

The Heavens 581

Chapter 581: Seed of Daoist Magic

Circulating cross-legged in the air around the Demon Immortal Pagoda was the Paragon of the Fourth Peak of the Demon Immortal Sect's First Heaven, Ke Yunhai. White hair swirled around him, and his eyes shone with a radiant glow.

He seemed to be in high spirits; however, far back within the recesses of his eyes was an imperceptible exhaustion and ancientness. No aura of death emanated out from him; however, deep within his heart existed a sea of death.

Outsiders could not observe what was happening within the Demon Immortal Pagoda. Even the seven Paragons couldn't sense the ripples of what was happening. However, all of them were well aware of why the Demon Immortal Pagoda had been opened this time.

Their gazes swept over the pagoda, and, although they could not see what was happening inside, based on the aura coming from the dots of light, it was possible for them to determine who was who.

Ke Yunhai was watching the 2nd level, and his eyes shone with determination.

“Jiusi, your father can only do this much for you...”

In addition to the seven Paragons, the rest of the disciples in the Demon Immortal Sect's First Heaven were all congregated around the pagoda. One by one, the disciples flew up to enter the pagoda. Everything was in a great commotion. A few moments later, a dot of light appeared on the 7th level, leading to an outburst of discussions.

Meng Hao had no way to know about any of this. He was still on the 2nd level, looking at the enormous mountain formed of seawater that was hovering in mid-air. A bright glow shone from his eyes as the mountain shot toward him. He leaped upward, not in evasion, but rather, relying completely on the Second Anima, he charged in attack.

A massive boom rose up into the air. Meng Hao didn't destroy the mountain, but rather pierced inside of it.

Rumbling filled the seawater mountain, and countless ripples spread out, as if to seal Meng Hao inside. As the ripples surrounded him, he suddenly closed his eyes.

Then he waved both arms out in front of him. A boom filled the sea mountain as it exploded apart. Meng Hao shot out from within, his face pale, but his eyes shining with a strange light.

“Mountain Consuming Incantation...” he said, panting a little. By this point, Meng Hao could tell that if you looked at the enlightenment of the Mountain Consuming Incantation in terms of percentage, then he had mastered roughly five percent.

As the sea mountain fell apart, no magical technique appeared. Meng Hao looked up as a beam of soft light appeared up in the air in front of him. A mere glance and he understood that this dazzling light was the entrance to the 3rd level.

As the light neared, he shot up into the air. He entered the void, and when everything became clear, he was in the 3rd level.

The moment he appeared, a towering sea of flames could be seen, as well as ten enormous figures. Meng Hao shot out from within the flames, his eyes glittering.

“Third Anima!”

BOOM!

His fleshly body expanded and his Cultivation base began to transform. The power of four great circle Nascent Souls instantly exploded out from within him. Fearsome and intense power roared up from him, especially from his fleshly body, as he strode forward.

4th level. 5th level. 6th level....

Without hesitation, Meng Hao charged up all the way to the 7th level. By this time, he was in the Fourth Anima.

In the outside world, there were simply too many people participating in the event, so few people noticed Meng Hao's dot of light moving up. Most were focused on the 10th level.

There was only one dot of light there, attempting to break through.

At the moment, just about all of the disciples' eyes were focused there. Their eyes shone brightly as they watched to see what transformations might occur if the 10th level were passed.

After all, the Demon Immortal Pagoda had 99 levels, and every 10th level gave a chance at one of the top 100 Daoist magics. Any one of those could be considered a shocking magical technique, enough to cause anyone's heart to pound.

That was especially true for the Cultivators from South Heaven. They were completely focused on the 10th level, even more so than the other disciples from the Demon Immortal Sect. Han Bei and Wang Lihai, the Ji Clan, the Fang Clan, the Cultivators from the Eastern Lands and the Northern Reaches, all those who had not entered the Pagoda were observing closely.

Time passed. Apparently, the 10th level was quite difficult. The Cultivator who was there still had not broken through. With the exception of Ke Yunhai and Fang Yu, few people had noticed that there was one particular dot of light that had just disappeared from the 7th level and then appeared in the 8th. Then it was in the 9th.

Finally... everyone gaped, and their stares focused even more intently on the 10th level, because.... Suddenly, another dot of light had appeared there!

A second dot of light was now in the 10th level!

Of course, it was Meng Hao.

"Who's that...?"

"Who could that be? Whoever it was that just entered the 10th level, no one was paying much attention to him before!"

As the buzz of conversation filled the air, all gazes focused on the dot of light that represented Meng Hao.

Meanwhile, back in the 10th level, a golden glow filled the area. The sky was gold, the land was gold. Everything was the color of gold. Ten swords sped toward Meng Hao from all directions, filled with shocking power.

These ten swords exploded with the power of Spirit Severing. They were matchlessly brutal, and their killing intent rose to the Heavens.

In the moment before the ten swords reached him, Meng Hao's pupils constricted and he unhesitatingly cried, "Sixth Anima!"

BOOM!

His Cultivation base shot up and his fleshly body exploded with power. His battle prowess was now equivalent to thirty-two great circle Nascent Souls. As for his body, it was now more powerful than the Seventh Anima. According to Meng Hao's speculations, the level of power it now reached was equivalent to an Eighth Anima!

Such shocking power, especially when it was all synthesized together, made it so that Meng Hao could now attack with roaring power equivalent to the Seventh Anima.

Meng Hao unleashed divine abilities, one of which made a small, illusory mountain appear above his hand. The golden world he was in seemed to transform into a sea of rage, churning and seething.

A moment later, ghost images sprang up from the ten swords. The golden glow that filled the world swept toward them, changing the ghost images into something like a black hole that seemed capable of swallowing all light. All the light in the world was sucked in, leaving behind only the swords themselves. Surrounded by a shapeless glow, they slashed down toward Meng Hao.

Furthermore, they even began to emanate the ripples of a Domain!

Meng Hao's pupils constricted. The instant the swords began to near him, he unhesitatingly entered the Seventh Anima!

BOOM!

The Seventh Anima exploded out, filling him with sixty-four shocking levels of power. Sounds like cracks of thunder exploded out from Meng Hao's fleshly body, which did not grow any larger, but rather, more tight. The feeling of an Immortal Devil grew even more intense. In Meng Hao's judgement, he currently had a fleshly body that was equivalent to a Ninth Anima.

He was only a tiny step away from having a fleshly body that was actually of the Spirit Severing stage!

Meng Hao moved toward the descending swords and punched.

A huge explosion filled the air, causing everything to tremble and shake. Meng Hao coughed up some blood as he shot backward. Everything up ahead of him shattered into pieces; at the same time, countless magical symbols flickered out. Three thousand great Daos. Three thousand magical symbols. They swirled around Meng Hao for a moment before one of them sparkled and shot toward him.

The mark had the appearance of a small mountain. Meng Hao recognized it as soon as he saw it; this was none other than the Mountain Consuming Incantation which he already had partly gained enlightenment of.

His eyes glittered, and he did nothing to dodge the magical symbol. It neared him and then fused into his body, filling his mind with a roaring sound. Something like the shapes of countless mountain peaks filled his mind. It felt as if he was currently personally observing and emulating hundreds of millions of mountains.

