let out a roar.

At the same time, a sort of boundless life force seemed to be released from within the pain. It spread through him, healing his body. Furthermore, he could sense that it also gave him the chance to accept the fourth legacy.

Suddenly, an archaic voice sounded out in his mind. It was boundlessly ancient, transmitted from ten thousand years in the past. It did not come from the mark on his hand, but rather, the Frigid Snow Clan legacy!

“I am the third generation Grand Dragoner of the Frigid Snow Clan. My name is Qi’nan Ning.... I accepted the legacy of the second generation in the frigid cold of midwinter. I gained enlightenment on Mount Agarwood. I severed my Dao on Midwinter Plain. Before me, the Clan was called Agarwood. After me, it was called Frigid Snow.... Clan members, engrave upon your minds: our power was fading, we could not support ourselves. Sadly, we were forced to leave the Western Desert.” [1]

As the voice spoke, an image of a mountain appeared in the pupil of each of Meng Hao’s eyes!

This was Mount Agarwood. The same moment that the images of the mountains appeared, up above in the sky, the breach slashed by the Lightning Blade began to split open. An enormous mountain suddenly began to descend.

The size of this mountain was difficult to describe; the power it radiated was boundless and shocking.

Just barely visible on the mountain were two glowing characters that made up the word Agarwood. As the mountain descended, the ground shook and began to crack and sink.

The Heavenly Pit disappeared, and the Lightning Blade shattered. A massive sinkhole appeared on the battlefield, which turned into an enormous basin. The two Nascent Soul Cultivators from the Black Lands Palace coughed up blood. Their masks shattered, revealing the shocked faces of two old men. Immediately, they began to flee.

The two Nascent Soul Cultivators from the Western Desert also coughed up blood as they were tossed backward. The shock that filled their hearts was impossible to describe with words.

“Qi’nan Ning.... Ten thousand years ago, he was one of the three most powerful figures in the Western Desert. He... he was actually a member of the Frigid Snow Tribe?! How is that possible?! How come the ancient records never mentioned anything about this!?”

“Qi’nan Ning.....” The black-robed Cultivator’s face flickered. Behind him, Hanxue Zong stared mutely. He suddenly coughed up a mouthful of blood, a look of disbelief in his eyes. How could he ever have imagined that the Patriarch of his own bloodline was actually a member of the famous Agarwood Clan from ten thousand years ago!

“Why change the name of the Clan?” Hanxue Zong didn’t have any time to think about it further. The black-robed Cultivator, eyes glistening with concentration, lifted his right hand and was about to wave it when suddenly, his face flickered yet again.

“Dammit! How can this kid have so much latent talent? The legacy isn’t concluded yet....”

The ground rumbled as the enormous Mount Agarwood descended. Meng Hao floated there, his eyes shining with a bright light. As of this moment, he knew with absolute certainty this time, he really was experiencing an incredible amount of good fortune.

The Spirit Severing brands remained in his mind. He couldn’t employ them except during the branding process, but... when it came time for his own Spirit Severing, it would be vastly easier.

Furthermore, after he reached Spirit Severing, the power he would be able to wield would be unprecedented, and he would be able to use any of the brands that existed in his mind.

Such good fortune was normally something he would never have access to; only Spirit Severing Cultivators should be able to acquire such things.

However, due to chance occurrences, the good fortune fell upon him. As such, he would do everything within his power to acquire even more!

“The legacies of the sixth, fifth, fourth and third generations... are not enough,” thought Meng Hao. “I must acquire the second generation legacy. I will not squander such good fortune. I’ll use it to secure my future rise to prominence! I’m not sure why the mark appeared on the back of my hand

again just now, but now I have hope. I possess all the requirements, so therefore, I will definitely open up the full potential of these legacies! It doesn't matter if the second generation is Frigid Snow Clan or Agarwood Clan. Second generation legacy, come out!" Meng Hao lifted his head up and roared. Light shone up from his eyes as he floated there in mid-air, his hair whipping about. The sight of it was shocking and strangely beautiful!

Within his head, a ceaseless rumbling sound could be heard. This sound exceeded that of the sixth generation tempest, swept away the fifth generation ten thousand dragons, crushed the fourth generation Yellow Springs, and shattered the third generation Mount Agarwood. It transformed into eminently domineering, supreme noise.

The sound seemed to be echoing out in response to Meng Hao's expression of desire.

"I am Qi'nan Tian, second generation Grand Dragoner of the Agarwood Clan. With the legacy power of the Patriarch, I controlled the power of the four seasons. I am not an Immortal, but by controlling the seasons, I silenced the Western Desert. I am... the Heaven of the Western Desert!"

