

## The Heavens 451

### Chapter 451: Western Desert Apocalypse!!

There was a legend in the great lands of the Western Desert, the source of which was impossible to determine. In any case, over the years, this legend came to exist in the minds of all Tribes in the Western Desert. It was even recorded in the ancient records of the Tribes and passed down from generation to generation.

But then, even more time passed. Eventually, people began to forget about the legend. It wasn't that there was no knowledge about it at all, just, most people didn't remember...

According to the legend, at a time many, many years in the past, the Western Desert was not a continent, but rather, a sea. The sea existed for thirty thousand years before vanishing to reveal the continent beneath. During that time, the Western Desert... was not called the Western Desert, but rather a different name. The Western Sea.

This sea was not the same color as the Milky Way Sea. Rather, it was violet, and its waters had the power to cause all life to become extinct. It even cut off spiritual energy, making the area a prohibited zone for living things.

There was an area of division between the Milky Way Sea and this Sea, as if they intentionally did not want to mix.

According to the legend, the Western Sea was not completely without any land mass. There was one area with land, a part that was connected to the Southern Domain. That was none other than... the Black Lands.

In terms of elevation, the Black Lands were relatively high. Such high elevation was something that Cultivators wouldn't pay too much attention to. However, the Black Lands were actually the highest place in the entire continent, including the Western Desert and the Southern Domain. It was so high that even after the Western Desert became a sea... it still existed.

The legend said that long before the Western Desert, and even before the Western Sea, the entire land was filled with abundant resources and dense spiritual energy. However, it eventually experienced a fall of violet rain that lasted many years. The rainwater did not soak into the earth, but rather began to collect on its surface.

Gradually the waters turned into streams, which then formed lakes, and eventually turned into a sea.

The violet rain had the power to destroy the life force of any living thing it touched, and could even cut off spiritual energy. All spell formations ceased to function, and it became difficult for Cultivators to survive there. Everything was plunged into destruction.

Countless varieties of vegetation died, and an innumerable amount of animals became nothing more than skeletons. Multitudinous life forms... reached the end of their path. This was a catastrophe that affected the lives of all Tribes in the Western Desert, an Apocalypse of Heaven and Earth!

This was the legend that existed within each and every Tribe.

Right now, the body of the Five Poisons Tribe High Priest was trembling, and his face was pale. He slowly reached his hand out to catch some violet raindrops. He stared blankly; it felt as if this rain was causing his Cultivation base to slowly fade away.

He was now shaking, and his eyes filled with dread. He looked down as the rainwater collected on the ground, mixing together with the blood. There were some places in which cracks existed in the ground where the water drained into. However... most of the water appeared to be just floating there, mixing with the blood.

The High Priest's face was completely ashen, and he was panting.

"This is... this is impossible...." he murmured. There were some of the Five Poison Tribe's Nascent Soul Cultivators who also seemed to be reaching the same conclusion as the High Priest. Their faces began to flicker as they looked at the violet rain.

Zhao Youlan suddenly staggered backward a few steps, staring blankly at the rain. Clearly, she too had just come to a certain realization.

At the same time, inside the Thorn Rampart, the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather was staring at the rain in stupefaction. His face completely fell as a despair filled him even that was even more terrible than that which could be caused by the destruction of his Tribe.

"Apocalypse...."

“The Western Desert Apocalypse...”

“According to the legends, an Apocalypse will come that will exterminate all life and change the Western Desert into the Western Sea!!”

The Five Poisons Tribe High Priest backed up a few steps. At that moment, the war, the spot in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins, the spoils... none of them were important.

Without hesitation, he began to activate the teleportation spell again as a means to test whether or not the stories about the violet rain were true. Before, the teleportation spell had worked, but now... no matter what he tried, he couldn't get it to work. It was as if something were blocking its power, making it completely useless.

The sight of this turned into a roaring sound that filled the minds of the Five Poisons Tribe High Priest.

“Migrate. The Tribe must migrate!” he murmured to himself. “The Western Desert North is the lowest place in the whole Western Desert. This is the first place where the sea will rise up! The Tribe must migrate, migrate to south. We... must go to the Black Lands near the Southern Domain!!” The rain continued to grow heavier. Already, the Cultivators were beginning to sense that the spiritual energy of Heaven and Earth was becoming thinner. This immediately caused the faces of the Five Poisons Tribe members to fall.

“The Black Lands... the Black Lands!! Now I understand!” A tremor ran through the High Priest; his eyes went wide and filled with even more urgency. “It makes sense. All those years ago, the three great Tribes with Spirit Severing Patriarchs made an alliance and invaded the Black Lands. They even joined forces with some of the powers in the Black Lands.

“They were careful not to offend the Southern Domain in their war! After the war, many of the other Tribes connected to them also migrated to the Black Lands!

“They knew! They carved out an area for themselves in the Black Lands, making it even easier to have dealings with the Southern Domain. Or, maybe they had some other purposes.

“In any case, it all makes sense now!”

The High Priest's panting grew even more intense as he murmured to himself.

“Those three enormous great Tribes knew all along that the Apocalypse was coming. They occupied the Black Lands. Now, anyone who wants to go to the Black Lands will only be able to do so with their approval!!

“Without spilling a drop of blood, they wrested control over all the powers in the Western Desert! They will be able to control the fate of thousands of Tribes during the Apocalypse!”

The High Priest’s eyes filled with anxiety.

“The Black Lands is small. There’s no way it can hold all of the Tribes of the Western Desert. But any who don’t go there... will be exterminated without a doubt. The Five Poisons Tribe is in the north. So far away...”

He suddenly raised his voice loudly. “All Five Poisons Tribe members, hear my orders. We must leave this place immediately. Whatever the cost, employ the greatest speed possible to return to the Tribe!” This was a critical moment in which every bit of time was important. The war with the broken remnants of the Crow Divinity Tribes was now inconsequential. In fact, now he felt regret over having gone to war in the first place!

The members of the Five Poisons Tribe heard his words and gaped in astonishment. However, based on the ashen expressions of the various Elders, they had guessed that something was going on. Without hesitation, they followed orders and flew up into the air.

Soon, not a single member of the Five Poisons Tribe was fighting. Nearly twenty thousand Cultivators and tens of thousands of neo-demons all roared through the air to disappear off in the distance. Zhao Youlan was amongst them. However, as she flew off, she looked back at the Crow Divinity Tribes and the protective Thorn Rampart, and her eyes filled with a sharp glow.

“You will pay tenfold for severing my arm!” she thought. Then she turned and followed the rest of the Five Poisons Tribe members off into the distance.

After the Five Poisons Tribe left, the Thorn Rampart slowly began to retract and disappear. Meng Hao rose up from his cross-legged position and looked off at the horizon. Behind him, the more than two thousand surviving Tribe members let out cries of relief at their sudden new lease on life.

However, their happiness could not dispel the shadow that lingered over Meng Hao's heart. Next to him, the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather had a bitter look on his face.

"Is it true?" said Meng Hao slowly.

"For the Five Poisons Tribe to make such a hasty exit indicates that the legendary Apocalypse is mostly likely coming. Spell formations will become inoperable and the spiritual energy of Heaven and Earth will be extinguished. All life will be destroyed.... The only hope....

"The only hope is to migrate to the south," said the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather, his voice low. "Head south and keep going all the way to the Black Lands."

"The Black Lands...." Meng Hao's body suddenly shook. Like the Five Poisons Tribe High Priest, Meng Hao also thought of the war that the Western Desert had participated in back in the Black Lands. He thought about the Western Desert Tribes he'd seen entering the Black Lands during his departure.

"So, this is the reason for all of it!" he thought. Finally, he understood something that for so long had been a point of confusion.

This was why war had broken out in the Black Lands. This was why the Western Desert had participated with such gusto. And this was why the Southern Domain did nothing to stop it. They allowed the Western Desert to occupy the Black Lands. A great Apocalypse of Heaven and Earth was coming. If the Southern Domain attempted to obstruct the Western Desert, a full scale war would have broken out. That was something the Southern Domain wouldn't want.

Meng Hao looked up at the increasingly heavy rain. A gleam suddenly appeared in his eyes.

"The spiritual energy of Heaven and Earth is being extinguished. All living things will be destroyed. The continent will turn into a sea.... For me, it's not that bad. After the experience of using the East Pill Everburning Flame to form my Fire-type totem tattoo, I know... that all things in Heaven and Earth exist on the path of the five elements, and have the potential to give enlightenment.

"What better type of water could you use than a sea!? And what better sea could there be than one referred to as the Western Desert Apocalypse!?"

“As for the spiritual energy of Heaven and Earth being extinguished... with the exception of the ultra high-grade Spirit Stones, I’ve already gone for many years without absorbing it. That’s why I’ve supported myself by consuming medicinal pills. Every time I attack, I must very carefully control the spiritual energy I use. Furthermore, I’ve constantly been improving my pill concocting skills.

“For the same reason, I was always inclined toward being a Dragoneer. Only Dragoneers can grow strong without wasting very much spiritual power!

“The main thing I need to be careful of is that the rain can exterminate life force.... In any case, I am definitely the most suitable person to exist within the Western Desert Apocalypse!” Meng Hao’s eyes glittered for a moment. However, he then looked at the rejoicing members of the Five Tribes. They didn’t know about this Apocalypse. Seeing the happiness of the children caused him to think for a long moment.

“Golden Crow,” he said, closing his eyes. “I have accepted your legacy. Your Tribe calls me their Sacred Ancient, and I am connected to them through totems. Is this... is this the protection you wish me to give them...?”

As of this moment, all sky and land of the Western Desert North regions was filled with violet-colored rain. No sun could be seen in the sky, and everything was dark. This was a dusk that would last a very, very long time....

Down on the ground, the water slowly began to pool up. More and more puddles could be seen.

It wasn’t just in the North region of the Western Desert. In the East, West and South, it was just the same. Violet rain began to fall, and as it did, more and more cries of alarm could be heard. Hearts shook.

The Western Desert Apocalypse was nigh!

Chapter 452: Hope

Migration.

Throughout the lands of the Western Desert, it took only a short period of time for a multitude of Tribes to all reach the same bitter decision!

To make such a decision was easier said than done. However, as far as the Crow Divinity Tribes were concerned, migrating... was the same as death!

Throughout the Western Desert, teleportation spells rapidly ceased to function. This was especially true of the low-lying Western Desert North, where vast amounts of violet rainwater was collecting. One could easily imagine how the rain which fell in the West, South and East would flow down and accumulate within the North.

The Western Desert North was definitely the first place that the sea would begin to rise!

Had the five Crow Divinity Tribes not experienced the war with the Five Poisons Tribe, then they would surely have been powerful enough to migrate. Unfortunately... even including all the young children and elderly Tribe members, their total population was now around two thousand.

Considering that they used to have more than ten thousand Tribe members, their overall power had been critically reduced. As of this moment, they only counted as a small Tribe when compared to the rest of the Western Desert.

Furthermore... because teleportation portals were no longer functional, and more than half of the Tribe members were ordinary people with no Cultivation bases, there was no way for the Tribe to fly. They would be forced to travel on foot.

The Greatfather stood next to Meng Hao, his hair gray and his expression one of exhaustion. He smiled bitterly and said, "We can't travel on foot to the Black Lands... We're simply too far away. Even a Nascent Soul Cultivator who flew continuously without sleep or rest would need at least ten years to get there. If we went on foot... it would take more than a thousand. More than a thousand years to migrate. Would the Crow Divinity Tribes even still be around by that time?"

He looked even older than he had before. He turned his head back to look at the Tribe members behind him who were erecting wooden shelters, and continued, "The violet rain will continuously extinguish the spiritual energy. Eventually we would all become mortals. The will of extermination in the rain would corrode our bodies, weakening us to the point of death.

"That's not even to mention what the rain would do to the children and the other ordinary Tribe members. They... would be the first to die. After that... the deaths would only continue to increase. The entire Tribe would eventually be wiped out during the course of the migration.

“In addition, virtually all of the other Tribes in the Western Desert will be migrating at the same time. Because of food, resources and other reasons, the road will be filled with chaotic battles! Tribes will be constantly contending with each other in order to ensure their own existence. Right now, the Crow Divinity Tribes... simply could not survive such an ordeal.