At the same time, the glow of enlightenment filled his eyes. He sat down cross-legged for an hour before opening his eyes. Shockingly, the image of a mountain could now be seen in Meng Hao's pupils!

His aura also changed. All of the images and memories regarding the Mountain Consuming Incantation merged together into his mind to form a brand mark that was like a seed.

This was a seed of Daoist magic that he could take with him when he left the Demon Immortal Sect's Second Plane!

The appearance of this seed proved that Meng Hao had achieved initial enlightenment of this art!

“Consume the soul of the mountain, emulate the soul of the mountain; seize the body of the mountain, refine my own body!” Meng Hao stood up and waved his right hand. Instantly, the illusory shape of a mountain peak burst into being above it. A strange light appeared in his eyes as he looked up and then shot toward a glowing screen up above.

As soon as he touched it, a roaring sound echoed out within his body. He felt as if he were trying to move forward through water, as if there were something pushing back against him. The feeling lasted for the space of a few breaths before he pierced out of his current world. Everything in front of him grew clear, and shockingly, he could see an entire new world in front of him.

This world was an ancient battlefield. The instant he appeared, many of the figures on the battlefield suddenly turned and looked directly at him.

There were several dozen of them, each one a Cultivator. When he saw them, Meng Hao’s pupils constricted. They instantly began to near him, whereupon, without hesitation, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a large amulet which he flung out in front of him.

Booming sounds echoed out, and half of the lands of this entire world quaked. Massive fissures appeared, with Meng Hao at the center. As they spread out, thundering booms could be heard, and countless bolts of lightning rained down. It was as if the entire world had turned into an armageddon.

Meng Hao took a deep breath. Although he had anticipated that the amulets given him by Ke Yunhai would be powerful, now that he could see one in action, he was shaken. The entire world of the 11th level vanished, completely toppled and destroyed. Everything was wreckage; the figures on the battlefield had been transformed into nothing but drifting pieces of ash.

Only Meng Hao remained behind.

“Force my way to the top?” Meng Hao blinked, and then a shy expression appeared on his face as he shot toward the 12th level.

12th level. 13th level. 14th level.... Meng Hao was surrounded by explosions as he proceeded onward. Everywhere he went, he shook Heaven and Earth, and was surrounded by the boundless glow of magical items. Even from the perspective of those on the outside world... it was starting to become obvious what was happening.

All of the disciples of the Demon Immortal Sect watched with wide eyes as, within the space of only a few breaths, a glowing dot rose from the 11th level all the way to the 15th level. Everyone gaped in astonishment.

That was especially true when a glowing aura appeared in the area around the dot, along with the clear, rippling aura of magical items.

“How many... how many magic items does that guy have?”

Chapter 582 and 583: Twelve Words

Amidst the deathly silence, a complaining voice suddenly cried out. It was from none other than the Cultivator from the Northern Reaches: “Who is he? Don’t tell me he’s one of those Elite Apprentices? But, even if he is an Elite Apprentice, he... he still shouldn’t be able to squander magical items like that.

“Just... just how many magical items has he actually used? Cheater! He’s cheating!”

What happened next caused everyone to watch on in a daze. The glowing dot on the 15th level, surrounded by a powerful glow of magical items, flickered up to the 16th level.

Next was the 17th level, the 18th level, the 19th level. Incredible amounts of jealousy filled the hearts of the onlookers as the glowing dot finally reached the 20th level before finally stopping. Apparently this level was incredibly hard.

Seeing this, the audience finally breathed sighs of relief. All of them had very conflicting emotions as the sounds of their discussion began to spread out.

“Hey, I said it, didn’t I? There’s nobody that could last like that for too long. Even if that guy has more magical items, he won’t be able to break past the 20th level!”

“Thank goodness he finally stopped. Otherwise how could any of the rest of us measure up to him?!”

Han Bei and Wang Lihai also secretly sighed in relief. The scene they had just witnessed caused them to be jumpy with fear. It wasn’t just them; the others from the lands of South Heaven felt the same.

And yet, even as everyone was still in the midst of discussing the matter, before they could get to the third sentence in their conversations, a booming sound could be heard from the 20th level. It was so powerful that it echoed outside of the pagoda.

As the roaring sound echoed out, nearly thirty percent of the 20th level was covered with a magical glow that surrounded Meng Hao's dot of light. From a distance, the glow seemed boundless!

The scene instantly caused everyone in the area to gasp as a roaring sound filled their minds. All of them seemed to be wondering about the exact same thing.

Just exactly... how many magical items had been detonated to create a glow that encompassed thirty percent of the entire level?

Fang Yu's eyes were wide and her expression was one of complete envy. "It's only because of that awesome dad of his!!" she thought.

Ke Yunhai sat cross-legged in mid-air, a complacent smile on his face as he completely ignored the strange looks on the faces of the other six Paragons.

"Attaboy, Jiusi! Force your way up to the top. Get to the 90th level for your old man!" Ke Yunhai almost shouted this out. Even if everyone else knew that cheating was involved, as a father, he couldn't help but be happy as he watched the scene playing out.

In the 20th level, Meng Hao, tattered and bedraggled, shot backward at high speed. He was surrounded by an enormous shield that glowed with incredible brightness. A host of vicious Heavenly dragons charged him constantly, any one of which was enough to shock Meng Hao to the core. All of them, though, were blocked by the huge shield.

Unfortunately, the shield was rapidly fading. Meng Hao's left hand clutched a bag that happened to be filled with Demon Stones. They were similar to Spirit Stones, and were what Meng Hao was using to sustain the magical treasures and talismans that he was wielding.

Just now he had slipped up, which caused him to almost be buried in a divine ability. Currently, he was in full retreat, at the same time pulling out vast quantities of talismans that he was slapping onto his body.

Boom!

The fading shield once again surged with strength. Immediately, hundreds of layers burst out, then superimposed over each other to block all of the divine abilities that were shooting against him.

Meng Hao let out a sigh. This shield was the main reason he had been able to charge into this place. Furthermore, of all the magical items and talismans that Ke Yunhai had refined, this type of shield was what he had created the most of. He has used his own life force to refine such shields; they contained his Qi, blood, and aura. It was as if he himself were here, protecting Meng Hao with his magical arts.

Because of this shield, Meng Hao was able to proceed from one level to next as easily as walking down a level path.

This really was just as the people on the outside has said; cheating. And it was not a small cheat either, but rather, major cheating.

Meng Hao looked around at the Cultivation bases of the figures around him, and was shocked. He immediately produced a vast quantity of talismans from another bag, which he then tossed forward.

Booming sounds rolled out, and thousands of huge hands appeared in the air, each one of which was thoroughly shocking. They instantly descended downward, sweeping across everything.

The glow of magical items spread out to fill nearly half of the entire 20th level.

As Meng Hao shoved aside everything, the glowing light of the 21st level began to spread out. At the same time, the magical symbols of the three thousand Daoist magics once again appeared. They swirled around Meng Hao, after which, a red symbol shot toward Meng Hao.

As soon as it touched his forehead, his mind filled with a roaring sound. An ancient voice filled his mind.