The voice was common, but it echoed out with a soaring, overbearing aura. The domineering air emanated out from Meng Hao, changing everything. The patch of sky directly above Mount Agarwood suddenly looked bizarre in appearance.

Within this patch of sky could be seen resplendent Spring flowers, a light Summer rain, dancing, frost-covered Autumn leaves, and bitter Winter snow!

This patch of sky contained all four seasons, and its power spread out over everything, transforming the land, causing everything to tremble. The two Nascent Soul Cultivators from the Black Lands Palace coughed up blood, and their bodies began to wither as they slipped into unconsciousness.

Blank expressions covered the faces of the two Western Desert Nascent Soul Cultivators. They couldn't feel or sense anything; their life force was slipping away.

Hanxue Zong's body shook and his mind reeled; he coughed up a mouthful of blood as his body suddenly aged. Up ahead of him, the black-robed Cultivator's pupils constricted, and his eyes filled with terror and astonishment.

Without even thinking about it, he backed up, panting as he stared at the Four Seasons Sky above Mount Agarwood.

“That’s not a Spirit Severing brand, that’s... a Dao Seeking brand!! Dammit, the Frigid Snow Clan actually had a Dao Seeking expert! How is that possible? A Dao Seeking expert in the Western Desert.... Agarwood.... Agarwood....” The black-robed Cultivator’s face fell as he suddenly lost confidence in his ability to seize the legacy. “If I can’t seize this legacy now, then it will never belong to me. Even if I kill this punk later, I wouldn’t be able to take it. Dammit! How come this kid is so troublesome!?!?”

A twisted look of madness appeared in his eyes. He had been preparing for this day for a long time, and needed the good fortune of the Frigid Snow Clan legacy for his Third Severing. As such, he wasn’t willing to give up so easily.

“Five generations. So, you can support five legacy generations. Dammit, there’s only six in total. Don’t tell me he’s going to acquire them all! This kid’s greed is something rarely seen in the world! People as greedy as this deserve to die! I won’t let you continue!!” The black-robed Cultivator’s heart buzzed. As of now, he no longer looked down on Meng Hao, but rather, was convinced that Meng Hao would be able to acquire the full legacy. Even though it seemed unbelievable, he didn’t have time to think about the matter too much. Eyes glittering with killing intent, his body flashed. Drawing on the full power of his Spirit Severing Cultivation base, he shot in Meng Hao’s direction.

“I don’t care what price I have to pay, I will stop you!” Determination filled his eyes as he slammed into the Four Seasons Sky, and Mount Agarwood.

An indescribable pressure weighed down on his entire body, causing the black-robed Cultivator to shake, and his flesh to begin to evaporate.

“BREAK!” he roared. The evaporation of his body suddenly slowed. He gritted his teeth and shot forward toward Meng Hao. In the blink of an eye, he was three hundred meters away from him!

Those final three hundred meters would be extremely difficult to cross.

Actually, he knew that the best way to handle this situation would be to wait until Meng Hao couldn’t hold on any longer, and self-detonated. As far as interfering with the branding process, the best would be to take some action while at a distance. The most stupid method was what he was doing right now, which was to personally approach Meng Hao.

Unfortunately, he had no other options. Interfering from outside did no good, and waiting for Meng Hao to self-detonate wasn’t possible. Therefore, he had to move in as he was doing now.

As rumbling sounds continued to fill the air, Meng Hao completely ignored the incoming black-robed Cultivator. Breathing heavily, he looked up into the sky, his eyes radiating intense determination. He had accepted five generations of legacies from powerful experts. However, as this happened, and the increasing power was revealed, it only made Meng Hao's desire for the first generation legacy grow even stronger.

“Agarwood Clan, first generation legacy!!” he roared.

The sound echoed out into the ears of the black-robed Cultivator, causing his heart to begin to pound. An uneasy feeling filled his heart as he looked at Meng Hao, whose head was raised in determination. The black-robed Cultivator gritted his teeth, then raised his hand toward the blank-faced Hanxue Zong behind him.

“Blood and Will Liquefaction!” he cried, pointing at Hanxue Zong. Hanxue Zong's body began to shake, and he let out a blood-curdling shriek. His body rapidly withered, and in the blink of an eye, he had turned into a desiccated corpse. All of the blood in his body spurted out and shot toward the black-robed Cultivator. It circulated around his body for a moment; then he shot forward at incredible speed.

The three hundred meter distance began to close. However, the pressure of the five legacy brands pushing down on the black-robed Cultivator was rapidly eating away at the Frigid Snow Clan blood which gave him his speed. Once it completely disappeared, he would be in great danger.

“DIE!” he cried. He was now less than thirty meters away from Meng Hao. He lifted his hand up, and a billowing Lightning Blade slashed down toward Meng Hao.