“Also, even if we managed to travel for more than a thousand years, even if by some fluke we weren’t swallowed up by some other Tribe, then... once we got to the Black Lands... what would qualify us to enter? There is limited space in there. How could we get in?”

“How could we possibly distinguish ourselves... amongst so many great Tribes and mid-sized Tribes. With so many big shot Tribes controlling the Black Lands, how could we get them to accept us?”

Meng Hao stood there silently. He had already seen some of the children who were physically weak to begin with growing even weaker after being touched by the rainwater. This violet rain was going to exterminate everything.

“It is because of all of this, exalted Sacred Ancient, that I urge you... to leave!” The Greatfather’s voice was so decisive that it could sever nails and chop iron. “Leave this place and leave the Crow Divinity Tribes. Sacred Ancient, given your Cultivation base and your status as a Grand Dragoner, any Tribe would be happy to accept you during this critical time and bring you with them to the Black Lands.

“Exalted Sacred Ancient, this is your only hope. As for us...” The Greatfather once again looked back at the Five Tribes members building huts to shelter themselves from the rainwater. Their eyes were filled with sorrow and grief.

“We will not leave our homeland. If we are doomed to be exterminated, then we will die together and be buried here with our forefathers and fellow Tribe members. At least this way, maybe some of those children will have a chance to grow up.” The Greatfather looked even older now, as if his life force were slowly flowing away.

Meng Hao continued to stand there quietly, unsure of what to say. He looked over his shoulder at the silent Five Tribes members. Wu Chen was there, as was Wu Ling. There were sleeping children, who occasionally called out for their mothers. Tears were being shed. There were elderly ones longing for loved ones. As Meng Hao looked at them all, he realized that there were many, many familiar faces.

Right now, he had only two choices. Go... or stay!



If he did leave, then he was essentially the most likely person to be able to survive within the violet rain, considering all of his special abilities.

But if he stayed....

Meng Hao let out a soft sigh. He said nothing, but rather, turned and walked over to where the Tribe members were gathered. As he neared, they all looked toward him, eyes hot with zeal. With a slight smile, Meng Hao continued around to the back of the mountain, and his courtyard.

Here, the rain was falling heavily. He sat down beneath the eaves, surrounded by his neo-demon horde. Big Hairy lay on the ground next to him, letting out light yips. He was wounded, but not fatally.

Meng Hao now had only six thousand neo-demons left in his horde. All were wounded, and were currently healing naturally.

Gu La braved the rainwater to bustle about, giving them food and treating some of their minor injuries. The sky above was dim, and the rain... only continued to fall harder and harder.

The vast sky and land gradually transformed into a depression that weighed down on the hearts of both Meng Hao and the Crow Divinity Tribe members.

“Perhaps I should wait for the parrot to return... and then leave. Leaving really is the best decision. However....” He lapsed into silence again. During his entire time in the Western Desert, he had lived amongst the five Crow Divinity Tribes. He had achieved his goals, and yet, the ones to pay the price had been them.

Objectively speaking, everything that was happening was not Meng Hao’s fault. However, when it came to his heart, Meng Hao found it hard shake off the deep emotions that he felt.

The Crow Soldier Greatfather’s words made sense. The five Crow Divinity Tribes had no ability to migrate, and even if they did... they would never be able to enter the Black Lands.

When he thought of the Black Lands, Meng Hao recalled the war he had seen there, and the Western Desert Cultivators who had fought in them.

“What an incredible plan,” Meng Hao thought, his eyes flashing. “Because of this Apocalypse, the eyes of the entire Western Desert will be focused on the Black Lands. It seems that the time will soon come for those great Tribes who control the Black Lands... to bare their fangs.”

Time passed by slowly. Two months were gone, and the violet rain never ceased to fall. It only grew harder. Meng Hao could no longer stay behind the mountain, because... it had already turned into a small stream as deep as one's knees.

The five Crow Divinity Tribes had moved to the top of the mountain peak. There, they built huts to shelter themselves from the rain. More than two thousand people lived their lives silently inside these huts.

Already, there were Tribe members who were visibly weakening....

Meng Hao sat cross-legged on the mountain peak, looking at the mountains off in the distance. They had once been green and verdant, but now they were a deathly dark gray. All of the vegetation had withered up and died.

Every day, it was possible to see neo-demons running or flying away from within the deep mountains. It wasn't just Cultivators who were migrating during this Apocalypse, but neo-demons as well.

The land in many areas around had already turned violet. Streams flowed together to form rivers. It was easy to imagine how, after some bit of time passed, the rivers would merge together to form lakes. Eventually, the lakes would turn into... a sea.

“If I can't take you with me,” said Meng Hao, “then I will stay with you here. We will await death together. I will not allow the violet rain to bury you. The tombstone of the five Crow Divinity Tribes should have all of your names carved on its surface.” Meng Hao felt deeply melancholy, but he really could not think of any other options. The five Crow Divinity Tribes really had no hope to hold in front of them anymore.

The Black Lands might count as hope. However, it was an intangible hope, a stagnant hope. Besides, the path to the Black Lands would be rife with countless other Tribes all charging toward the same destination. The five Crow Divinity Tribes would have much difficulty fighting for a place amongst all those other Tribes.

“Maybe there is some other hope to be had!” murmured Meng Hao, lifting his head up to look at the violet rain.

More time passed. A month later, hope suddenly appeared one day.... It appeared, not just for Meng Hao, but for all the members of the five Crow Divinity Tribes.

That hope came in the form of a voice!

The voice echoed out throughout the entire Western Desert, from North to South, East to West. It was impossible to say if it was a magical technique or divine ability, nor was it possible to determine the profundity of the speaker’s Cultivation base. The voice was archaic and ancient as it echoed out.

“To all fellow countrymen in the Western Desert, greetings....

“We are the Heavenly Court Alliance of the Black Lands, formed by the great Heavenly Pursuit Tribe, great Wild Flame Tribe, and great Demon Butterfly Tribe. This is our first public announcement to all Cultivators in the Western Desert....”

Meng Hao looked up. The Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather suddenly opened his eyes from meditation. All of the Tribe members gazed out at the sky.

At this moment, all Tribes in the Western Desert stopped what they were doing. Some were like the great Scorching Ice Tribe, currently on the road in the midst of migration. Others were camped out, resting. Others, like the five Crow Divinity Tribes, had decided to return to the dust in their homeland. All Cultivators in the Western Desert began to tremble as they looked up to the sky.

Everyone, even the Five Poisons Tribe. Everywhere, West, East, North and South. All members of all Tribes... looked up.

“The violet rain has come, and the Western Sea Apocalypse is here. This violet rain will exterminate all life, and extinguish all spiritual energy. At the moment, roughly ninety percent of teleportation portals in the great lands of the Western Desert are not functional.

“There is only one hope for life amidst this great Apocalypse, and that is the Black Lands. Thankfully, many years ago, the Heavenly Court Alliance enacted plans to carve out a suitable place for Western Desert Tribes to survive within the Black Lands!

“Naturally, the space is limited, and not all Tribes will be permitted to enter. Furthermore, we do not have the right to decide who is most qualified to do so. Therefore... we will give all of you a chance... to find a Demon Spirit!

“According to information gleaned from the augury of the Heavenly Court Alliance, as well as details recorded in countless ancient records, we know that whenever the Western Desert turns into a sea, Heaven and Earth experience changes. Demon Spirits emerge in the great lands of the Western Desert, no more than ten of them.

“Any Tribe who appears outside of the Black Lands with a Demon Spirit, will be qualified to enter the Black Lands. We will only accept... Demon Spirits!”

The voice stopped speaking, but the sound of it continued to echo out throughout the Western Desert. The countless people who heard the voice all began to breathe heavily, and their eyes instantly grew bloodshot.

Meng Hao’s eyes began to shine brightly.

Chapter 453: Bridge of Immortality!

“Now that’s hope!” thought Meng Hao, his eyes glittering brightly. He didn’t care why this Heavenly Court Alliance in the Black Lands needed these so-called Demon Spirit. He only knew that they were required to enter the Black Lands!

Whoever could get one, would have a chance to live through this Apocalypse and evade destruction.

One could only imagine how short a period of time would pass before the Demon Spirit were surrounded, and great wars would engulf the Western Desert.

Meng Hao stood up, and then turned his head back to look at the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather. An unprecedented glow appeared in his eyes as he gazed at Meng Hao.

After they looked at each other for a moment, the Greatfather stood up and approached Meng Hao to stand at the mountain’s peak.

“I’m not sure where the Demon Spirits will appear in the great lands of the Western Desert,” said the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather, breathing heavily, “nor have I even heard the term ‘Demon Spirit’ before. However, I do know that if the words of this so-called Heavenly Court Alliance are true, then there is a place that is eighty percent or more likely to have them!

“The Realm of the Bridge Ruins!”

Meng Hao nodded, and his eyes glittered as he stood there thoughtfully for a moment.

“Except....” started the Greatfather, and then stopped. He could tell what Meng Hao was thinking. However, he knew that if he himself had reached this conclusion, then many of the other Tribes in the Western Desert would also be able to.

As such, this particular foray into the Realm of the Bridge Ruins would be fraught with even more danger than usual, danger not from that world itself, but rather, the other Cultivators who entered it.

“I’ve made my mind up already,” said Meng Hao slowly, looking at the old man. “If I can’t acquire a Demon Spirit, then I will accompany you to the end of the road, and I will carve your names onto your tombstones.

“But, if I can get a Demon Spirit, then I, Meng Hao... will lead you in migration. Regardless of whether or not the migration is successful, I will not disappoint you by leaving you!”

The Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather listened. He looked quietly over at Meng Hao, his eyes shining with an indescribable brightness. Next, he flicked his sleeve and, disregarding his own mid Nascent Soul Cultivation base, and the difference in age between himself and Meng Hao, dropped to his knee, clasped hands and bowed deeply!

“For generation after generation to come, the five Crow Divinity Tribes will never forget your kindness, Sacred Ancient. For generation after generation to come, we will offer worship to your statue. If my words are not true, let the five Crow Divinity Tribes be destroyed by fire!”

There were two other Nascent Soul Cultivators in the Tribe, as well as two whose Cultivation bases had dropped to the great circle of Core Formation. They, too, heard the words spoken by the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather.

It wasn't just them, but all of the Tribe members. They all were watching on, listening to the conversation between the two.

No one said a word. It was hard to say who did it first, but one by one, they all began to drop to their knees to kowtow. Soon, the entire Tribe was on their knees.

All the Cultivators of the Tribe, including the Core Formation and Nascent Soul Cultivators, had dropped to their knees in worship.

No one spoke a word, they simply kneeled to him. There were, in fact, no words that could express the appreciation that existed in their hearts. They could only use a kowtow, along with the glistening teardrops in their eyes, to show Meng Hao... how deeply thankful they were.

As Meng Hao looked out at them, thunder rumbled in the sky, and the violet rain continued to pitter patter down from up above.

“What Cultivators truly cultivate, is self-confidence, and even more importantly, self-awareness. I have to say that ... I, Meng Hao, do not dare to call myself a straightforward and upright person. Nor am I a gentleman, or a man of honor. But I always repay the kindnesses shown to me!” With that, Meng Hao clasped hands and bowed deeply to the members of the five Crow Divinity Tribes.

Time trickled by. Three months passed. The streams down below were already beginning to merge together to form rivers. Looking down at it all from the top of the mountain, there were already seven or eight such large rivers that could be seen.

The river water churned, lifeless. In some places a thick aura of death rose up.

The spiritual energy in the area was already very scant. The will of extermination was even more obvious. The world was becoming desolate....

Three more months went by. Of the two thousand Tribe members, there were already a hundred who were gravely weakened, and could do nothing but lay there in bed. Even their power to simply breathe seemed on the verge of disappearing.

Because of their relationship with Meng Hao, Wu Chen and Wu Ling now had a distinguished position in the Tribe. They were the new blazing suns who presided over all matters relating to the Crow Scout Tribe. They were also taken in as disciples by the two other Nascent Soul Cultivators.

After Meng Hao asked the Crow Soldier Tribe about Wu Ling's necklace, he finally understood its origin. It did not come from the Crow Divinity Holy Land. Rather it was a treasure acquired thousands of years ago from the Realm of the Bridge Ruins, back when the Crow Divinity Tribe had been at the peak of its power.