“Daylight Incantation!”

The voice didn't just echo in Meng Hao's mind, but rather spread out from within the 20th level of the Demon Immortal Pagoda to fill the entire Sect. The sound echoed out so that all disciples could

hear, filling their minds with shock. Quite a few people began to pant, and their eyes filled with avarice and greed.

“Daylight... Daylight Incantation!!”

“Dammit! DAMMIT! He actually got the Daylight Incantation in the 20th level!!”

“In the rankings of the 3,000 Daoist magics, the Daylight Incantation is number 31! It’s said that if you gain enlightenment, that when you use it, all you have to do is turn your hand over, and the sky will turn dark. Flip your hand back, and it becomes day! He actually got the Daylight Incantation. I can’t accept this!”

All of the disciples of the Demon Immortal Sect were completely in a frenzy. Most crazy were those who had arrived from South Heaven. Han Bei, Wang Lihai, the Cultivators from the Eastern Lands, the Southern Domain, and the Northern Reaches, all of them were filled with intense longing. None of them were willing to wait any longer. Their bodies flickered as they shot toward the Demon Immortal Pagoda.

The Ji Clan, the Fang Clan, including Fang Yu, all of them shot up into the air.

It wasn’t just them. Many other disciples of the Demon Immortal Sect were no longer willing to just observe. They charged forward, clearly unable to take the intense stimulation caused by Meng Hao’s acquisition.

In the blink of an eye, more than 100,000 people rushed into the Demon Immortal Pagoda. At the same time, Meng Hao sat there in the 20th level. Suddenly, a tremor ran through his body, and his eyes opened. The Daylight Incantation was now there in his mind. However, despite being an excellent incantation, it wasn’t the Daoist magic that he really wanted.

After a moment of considering, he gave up trying to gain enlightenment. His body flickered as he shot toward the 21st level.

22nd level. 23rd level.... In the amount of time it takes an incense stick to burn, Meng Hao shot with incredible speed all the way to the 29th level. Everyone watched, hearts burning, hands clenched tightly into fists. Their fury continued to rise, and cries of disbelief began to join together to form an uproar.

“This is definitely cheating!”

“How could he have so many magical items!? How could he move so quickly!? It’s almost like he has an endless supply of treasures for each level!!”

“This isn’t fair!!” By now, almost all of the disciples were shouting out. Even more began to charge toward the pagoda. However, people continued to be ejected out from within. There were at least ten empty levels between Meng Hao and his nearest competition.

One of the Cultivators from the Eastern Lands, who had met with failure on the 7th level, was filled with frustration and shouted, “Let’s go break open the pagoda and drag that guy out! The Demon Immortal Pagoda is for everyone! We demand fairness!”

However, even as the fury of the crowd raged, the light of magical items completely covered the 29th level, where Meng Hao was currently. Most outrageous was that the glow of treasures directly reappeared on the 30th level.

Then, after the space of only seven or eight breaths. The 30th level... was passed!

The sky in the 30th level suddenly took on a bizarre appearance. Seven enormous statues appeared, each of which had three heads and six arms. They were completely ferocious in appearance. A voice that seemed to echo out from the netherworld with Heavenly might suddenly filled the entire land.

“Our Daoist magic, Dao of Seven Bodhisattvas!”

As soon as the voice echoed out, the eyes of the disciples outside of the Demon Immortal Pagoda went completely red as their madness increased. The Dao of Seven Bodhisattvas was a divine ability ranked number 67 in the 3,000 Daoist magics of the Demon Immortal Sect.

It was an art completely and thoroughly shocking. Anyone who gained enlightenment could advance by leaps and bounds and move beyond the bounds of mortality.

“This isn’t fair!!” cried the Cultivator from the Northern Reaches. More and more people were becoming enraged.

“This is incredibly unfair!!”

“The Demon Immortal Sect is fair and upright! Kick that guy out!!”

However, even as their voices rose up, Ke Yunhai looked coolly down at them and gave a light snort. The sound descended, turning into what sounded like Heavenly Thunder. Blood sprayed from the mouths of everyone present, especially that Cultivator from the Northern Reaches. His soul shuddered on the verge of collapse, and his face filled with astonishment. He suddenly looked up toward the seven Paragons in mid-air.

Ke Yunhai’s archaic voice echoed coldly throughout the Sect: “If anyone else talks crap, they’ll be kicked out of the Sect.”

Everything went completely silent. When a Paragon spoke, no one would dare to offer retort. However, everyone was still suspicious as to why Ke Yunhai, who usually paid little attention to outside matters, would suddenly open his mouth now.

Time passed. The 10th level of the Demon Immortal Pagoda seemed to be a line of demarcation that ninety percent of participants couldn’t pass. Of the few who were actually able to pass it, the 20th level was the second line of demarcation. Only 15 people had managed to force their way past that point.

As for the 30th level, currently... only Meng Hao had made it that far.

As time passed, the majority of the Cultivators from South Heaven experienced defeat. Wang Lihai was stopped at the 9th level, after which he emerged, pale faced and wounded.

In his attempt to pass the 9th level, he had employed all of the hidden techniques he possessed, and yet had still failed. Now, he could only grudgingly admit the vast difference between himself and the Cultivators from ancient times.

As for Zhao Fang, he wasn’t even able to get past the 5th level.

Han Bei was one of the few who made it to the 10th level before meeting defeat, unable to acquire the good fortune of one of the top 100 Daoist magics.

Among the group from South Heaven, including those from the Ji and Fang Clans, only three people were able to make it past the 10th level.

One was Fang Yu, the second was Patriarch Huyan and the third was the young man from the Imperial Bloodline Clan of the Northern Reaches. These three managed to make it past the 10th level, but were stopped at the 11th.

Unable to proceed, they were forced to accept defeat and leave.

At the moment, Meng Hao's dot of light went onward, surrounded by the glow of magical treasures, all the way to the 40th level.

When he reached the 40th level, an archaic voice could be heard. The crowds outside of the Demon Immortal Pagoda were now jealous to the extreme and filled with incredible discontent. However, none of them dared to give voice to vent their feelings.

If looks could kill, though, then the 40th level would have long since been reduced to nothing but wreckage.

By this point, all of them could hardly wait to find out who this person was, this damnable cheater who had relied on an inexhaustible supply of magical items to get to the 40th level. It wasn't just the disciples of the Demon Immortal Sect who wondered about this; all of the South Heaven Cultivators were also dying to find out.

Although some people had already guessed that it was Ke Jiushi, there was no way to confirm that. In addition, they didn't dare to give voice to their suspicions.

Right now, regardless of whether the crowds admitted it or were willing to accept it, and despite how many people had entered the Demon Immortal Pagoda this time, it was now the battlefield of a single individual.

That person's existence caused their gums to itch. On the one hand, they hated him down to their bones, but on the other hand, they envied him to death.

If things went on like this, then perhaps in the end, when they found out that the glowing light was Meng Hao, there might be an "unforeseen occurrence." Although, at the moment, Meng Hao had already run into an unforeseen situation on the 40th level.

1,000,000 Demon Stones was gradually proving to be insufficient. After all, Meng Hao wasn't really Ke Jiushi. These Demon Stones were only here for him to borrow; he couldn't absorb them. Therefore, he had no qualms about wasting them.