Inside his mind, Meng Hao used Spiritual Sense to transmit a message out. “The bloodline of Agarwood comes from the Western Desert. Western Desert totems come from countless demons. As for me, I... I am the Ninth Demon Sealer. Agarwood Clan legacy, yield to me as you should!”

Chapter 378: Exterminate the Spirit!

“I am the Agarwood, a Spirit from the Ninth Sea. I fell to South Heaven and into the Western Desert.... I encountered a magical transformation, which reopened my consciousness. Righteous Bestowal made me Demonic. My bloodline remained in South Heaven and evolved into a Clan. My legacy was passed down from generation to generation, but few nowadays possess my bloodline.

“The Agarwood has two heads, the body of a dragon, and the tail of a phoenix. It never sheds tears; shedding tears ends its life. Now, I am gone. I left South Heaven to return home.... Other than the League of Demon Sealers, only my descendants can receive my legacy!” The ancient voice echoed out in Meng Hao’s head. Endless amounts of glorious light surrounded him. Suddenly, the illusory image of a creature appeared. It was shaped like a dragon, with two heads, and the tail of a phoenix, and was no less than three thousand meters long!

The instant the two-headed Agarwood appeared, the sky faded, and a roar filled all creation. Meng Hao could sense a bizarre, unspeakable power pouring into him from the Agarwood.

The descending Lightning Blade of the black-robed Cultivator shattered into pieces. His eyes filled with astonishment, and he immediately fell back, dumbstruck. He could sense an unprecedented aura of fear and terror emanating off of this two-headed beast.

“Run away!” This was the first thing that filled his mind. He had to get away from this place. His Cultivation base was at the Spirit Severing stage, but he was a cautious person. That was why he had done his research before coming here.

His prudence was why he didn’t care that he was a Spirit Severing Patriarch, nor that he was facing up against nothing more than a Core Formation stripling. Matters regarding face meant nothing to him at the moment. All he cared about was the acute sense of crisis that filled his heart.

As the black-robed Cultivator fled, a voice filled Meng Hao’s mind. The voice was familiar. It was none other than the sixth generation Patriarch, Hanxue Bao! “Kill him!”

Next, another voice could be heard, that of the fifth generation Grand Dragoner! “Kill him!”

“Kill him!”

“Kill him!”

Voices filled his head. From the sixth generation all the way to the second, Qi’nan Tian. They rang out one after another, and as they did, Meng Hao’s eyes filled with a cold glow. He slowly lifted up his right hand.

The Agarwood which twisted about in the air around him suddenly blurred with speed. It transformed into beams of light that bored into Meng Hao’s body, fusing into him!

Meng Hao breathed in slowly, and then said, “Tempest!” Instantly, a black tempest sprang into being around Meng Hao. It spread out rapidly, making it seem as if the entire world were filled with its fury.

Within the tempest appeared the towering figure of Hanxue Bao. His appearance was somewhat indistinct, but his stature was indomitable. As soon as he appeared, his gaze fell upon the black-robed Cultivator.

The black-robed Cultivator’s scalp went numb, and a sensation like death swept over him. He suddenly had the urge to laugh out loud. He was a Spirit Severing Patriarch, and yet here he was, feeling the approach of death in front of a Core Formation Cultivator.

Not only was it terrifying, it was supremely comical.

“Ten Thousand Dragons,” said Meng Hao, waving his right hand. The Ten Thousand Dragons Pool appeared again. Within it, ten thousand black dragons roared. Shockingly, behind them appeared the figure of an old man wearing a black robe, who gazed coldly at the Spirit Severing Cultivator.

This was none other than the fifth generation Patriarch!

“Yellow Springs!” said Meng Hao, the third in his string of statements. A roaring sound filled the air as the Yellow Springs suddenly appeared, along with the eighteen layers of hell. The world turned gray, and a thick death aura sprang up which transformed into the image of a man wearing a gray robe. He held a skull in one hand, and gray Qi rippled around him which transformed into the images of all manner of beasts.

This was the fourth generation Patriarch!

“Midwinter!” said Meng Hao. He felt power bursting around him, all coming from the brands in his mind. This was the bizarre power of the Agarwood that had poured into him!

The third patriarch appeared within a snowstorm, the coldness of which froze the very ground.

Suddenly, crackling sounds filled the air as Mount Agarwood appeared, surrounding by endless snowy winds and lightning. At the very peak of the mountain, surrounding by snow and wind, was an old man who looked down at the black-robed Cultivator.

The black-robed Cultivator's face was pale white. He spit up a mouthful of blood, dramatically increasing his speed. He was trying to create a portal to teleport away, but couldn't.