Having learned this, the Realm of the Bridge Ruins became even more mysterious in Meng Hao's mind. Meng Hao also learned something very strange from the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather. When people returned from the Realm of the Bridge Ruins, they could remember everything that happened inside. However, regarding what happened on the way there, and on the way back, no one ever remembered anything clearly. It was as if something interfered with, or even erased, those memories.

"A Resurrection Lily seed, so-called Demon Spirits, and even a legendary Bridge of Immortal Treading from ancient times.... The whole place is ruins. Regardless of what special functions might be contained within the stones that formed the Immortality Bridge, if they contain the Earth of the five elements, then I might have the fortune to obtain the Earth-type elements I need." Meng Hao's eyes shone brightly. His anticipation regarding Realm of the Bridge Ruins continued to grow even stronger.

The parrot finally returned during this time. However, it only took a few days before it went back out, full of enthusiasm. Meng Hao wasn't sure how it was amusing itself, but the violet rain didn't seem to stop it.

One afternoon, half a month later, a shocking rumbling sound filled the sky. Silver-colored lightning appeared up above, crackling with such intensity that it seemed it would rip the sky apart. All the Tribe members looked up with shock as the violet rain which had fallen for months on end... suddenly stopped!

When the rain stopped, everyone was filled with shock. Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he looked up. What he saw caused his entire body to tremble, and he began to breathe heavily.

There in the sky was a bridge!

The bridge seemed to fill the entire sky, with neither the beginning nor the end visible. Inexhaustible light shone out from the bridge; it was this light that broke up the rain. On this day, no rain fell within the Western Desert.

If you looked closely at the booming lightning, you would be able to see that it existed only within the bridge. None of it was on the outside. In fact, the lightning actually seemed like countless cracks that existed on this enormous bridge.

“The Bridge of Immortal Treading!” thought Meng Hao as he looked up at the boundless structure. Although it was actually illusory, it seemed incredibly realistic.

Countless magical symbols glittered on the surface of the bridge. Each one seemed to contain rippling power capable of exterminating even a Nascent Soul Cultivator. An incredibly archaic aura emanated out from the bridge, an aura that contained the feeling of Time itself. This aura was different from spiritual energy; it seemed more rich and full, as though even a tiny bit of it was the same as a large amount of the spiritual energy that existed in the outside world.

Meng Hao could tell that this aura far outmatched the aura of the spiritual energy of Heaven and Earth, and would shock any Cultivator who absorbed it. Even more shocking... he himself could absorb it as well!

This caused Meng Hao’s mind and heart to reel with incredible intensity. The shocking light cast by the bridge expanded out for tens of thousands of meters in all direction. It spread out over the entire sky, making it seem almost as if a curtain was opening up to reveal... a starry sky!

Meng Hao panted as he looked up at the stars. He was certain that this starry sky was the true world that existed outside of South Heaven.

It was at this moment that an indistinct figure suddenly appeared on top of the bridge. It was a woman wearing a long robe. Her features weren’t clearly distinguishable, and her body shone with a brilliant glow.

She looked down at the lands below her, then lifted up her slender hand. A strangely shaped stone appeared in her hand which seemed ordinary, lacking any special features. The woman tossed the stone out in front of her, where it floated in the air.

The Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather stood next to Meng Hao. “To step onto the bridge, seize the Immortality Bridgestone,” he said urgently. “Then, you may enter the Realm of the Bridge Ruins. To return, you must also use the same stone.”

As for how to enter and leave the bridge, Meng Hao had learned the details earlier from the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather. Meng Hao looked up into the sky with glittering eyes. He waved his right



hand, and suddenly the Thorn Rampart vine appeared. It circled around the Crow Divinity Tribes, piercing into the rocky mountainside. With it in place, the Crow Divinity Tribes would be protected in the days after Meng Hao left. No migrating Tribes would be able to raid or attack them.

Meng Hao was aware that ordinary Dragoneers were not able to enter the Realm of the Bridge Ruins. The reason for that was because neo-demons were incapable of existing there.

This point had only been revealed to him apologetically later on by the Crow Soldier Greatfather.

The instant that Meng Hao saw the Bridge of Immortal Treading, he could sense an aura that repelled neo-demons. It was as if the bridge was designed for the Immortal Ascension of Cultivators only, and not Immortal Demons. Although it had been destroyed, its primary laws still remained.

As such, Meng Hao left his neo-demon horde behind within the five Crow Divinity Tribes. He took a deep breath and then flew up into the sky. He transformed into a beam of light that shot up toward the Bridge of Immortal Treading. Below, the more than two thousand Tribe members watched him go.

Meanwhile, across the rest of the Western Desert, people flew up into the air from the other twenty or more Tribes qualified to enter the Realm of the Bridge Ruins. The representative from the Five Poisons Tribe was there too. It was none other than... Zhao Youlan.

Her right arm had been restored, and she wore a white robe. She looked incredibly beautiful as she flew up toward the Bridge of Immortal Treading.

Although it appeared as if there were only one bridge, in fact, identical bridges appeared above each and every qualified Tribe. None of the participants could see any of the others. The only thing they could see was the woman on top of the bridge, and the Immortality Bridgestone in front of her.

In different areas, different people all shot up into the sky. Meng Hao suddenly appeared directly in front of the woman. He reached out and took hold of the Immortality Bridgestone.

The instant he did, a buzzing sound filled him. It felt as if something had grabbed his body, and he was suddenly shooting forward at incredibly high speed.

Chapter 454: Demoness Zhixiang

Meng Hao wasn't the only one experiencing such a thing. The exact same thing happened to everyone from all the other Tribes. The woman in front of them did not seem to be a Cultivator, but rather, something more like a puppet. As for the bridge, it had turned into something like a flying shuttle, carrying them off to some other location.

No life force whatsoever could be detected coming from the woman. In fact, if you observed how she moved, it seemed stiff. In Meng Hao's estimation, she must not be a real person, but a puppet, another mysterious aspect of the Bridge of Immortal Treading.

As he whistled through the air, Meng Hao saw twenty or more figures appearing around him.

These figures were the representatives from the other qualified Tribes. However, because of the incredible speed with which they were moving, their features could not be seen clearly.

The world flashed by as they shot through the air and clouds. The speed with which they moved was incredible. Soon, Meng Hao couldn't even breathe. His mind was spinning as he looked down at the lands beneath them. They rapidly shrank, until the Crow Divinity Tribes were only a small dot.

Soon, he could see about half of the entire Western Desert!

Such indescribable speed filled Meng Hao with a sense of grave danger. He had the feeling that if he wasn't able to keep a firm grip on the Immortality Bridgestone, his body would be crushed into smithereens.

Even as this thought entered his mind, he saw a nearby figure suddenly lose contact with the Immortality Bridgestone. Instantly, a fountain of blood appeared. There wasn't even time for a bloodcurdling scream. Death came in an instant.

This caused Meng Hao's mind to tremble. He kept a tight grip on his Immortality Bridgestone, his eyes glowing brightly.

The temperature was dropping rapidly. The coldness stabbed into his bones; were these people not Cultivators, they would barely even be able to move their bodies at this point.

By now, it wasn't just Meng Hao that was looking at the scene down below. Everyone was gazing at the lands beneath them. By now, Meng Hao could see all of the Western Desert, plus the Black Lands and even the Southern Domain. He was also able to see the Milky Way Sea!

There were a multitude of islands on the Milky Way Sea, but Meng Hao's gaze happened to come to rest on one particular island. By now, it was only a small dot, but Meng Hao was shocked to realize with a certainty that this island was none other than the very unreliable Patriarch Reliance!

His gaze flickered back to the Southern Domain, and the region of the Violet Fate Sect. Although he couldn't see the Violet Fate Sect clearly, his eyes were fixed on that particular area.

The Southern Domain continued to grow smaller and smaller. Meng Hao was now able to see that in addition to the Southern Domain and the Western Desert, there was another continent!

As soon as he laid eyes on it, his heart trembled. A host of indescribable thoughts filled his mind, to the point where he almost forgot to keep a firm grip on the Immortality Bridgestone. He could only stare blankly.

He was looking at... the Eastern Lands!

"So, at long last... I get to look at the Eastern Lands," he murmured inwardly. That had always been his dream as a child, and his dream when taking the imperial examinations. In fact, it was still his dream.

The Eastern Lands, the Great Tang!

He thought about his father and mother who had gone missing that day, and he thought about the violet wind. He also recalled the stories his mother had told him about the Eastern Lands, and the legends of the Great Tang.

"Dad, mom... is that where you are...?" He watched the Eastern Lands grow smaller and smaller until the entire continent looked like a small arc-like shape. It was at this point that suddenly a booming sound filled his body, and he felt as if he had just slammed into an invisible wall. The intensity of the blow caused his mouth to fill with blood. Instead of coughing it out, however, he swallowed it back down.

His vision grew blurry as everything around him became unclear. It was impossible to even send out Spiritual Sense. Everything was violently suppressed. The only thing he could do was hold on tightly to the Immortality Bridgestone and not allow his grip to loosen in the slightest.

This process in which everything grew blurry lasted for an indeterminable period of time. Eventually, a roaring sound began to echo out, and Meng Hao coughed up some blood. Gradually, the blurriness faded away. When Meng Hao's vision returned to normal, all he could do was gape.

The blood he had just coughed up floating in front of him, and was speeding along with him.

Everything around him was black, blackness dotted with countless stars. The starlight was resplendent, shining out within the pitch black, allowing Meng Hao to see something far off in the distance.

He saw... a bridge!

A ruined bridge!

It was immeasurably large, and throbbed with an ancient will. It was as if it contained countless years of time. The bridge was made of stone, and spread out into vast depths of the blackness and the stars, making it impossible to see where it ended.

The bridge was not complete, but rather, had long since been reduced to countless chunks of rubble. The chunks of rubble had not been scattered about, though. Instead, they retained the original shape of the structure, making the bridge seem almost like a complete one if you looked at it from a distance.

The closer one came, however, the more easy it was to see the gaps between the various chunks. The gaps looked small, but upon nearing, it became clear that they were actually incredibly wide.

Countless fragments of dust drifted about in the gaps between the various chunks. They glowed brightly, causing the entire bridge itself to also glow.

"The Bridge of Immortal Treading...." murmured Meng Hao inwardly. Even as he neared the bridge, something shocking suddenly neared his field of vision.

Eight dark, blurry figures suddenly appeared up ahead, surrounding the puppet-like woman. As soon as they did, their Cultivation bases began to emanate ripples. The ripples far exceeded anything that Meng Hao could ever have imagined, and gave him the same feeling he'd gotten from the Immortal who had fallen out of the Heavens that year.

These eight figures were Immortals!

As these eight Immortals appeared up ahead, surrounding the woman, they all began to attack. Everything around them trembled as a blinding light appeared, filled with an indescribable feeling of extermination.

Meng Hao had originally assumed that the stiff woman who did not seem to be a Cultivator wouldn't even move. However, it was at this point that countless ripples suddenly emanated off of her body, spreading out to slam into the divine abilities of the other eight. As a booming sound echoed out, Meng Hao and all the other Cultivators who were holding stones in their hands, coughed up blood. Although they couldn't see each other clearly, it was possible to sense the shock and injury being experienced by the others.

"She's not a puppet?" thought Meng Hao, shock filling his heart. At the same time that the boom echoed out, something like a fierce gale swept across everything. Meng Hao's body did not feel stable, almost as if he were not capable of holding onto the Immortality Bridgestone anymore. The glow in the area began to flicker, and darkened by about half.

"Dammit, dammit..." thought Meng Hao, his fury burning. This was all he could do, however; rage inwardly and hold on tightly to the Immortality Bridgestone.

The booming caused the eight to be sent tumbling backward. In the blink of an eye, the woman proceeded forward with Meng Hao and the others, shooting off into the distance. However, it only took a moment for the eight to return. This time, their bodies were surrounded by bright glows. They looked like eight suns as they charged toward the woman.

The woman's expression suddenly flickered. Her body disappeared, then reappeared off in the distance, whereupon she transformed into a beam of prismatic light that shot off at high speed.

One of the eight suddenly spoke, his voice cold: "Demoness Zhixiang of the Immortal Demon Sect, you were able to con Young Master out of his precious treasure. We've been chasing you for a whole sixty year cycle, and it turns out you were hiding here, pretending to be a puppet of the Bridge of Immortal Treading. Your little ruse fooled us before, but let's see how exactly you plan to elude us this time!" [1]

With that, the eight of them completely ignored Meng Hao and the others as they sped off in pursuit of the woman.