"This isn't gonna work," he thought anxiously. "I'm going to need a few more Demon Stones...."

Currently, his supply was down to only about thirty percent. After reducing the 40th level to ruins, Meng Hao thought about it from a hundred different directions, and yet couldn't come up with any ideas except for one. He decided to give it a shot. Employing the power of his Cultivation base, he tossed out vast quantities of magical items. Using their glow, he arranged them all to form a string of words.

Close up, you wouldn't be able to make out much. However, from outside the pagoda, the glow of the magical items filled nearly half of the 40th level. Gradually, a string of twelve words became visible.

"Dad, I don't have enough Demon Stones. Please send a few more."

As soon as the words became visible, the disciples outside of the Demon Immortal Pagoda gaped in astonishment, especially the Cultivators from South Heaven.

In the blink of an eye, the entire world was filled with deathly silence.

When everyone finally realized the meaning of the words, they were filled with complete astonishment.

"This is beyond belief! Ridiculous!!"

"This is bald-faced cheating! He's not even trying to hide it any more! It's infuriating!!"

"So someone's going to send more Demon Stones in?! Damned bastard! Who does he think he is? Does he really think that that this instance of the Demon Immortal Pagoda is entirely for him!?"

The Demon Immortal Sect disciples were panting, and their fury had reached a boiling point.

Most furious of all were the Cultivators from the lands of South Heaven. Their rage was filled with frustration and vexation. However, they had to admit that they had obviously lost to the people of this long dead, illusory world.

Furthermore, they had lost in a fashion that was virtually impossible to accept.

Fang Yu was the exception. She stood off in the distance covering her mouth to conceal her chuckles. She was almost shaking from laughter, and her eyes had turned into beautiful crescent moons that glowed with beauty.

As for the other six Paragons, they appeared to be a bit embarrassed as they looked over at Ke Yunhai, wry smiles on their faces.

Ke Yunhai sat cross-legged in mid-air, staring blankly at the string of words. His expression flickered a few times, and he muttered to himself. Then his body flickered. Under the shocked gaze of hundreds of thousands of Demon Immortal Sect disciples, he flew toward the pagoda.

“Paragon Yunhai, what are you...” said one of the other Paragons.

“He’s definitely going to punish that guy!” said someone in the crowd. “For someone to cheat so brazenly is something that he can’t accept!”

“I’m not sure. All of a sudden I started thinking about Ke Jiushi...”

As the crowds of disciples hesitated, Ke Yunhai neared the Demon Immortal Pagoda. He stopped outside the 40th level, then calmly pulled a bag of holding out from within his robe. Everyone gaped in astonishment as he pushed the bag up against the surface of the pagoda. Then he pulled out his Paragon’s medallion.

Instantly, the bag of holding sank into the pagoda.

“Keep it up, son,” he said with a laugh. “Force your way up to the 90th level for your old man!” With that, he returned to sit cross-legged up in mid-air, completely ignoring all the crowds who were watching him.

After a moment of silence, a huge commotion exploded out.

“It’s Ke Jiusi! Dammit! I knew there was something going on behind the scenes!”

“Not fair! This is brazen cheating! I can’t accept this!!”

“So, it was Ke Jiusi all along!” said a First Peak Conclave disciple, gnashing his teeth. “That guy!!”

“Only he could have so many magic items,” said a Second Peak Inner Sect disciple, his heart filled with madness and jealousy. “He forced his way to the 40th level. This is... it’s just...”

“Cheating is one thing,” said another disciple. “But how could you be so unabashed about it? He’s actually refilling Demon Stones in the middle? Ridiculous!!”

The disciples were in an uproar. As for the South Heaven Cultivators, their hearts were pounding. Quite a few of them had gotten the feeling recently that something fishy was going on with Ke Jiusi.

That was especially true of those who knew Meng Hao. Most of those people could tell at a glance that something strange was happening. After all, the matter of Meng Hao becoming Ke Jiusi was not a secret among the group from South Heaven.

Even the people from the Ji Clan knew. However, for some reason, perhaps because of Ji Xiaoxiao, the people from the Ji Clan did not have any excessive amount of killing intent toward Meng Hao.

Han Bei could only smile wryly and try to control her ragged breathing. She couldn’t think of anything to say. However, her admiration for Meng Hao had reached the pinnacle.

Wang Lihai’s face twisted, filled once with frustration, then fury, and finally, helplessness.

Patriarch Huyan’s pupils constricted. He had long since found out that Meng Hao was Ke Jiusi, and had intentionally avoided him. Although his own identity hadn’t been revealed, his jealousy toward Meng Hao had reached a pinnacle, and transformed into flames of rage.

As for Fang Yu, she had a strange expression on her face as she looked at the 40th level. It was impossible to tell what she was thinking.

The feeling which prevailed in the hearts of the Cultivators from the Eastern Lands, Northern Reaches, Southern Domain, and Black Lands was... helplessness. Facing up against a cheater like this, there was really nothing else that they could feel.

Although many of the Demon Immortal Sect disciples were furious, there were quite a few who spoke out for Meng Hao. These were the Sect silkpants, and the members of the Demon Entente. Their support for Meng Hao caused the uproar to grow even more tumultuous.

Amidst the clamor, the Paragon of the Seventh Peak, the old man with the transcendent demeanor, slowly cracked open an eye, let out a cold snort, and then said, "PIPE DOWN!"

The shocking sound caused everything to shake.

Immediately, the disciples of the Sect closed their mouths. Their minds trembled violently.

"The Demon Immortal Pagoda shouldn't even be opened in this age," continued the old man. "It was arranged today especially for Ke Jiusi."

There was no further explanation, only this direct statement of fact. However, the minds of everyone present were sent spinning. At the same time, they all were thinking of the same question.

Why did no Elders or even Elite Apprentices appear to enter the pagoda?

Obviously, the pagoda had been opened specifically for Ke Jiusi. There were clearly people in the Sect who already knew that, and thus opted not to participate. Regardless of Elite Apprentice or Elder, if they participated, then they would owe a huge favor to the Fourth Peak.

Everyone watched on silently as the glow of magical items surrounded Meng Hao on the 40th level. Magical items and talismans were unleashed freely as Meng Hao shot out from the 40th level.

Another one of the top 100 Daoist magics appeared, causing the crowds outside to smile bitterly. They could only watch Meng Hao, unable to say anything.

They looked on as the glow of magical items within the Demon Immortal Sect went from the 40th level to the 41st. Then the 42nd, 43rd... it only took a brief moment for it to appear on the 50th level.

Then the 60th....

The entire way, the glow of magical items lit the sky. As everyone watched, they gradually began to grow numb. The exception was at every ten levels, when the Daoist magic was announced, and their hearts filled with madness and envy.

Cheating. And replenishing along the way. What could compare to chicanery like that...?

As for anger, once the Seventh Paragon openly said that the Demon Immortal Pagoda had been opened specifically for Ke Jiushi, then who present qualified to be angry...?

Moments later, though, people simply couldn't control themselves, and began to discuss the matter amongst themselves.