"Four Seasons!" Killing intent radiated out from Meng Hao's eyes. As it did, the sky above changed as images of the four seasons appeared, covering everything.

"Agarwood!" This was the last of Meng Hao's successive words. As he spoke them, his right hand descended, and he pointed directly at the fleeing black-robed Cultivator.

As he extended his finger, the black tempest congealed into the form of two enormous wings!

The ten thousand roaring dragons, along with the Dragons Pool itself, began the head of a dragon!

The Yellow Springs twisted, pulling the eighteen layers of hell along with it to form an enormous dragon-shaped body, nearly three thousand meters long.

Mount Agarwood collapsed, and the pieces formed into the tail and claws of a phoenix!

Finally... the Four Seasons Sky fused together to form a second head. All of these things congealed together to become what in ancient times had rebuked the Heavens... the Agarwood!

Stormy wings, dragons' heads, a body formed from the Yellow Springs, a mountain for a tail, and the Four Seasons!

When the Agarwood appeared, it let out a roar that cracked the sky and shattered the land. It was a force that could annihilate everything, sweeping out in all directions. At this moment, the black-robed Cultivator sensed an unprecedented feeling of life-and-death danger. It was a force of destruction which he could simply not bear.

His pupils constricted, and both hands rapidly flashed an incantation. Magical treasures appeared, and finally a black glow that rose up to the heavens and took on the shape of a black sun.

“If the true self of any of you appeared, I would be dead. Instead, you’ve formed the Agarwood. Well, I’ve performed my Second Severing. You can’t destroy my reincarnation. The only thing you can do is stop my first body!

“Reincarnation exists, so I will always exist. My Karma cannot be annihilated! The Deification Altar of the Heavens of Ji has my name on it! You can’t hook my Karma! I’ll be resurrected!” The black-robed Cultivator raised his head up and howled. The black sun slammed into the Agarwood, and an enormous boom rose up. Everything shattered, destroying the land, killing all of the Cultivators directly below.

Luo Chong was lucky; around the time Meng Hao had received the brand of the fifth generation Frigid Snow Patriarch, he’d gotten a bad feeling and had fled. Because of his prudent action, he and a few hundred other Cultivators who went with him were spared.

The explosion rippled out, and the Agarwood slowly vanished.

The black sun also faded. As it did, an image could be seen within of the black-robed Cultivator, which then transformed into ash. The brightly glowing light which had surrounded them slowly sank into the earth, and they were gone.

The black-robed Cultivator was nowhere to be seen.

Meng Hao wasn’t sure if he was alive or dead. Slowly, everything around him started to return to normal. An unparalleled sense of weakness washed through him. His vision started to fade and he began to collapse into unconsciousness.

Before that could happen, though, he bit the tip of his tongue, using the last scrap of borrowed energy he possessed to do something he would normally be incapable of doing... he spit out some Divine Will which then shot off in the direction of the former Dongluo City.

That was his final action before everything faded into blackness and he fell down to the ground.

Holy Snow City was still there, although it was virtually in complete ruins. There were less than three hundred Cultivators left alive, including the Four Grand Elders. All of them stood there, their faces pale, looking at Meng Hao with expressions of deep veneration.

Meng Hao couldn't see anything, but he could sense that someone was holding him. He also smelled a delicate fragrance. Within the blackness of his world, an ancient voice slowly echoed out in his mind.

“Successor, remember the Agarwood. I can project to you three times to help you avoid death.”

Meanwhile, far away from Holy Snow City, on the other side of the Black Lands, in the former Dongluo City, more than five thousand Cultivators were running and yelling.

“Have faith in the Lord Fifth, gain eternal life! When the Lord Fifth appears, who dares to cause strife!”

The more than five thousand Cultivators were dashing around the city in a circular pattern. The sight of it was quite astonishing. The ground shook as they ran, and a fog roiled around them, deep within which was what appeared to be a bright glow.

The glow bore the semblance of a sword, slowly gathering together. The glow didn't spread out, although it did emanate a frightening aura. Nearby the glow was the parrot, who looked nervous. Its wings flapped as it flew around the bright glow.

“Ah, the Immortal Execution Formation, created by none other than myself, Lord Fifth. Dammit, this spell formation never screwed Lord Fifth over nine times. That never happened!” The parrot clenched its jaw as if it had just made a difficult decision. Just as it seemed to be on the verge of charging into the bright light, the Divine Will from Meng Hao arrived.

The parrot suddenly stopped moving. It stared in shock for a moment, then let out a shriek.

“Scared me to death! Just about completely broke my concentration. So, you're in trouble, eh Meng Hao? Need me to rescue you? Alright, alright. We'll have to see what furred and feathered things you can find for me in the future. I guess I'll go save you.” With that, the parrot flapped its wings, flying up.