“She’s a Cultivator who was masquerading as a puppet to avoid pursuit? Immortal Demon Sect? What Sect is that...?” Meng Hao watched them disappear off into the distance, his mind and heart reeling. The Immortality Bridgestone in his hand had not ceased moving. It continued to carry the group of Cultivators toward the Bridge of Immortal Treading. They flew closer and closer, at a speed that Meng Hao had a hard time wrapping his mind around.

It was at this moment that suddenly, a furious roar could be heard from off in the distance. Behind them, eight colorful beams of light could be seen racing toward them. Their speed was such that they would obviously be able to catch up in a short time.

Meng Hao looked back and his pupils constricted. “Just what divine ability is that? The speed they can achieve while flying amongst the stars is...” He watched as the eight figures would move an incredible distance seemingly in a single movement.

It was almost as if the space beneath their feet was being shrunken.

“Shrunken... shrunken...” murmured Meng Hao. He suddenly thought back to when he had left Planet South Heaven and how the land had seemed to shrink. Ignoring the true size of his body, it made it seem as if with a single step he could cross a huge divide.

Even as the eight people sped in pursuit, Meng Hao suddenly felt a tremor run through his body. Roaring sounds could be heard as some massive, invisible force seemed to emanate out from the Immortality Bridgestone in his hand and then suck Meng Hao inside.

The same thing happened to the others. All of the Western Desert Cultivators from Planet South Heaven suddenly vanished as they entered the true Bridge of Immortal Treading.

As for the eight Immortals, when they arrived, they found nothing but empty space. They looked around at the rubble, but dared not enter.

“So, she got away again. This Demoness’s craftiness knows no bounds. This time, however, she abandoned her physical body and paid a heavy price to fuse her soul into the body of one of those ants from South Heaven.”

“The Bridge of Immortal Treading was destroyed by Ancestor Ji long ago. However a mighty force protects it and reforms it every one thousand years. The starry sky cannot go against it and Ji Immortals cannot enter it. We cannot go in, but, she will be forced to come out eventually. When she does, we’ll be waiting for her!” The eight Immortals gave a final look at the Bridge of Immortal Treading before turning and disappearing.

Chapter 455: Step on the Stone, Enter the Void

Meng Hao’s vision blurred. As soon as everything became clear again, he sent out his Spiritual Sense as he looked around vigilantly.

“Is this the Realm of the Bridge Ruins?” He hesitated for a moment as he looked down at the Immortality Bridgestone he held in his hand. It was this object that had brought him to his current location.

He was surrounded by destruction. A variety of colors could be seen in the sky which was sometimes red and occasionally pitch black. Lightning danced about up above, leaving behind what seemed like cracks.

The land was in complete ruins. There were corpses lying about which had been there for who knew how many years. Vestiges of the passage of time could be seen everywhere. Where he stood now was apparently once a city.

An aura of death filled the air; this world seemed to be like a cage, a place where, if you got stuck too long, you would end up being entombed there just like the death aura.

Meng Hao frowned slightly as he put away the Immortality Bridgestone. He looked around as he carefully reviewed the events which had led up to him arriving here. After a long moment, his eyes glittered as he recalled the scene outside when the eight Immortals left, only to suddenly return.

Muttering to himself for a moment, Meng Hao proceeded forward carefully. This place seemed to make his Spiritual Sense much weaker. It was difficult to see very far in any direction. In fact, his range now seemed to be limited to about fifteen hundred meters. Looking up at the lightning in the sky, Meng Hao dispelled any notions of flying up.

Time passed. Soon it was a month later. During that time, Meng Hao had been able to explore about half of the entire location. He encountered no other life forms, including any of the other Cultivators from the Western Desert.

This world was very small, and did not seem to have a regular shape. Its borders were formed by jagged edges, beyond which was nothingness. Meng Hao currently was standing on one such border.

In front of him was pitch blackness, gloomy and cold. It seemed capable of swallowing up anything and everything as it surrounded this region. Muttering, Meng Hao lifted up his hand and made a grasping motion. A nearby rock immediately flew up into the air and landed into his hand. He tossed it out toward the blackness. As soon as it touched the blackness, it bounced back to land in Meng Hao's hand. He looked down at the rock and noticed that the part that had touched the blackness looked as if it had been sliced with a knife. It was completely flat and smooth.

Meng Hao's frown deepened as he slowly backed up. This black void gave him a sense of incredible danger. He could only imagine what would happen to his body if he happened to run into the blackness.

"Something's not right. If this is the Realm of the Bridge Ruins, then why am I the only person here? Besides... this place seems too small. Furthermore, there is none of the Celestial Soil that the Crow Soldier Tribe Greatfather mentioned!

"Other than the ruins of that city, I haven't seen any of the remains of the Bridge of Immortal Treading!" Meng Hao turned to once again continue his careful explorations of this world.

By the time another half month went by, Meng Hao's face was grim. He stood in the very center of the world, looking at a stone stele.

The stele was cracked, but not broken apart. It was in relatively good condition, and on its surface could vaguely be made out some rather large characters.

"Harmony City...." said Meng Hao softly. A ponderous look appeared in his eyes. He suddenly thought back to the eight Immortals he had seen on his way here, as well as the woman, Demoness Zhixiang.

"Immortal Demon Sect. Masquerading as a puppet. Demoness Zhixiang, trying to evade a deadly chase...." Sinking into thought, Meng Hao sat down, crossing his legs.



“That Demoness Zhixiang comes from a Sect called the Immortal Demon Sect. She conned the Young Master of those eight Immortals out of his treasure. Then she turned herself into a puppet to evade their pursuit.

“After she fled, why would the eight of them pursue us again, looking flustered and exasperated...?” Suddenly, a look of concentration filled his eyes.

“Actually, she didn’t flee! She used some other method to trick her eight pursuers and lead them away. They quickly realized something fishy was going on and returned as quickly as they could. Although, if you look at it from that perspective... well, perhaps she did something completely different that I couldn’t possibly imagine. Or perhaps she came to the Realm of the Bridge Ruins on her own power, to explore it. The final possibility... is that she is actually among us Cultivators who came from the Western Desert!” Meng Hao sat there silent and unmoving. This Demoness was someone who was being chased by eight Immortals, and clearly had a sublime Cultivation base.

A person like this was someone that Meng Hao had no desire to provoke. There was little need for further analysis. Meng Hao determined he would need to be vigilant and on the lookout. Although the Western Desert Cultivators seemed to have been scattered, he had the feeling that his third guess was the most likely one to be true.

“Who is she hiding with....” thought Meng Hao. Suddenly, he looked up into the sky to see a dark figure approaching at high speed. This dark figure was not a Cultivator, but rather, an enormous rock!

The rock was no less than two thousand meters wide. It whistled down from up above, causing lightning to spring up wherever it passed, and shattered the air. It seemed as if some incredible crushing force were descending.

It moved with incredible speed as it bore down. A huge pressure formed, causing the land to shake. Meng Hao’s pupils constricted, and he was just about to retreat when he suddenly sensed that this two thousand meter wide rock was actually not going to strike into the world he was in. Actually, it became an arc, changing directions and shooting off into another area of the sky.

Meng Hao stared in shock before taking a deep breath as he watched the enormous rock slam into the blackness that lay at the border of this world.

As it did, the void of the blackness seemed to shatter, and a huge gap became visible. The rock sailed through it and then disappeared.

All of this happened in the short amount of time it takes for an incense stick to burn. Meng Hao had little time to think about the matter. When the rock disappeared into the black void, his pupils constricted and his mind felt as if lightning were crashing around inside of it. He suddenly thought back to when he had been approaching the Bridge of Immortal Treading, and had seen the gaps between the various bridge stones, and the dust therein.

“That three thousand meter rock was one of the countless pieces of dust that I saw earlier. They are constantly flying about in the gaps between the stones which make up the Bridge of Immortal Treading!

“In that case, I am definitely on the Bridge of Immortal Treading. The year it collapsed, it broke apart into countless fragments. If I want to leave here, then the only way... will be with the aid of that dust!” His mind reeled as he came to this new understanding. He took a deep breath as he sat down cross-legged to wait quietly.

Time went by. According to Meng Hao’s understanding, time passed differently in this place than in the outside world. If months or years actually passed on the outside, that would be something that the Cultivators who entered this place could not hide. Furthermore, the Crow Soldier Greatfather wouldn’t have left that part out.

Three months passed, during which time, Meng Hao saw six huge rocks come and go. He did not act rashly, but rather, carefully observed what happened to the rocks after they slammed into the black void. Finally one day, a rock suddenly neared that was roughly two thousand meters wide.

When this particular rock appeared, Meng Hao took a deep breath. His body suddenly vanished. When it reappeared, he was in mid-air, stepping down onto the rock that was shooting through the air.

The instant he set foot onto it, Meng Hao suddenly felt as if there were some terrifying force getting ready to pull his body apart. He rotated his Cultivation base and the glow of three totems emerged. In this manner, he was able to force himself into a state of stability. He immediately sat down cross-legged and stared out straight ahead.

The rock moved with incredible speed. In the blink of an eye, it passed over the land. In the space of about ten breaths, it reached the black void. Meng Hao’s heart beat nervously. This endeavor was a gamble; however, having observed what happened with all the other rocks, he was confident.

In the blink of an eye, the rock was upon the black void. It slammed into it, causing a rip in the blackness, a gap which it then passed through. As it shot through, Meng Hao settled his Qi and concentrated. Sitting there cross-legged atop the rock seemed frightening, but was actually not dangerous. He was now out in the black void.

The moment he entered the void, Meng Hao suddenly felt coldness. The intensity of this coldness was such that it could freeze the soul. Meng Hao quickly rotated his Cultivation base to fight back against the cold.

His eyes were wide as he looked around. The blackness seemed endless. However, he was able to see beams of colorful light flying about here and there.

Each of these beams was an enormous rock!

“This method should work great. This Realm of the Bridge Ruins contains the remains of the Bridge of Immortal Treading. The people who come here move about between the remnants of the Bridge of Immortal Treading by means of these rocks!” His body began to quiver because of the cold. He rotated his Cultivation base, but that alone did not suffice. His body was starting to grow stiff. Eyes glittering, he circulated the power of his fire totem, forcing his body to not be stiff with cold. Despite this, a layer of frost appeared on his skin. It looked almost like he was turning into a statue of ice.

“With this method, I should be able to hold out for quite a bit longer. Thankfully I have the Everburning Flame. Otherwise, without preparing cold-repelling items ahead of time, it would be difficult to survive here.” The cold continued to grow more intense around him. Meng Hao sat there motionless, ensuring that none of the heat left his body, and his life force continued to remain.

Time passed by. Meng Hao wasn't sure how long the rock had carried him through this world of blackness. Suddenly, a rock nearly one thousand meters large appeared off in the distance. From the way it whistled toward him, it seemed it would brush past Meng Hao and his rock.

As the two rocks got closer and closer, a light “eee!?” noise suddenly could be heard.

“So I've run into someone who didn't come with a cold-repelling treasure! What good fortune! Hahaha!” This voice belonged to a man, and as the other rock neared, Meng Hao could sense that a middle-aged man sat cross-legged in meditation upon it.

His Cultivation base was at the early Nascent Soul stage, and his body glittered with totem tattoos. On his forehead was a golden totem tattoo that looked like a lion. He was surrounded by five white stones which emitted a shield, enveloping the man and fighting back against the cold.

As the man's words rang out, he licked his lips. His eyes filled with a sharp glow, and as his rock neared Meng Hao's, the man suddenly stood up. He vanished, and when he reappeared, he was standing on Meng Hao's rock. He lifted his hand, and a golden lion magically appeared. It roared as it pounced toward Meng Hao.

"I'll kill you to put you out of your misery, and then I, Xue, will have one less person to compete with, and a greater chance at success!"

Chapter 456: Changes of the Lotus!

The golden lion roared as it neared. Suddenly, Meng Hao's eyes snapped open. They had been closed the entire time in his efforts to not waste even a scrap of energy. It was in this manner that he could use the power of the Everburning Flame to fight back against the bitter coldness of the void, and prevent his life force from being exterminated. After all, he had not come prepared with any cold-resisting magical items.