"Humph. Even if the Paragons do help each other, cheating to obtain good fortune isn't as good as making progress yourself one step at a time!"

"That's right! Besides, who's to say whether or not he'll be able to get past the 70th level!"

The most frustrated of all were the Cultivators from South Heaven. They were by far the most jealous and also the most angry.

In truth, the South Heaven Cultivators were all cheating. They were like people who went to take a test, but knew what the questions would be ahead of time. But then, they entered the exam room only to discover that someone else had a teacher standing off to the side to help. Well... that sort of feeling was difficult to describe.

The young man from the Imperial Bloodline Clan of the Northern Reaches ground his teeth. "I curse you to die in there!" he thought.

Also in the group from South Heaven was a young woman. Her face was calm, but her eyes shone with a bright light as she looked at the Demon Immortal Pagoda.

“My Master told me there was something special about him...” she murmured to herself. “In fact, before coming here, he especially entrusted me to keep my eyes on him. Meng Hao, what is it about you that’s so special my Master would show so much interest in you?” This young woman was none other than the Dao Child of the Blood Demon Sect of South Heaven, Li Shiqi!

61st level. 68th level. 69th level!

Meng Hao was scared out of his mind the entire time. The opponents he faced now were no longer Cultivators, but rather, bizarrely shaped Greater Demons. Some of them were enormous, big enough to squash him to death with a single swipe.

Without his shield, Meng Hao would have been dead many times over. It was amidst massive roaring sounds that he finally stepped into the 70th level.

Starting with this level, he was guaranteed one of the top 10 Daoist magics if he passed!

The top 10 Daoist magics were shocking in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, even in ancient times. In the modern Cultivation world, they were legends among legends!

As soon as he entered the 70th level, Meng Hao, before his vision even became clear, he suddenly heard a proud, lofty voice.

As soon as he heard the voice, Meng Hao gaped. The reason was because this particular voice filled him with a sensation of incredible unreliability.

“Hello, child. You want to pass through here? My Daoist name is Patriarch Reliance. Come, come. Allow the Patriarch to bestow you with some good fortune....”

Chapter 584: Withering Flame Demon Magic True Self Dao

As the familiar voice echoed in Meng Hao’s ears, he felt as if a gentle wind were blowing him back to those wonderful days in the vicious Reliance Sect.

Within that Sect was a wicked, wretched, duplicitous, unreliable old turtle....

Meng Hao's eyes widened as he saw a dark shadow appear up ahead. At the same time, the sky darkened, and snapping sounds could be heard.

The shield surrounding Meng Hao began to collapse, and nearly exploded. Then, a screech of pain could be heard, and the area up ahead of Meng Hao became light once again, revealing... a huge, fierce turtle, retreating at top speed.

The turtle was fully several thousand meters wide, with an anxious expression on its huge face. It then glared fiercely at Meng Hao.

Shocked, Meng Hao fell back a few paces as his cracked shield quickly repaired itself. As of this moment, he realized that without the shield, he would currently be crushed inside of that damnable Patriarch Reliance's mouth.

The Patriarch Reliance in his memory was far larger than this turtle in front of him. However, the unreliable appearance, his sneak attack method, and his tone of voice were all exactly the same as the Patriarch Reliance that Meng Hao knew.

A strange expression appeared on Meng Hao's face as he looked at this Patriarch Reliance. New hatred piled up in his heart. He thought back to the untold trials and tribulations he had gone through to help Patriarch Reliance, only to be ripped off in the end by the stingy old turtle.

In the end, Patriarch Reliance even tried to eat him! It was only because of the reminder from Guyiding Tri-Rain, and his recitation of the Demon Sealing Scripture, that unreliable Patriarch Reliance was sent running.

"How strange," said Patriarch Reliance, glaring at him. "Something about your expression seems a bit off. Don't tell me you recognize this old Patriarch?" His expression was strange as he looked at Meng Hao and the shield surrounding him. He gritted his jaw, looking inexplicably hateful.

"The Patriarch hates cheating children more than anything else, and you're obviously a cheater! You, you, you... you dare to try to pass through here with a shield! Bamboozler!!"

Meng Hao backed up a few steps. Looking Patriarch Reliance over carefully, he suddenly said, "Ancient Dao; tenacious desire to seal the heavens...."

After speaking a few words, there was no reaction whatsoever from Patriarch Reliance. In fact, he seemed even more astonished, confused, and curious.

“What the fudge! What are you doing, cursing me?”

Meng Hao backed up a few more steps, abandoning the Demon Sealing Scripture. After another look at Patriarch Reliance, he suddenly laughed.

The laugh contained a bit of bashfulness; at the same time, a strange light could be seen shining in his eyes. The entire expression caused Patriarch Reliance to tremble with astonishment.

“What the fudge! What gives? What the hell! What kind of fishy thing is going here? Kid, there’s something wrong with your expression....”

“Listen, bitch!” cried Meng Hao, “I’m not just gonna curse you, I’m gonna beat the crap out of you!” Roaring, he leaped up into the air and slapped his bag of holding, causing a vast quantity of talismans to appear.

Every single talisman emanated shocking power, blinding light, and incredible pressure. Patriarch Reliance’s eyes went wide.

“Too vicious!!!” cried Patriarch Reliance, retreating backward at top speed. The feeling he got from the talismans caused his heart to race with fear. Before he could retreat too far, Meng Hao waved his hand, causing the talismans to ignite. An immense, red glow could be seen, from within which exploded countless Thunder Dragons. Their roars filled the air as they shot toward Patriarch Reliance.

Amidst the echoing booms, Patriarch Reliance shrieked and hollered, dodging back and forth. His rage billowed up, and he was about to say something when Meng Hao waved his hand again, causing seventy or eighty more talismans to fly out. As they exploded chaotically, the air shook and the ground was torn to pieces. Patriarch Reliance howled and charged toward Meng Hao’s shield.

Meng Hao clearly had no intention of evading or dodging. He allowed the old turtle to slam into his shield, after which a huge explosion could be heard along with a miserable shriek. Patriarch Reliance immediately tumbled backward, during which time Meng Hao waved his arm, causing more than a thousand talismans to be hurled out.

These were all talismans personally created by Ke Yunhai. They needed no direction from Meng Hao. All he had to do was throw them out, and they would voluntarily transform into divine abilities and Daoist magic. Up above in the air, more than a thousand statues suddenly appeared, all of which instantly dove down toward Patriarch Reliance.

This barrage of attacks had Patriarch Reliance knocked into a daze. He shot backward relentlessly, his shell on the verge of being shattered, his heart filled with astonishment, as howls of rage emitted from his mouth.

“I surrender! The Patriarch surrenders! ... Fudge, you’re such a cheat! I never cheat like this!!”

“I don’t accept surrender!” growled Meng Hao. No matter what was said, he would have his revenge. He waved his hand again, causing another thousand talismans to appear. Bloodcurdling shrieks continued to echo out. Patriarch Reliance trembled as he attempted to flee this way and that. The feeling of frustration in his heart had reached a pinnacle.

“Dammit, DAMMIT!” howled Patriarch Reliance, “Is there a grudge between us?!”

BAM!

Meng Hao produced several hundred more talismans.