A roaring filled the air and the ground shook. More than five thousand Cultivators who had taken refuge in the Church of the Golden Light stared blankly up into the sky at the parrot as it spoke.

“Listen up, children! Your Patriarch Golden Light is in trouble. Let's go save him! Come come. Start running in the way I taught you. Use the steps of the Immortal Execution Formation. Three

circles to the left, three circles to the right. Shake those butts.... Go as fast as you can! Now, call it out with me....”

The Cultivators formed a long line and began running. A billowing fog sprang up that looked like dark clouds, which then whistled off into the distance.

Chapter 379: Offers

When Meng Hao woke up, he found himself staring at someone’s back.

It was a beautiful silhouette. Graceful curves accentuated beautiful shoulders. A supple waist descended into perfect roundness.

She wore a light pink blouse that Meng Hao almost didn’t notice when he looked at her.

Her hair was long and beautiful, and she emanated a delicate, youthful aroma. Suddenly, the overcast sky seemed to brighten a bit for Meng Hao.

It wasn’t that Meng Hao didn’t enjoy looking at beauty. However, as a Cultivator, the first thing he did when he opened his eyes was not gaze upon the beautiful figure in front of him; instead, he sent out his Spiritual Sense to check whether or not his belongings had been touched after he passed out.

He was surrounded by ruins. However, he could tell that he was still in Holy Snow City. Although, the city itself now consisted only of broken and shattered buildings. There was something strange about everything. A silver light covered the ground, clearly some kind of spell. However, this spell was clearly not complete; it was obviously just beginning to form.

Everything was quiet. The only thing that could be heard was the crackling which came from the bonfires in the area.

Off in the distance, he could see two of the four Grand Elders sitting there cross-legged. In addition, there were a little over a hundred Cultivators, all of them meditating, clearly exhausted.

Almost all of these people were members of the Frigid Snow Clan. There were only a few that didn’t belong to the Clan. Meng Hao remembered glancing toward the ground before passing out and seeing about three hundred people.

The other two Frigid Snow Clan Grand Elders were concentrating on the spell, and were conversing in low tones. Their expressions were anxious, and they occasionally glanced up to look at the sky.

The moment Meng Hao woke up, the four Grand Elders looked over at him. This, in turn, attracted the attention of the other surrounding Cultivators. Soon, everyone had opened their eyes and was looking at Meng Hao. The beautiful figure in front of him was, of course, Hanxue Shan, who opened her eyes from meditation to turn and look at Meng Hao.

Happiness flickered within her gaze, as well as something else, the infatuation of a young girl, and adoration.

Meng Hao took a deep breath and then slowly sat up. Hanxue Shan approached and then supported him with her arm. He felt weak, but his Cultivation base was intact. He couldn't make himself refuse her assistance.

He could see the haggard expression on her face. It was filled with suffering because of the destruction of her city, the decline of her Clan, confusion regarding the future, helplessness, and concern for him.

All of that would not vanish just because Meng Hao woke up.

First Elder stood and then approached Meng Hao. He looked Meng Hao over, then clasped hands and bowed deeply. "Many thanks for your actions, Grandmaster Meng. The Frigid Snow Clan will never forget your kindness."

Second Elder, the old woman, and Fourth Elder were all injured. However, they too clasped hands and bowed deeply to Meng Hao.

It wasn't just them. All of the surrounding Cultivators rose to their feet and then bowed to Meng Hao.

Everything that had happened before Meng Hao passed out had been deeply imprinted onto their hearts. Without Meng Hao, they would be dead, transformed into a sea of blood.

Meng Hao had single-handedly saved everyone present here, and the Frigid Snow Clan itself.

Their bows to him were filled with complete and utter sincerity.

He nodded but didn't say anything. It was appropriate to accept their bows but would have been somewhat pugnacious to comment. After a moment passed, Meng Hao slowly asked, "How many days was I unconscious?"

"Seven days." The person who answered his question was not one of the surrounding Cultivators. The voice came from behind him. It was ancient, and caused looks of veneration to appear on the faces of all the surrounding Cultivators.

Meng Hao's mind suddenly trembled. He turned to see an old man approaching from within the ruins, accompanied by a dozen or so Frigid Snow Clan members. He was wizened, as if he had just crawled out from the grave. His clothing was simple, and his Cultivation base was not high. However, as he approached, it felt as if a tempest were swirling around the area.

"Senior..." said Meng Hao, feeling shocked. At a glance, he could tell that this was the sixth generation Frigid Snow Clan Patriarch, Spirit Severing Cultivator Hanxue Bao. For this man to suddenly appear was quite a shock. Logically speaking, he should have perished.