When he saw the middle-aged man and felt his killing intent, Meng Hao had maintained his motionlessness.

He was waiting; waiting for the man to near him. That way, he could conserve the most amount of energy when killing him. The man wanted to rob Meng Hao of his life; how could Meng Hao not prepare to take the man's cold-resisting treasure after that?

Almost the same moment that Meng Hao opened his eyes, he sprang into motion. His body immediately disappeared, then reappeared next to the man. The man's face filled with surprise as he realized that his previous assessment of the situation was incorrect; Meng Hao's sudden movement proved this.

"His soul hasn't been frozen by the cold!" the man thought, his scalp growing numb. "The ice on his body isn't fake. Neither is the cold emanating off of him; that's impossible to fake. In that case... he really doesn't have a cold-resisting magical item. But, without that, how could he possibly stay alive?!" The man instantly shot backward, trying to put some distance between himself and Meng Hao.

Meng Hao gave a cold snort. He suddenly shook his body, causing layer after layer of ice to crumble off of him. The Everburning Flame exploded with power, expelling massive amounts of coldness out of his body. It merged with the chunks of ice around him to transform into a frigid ice tempest that shot toward his opponent.

The man's face flickered as the tempest slammed into his golden lion. A boom could be heard, and blood began to ooze out of the corners of the man's mouth. His face turned green as coldness entered his body.

He continued to fall back with urgency, using minor teleportation to return to his own rock. However, even as he reappeared, Meng Hao also popped into being on the same rock. He lifted his right hand, causing the Lotus Sword Formation to appear.

The power of Time rotated out explosively. As it neared the man, his face fell and he slapped his bag of holding. A black statue of a closed-eyed monkey appeared. It immediately began to emanate a black glow; at the same time, the man began to mutter an incantation. Suddenly, the statue opened its eyes to reveal a bloodthirsty gleam.

The man's expression became savage and he said, "Statue, kill this... huh?"

Suddenly, his expression changed and his body began to tremble. His hair immediately turned white, and his skin began to dry up and wither. It was as if countless years had passed by in an instant.

"This...." The man was panting as he once again retreated. Without hesitation, he spit out some heart blood and used its power to try to get out of range of the power of the Lotus Sword Formation. Unfortunately, he failed, and his body continued to wither. During this critical moment, his eyes filled with despair. He suddenly lifted his hand up and levelled a blow against his own head. A boom could be heard as his Nascent Soul suddenly emerged. It used a minor teleportation to attempt to get out of range of the Lotus Sword Formation.

"What magical item is this!?!?" he said, his voice shrill and filled with an unprecedented level of terror. His Nascent Soul began to shake violently; it wouldn't be able to survive very long in the bitter cold.

As for his physical body, it died in the blink of an eye, transformed into nothing more than ash, obliterated by Time itself.

All of this takes some time to describe, but actually happened faster than the spark flying off of a piece of flint. The power of the Lotus Sword Formation was vastly increased in this place. Not even Meng Hao had been aware that something like this would happen. He stared in shock.

It took him only a moment to come to his senses, though. With a cold snort, he moved forward and grabbed the man's bag of holding, including the monkey statue, which the man had only half activated. He also collected up the five small, white rocks. Then he flashed an incantation gesture with his left hand, causing the Lotus Sword Formation to return.

After that, his body flickered as he returned to his two thousand meter wide rock. He looked back at the middle-aged man's Nascent Soul, and the killing intent in his eyes faded.

"Fellow Daoist, save me..." he said, his voice shrill with fear. "I'm from a sub-Tribe of the Western Desert's great Goldenroar Tribe. What happened just now was a misunderstanding, you...." The man's Nascent Soul trembled; cracking sounds could be heard as ice began to form on its surface.

The two rocks were only temporarily near each other. As of this moment, they were now moving apart, each one heading off in a different direction. Meng Hao realized that taking the time to kill the man completely would be a waste, and as such, had returned to his own large rock.

The man now only had his Nascent Soul left, and no cold-resisting treasure. He would die for certain.

Therefore, Meng Hao did nothing. He sat down cross-legged on his large rock. He then took out the five small rocks and studied them for a moment. He was about to erase the branding seal on them, when it suddenly began to fade away on its own. Meng Hao looked thoughtfully back toward the smaller rock which was disappearing into the void. The middle-aged man's Nascent Soul was now completely frozen solid.

"The cold in this void is shocking," thought Meng Hao, quickly branding the small stones to himself. Immediately, a glow appeared, surrounding Meng Hao and reducing the cold by more than half. Meng Hao let out a sigh of relief. Now, his confidence in being able to proceed through the void on this large rock was even greater.

Sitting there cross-legged, he produced the man's bag of holding, opened it, and glanced over the contents. There were quite a bit of Spirit Stones and a random collection of odds and ends. There were quite a few magical items, but Meng Hao ignored them, searching instead for jade slips.

He found a total of eight. After glancing them over, he selected one, which he began to study closely. After a moment, he lifted his head up, and a bright glow appeared in his eyes.

“So, the great Tribes really are well-equipped to come to this place. They even have maps!” The jade slip he held in his hand contained a simple map. The map depicted four locations in which the fragments of the bridge formed large land masses. One of them was the place that Meng Hao had just come from.

“It seems this guy was heading toward Harmony City. However, I explored the place thoroughly and didn’t find anything unusual.” Meng Hao frowned. He continued to look through the bag of holding, eventually pulling out a jade box.

The box emitted a soft glow. Meng Hao didn’t open it immediately, but studied it closely to make sure there wasn’t anything dangerous about. Finally, he opened it, whereupon a dense Qi sprang out. The Qi contained a medicinal aura that seemed capable of moving his spirit. In addition, it gave him an indescribable feeling that was similar to ultra high-grade Spirit Stones, except, even stronger.

After taking only a single breath, Meng Hao’s spirit was shaken, and his skin went tight.

Inside of the box was a finger sized clump of black soil which was where the powerful Qi was emanating out from. After examining it closely, two characters sprang up in Meng Hao’s mind.

“Celestial soil!” His eyes glittered as he examined it. After doing so, he was now certain that this soil did contain the power of the five elements.

“Too bad there’s so little. If I had a lot more, I could use the same method I used with the Fire-type power to make my own Earth-type totem!” Meng Hao’s heart was beating as he closed the box and then put it away.

“If I want to get more Celestial soil, it will require robbing others. Well... then rob I shall!” His eyes filled with determination. To Meng Hao, the matter of forming his Earth-type totem was just as important of a reason for coming to the Realm of the Bridge Ruins as was acquiring a Demon Spirit. He looked out into the void and began to recall the shocking power of the Lotus Sword Formation earlier.

“The power just now far exceeded the ordinary power of Time. It was able to cause a Nascent Soul Cultivator to abandon his physical body in the blink of an eye. It made time pass so quickly that even minor teleportation wouldn’t work. The only way for him to get away was to cause his

Nascent Soul to emerge. Just now, the Lotus Sword Formation emitted Time power equivalent to one thousand years!”

Meng Hao began to pant as he took out his Wooden Time Swords to look at.

No matter how he studied them, however, they appeared normal. Meng Hao couldn't find any signs of change whatsoever.

“Could it have something to do with this void?” he thought. “Or is it because, as I speculated, time flows differently in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins than outside in the Western Desert?” After thinking about the matter for some time, Meng Hao couldn't come up with any more clues. Nonetheless, his eyes flickered with a bright glow. If he could figure out the true reason for the increase in power, then maybe he would be able to cause the Lotus Time Formation to permanently increase its power.

“In any case, even if it only has this effect in the Realm of the Bridge Ruins, it's still an incredible advantage for me!”

Meng Hao put away the Wooden Time Swords and look out into the black void. Up ahead, a large land mass was approaching. The rock he was on was tiny when compared to this immense, unmoving mass.

“I'm here!” said Meng Hao, rising to his feet. The jade slip he had acquired from the man had a description of the location up ahead. Just like the place Meng Hao had come from, this was... one of the broken remnants of the Bridge of Immortal Treading.

Of course, the Bridge of Immortal Treading was incredibly massive, so each of the tens of thousands of fragments were so large they were like continents.

Meng Hao's two thousand meter wide rock shot rapidly through the void toward the giant land mass, emitting a piercing shriek. Meng Hao once again sat down. He collected the cold-resisting magical item, once again igniting the Everburning Flame to battle against the suppressive cold.

Closer... Closer...



A massive boom could suddenly be heard. Meng Hao felt the rock shaking beneath him, a tremor which ran up into his own body. The rock shredded through the void; as it burst through, a bright light suddenly became visible.

Meng Hao instantly sent his Spiritual Sense out. Lightning filled the sky in this world, permeating it with cracks. However, as he looked around calmly, he realized that this world seemed more stable than the one he had been in before.

Mountains rose and fell off into the distance. There were even lakes and rivers. The whole place was very large. From his vantage point up in mid-air, it seemed this land mass was probably about ten times bigger than the previous one.

As the rock whistled through the air, Meng Hao stood up and examined his surroundings. Suddenly, a look of concentration filled his eyes, and he frowned.

Off in the distance, he could see seven beams of light twisting through the air, locked in battle.

Of the seven people within the beams of light, the two highest Cultivation bases were of the mid Nascent Soul stage. Those two were fighting back and forth, causing rumbling booms to fill the air. As for the other five, they were obviously allies of the two who were fighting.

The two mid Nascent Soul stage Cultivators were both men. One wore a violet robe, the other a white one. Both were handsome, and had extraordinary bearings. They continuously unleashed various divine abilities as they attempted to prevent the other from snatching... a white glow that floated in the air not too far away from them!

Within the glow, Meng Hao could see a finger-sized clump of Celestial soil.

Chapter 457: Yi Chenzi

At the same moment in which Meng Hao caught sight of this group of people, they also looked up into the sky at the two thousand meter rock whistling through the air. They saw Meng Hao standing there atop of the rock, his hair whipping about, his face expressionless.

His eyes shone with a bright light as he suddenly teleported from atop the rock to reappear about thirty meters away from the group.

Meng Hao made a slight noise of surprise. He had originally intended to teleport directly next to the clump of glowing Celestial soil. His appearance in this location seemed to indicate that something had interfered with his minor teleportation.

Almost the same instant that Meng Hao reappeared, one of the seven, a ruddy-faced old man, gave a cold harrumph. He waved his right hand, causing a red sea to magically appear. It shot up into the air and then began to descend as a red rain which roared toward Meng Hao.

“Since I can’t teleport, well....” A bloody glow suddenly rose up around Meng Hao. It flickered, and then Meng Hao disappeared. Shockingly, when he reappeared, he was directly in front of the ruddy-faced old man. The speed with which he moved was astonishing, causing the old man’s pupils to constrict. He fell back, raising his right hand up to summon another red sea. It almost looked like a sea of blood as it roiled around him.

A booming sound filled the air as Meng Hao shot forward. Eyeless Larva silk whizzed around him, emanating a silver glow. It sliced into the incoming red sea, blocking it completely.

The ruddy-faced old man’s face flickered and he continued to back up. Unfortunately, he was too slow. Meng Hao’s hand formed into a fist which slammed out into the air. The motion caused a violent windstorm to rise up and sweep out in all directions. Facing up against this attack, the old man’s hands flickered in an incantation, causing his totem tattoos to begin to glow as he attempted to defend himself.

The sound of an explosion ripped out, and blood sprayed from the mouth of the old man. His expression was one of astonishment as he continued to retreat, obviously incapable of blocking Meng Hao.

Meng Hao ignored the man and instead headed back toward the group of people, obviously intent on taking the Celestial soil.

At the moment, none of these people were capable of ignoring Meng Hao. Everything that had happened just now had occurred with incredible speed. The fact that Meng Hao had just forced a Nascent Soul Cultivator to retreat left them filled with shock.

Even the two mid Nascent Soul stage Cultivators were frowning. Unfortunately, they were at a critical point in the battle. The clump of Celestial soil was right next to them, and neither was able to snatch it away.

“Kill that man!”

“Exterminate him!”

The men actually yelled out at exactly the same time, simultaneously unleashing divine abilities on each other. One of them summoned a violet crocodile. As for the other, a white crane materialized next to him. The two continued to fight.

As for the four others who were fighting around them, they didn't hesitate for a moment. They all suddenly changed directions and shot toward Meng Hao.