“What did I do to piss you off? Huh? Come on, tell me!!” Patriarch Reliance was on the verge of tears. He was incapable of evasion, and could do nothing more than retract his trembling limbs and head into his shell. “I was just born recently, I haven’t even grown up yet. How could I have pissed you off?!?!”

“You haven’t pissed me off,” said Meng Hao. “But that doesn’t mean you won’t piss me off in the future!” He waved his hand again, causing more miserable shrieks to come from Patriarch Reliance.

“Stick your head out of your shell,” commanded Meng Hao, producing another large amassment of talismans and staring at Patriarch Reliance.

“I won’t stick my head out even if you beat me to death! You’re just a big bully! You’re incomparable! You... you’re impossible!!”

“If I don’t bully you now, then you’ll bully me in the future!” said Meng Hao coldly. He produced even more talismans, which he continuously tossed out. Booming filled the air, along with Patriarch Reliance’s miserable shrieks. He retreated more, weeping.

His shell was now almost half destroyed, and his body quivered as if from coldness. His head was pulled back tight inside, as if he really refused to stick it out even if he died.

Meng Hao looked at him, then leaped up onto his shell. He slapped his bag of holding to produce another magical item that Ke Yunhai had made for him. It was a small blade, seemingly dull, but in fact equipped with a fiercely sharp coldness. Meng Hao hefted the blade then squatted down and began to carve some words into Patriarch Reliance’s shell.

“Meng Hao’s turtle!”

After carving the three words, Meng Hao patted the turtle shell, then smiled complacently.

“We’ll call it quits today. It might be difficult for you, but I hope that in the future you’ll remember that you’re MY turtle!”

Patriarch Reliance glared at him, clenching his jaw. He knew that Meng Hao had carved something onto his back, and had long since made an inward determination to pay back this insult.

Meng Hao stamped his foot and flew up into the air, preparing to move on to the 71st level. However, as soon as he flew into the air, he suddenly seemed to think of something. He looked down just in the moment in which Patriarch Reliance stuck his head out of his shell.

Meng Hao suddenly smiled, then subconsciously pulled out a talisman. Frightened, Patriarch Reliance retracted his head as fast as lightning, then howled, “Didn’t you say that we would call it quits today?! You, you, you... you tricked me!!”

Meng Hao’s body flashed and he suddenly appeared directly in front of Patriarch Reliance, who was retracted in his shell. His powerful shield made it so that he wasn’t afraid at all of any sort of sneak attack by the turtle.

“I’ll let you off this time,” said Meng Hao earnestly, “but I’m still trying to decide whether or not to destroy you to get the reward for this level.”

Patriarch Reliance trembled within his turtle shell. He then opened his mouth to spit out golden beam of light that shot toward Meng Hao. It pierced through the shield, transforming into a magical symbol.

The magical symbol was something that looked like a seed, which emanated colorful light as well as an indescribable pressure. It gave off a feeling of splendor, which instantly caused the rest of the world to grow dark, as if the sky itself had dimmed.

Because it contained a Dao of Heaven and Earth, existing in a place above the natural laws of the world, anyone who cultivated it would have a great Dao!

This was one of the top 10 Daoist magics of the 3,000!

Even in the Demon Immortal Sect, this was truly an incredible and shocking magical technique. Its origin was unclear, and even in ancient times few people understood it clearly.

Meng Hao took a deep breath as he examined the magic. His heart began to beat out of control. Other than the Soul Divergence Incantation, this was the most powerful Daoist Magic that he had seen in the entire time he had been in this ancient world of the Demon Immortal Sect.

“I wonder what Daoist magic this is?!” he thought.

He took a deep breath and raised his hand to push his finger down into the magical symbol. Instantly, his brain filled with a roaring sound.

The mark required no enlightenment. As soon as his finger touched it, it rushed into his body to his heart, where it transformed into a seed.

This... was the seed of a great Dao, one of the top 10 Daoist magics. It required no enlightenment. In fact, enlightenment was useless. This seed would only sprout in the mind of someone destined to receive it!

If destiny existed between him and this seed, it would always be there. Were there no destiny, then forcing it would be useless!

The illusory seed rapidly transformed into nine parts, seven of which rushed toward his seven nascent souls.

The other two remained in his heart.

The instant the seven seeds made contact with his Nascent Souls, they began to tremble. Shockingly, they rapidly began to solidify from something illusory into something real. It seemed... that Meng Hao had acquired their approval, and that they had chosen to sprout within him!

Meanwhile, in the outside world, the eyes of all the Demon Immortal Sect disciples were fixed on the glow of magical light on the 70th level of the pagoda. This was especially true of the Cultivators from South Heaven.

Even Ke Yunhai's expression was one of increased anticipation. As for the other Paragons, they were watching closely as well. All of them knew that this was a chance to get one of the top 10 Daoist magics.

In this moment, the sky above the Demon Immortal Sect suddenly filled with roiling clouds. A red glow filled the lands, and a beam of bright light shot down. As soon as the beam of light appeared, the Seventh Peak Paragon suddenly opened his eyes, which glowed brightly.

"This is...."

The light fell, turning blurry, and then splitting into three parts.

The meaning of such a sign was something that most people wouldn't understand. However, the Paragons present all watched on with serious looks.

Ke Yunhai began to pant slightly. Any other matter that occurred would not have left him so visibly shaken. However, since it affected Ke Jiushi, he couldn't help but be moved. His eyes shone with a strange light, and he almost couldn't bring himself to believe that what was happening was true.

The three beams of light split again, turning into nine beams of light. In the blink of an eye, those nine beams of light... shockingly merged together into the form of an enormous figure.

It was a somewhat indistinct figure, but it was still possible to see that it was Meng Hao's face!

It was like a gigantic, magical image, shocking enough to cause Heaven and Earth to tremble.

Next, the magical image opened its mouth and began to speak with an archaic voice that filled the entire Demon Immortal Sect.

“One bloodline, transformed into three souls. Three souls tempered into nine divinities. Nine divinities refined into my true self. I am... Withering Flame Demon Magic True Self Dao!”

In this same instant, for some apparently unfathomable reason, one of the three inverted Demon Mountains hanging up above the Demon Immortal Sect, the mountain which seemed to be formed of molten stone... suddenly trembled!

Everyone, including the Seven Paragons and all the disciples, were completely shaken.

Chapter 585: The Voice of Lord Li

Three inverted Demon Mountains. One was completely formed of ice and frost, containing boundless coldness. The second was crimson red like blood, almost like an immense pile of corpses. Between those two was a mountain of molten rock, like fire, that brimmed with the most supreme dignity.

The mountain that was currently trembling was none other than the Demon Mountain of molten stone.

It trembled only slightly, but the incredible rumbling shook the minds and hearts of everyone within the Demon Immortal Sect. The seven Paragons, including Ke Yunhai, could not be taking the matter more seriously. All of them actually rose to their feet to look at the Demon Mountain.

The rest of the disciples didn't quite understand what was happening, but what they did know was that considering the Demon Mountain was trembling, obviously... whatever was happening inside the Demon Immortal Pagoda involved Heaven-defying good fortune.