He approached Meng Hao, and, seeing the serious look on his face, explained: "I've dispersed all my skills, and given up on trying to break through. I'm no longer of Spirit Severing. When you absorbed my legacy, I let go of the life force of the Thorn Rampart in exchange for ten years of longevity. In ten years, I will perish." The surrounding Cultivators, including the four Grand Elders, concealed the pain in their expressions, showing only respect.

"You did a good job," said Hanxue Bao, sitting down in front of Meng Hao. An affable smile covered his face. "I think perhaps there is only one person on South Heaven in the entire Core Formation stage that could possibly accept all six legacies of our Clan. Obviously, that person is you."

Meng Hao's heart filled with gratitude. As of now, he understood that this man truly had no aspirations of possessing him. Meng Hao really had stumbled onto an incredible bit of good fortune.

He was about to speak when Hanxue Bao shook his head, cutting him off. Gazing at Meng Hao sincerely, he said, "If you join our Frigid Snow Clan, under my authority, you will be given Hanxue Shan as your beloved."

Meng Hao gaped. Off to the side, Hanxue Shan's face went red, and she bowed her head to cover up her embarrassment.

“Don't worry, I won't interfere with your love life. She can be one of many beloved. Become a member of the Frigid Snow Clan, and you will be the Patriarch of this generation!” Hanxue Bao's eyes glowed with an air of solemnity.

“I will make it worth it for you to join, by offering you three blessings.

“I've dispersed my skills, and am no longer of the Spirit Severing stage. However, I have a lifetime of enlightenment. With my aid, you will have an eighty percent chance of reaching the Spirit Severing stage within five hundred years! That is the first blessing I will give you!

“The blood of the Frigid Snow Clan contains another secret Grand Dragoner technique. It's more powerful than any other magic you have ever acquired. By passing it on to you, all living creatures will be powerless to do anything but sleep in front of you. That is the second blessing!

“Third, although the Frigid Snow Clan is currently in decline, our Dao Reserve is still here. We cannot remain in this location, so we will travel to the Southern Domain. Long ago, I was friends with Grandmaster Pill Demon from the Violet Fate Sect. We will move our Clan into the Violet Fate Sect.

“Come with us from the Black Lands to the Southern Domain. My reputation can earn the patronage of Grandmaster Pill Demon. You have proved that your Dao of alchemy is strong. If I request it, Grandmaster Pill Demon will surely give me face and accept you as an apprentice.”

Hanxue Bao's voice echoed into Meng Hao's ears. He sat there thinking, smiling to himself wryly. Other than the Spirit Severing enlightenment, nothing that had been offered him was very appealing. The secret Dragoner technique was surely powerful, but Meng Hao already possessed three great secret techniques. As for being Grandmaster Pill Demon's apprentice, well it wasn't that the idea of it was inherently unappealing. However, Meng Hao, even though he'd long since left the Violet Fate Sect, still considered Grandmaster Pill Demon to be his Master.

He had kowtowed three times to become an apprentice, and that first kowtow lasted for a lifetime.

Chapter 380: Eyeless Larva!

“You don’t agree?” asked Hanxue Bao, gazing at Meng Hao. His expression was gradually fading into one of disappointment. Based on his experiences throughout the years, he was able to see the slight hesitation visible in Meng Hao’s otherwise calm expression.

He sighed inwardly and then shook his head, laughing slightly.

“Senior...” said Meng Hao, feeling a bit guilty. He could sense the sincerity in Hanxue Bao, and even though it was all for the sake of his own Clan, Meng Hao knew that he truly was offering a new path to tread.

Unfortunately, Meng Hao couldn’t go back to the Southern Domain for now.

Hanxue Shan’s face was now pale white. She held her head up high and forced a smile onto her face, but her mood couldn’t be lower. She stood and curtsied to Meng Hao, then walked off into the distance, her head hanging. It seemed she couldn’t stay behind for fear of crying from the grief she felt.

“Well, never mind,” said Hanxue Bao, not wanting to force Meng Hao to explain. “I put you in an awkward position just now. You have your own path, and don’t need me to arrange things for you. That’s great.” He stood, eyeing the spell that was forming on the ground.

“The Frigid Snow Clan has a total of seven Nascent Soul Elders. You’ve met four already. The other three went to the Southern Domain last year, where they’ve been preparing a teleportation spell. Unfortunately, the spell has to penetrate the Black Lands Palace’s blockade spell, making the teleportation to the Southern Domain a bit difficult.

“It is only just recently that the teleportation spell was completed on their side. Within about five days, we should be able to activate it. Once that happens, we will leave this place.” Hanxue Bao slapped his bag of holding. Suddenly, everything got very cold, and snowflakes appeared in the air to drift down. Meng Hao’s eyes filled with a serious look as he looked at the object in Hanxue Bao’s hand.