As the four neared, the Wood character on Meng Hao's forehead flickered. Suddenly, an enormous tree appeared around him, which in turn was covered with shapeless flames that shot up into the sky.

“Disseminate!” Meng Hao's hands flashed an incantation, then jerked his arms out wide. A flame sea roared into being, with Meng Hao at its center. It roiled out in all directions, setting everything aflame. Within the manifestations of Meng Hao's Wood- and Fire-type totems, golden droplets suddenly became visible. The flame sea continued to spread out, filled with the shocking power of Metal-, Wood-, and Fire-type totems.

His four opponents' faces flickered, and they used various methods in response. Next to one, an enormous Xuanwu turtle appeared. Another waved his hand, causing a red gigantic centipede to roar into being next him.

As for the other two, each of them caused a howling Cyclops to magically appear to fight the flame sea.

The flame sea was like an enormous mouth, waiting to sweep over the four and consume them, and the roaring it caused was shocking. It swept over the Xuanwu turtle, which let out a miserable shriek as its body was ripped into pieces. The Nascent Soul Cultivator controlling it tumbled backward, blood spraying from his mouth.

As for the gigantic centipede, it was actually fire-resistant. However, when the golden droplets hit it, it was transformed into a golden statue, which was then melted by the flames. The Cultivator controlling it was astonished to find that his entire arm had turned the color of gold. An immense pressure weighed down on him that seemed capable of turning his body to gold in an instant.

As for the two Cyclopes, their screams were the most wretched of all as their bodies were torn to shreds. The fragments were then transformed into gold, which then evaporated into the air.

This was the first time Meng Hao had truly unleashed the full power of his three great totems. As soon as the magic spread out, the four Nascent Soul Cultivators were forced to retreat, coughing up blood the entire time.

Meng Hao's body turned into a long beam that whistled through the air amidst the flame sea. The fire stretched out behind him almost like a cloak. The golden droplets and the flaming tree seemed like decorations on the cloak.

If you could paint a picture of the scene, Meng Hao's imposing manner would be shocking to the extreme!

The scene shook the two mid Nascent Soul stage Cultivators. They glanced at each other, and simultaneously stopped fighting. Instead, they unleashed their divine abilities in the direction of Meng Hao.

These two mid Nascent Soul stage Cultivators were beyond the compare of the early Nascent Stage Cultivators from moments ago. Both the fearsome totemic crocodile and the gigantic white crane instantly shot toward Meng Hao, emanating ferocious auras that mixed with the crushing weight of the mid Nascent Soul Stage to descend onto Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's eyes glittered. Moments ago, he had been watching these people fighting over the Celestial soil while he flew along on top of the two thousand meter large rock. During that time, he had already formulated a plan for how to achieve his objective, which was not to kill these people, but to snatch the Celestial soil!

Even as the two mid Nascent Soul stage Cultivators neared, Meng Hao waved his right hand, causing ripples to suddenly emanate out. They instantly turned black in color, and then solidified into the first streamer of the flag of three streamers. Ji Nineteen was temporarily unbound as the streamer shot out.

The flag of three streamers was the most powerful magical item that Meng Hao possessed. When it appeared, the sky grew dim. The violet-robed man's face fell, and he immediately retreated. Unfortunately, despite flashing incantations, employing various divine abilities and producing

magical items, he was incapable of fighting back against the sweeping blackness which shot toward him.

A boom echoed out, and blood sprayed from the man's mouth. Killing intent, but also shock, filled his eyes as he was flung backward several hundred meters before finally being able to come to a stop.

At the same time, Meng Hao continued forward at top speed. Lifting his hand toward the white-robed Cultivator, he suddenly pointed out.

“Demon Sealing, Eighth Hex!”

As soon as the Demon Sealing Hex appeared, the white-robed man's expression flickered. Countless strands rose up that only Meng Hao could see. They immediately bound the man up, completely sealing him down.

Of course, the sealing would not last for very long, only the space of a single breath. However... that was all the time Meng Hao needed.

As he shot forward toward the Celestial Soil, the surrounding seven Nascent Soul Cultivators all watched on, eyes filled with killing intent and even more so, anxiety.

However, it was at this exact moment that ripples suddenly appeared in the middle of the air not too far off. A figure appeared, a young man wearing a long black robe. His head was unusually small and completely out of proportion with the rest of his body. He looked somewhat like a rat; his expression was somber, and his eyes glowed with bloodthirstiness. Laughing evilly, he shot forward with speed that exceeded Meng Hao's, heading directly toward the Celestial soil.

He had been using some special technique to remain hidden in the area, undetectable. He had originally planned to wait until the two fighting parties were at a deadlock, and then suddenly make a move and wipe them all out.

But then Meng Hao showed up. The way he swept the people aside was shocking, but also opened up a chance for this young man. Without hesitation, he made a decisive move.

“Many thanks, Fellow Daoist!” cried the small-headed Cultivator. “It would be impolite for Yi Chenzi to turn down a gift like this Celestial soil!” As he reached out to grab ahold of it, killing

intent flickered in Meng Hao's eyes. The Eyeless Larva suddenly flew out. Its silk began to wrap around the clump of Celestial soil at the exact same time that the Cultivator Yi Chenzi grabbed onto it.

A bang could be heard as the finger-sized clump of Celestial soil suddenly split into two pieces. One was dragged back toward Meng Hao by the Eyeless Larva, the other was grabbed by Yi Chenzi, who immediately turned and shot off in the other direction.

When the seven Nascent Soul Cultivators saw the small-headed Yi Chenzi, their expressions immediately filled with shock.

“Yi Chenzi!” [1]

“That's Yi Chenzi, the guy who betrayed and then slaughtered the entire Gryphon Tribe!”

“Dammit! He's evil to the core! I heard he made living sacrifices of his own Clan to further his cultivation!”

Meng Hao grabbed the Celestial soil and then slapped his bag of holding to produce the blood-colored mask. He immediately put it on, causing his Cultivation base to explode with power, and a Blood Qi to rise up. His aura spread out in all directions, causing the Cultivators to feel complete astonishment. The pupils of the two mid Nascent Soul stage Cultivators constricted. As of this moment, they had no desire whatsoever to participate in the conflict between Yi Chenzi and Meng Hao.

“Nobody owns the Celestial soil,” said Meng Hao, “so it belongs to whoever manages to snatch it! If you have the skill to escape with it, then it will belong to you!” With that, he shot forward with incredible speed. The distance between the two immediately lessened. Meng Hao waved his right hand, causing a blood-colored face to appear. Rumbling filled the air as it shot toward the fleeing Yi Chenzi, whose face immediately fell. He quickly performed an incantation with his left hand, causing a glistening fish scale to appear in his palm. He threw it out behind him, where it instantly began to expand until it was about ten meters tall.

A boom rattled out as the power of Meng Hao's Blood Immortal face slammed into its blocking force. Yi Chenzi coughed up some blood, then suddenly vanished. When he reappeared, he was already three thousand meters away. He turned back, a sinister smile on his face.

“Draconic Vulture Transformation!” he cried. Immediately, the fish scale exploded out in size. Black Qi boiled up into the sky, transforming into an enormous vulture. The vulture’s eyes were bright red as it charged toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao’s face was completely expressionless as he said, “A single word.”

Instantly, the face once again appeared. Its lips began to move as amorphous ripples began to spread out. The seemingly horrifying vulture suddenly began to tremble, then suddenly collapsed into pieces. Meng Hao, moving as fast as lightning, shot through the collapsing pieces of the vulture.

This caused Yi Chenzi’s face to fall. He immediately spun around and once again began to flee.

“Dammit, how come that bastard has so many divine abilities. He has three totems, Metal, Fire and Wood. And what magical item was that mask just now?”

Meng Hao’s expression was the same as ever as he employed a minor teleportation as he shot in pursuit of Yi Chenzi.

Chapter 458: A Faint Sound!

Two people, one chasing the other through the air at top speed.

Meng Hao wore the blood-colored mask, and his eyes glowed with coldness. Eyeless Larva silk circulated around his body, emitting a droning sound. Occasionally he would employ minor teleportation to get closer to Yi Chenzi.

As for Yi Chenzi, he shot forward with all the speed he could muster. His Cultivation base was at the mid Nascent Soul stage, and he possessed extraordinary divine abilities. He had a vicious personality, and was actually quite infamous throughout the Western Desert.

He was once a member of the Gryphon Tribe. Through a chance bit of good fortune, he had acquired an evil magic. In order to cultivate this evil magic, he had secretly begun to sacrifice members of his own Tribe to the totems on his body. The enticement of this secret technique was impossible to resist. When the matter was discovered, he confessed his guilt and managed to acquire the forgiveness of his fellow Tribe members. However, he then secretly used a ruthless method to kill the Greatfather of the Gryphon Tribe, who was none other than his own father!

After that, he cold-bloodedly slaughtered the rest of the Tribe. Regardless of young or old, they were all cut down and sacrificed to mutate his totems. It was in this fashion that he was able to acquire an early Nascent Soul stage Cultivation base.

When all of those things happened, a full sixty-year cycle previous, it had caused a huge sensation throughout the Western Desert. The Gryphon Tribe was a small Tribe, but such matters of Tribe betrayal were appalling to the extreme. Because of that, Yi Chenzi immediately became infamous throughout the Western Desert.

During the following sixty-year cycle, he appeared three more times in the Western Desert. Each time, he slaughtered a Tribe. The first two times had been small Tribes, but the third time was a mid-sized Tribe. It was that occasion which allowed him to step into the mid Nascent Soul stage. After that, he disappeared without a trace.

As he shot through the air like lightning, Yi Chenzi thought to himself, “If I get enough Celestial soil, I can use it with my secret technique to stimulate the power of my totems. After that, I’ll need a hundred thousand blood sacrifices! That will give me the chance to enter the late Nascent Soul stage!” Each time Meng Hao used a minor teleportation, so did he.

As time progressed, he was able to maintain the distance between himself and Meng Hao, making it impossible for Meng Hao to catch up to him!

The giant face around Meng Hao suddenly expanded to an even larger size and then shot forward, radiating attack energy. Yi Chenzi’s face flickered, but he didn’t slow down in the least. Instead, he actually started to go faster.

“Dammit, how can this guy be so fast!?” he thought. Howling inwardly, Yi Chenzi continued to flee. It had been a long time since he had gone all out like this.

“Want to catch me? You’re still not qualified!” Yi Chenzi gave a cold harrumph and then employed the pride of his divine abilities to increase his speed once more.

At the same time, however, Meng Hao suddenly lifted his hand to employ the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex. The instant it appeared, Yi Chenzi suddenly stopped in mid-air. This sudden stop scared him out of his wits. Although he quickly recovered, by the time he did, the rippling power of Meng Hao’s Without a Face had arrived.



A boom filled the air as blood sprayed out from Yi Chenzi's mouth. However, five fish scales suddenly appeared, which then exploded, giving him a burst of speed that allowed him to escape once more.

"Dammit, what divine ability was that?!?!" thought Yi Chenzi, his face pale. Lowering his head in determination, he continued to move along at the fastest speed he could muster.

Time passed by, and soon it was a day later.

Meng Hao was frowning. He looked up ahead at Yi Chenzi, who moved with increasingly greater speed. The killing intent in Meng Hao's eyes grew even stronger. This Yi Chenzi was one of the fastest Cultivators that he had ever encountered. He also seemed to excel in one particular escape art which allowed him to merge into the air. When coupled with minor teleportation, its power was even further increased.

Seeing the distance between them once again grow greater, Meng Hao caused a bloody glow to surround him. A Bloodburst Flash caused his speed to increase dramatically. His body blurred until it looked like a ghost, and then he used a minor teleportation to close the distance again.

Unfortunately, as soon as he neared the man, Yi Chenzi would once again disappear, transforming into a green smoke that moved a hundred times faster than before.

In the midst of this incredible increase in speed, he used teleportation, causing the effect to be even greater.

"That art again!" thought Meng Hao. Now the distance between them was once again increased. Meng Hao was shocked, and his killing intent grew even greater. He continued to alternate between Bloodburst Flash and minor teleportation. He was now around three thousand meters away from Yi Chenzi, who was just about to use his escape art.

Meng Hao slapped his bag of holding to produce a series of magical items. Many of these he had acquired after coming to the Western Desert. Some were from the Five Poison Tribe's war of invasion, and quite a few were from the Goldenroar Tribe Cultivator.