The faces of the Cultivators from South Heaven all changed dramatically. Most were filled with mad jealousy, as well as the wish that they could become Ke Jiusi.

Fang Yu took a deep breath. Although she had been somewhat unsure regarding Meng Hao's identity, now that she saw the enormous magical sign in the sky, she suddenly realized that he was indeed Ke Jiusi.

"That little brat..." she thought, a smile brightening her eyes.

Off on the distant mountain peak, Zhixiang was panting as she looked up at the Demon mountain of molten rock. Her eyes widened.

"Withering Flame Demon Magic True Self Dao... so it's that art. Just what sort of Heaven-defying lucky opportunity has Meng Hao come across? He's actually acquired a Daoist magic that has a deep connection to Molten Rock Demon Mountain!"

Everyone had different thoughts and reactions. The one similar thing shared by everyone was intense jealousy and frustration regarding Meng Hao.

In the moment that the Molten Rock Demon Mountain trembled, a muffled voice spoke out from within it, seemingly from within a seal. Its cadence was odd, and the sound of it echoed out everywhere.

"The Withering Flame Demon Magic once again appears under Heaven. We sealed the unresolved Karma, and cultivated the True Self Dao. Finally, everything will... eee?" The voice suddenly stopped talking in mid-sentence.

After a long moment, a light sigh could be heard from within the Molten Rock Demon Mountain. "Night..."

The sound echoed out throughout this world, causing everyone to feel shocked. Within the Demon Immortal Pagoda, Meng Hao's eyes snapped open, and they were filled with a strange light. In his mind, the seed of the Daoist magic was solidified, and would never fade.

This Daoist magic seed was separated into seven strands which were connected to his seven Nascent Souls. Although his Cultivation base had not changed, Meng Hao felt as if there were something different about it.

Muttering to himself, he rose to his feet and looked down at Patriarch Reliance, who was still tucked away cautiously in his shell, looking out at Meng Hao. Meng Hao chuckled.

“Old turtle Reliance, we’ll be meeting again in the future. See you later.” With a laugh, he shot up toward the descending beam of light.

Just when Meng Hao was about to touch the beam of light, Patriarch Reliance stuck his head out of his shell and arrogantly shouted, “You’re the old turtle! Your whole family are all turtles! Come on! BRING IT! I’ll give you some good fortune! Since you came you ... AHH!?!?”

Even in the midst of his self-righteous rant, just when he thought he was able to earn some face back, before he could even finish speaking, Meng Hao, who was just about to fuse with the glowing light, stopped in place and turned to glance back at him.

That glance caused Patriarch Reliance to start shaking all over. A whizzing sound could be heard as he retracted his neck and head at top speed.

“You damned, perverted cheater!” he grumbled within his shell. “Get outta here...! One of these days, I’m gonna grow up, and then, I’ll get my revenge!”

Meng Hao looked thoughtfully at the several thousand meter wide turtle Reliance, and his eyes lit up.

“The previous generations of Demon Sealers captured this unreliable old turtle to be my Dao Protector. That basically means that they prepared a mount for me. However, after all these years, I still haven’t gotten a real mount....

“I wonder what it would feel like to have an old turtle as a mount?” Having reached this point in his train of thoughts, he suddenly began to palpitate with eagerness. After all, he knew that once he got back to the lands of South Heaven, it would be impossible to further punish the old turtle.

With that, Meng Hao moved out from within the light and shot back down to stand on Patriarch Reliance’s back. The instant that happened, Patriarch Reliance quivered. Inwardly, he was filled with intense regret, and was scared witless. He had no idea what Meng Hao was planning to do.

“Alright, spit it out,” said Meng Hao with a smile. “Do you admit it or not? You’re my turtle!”

Patriarch Reliance remained in his shell, gnashing his teeth. After a long moment of thought, he suddenly realized that this Meng Hao had suddenly begun to emit an enormous and terrifying aura. It was obvious that he had produced another vast quantity of talismans.

On the verge of going mad, Patriarch Reliance, feeling even more in the wrong, shouted, “I admit it! I admit it, alright? You big bully! I’m... I’m just a tiny little turtle, that’s all! You’ll, you’ll, you’ll... you’ll get what’s coming to you!”

“As long as you admit it, then I’m happy,” said Meng Hao, finding a comfortable position and sitting down. He still held all of the talismans in his hand. “Now, let’s go. Take me out of the 70th level!”

Patriarch Reliance stood stock still, stunned. No matter what he had imagined, he could never have predicted that Meng Hao would make such a demand. Even as he stood there stupefied, Meng Hao tossed out the talismans.

When they landed on Patriarch Reliance, a huge booming echoed out. Divine abilities and magical techniques shook everything. The sky above was rent, and Patriarch Reliance let out a miserable shriek and instantly began to move at top speed.

“Yeahhhh, that’s the right attitude,” laughed Meng Hao. “Come, come. Fly up into the air!” He held talismans in his hand like a whip. Beneath him, the turtle was like a little pony, completely under his control. Patriarch Reliance was on the verge of tears as he carried Meng Hao up toward the bright light.

He felt intense regret. He regretted his own courting of death. Just when his opponent had been about to leave, he had to shout out those last few words. The result... was that the damned, inhuman creature had returned for him.

Filled with a feeling of maltreatment, Patriarch Reliance let out a venting roar as they fused into the light. In the blink of an eye, both of them vanished.

When they reappeared, they were in the 71st level.

On the outside world, everyone, including Ke Yunhai and even Zhixiang, stared, dumbfounded at the 71st level.

In addition to the glowing dot which represented Meng Hao, they could also see an additional, massive glow that looked like... the outline of a turtle.

Soon, it became apparent that Meng Hao was riding the turtle.

The Demon Immortal Sect disciples seemed to be on the verge of going insane.

“How could there be a turtle in there?”

“That turtle is huge! It must be several thousand meters wide! Dammit! DAMMIT! Ke Jiusi has gone way overboard. He’s a cheater? Fine. He has an incredible dad? Okay. But, but, but... but how could he cheat even more WITHIN his cheating!?!?”

“What exactly does he think he’s going to accomplish with such a gigantic turtle?!?!?”

Even more in a frenzy were the Cultivators from South Heaven. Their organs almost seemed to be on the verge of exploding out of their bodies, and their expressions filled with intense envy and jealousy. The jealousy even turned into hatred, filling them with very complex feelings.

“Patriarch Crow Divinity sure lives up to his reputation....” thought Zhao Fang with a bitter smile. He looked at the 71st level and sighed.

Wang Lihai’s hands were clenched tightly into fists, and his eyes brimmed with frustration and, even more so, helplessness.

Han Bei could only blink, completely at a loss for words regarding Meng Hao. His current actions overlapped with the deep impression he had left on her years ago; it suddenly gave her the intense premonition that, in the future, he would have limitless possibilities.

“Relying on his status and the power of his Clan? Could he piss me off any more?” said the young man from the Imperial Bloodline clan of the Northern Reaches. “Even more brazen, he is riding such an enormous turtle as a mount! That’s only because the identity he got has a great dad!

Dammit!” Usually, it was other people in the Northern Reaches who had such thoughts about him. This was the first time in his life that he had ever felt jealous of another person.