There, in his palm, was a blue silkworm, about the size of his pinky finger. It was translucent, like crystal, and glowed with a blue light. The coldness in the area was emanating out from this very larva.

Meng Hao’s breathing immediately grew heavy.

“You were promised a Frigid Snow Larva. Given the Cultivation bases of the others, they would need half a year to complete it. But time is running out, so I will give you mine! This is a mutated Frigid Snow Larva, with a much more vigorous life force than an ordinary larva. Throughout all the years, our Frigid Snow Clan only ever produced six mutant Frigid Snow Larvae. This is the seventh.

“Because of its mutation, this type of Frigid Snow Larva can bond two masters. Feed it your blood, and it will become yours.” He waved his hand, and a blue light shot toward Meng Hao to hover in front of him. He took a deep breath as he gazed at the blue Frigid Snow Larva floating there before him. Then, he bit the tip of a finger and squeezed a drop of blood out onto the larva.

The instant the drop of blood vanished, Meng Hao could sense a connection between him and the Frigid Snow Larva. The larva’s body glittered as it descended slowly onto his hand. An immense coldness emanated out from it. It felt like he was holding a piece of freezing ice.

Meng Hao took a deep breath as he bowed deeply to Hanxue Bao. His entire purpose for coming to this place was now complete. He felt incredibly excited. Now the only thing he had left to do was transform the Frigid Snow Larva into an Eyeless Larva.

Once it became an Eyeless Larva, the larva could never be destroyed, and its thread could not be broken. The thread could not be broken, nor could the larva be destroyed! A miraculous bug like that was a remarkable treasure of Heaven and Earth, one of his most powerful methods for dealing with Heavenly Tribulation.

“Senior, I will be going into secluded meditation,” said Meng Hao, pushing down the excitement which bubbled up in his heart. He bowed again, then turned to walk off. He didn’t go too far, but rather climbed deep into a half-collapsed building nearby.

Hanxue Bao watched him walk off and sighed again in his heart. He really had taken a liking to Meng Hao, but he knew that he had his own plans and aspirations. Hanxue Bao then looked over toward Hanxue Shan and sighed yet again.

Within a room in the collapsed house, Meng Hao sat cross-legged, breathing deeply. He performed an incantation and then pointed toward the ground, causing Demonic Qi to noiselessly begin to gather. It circulated around him, forming a barrier. Although he was on good terms with the Frigid Snow Clan right now, he still needed to take measures to protect himself.

This was especially true considering that he had just turned down their offer. Covered by the Demonic Qi, Meng Hao produced some medicinal pills, then closed his eyes and began to meditate. After a few hours passed, he opened his eyes again, and they shone brightly. His body was now completely recovered from its weak state. His Spiritual Sense had grown, and his Cultivation base had made significant progress.

Meng Hao was confident that after he transcended the Heavenly Tribulation, he would pass directly into the late Core Formation stage.

With his preparations complete, Meng Hao took out the Frigid Snow Larva. Then, he took out a Mulberry Thunderclap Leaf and placed it in front of the larva. As soon as the leaf appeared, a tremor ran through the Frigid Snow Larva. It appeared to find the leaf incredibly enticing. In the blink of an eye, lightning surrounded the leaf, and it was completely consumed by the Frigid Snow Larva.

Meng Hao's eyes gleamed as he produced the copper mirror and began to duplicate more Mulberry Thunderclap Leaves. Thankfully, he had quite a collection of Spirit Stones in his bag of holding. Although he hated to see them disappear as the price of duplication, the thought of acquiring the Eyeless Larva caused him to do so without hesitation.

One leaf, two leaves, one hundred leaves.... Meng Hao's eyes began to grow wide with disbelief that this tiny little Frigid Snow Larva could consume so many Mulberry Thunderclap Leaves. It didn't seem to show any signs whatsoever of stopping. It appeared capable of eating all of the Mulberry Thunderclap Leaves in existence.

Meng Hao's heart began to sink a little bit. His information about the larva came from the Black Lands Cultivator he had met in the Southern Domain. After much analysis, he had taken most of the man's words to be true. Now, however, he was starting to feel a bit of skepticism.

He muttered to himself, his eyes glittering as he decided to go all out. He used all the Spirit Stones available in his bag of holding to continue to duplicate Mulberry Thunderclap Leaves to feed the Frigid Snow Larva.

Time passed by. Soon, it was a day later. By afternoon, Meng Hao's eyes were bloodshot as he continued to feed one leaf after another to the Frigid Snow Larva. From what he could tell, he had fed enough Mulberry Thunderclap Leaves to create a mountain forest.