He waved his arm, causing the items to turn into beams of light that shot forward.

“Boom!” growled Meng Hao, his eyes flickering coldly. Instantly, the dozens of magical items began to tremble and then explode. Meng Hao hated to lose such valuable items. However, now was not the time to sit around thinking about such things. As the magical items exploded, a roaring sound rose up and intense ripples spread out in all directions.

As the power of the explosion spread out, Meng Hao caused the Lotus Sword Formation to appear. Spinning Wooden Time Swords transformed into a beam of light that shot forward.

Meng Hao could have borrowed the momentum of the exploding magical items to increase his speed. If he did, he would instantly have been propelled hundreds of meters closer to Yi Chenzi.

However, even using that method, he would not have been able to catch up. Therefore, Meng Hao did not use the blast to increase his own speed, but rather... the speed of the Lotus Sword Formation.

The Wooden Time Swords within the formation were already fast. However, with the additional momentum from the explosive attack, the three thousand meter distance was closed in the blink of an eye. Even as Yi Chenzi was utilizing his escape art, the sword formation appeared behind him, rotating out with the explosive power of Time.

The power of Time caused ripples to spread out in the air. Then Meng Hao frowned. Yi Chenzi’s escape art was truly bizarre; even the power of the Time Sword Formation could do nothing to prevent Yi Chenzi from turning into a green stream of smoke that began to shoot off into the distance. That was when the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex suddenly activated.

In the sudden pause it caused, a miserable shriek could be heard. However, the green smoke continued off into the distance nonetheless, whereupon it transformed back into Yi Chenzi.

As soon as he appeared, he coughed up a huge mouthful of blood. His face was ashen, and his hair had suddenly turned white. His body was clearly older, and shock covered his face. He trembled violently, his eyes filled with dread.

“That bizarre divine ability again!” he said, his scalp going numb. “And... another magical item!!” He had just suffered a loss of three hundred years to his longevity. This fact left him completely terrified, scared out of his mind. He coughed up another mouthful of blood and then surged again in retreat.

“Dammit, dammit! This is only half a piece of Celestial soil. Is it worth it? Well, is it?!?” Yi Chenzi ground his teeth as he whistled through the air.

Meng Hao's eyes were cold and hard as he frowned.

"The power of the Lotus Sword Formation is indeed much greater here than in the outside world, but not as much as it is in the void. It's about seventy percent weaker.

"Could it be that the Time power in the sword formation will only reach the terrifying amount of one thousand years when it's out in the void?" Meng Hao was lost in thought as he once again continued in pursuit of Yi Chenzi.

Time passed; another day went by.

"How come it's not here yet," thought Yi Chenzi. "According to my calculations, it should be right here, right now!" Yi Chenzi looked haggard. That was especially so considering that Meng Hao was continuously consuming medicinal pills. Yi Chenzi had a mixed feeling; however, when he stole something, he would die before giving it back. That was his rule. Gritting his teeth at Meng Hao's continuous pursuit, he once again used his escape art.

It was at this moment that off in the distant sky, a beam of light appeared. This shooting beam of light was no Cultivator, but rather, a one thousand meter wide rock. This rock was moving at high speed along its orbit. From the look of it, it was near the edge of this particular land mass.

"It's here!" thought Yi Chenzi, his eyes filling with delight. Even as Meng Hao frowned, Yi Chenzi suddenly leaped up into the air. Meng Hao watched as he performed an incantation gesture, preparing to employ who knew what magical technique. Suddenly, the flying rock off in the distance changed direction and shot toward him.

"So, he can control the rocks in this place!" thought Meng Hao, his pupils constricting. Seeing Yi Chenzi heading toward the rock, Meng Hao's eyes suddenly filled with a bright glow. At this critical moment, it was without hesitation that he pointed out with his finger and, just as Yi Chenzi was about to land on the rock, employed the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex.

It happened just as Yi Chenzi was about to transform into green smoke. Yi Chenzi had long since guessed that his opponent would most likely use this bizarre divine ability. Therefore, he transformed into the green smoke and then reappeared on the surface of the rock.

“Hope to see you again someday, Fellow Daoist!” he cried, laughing uproariously. However, it was at this moment that his expression suddenly filled with shock as he noticed that the rock beneath his feet... had suddenly stopped moving.

Meng Hao’s Eighth Hex had not been aimed at Yi Chenzi at all, but rather, the enormous rock.

The moment the rock stopped moving, Eyeless Larva silk suddenly began to spin, binding up the rock. A moment later, the rock recovered its momentum and shot forward. As it did, it pulled Meng Hao in tow.

Being pulled at the same speed as the rock, Meng Hao instantly landed on its surface. He lifted up his right hand and punched out with an explosive fist. Yi Chenzi’s face flickered and he clenched his jaw as he prepared to fight back.

A boom filled the air. Yi Chenzi was sent tumbling off of the rock, blood spraying from his mouth. The Eyeless Larva silk loosened, and Meng Hao teleported off of the rock. When he reappeared, he was directly next to Yi Chenzi. His right hand snaked out to exterminate the man.

However, it was at this moment that the entire sky suddenly turned gray, and a gray mist rolled out to cover the land. Everything became a sea of gray.

At the same time, Meng Hao was astonished to discover that his entire body... was completely incapable of moving. Yi Chenzi was in exactly the same situation.

It was as if everything in the entire world had suddenly been rendered motionless.

At the same time, a crowd of figures could be seen moving through the mist. They had blank looks on their faces, and they carried chunks of Immortality Bridgestones on their shoulders as they trudged through the mist.

Faint, odd voices could suddenly be heard echoing throughout the world. “When will the Bridge of Immortality reappear like new...? Sir, on what day will we again lay eyes on you...?”

Chapter 459: Eccentric Bloodface

All of these figures were somewhat blurry, nor did they seem to have Cultivation bases. There were old people and young people, men and women. All of them seemed frustrated as they hauled along the chunks of Immortality Bridgestones. They trudged through the mist like specters.

As Meng Hao watched the spectacle, a sense of intense danger rose up within him. It made him feel as if he had encountered a dangerous predator. He had the feeling that if these bizarre figures ran into him, he would be dead for sure!

“What are they...?” he thought as he looked at the ghostly figures. There were more than a hundred of them walking through the mists. As they neared and then passed Meng Hao, he felt an intense coldness, similar to what he had felt out in the void.

Next, Meng Hao saw one of the strange figures within the group pass through the giant rock that was floating there in mid-air. When it came out the other side, it was carrying an illusory rock on its shoulders that was completely identical to the gigantic rock.

It was as if it were carrying the soul of that rock as it made its way off into the distance.

Although the one thousand meter wide Immortality Bridgestone still hung there in the air, Meng Hao could sense that it was somehow dead, as if it had lost its power to travel through the void.

As the figures moved off into the distance, their voices continued to echo out.

“When will the Bridge of Immortality reappear like new...? Sir, on what day will we again lay eyes on you...?”

The voices gradually faded away. The churning mist suddenly transformed into storm winds. The storm caused the gray cracks in the sky to begin to spin together, sucking in Yi Chenzi, Meng Hao and even the one thousand meter Immortality Bridgestone.

In fact, many of the ruins and objects within the area were also swept up into the tempest.

There was no resisting it; everything was sucked up. Then, the storm suddenly collapsed, sending everything inside shooting out in all directions.

Meng Hao got the same sensation he had all those years ago when he had been swept up by the wings of the roc. Wind tore at his body, threatening to rip it to pieces as the storm sent him shooting off into the distance.

Were he an ordinary Core Formation Cultivator, he would have been killed beyond the shadow of a doubt. However, Meng Hao had three totems of the five elements, which pushed him across the gap that existed between Core Formation and Nascent Soul. He gritted his teeth and rotated his Cultivation base to dispel the effects of the wild wind.

After about two hours passed, Meng Hao was able to suppress the force of the wind. He performed a minor teleportation to escape from within its devastating power.

When he finally removed himself from the region affected by the wind, blood sprayed from his mouth and his face turned ashen. He had teleported into a mountain range, where he quickly excavated an Immortal's Cave and sat down cross-legged to meditate.

A few days later, the wind gradually died down. Meng Hao left the Immortal's Cave and flew up into the air. He floated there, looking at the chaotic scene left behind by the wind. The wind had swept across the entire land, causing even many mountaintops to crumble.

“Just what exactly are those specters...?” Meng Hao frowned. He had a strange feeling about this mysterious Realm of the Bridge Ruins.

He could find no traces of Yi Chenzi. Considering the level of the man's Cultivation base, he was likely capable of escaping from the wild wind. Furthermore, since he was so fearful of Meng Hao, it was highly likely that he had left this land mass as quickly as possible.

Muttering to himself, Meng Hao looked off into the distance. He was suddenly shocked to find that not too far off, a glowing mass could be seen. Within the glow were some granules of dirt. It was Celestial soil!

His body flickered as he shot toward it. He quickly collected it up, his heart beating wildly. Next, he sent Spiritual Sense out in all directions. Shockingly, he found three more locations in which Celestial soil was floating in mid-air.

Although they were only granules, they were still Celestial soil nonetheless.

“Now I get it,” he thought. “That wind kicked up the Celestial soil that was concealed in the area.... In that case, there must be quite a bit of Celestial soil in the air right now!” His eyes gleamed with joy. Without hesitation he teleported away. It didn't take long for him to collect the three pieces of Celestial soil, after which he shot off into the distance.

After some time, Meng Hao began to breathe heavily. It had only taken a short while for him to collect together enough Celestial soil to form a clump the size of a fist.

During this time, he saw other Cultivators who were also madly rushing around looking for Celestial soil kicked up by the wind. Some of them were even fighting, although it was never more than a blow or two. After all, time was better spent searching than fighting.

“Celestial soil is critical to forming my Earth-type totem!” thought Meng Hao, his eyes bloodshot as he snatched up every bit of Celestial soil that he could find. If anyone tried to compete with him, he would attack explosively without hesitation.

Two hours later.

Meng Hao’s fist descended onto a Cultivator of the early Nascent Soul stage, sending him flying backward. Meng Hao grabbed the Celestial soil in front of him and then proceeded on his way.

The Nascent Soul Cultivator looked at Meng Hao as he left, and his eyes filled with fear. The blow just now had rattled his Nascent Soul and filled him with shock.

“Who is that...?”

Six hours later.

Three figures were locked in combat in mid-air. Meng Hao was one of them. He flashed an incantation gesture with both hands, causing a flame sea to roar up. It shot out in all directions, forcing his two opponents to fall back. Meng Hao flicked his sleeve, collecting up the Celestial soil and then shooting off into the distance.

The other two Cultivators gritted their teeth. Their hearts were filled with dread, and they didn’t dare to take up chase. The only thing they could do was stamp their feet and then head off in another direction to search for Celestial soil.

Time went by. A day later, Meng Hao’s eyes were completely bloodshot. He had snatched enough Celestial soil to form a clump the size of a baby’s head. All of it was in his bag of holding. He

continued to fly through the air, searching for more. However, it had been almost four hours since he had seen any at all. It seemed all of it had been collected.

“Others collected it up? No problem!” he thought, killing intent filling his eyes. In the Cultivation world, the law of the jungle prevails. Robbing Cultivation resources was common, and something that Meng Hao had long since gotten used to. His eyes shining with killing intent, he shot off to search for other Cultivators.

A day later, the sound of explosions filled the air. An enormous face could be seen collapsing in mid-air. As it did, a middle-aged Cultivator coughed up blood, his face pale and his eyes filled with astonishment. Without hesitation, he pulled a handful of Celestial soil out of his bag of holding and threw it out in front of him, then turned heel and fled.

Meng Hao emerged from roiling mists to snatch it up. Without a moment’s pause, he sped off in another direction to search for more Cultivators.

Two days later, a ruddy-faced old man, flanked by two Nascent Soul Cultivators, savagely slaughtered another Cultivator to snatch up his Celestial soil. The moment they joyfully collected up his bag of holding, a red mist suddenly appeared off in the distance. From within the mist, an enormous face suddenly appeared.

As soon as the ruddy-faced old man saw the face, his heart and mind filled with a roaring sound, and his scalp went numb. He recognized this face. It had appeared days before when he was involved in the 7-person battle, and then met that fearsome Cultivator who had nearly crushed them all.

The two Nascent Soul Cultivators next to the ruddy-faced old man saw the roiling mist. Voices hoarse, they exclaimed, “It’s Eccentric Bloodface!”

Their faces immediately fell, and they turned around to flee.

During recent days, the name ‘Eccentric Bloodface’ had been spread about quite a bit. According to the rumors, he was a fearsome Cultivator who wore a blood-colored mask. His Cultivation base was astonishing, and he robbed people of their Celestial soil. Victims of his robbery were numerous, making it so that few people were willing to stay in this region.

Any who did were extremely vigilant. As soon as they saw the blood-colored mask, they would flee.



The three men from just now immediately began to flee in three different directions. Booming sounds filled the air, and two of the men coughed up blood. Without hesitation, they retrieved the Celestial soil from their bags of holding and threw it out. They knew what Eccentric Bloodface wanted: Celestial soil! If you gave it up to him, he wouldn't kill you. However, if you fought back, then your death was assured.

“Dammit.... If I had known this would happen I would have left with what I acquired earlier. Damn you, Eccentric Bloodface!” The two fleeing Cultivators were panting, and had hearts filled with frustration. However, there was nothing they could do about the situation except consider leaving this area.

A few days later, there were no Cultivators left in the area, only Meng Hao. He had robbed the majority of the Cultivators, and now had a clump of Celestial soil the size of a human head, as well as a fearsome reputation.

After attempting to gain enlightenment regarding the soil, Meng Hao realized that he still had not collected enough!

Unfortunately, all the other Cultivators had fled, and further searching turned up nothing. It was at this point that a three hundred meter wide rock came whistling toward him. He immediately teleported onto the rock and sat down cross-legged to meditate. The rock shot out into the void as it proceeded on toward the next land mass.

Meng Hao didn't know that the fleeing Cultivators had taken the name 'Eccentric Bloodface' with them and spread it to other regions. It was only a matter of time before almost all of the Western Desert Cultivators heard about him.

As the rock shot through the void, everything turned black. Meng Hao sat there cross-legged, his eyes glittering.

“I ran into a lot of people, but I didn't see that Demoness Zhixiang with any of them.... Although, I didn't see Zhao Youlan either. I wonder where she is.” Lost in thought, Meng Hao pulled out the jade slip map and looked it over to confirm his destination. He was currently heading toward the largest of the Immortality Bridgestones in the whole area.

“The Realm of the Bridge Ruins is huge. Every Immortality Bridgestone is a whole world, and there are probably tens of thousands of such worlds. However, the Western Desert Cultivators are only able to explore a few dozen of them.”

A few days later, the void was growing even colder. Even with his cold-repelling treasure, Meng Hao was forced to continuously ignite his Everburning Flame to stay conscious. As he looked out into the blackness of the void, his eyes suddenly went wide.

Off in the blackness, he saw a man moving through the void. He wore a long azure robe, and had a sword strapped to his back. He held a flagon of alcohol in one hand as he strolled directly through the void. He took occasional sips of alcohol, his expression morose and filled with melancholy.

The coldness of the void seemed to be reduced to nothing more than a crisp breeze around him. It blew his hair, and did nothing to cause his stride to falter. He was simply walking along as if everything were normal. The void around him seemed to ripple and distort, and the coldness didn't seem willing to near him, but rather, avoided him of its own volition.

Meng Hao's mind was reeling, and his expression was one of astonishment.

He looked at the man, and the man looked back.

Chapter 460: Azure-robed Han Shan!

The instant their gazes met, Meng Hao suddenly couldn't see the azure-robed man anymore. When he reappeared, he was standing next to Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's scalp went numb; it was impossible to see the level of the man's Cultivation base. Trying to do so gave Meng Hao the same feeling you might get when looking into a deep ocean.

He immediately stood up and bowed deeply toward the azure-robed man. “Meng Hao of the junior generation greets senior.”

The man looked over at Meng Hao, then sat down off to the side. He took a sip of alcohol, and, his face as disconsolate as ever, said, “Are you on your way to Sealbreaking Continent?”

“Sealbreaking Continent?” replied Meng Hao, a blank expression on his face. He thought back to the jade slip map, and the description of the place he was headed to. Finally, he nodded.

“So, we happen to be heading in the same direction,” said the man with a slight nod. After that he said nothing more. Leaning up against a protruding rock, he drank and looked off into the blackness of the void.

Meng Hao looked at the man hesitantly for a moment, then made his way some distance off and sat down cross-legged. Unfortunately, he couldn't slip into a meditative trance. All he could do was sit there as time passed.

One day, two days, three days.... In the blink of an eye half a month had passed.

During that time, the azure-robed man continued to recline there, drinking. It seemed the alcohol in his flagon was endless. He drank and drank, looking out into the blackness, his expression morose. His bleakness continued to grow more and more apparent.

The stubble of a beard could be seen on his face; it seemed as if it had been a very long time since he was inclined to clean up. His robes were wrinkled, and although the man should have cut a sorry figure in his state of disarray, his aura was filled with an indescribable charm. As such, he seemed... lonely, but not a mess.

The alcohol flagon he held in hand was crafted from wood, and the woodgrain was even visible on its surface. It was impossible to determine how much he drank during the half month.

He did not speak, nor did Meng Hao. It seemed that this azure-robed man really was just heading in the same direction and didn't feel like walking. Therefore, he had decided to share the rock with Meng Hao.

They maintained their mutual silence for another month as they proceeded onward.

Meng Hao was finally able to slip into meditation. However, he left a sliver of will on the outside. He knew that doing so was essentially pointless, but he was used to the practice and it wasn't something he would stop doing.

One day as the three hundred meter wide rock flew forward, the previously listless and melancholy azure-robed man suddenly sat up and looked off into the distance.

The movement immediately caused Meng Hao to open his eyes. He looked out into the blackness, but saw nothing. The azure-robed man, however, seemed very intent, as if he was completely focused on looking off into the distance.

Meng Hao was puzzled, but didn't show it, and instead continued to look out into the void. Time passed, three days in which the azure-robed man and Meng Hao both looked out into the blackness.

It was on that third day that the world of blackness around them suddenly turned gray. At the same time, the three hundred meter wide rock they were on suddenly stopped moving. Meng Hao's mind trembled as a thick mist began to spread out in all directions. Soon, everything was like a sea of mist.

Meng Hao's scalp prickled as he realized that he couldn't move a muscle. How could he not understand what was happening? Off in the mists, a group of figures could be seen, shouldering rocks as they marched forward.

They looked frustrated, confused as they approached. Soft voices could be heard echoing out in the mists.

"When will the Bridge of Immortality reappear like new...? Sir, on what day will we again lay eyes on you...?"

Surrounded by the echoing sound, the figures floated through the mist. Men and women, elderly and young, all looked confused. As they neared Meng Hao, he felt a coldness that seemed capable of freezing the soul.

Meng Hao gradually grew colder, until it seemed as if his very life force were about to be extinguished. It was at this point that Meng Hao noticed that this group of people was not the same group that he had encountered on the last land mass, when he was chasing Yi Chenzi.

Next to him, the azure-robed man continued to sit there, occasionally sipping alcohol. As he looked at the group of people, the melancholy in his eyes grew deeper, and the corners of his mouth twisted with bitterness.

He examined them closely, as if he were looking for something. He examined each figure closely, and when he reached the last one, his loneliness seemed to grow deeper. He frowned and took another drink.

The figures moved toward the rock Meng Hao was on, and as they grew close, they suddenly stopped. The blankness and confusion in their faces suddenly turned into viciousness. They looked over at the rock, and the azure-robed man.

The man looked back at them, and then waved his hand. As he did, the figures continued to float on by. They moved off into the distance, their confusion once again restored. Faint voices were again heard.

“When will the Bridge of Immortality reappear like new...? Sir, on what day will we again lay eyes on you...?”

The sound faded off into the distance, and the grayness in the void disappeared. There was no tempest like before. The silence was restored.

As everything returned to normal, the three hundred meter wide rock that Meng Hao was on once again began to move forward at top speed.

Meng Hao’s body trembled as he recovered. His heart shook because of this second encounter with these bizarre figures. Without thinking about it, he turned to the azure-robed man and asked, “What are they...?”

After asking the question, Meng Hao realized that, considering the man’s Cultivation base, and the days of silence, it was likely that he might not get an answer to the question.

“Bridge Slaves,” said the azure-robed man, his voice soft.

“After the Bridge of Immortal Treading was destroyed by Ancestor Ji, the surviving will of the bridge settled in this spot. People who coveted eternity and sought to extend their lives found their wills dissolved, and they became Bridge Slaves.

“They achieved the eternal life they sought, but the price... was that they became slaves of the bridge. Day and night, throughout their eternal lives, they slave away to rebuild the Bridge of Immortal Treading, which of course, can never be rebuilt.”

Hearing this explanation caused Meng Hao's mind to spin. He turned to look in the direction the figures had departed in, but all he could see was blackness, as if an enormous screen of darkness were covering over everything.

The man began to mutter bitterly, "Everything in the world comes with a price... a price..." He held the alcohol flagon in front of him, gripping it tightly.

Time passed. Meng Hao asked no further questions, nor did the man say anything further. He reclined there in his silence, staring off into the void, disconsolately drinking his alcohol.

Meng Hao sat there thoughtfully. The term Bridge Slave certainly seemed appropriate. They acquired eternity, but the price they paid was a great one. When he thought of this, it caused Meng Hao to recall the Bridge Slaves' faint voices.

Two more months passed. Up ahead in the void appeared an enormous rock. This was another Immortality Bridgestone, its vastness virtually indescribable. It appeared to be about ten times larger than the land mass he had just come from.

An incredible pressure radiated out from it, enveloping everything in the area as it floated there in the void. Its edges were irregularly shaped, causing Meng Hao to think of the image of the enormous, broken bridge he had seen stretching boundlessly out in the starry sky.

It was at this moment that the azure-robed man suddenly stood up.

"Would you like a drink?" he asked, turning his head to look at Meng Hao. His eyes were clear and filled with a profundity like that of the stars in the sky. This was the second time the man had taken the initiative to speak. The first time was when he had arrived. Considering this was the second time, Meng Hao understood... that he was about to leave.

Meng Hao stood up, clasped hands and bowed deeply. He looked at the azure-robed man, his eyes glittering. After a moment's hesitation, he nodded.

The man smiled, then waved his hand, causing the alcohol flagon to fly over to Meng Hao. Meng Hao grabbed it and, without hesitation, drank a mouthful.

As the alcohol flowed down his throat, a burning sensation exploded out. It felt like fire, and caused Meng Hao's Cultivation base to rotate wildly.

“A bit greedy, aren’t we, boy? Well, it doesn’t matter. I’ll just consider it to be traveling expenses.” The man pointed a finger at Meng Hao, causing his body to tremble. The mouthful of alcohol inside of him instantly formed into something similar to his Gold Core. Strands of Alcohol Qi began to emanate out from it, fusing it with his Perfect Gold Core. He did not experience any growth in Cultivation base, however, he could tell that something inside of him was now different.

“The Alcohol Core within you will enable you to twice wield my Dancing Sword Qi. It can slay anything under the Immortal stage.”

With that, the flagon flew back into the man’s hand. He turned and stepped off of the three hundred meter wide rock, walking toward the enormous land mass formed by the Immortality Bridgestone.

As he stepped into the void, he sighed and said, “You ask when will you lay eyes upon me again...? I’ve searched for you for three thousand years....”

The voice echoed out with unspeakable melancholy and an indescribable loneliness.

Meng Hao’s mind reeled. All of a sudden, he could sense a sword skill within his mind. It was branded onto him in the form of a magical symbol. He didn’t understand it, but he could tell that he could rotate his Cultivation base to unleash the Alcohol Qi within his Gold Core. He could do this twice to cause the brand to explode out.

As the man headed off into the distance, Meng Hao suddenly cried out: “Senior, may I respectfully ask your name?!”

“Han Shan.” [1]

His voice echoed out, filled with pensiveness. The man sighed and then disappeared into the void. Meng Hao stood there, bowing deeply in his direction.

After a long time passed, Meng Hao straightened back up. The three hundred meter wide rock he was on slammed through the barrier to enter the enormous land mass formed by the Immortality Bridgestone. There in front of Meng Hao was an enormous world.