And yet, the Frigid Snow Larva showed no signs of being full. However, it did appear to be changing! It was still blue, but now had several white circles on its surface!

The circles looked something like eyes, and if you looked at them, it seemed as if they had the power to suck in your mind. By this point in Meng Hao's process of feeding the larva, it had accumulated five such circles on its body.

Meng Hao looked at his bag of holding, and his heart filled with pain. He had acquired quite a lot of Spirit Stones after becoming Patriarch Golden Light. However, as of now, they were half gone. Gritting his teeth, Meng Hao continued to feed the Frigid Snow Larva.

Leaf, after leaf, after leaf....

By morning of the third day, Meng Hao's eyes were completely filled with veins of blood. The Frigid Snow Larva in his hand now had eight circles. By the time the ninth appeared, Meng Hao's bag of holding would be virtually devoid of Spirit Stones.

Grief filled his face. A few days ago he'd had a vast accumulation of Spirit Stones that left him confident of being able to purchase whatever he wanted, wherever he was.

Now, he had the exact opposite feeling.

"If I can't create the Eyeless Larva...." Meng Hao clenched his fists and stopped thinking about the matter. He decided to risk it all. Having gone this far, he might as well continue on to the very end.

By night of the third day, Meng Hao's bag of holding was completely empty. As the Frigid Snow Larva consumed the very last Mulberry Thunder Leaf, a ninth circle finally appeared, causing Meng Hao to gape.

"Dammit, I'm out of Spirit Stones, and this thing still hasn't changed yet? Isn't it supposed to transform?" He stared in shock at the Frigid Snow Larva, which lay on his palm, unmoving. Within his mind, Meng Hao could sense that it wanted to continue to eat. Meng Hao was on the verge of collapsing.

"My millions of Spirit Stones...." As he looked down into his bag of holding, he realized that the only thing he had left were the ultra high-grade Spirit Stones. They were his final assets, life-saving objects that he could use at a critical moment to absorb spiritual energy.

He went back and forth about it for the time it takes an incense stick to burn. It seemed the Frigid Snow Larva realized there was no food left. It ceased transmitting its desire to eat and began to create silk.

Meng Hao watched as the Frigid Snow Larva continued to spit out the silk, which looked like snow. This was not the legendary silk of the Eyeless Larva. It took only a moment for the larva to completely cover itself. Soon, it had become a cocoon about the size of the fist of an infant.

Meng Hao frowned. Something seemed strange. After probing with his Spiritual Sense, his heart began to pound. He continued to examine it for a moment, then began to pant.

“I can sense another aura,” he said, his eyes gleaming. “It’s not the Frigid Snow Larva, it’s much, much more powerful.... There’s not even a way to compare the two!” He closed his eyes to think for a moment, and when they opened again, he was smiling.

“Two days, and it will emerge from the cocoon!” He put the precious cocoon away and dispelled the Demonic Qi in the area. It was currently late at night, and bright moonlight illuminated the land. Meng Hao took a deep breath as he walked out of his secluded meditation area.

People from the Frigid Snow Clan who were standing guard immediately saw Meng Hao. They clasped hands and bowed, faces filled with veneration.

These recent days had been very difficult for the Frigid Snow Clan. They weren’t sure when Cultivators from the Black Lands Palace would arrive. If they invaded a second time, it would be very difficult to fight back, considering the current situation of the Frigid Snow Clan. All they could do was maintain their vigilance and wait for the spell to activate.

Snowflakes danced about in the moonlight. It had been snowing for two days, and the ground was now covered with a thick layer of snow. Even though it was late at night, the moonlight reflected off of the white snow, making everything look silver.

Meng Hao breathed in the frigid air as his gaze flitted about. Finally, his gaze came to rest on the back of a familiar figure off in the distance.

It was Hanxue Shan. She sat atop a pile of rubble, looking off into the sky. It was impossible to tell what she was thinking.

Looking at her, Meng Hao sighed inwardly. Because of the matter of the Frigid Snow Larva, he had completely forgotten about how disappointed this young girl had looked after having been rejected by him.

Murmuring to himself, Meng Hao thought about the soft arms which had embraced him before he passed out earlier. He also recalled how the concern in her eyes had been replaced by joy when he regained consciousness. The falling snow brushed against his face as he walked toward her. She looked back. Amidst the snow and the moonlight, her pretty face looked even more beautiful. Tears could be seen in the corners of her eyes. She looked at Meng Hao, then bit her lip and turned her head away.

Meng Hao stood behind her for a moment, then cleared his throat.

“Hey, I heard you really admire Grandmaster Pill Cauldron. Would you like me to help introduce you to him?”