However, at the moment, he had no choice but to admit that he felt intense jealousy toward Meng Hao, and even felt as if what was happening was unfair.

Ke Yunhai cleared his throat and looked at the other six Paragons. He made no attempt to explain, and was in fact also somewhat puzzled. At the same time, though, he was quite happy.

Even as everyone watched on with complicated emotions, Meng Hao and the giant turtle were surrounded by the glow of magical items. They rose up from the 71st level to the 72nd. Then the 73rd, and the 74th....

When they reached the 80th level, all of the disciples in the Demon Immortal Sect, including the Cultivators from South Heaven, felt their hearts tightening. What they were thinking about wasn't whether or not Meng Hao would be able to pass this level. Instead, they were wondering about what good fortune he would seize as he did.

To watch with their own eyes as someone seized all of the good fortune that they had dreamed about for their entire lives was truly driving them mad.

If Meng Hao were doing by means of his own skill, then it would be one thing. In that case, at least they could console themselves in some way. But instead, he relied on his identity, and cheating, to the extent that they almost coughed up blood.

“I refuse to accept this!” said one of the Ji Clan members through gritted teeth, his hands clenched tightly at his sides.

Similar reactions could be seen in both the Ji and Fang Clans, with the exception of Fang Yu. The sizable group of Cultivators from other areas in the Eastern Lands were the same. In the end, it didn't matter what they were thinking, though. They could do nothing to prevent the blinding glow they currently saw on the 80th level.

Inundated by that glow of magical items, the 80th level seemed to be on the verge of collapse. Everyone could just barely make out the image of the turtle charging around violently. A moment later, a boundless glow shone out from the 80th level, along with an incredible roaring sound. An ancient, undulating voice began to speak, its cadence odd, its pace neither quick nor slow.

“Since you have passed the 80th level of the Demon Immortal Pagoda, you shall be bestowed with one of the top 10 Daoist magics... Nine Heavens Destruction.”

This voice caused everyone to stare blankly, not because of the ancientness of the voice, but rather, because of the voice’s manner of speaking.

Zhixiang’s eyes went wide, and she began to pant, a look of disbelief written on her face.

“That’s....”

The seven Paragons, including Ke Yunhai, all stood up. Their expressions all changed, even more so than they had when the previous Demon Mountain had been shaken.

The suns around them trembled and distorted. Clearly, they had been thoroughly shaken by the appearance of this voice.

“That’s....”

“That’s the voice of Lord Li!!”

Chapter 586: I’ll Take You the Rest of the Way

The Seven Paragons instantly began to grow even more shocked.

“The voice of Lord Li!!”

“Impossible! Lord Li is sleeping! If he had woken up, then the three Demon Mountains would immediately shine for tens of millions of meters in all directions, and the two Holy Lands would be unsealed. Everyone would know, and all the experts in the Ninth Mountain and Sea would come to offer their respects!”

“This isn’t Lord Li, but it’s definitely his voice? But why?”

“Something about the voice seems off... as if it’s weak?”

As everyone in the outside world was astonished, in the 80th level of the Demon Immortal Pagoda, everything was collapsing. Meng Hao sat cross-legged on top of Patriarch Reliance. Up ahead of him was a violet-colored mark that flickered with violet light.

As the light spread out, the collapsing world grew silent, and everything stopped moving.

The voice echoing about in the outside world could also be heard around Meng Hao, and its source... was none other than the violet mark in front of him.

The top 10 Daoist magics didn't require enlightenment, just good luck. After acquiring one of them, if destiny called for it, it would become a seed of Daoist magic. If there was no connection, no amount of pleading would do any good.

Meng Hao raised up his right hand silently. As soon as it touched the violet mark, a tremor ran through his body. The violet mark fused through his finger into his body. Then, it magically appeared in his mind, transforming into an illusory scene.

Within that scene, he could see a vague figure lifting its hand up. As it lifted its hand up, a first Heaven arose. Another wave of a hand caused it to split into two, forming two Heavens.

In the end, there were nine. Nine Heavens Destruction. All things become ancient.

“You have a destiny that is connected to this magic. I deliver this Dao to you.... It complements the Withering Flame Demon Magic.... I've been waiting a long time. Could it be that you're the one I've been waiting for? Come. Pass the 99 levels. Pass the three mountains. Pass the two lands. If you can come to stand in front of me... if you can win my approval... then you... are my successor.” When Meng Hao opened his eyes, the voice seemed to continue to echo in his ears. His eyes were filled with blankness, but they quickly grew clear.

Within his mind, the violet symbol transformed into the seed of a great Dao. However, it was rough, unrefined. Meng Hao would need to continue to contemplate it before being able to unleash it fully.

As he opened his eyes, the world in front of him resumed its collapse. As it did, the 81st level neared.

“That voice....” thought Meng Hao, his eyes filled with a touch of perplexity. “Something seemed odd about the voice. His status was definitely different than the average person. The way he spoke was the same. He... who was he?” He took a deep breath and looked at the bag of holding given him by Ke Yunhai. The Demon Stones, talismans, and magical items therein were already running low. However, the two Daoist magics that he most wanted to acquire hadn’t appeared.

“The Nine Heavens Treasured Body Seal, and the secret technique of Fleshly Sanctification....” Meng Hao’s eyes glittered. Without hesitation, he slapped his hand down onto Patriarch Reliance. The turtle, feeling as wronged as ever, shot toward the 81st level.

As soon as they entered it, roaring filled the area and rose up into the sky. Meng Hao’s protective shield was surrounded by the vast quantities of talismans and magical items that he tossed out into the air. Wailing and shrieking, Patriarch Reliance used all his evasion abilities as they roared along.

81st level. 82nd level....

Meng Hao charged forward, forcing his way up. He used the magical items and talismans given him by Ke Yunhai to force his way through every barrier. As he proceeded onward, the disciples of the Demon Immortal Sect panted. As of now, they had to admit that... Meng Hao was obviously about to reach the pinnacle!

83rd!

84th!

85th!

The glow of magical items seeped out from within the pagoda, shining on everything in the area. By the time Meng Hao reached the 87th level, the entire area was filled with a bright glow. He was using up even more Demon Stones, as well as vast quantities of talismans. More than half of his magical items had been destroyed.

Using this unsightly method in which no cost was spared, he finally forced his way to the 89th level.

As soon as he entered, the view around him changed. What appeared in front of him was, shockingly, an ancient battlefield. Countless Cultivators could be seen in all directions, all of them engaged in fierce warfare.

As soon as Meng Hao appeared in the middle of the battlefield, the Daoist magics of all the surrounding countless Cultivators roared directly toward Meng Hao's shield, instantly causing it to almost be destroyed.

The level of difficulty here was unprecedented as far as Meng Hao was concerned. Heaven and Earth shook; all he could do was throw out more and more talismans, and destroy more and more magical items.

Despite everything, the 89th level was difficult beyond compare.

He was currently positioned in the exact center of the battlefield, the ends of which were not visible. Besieged on all sides, this was a position the he was fundamentally incapable of reaching on his own. Even with all the talismans and magical items forged with Ke Yunhai's life force, it was still difficult for him to make even the slightest progress.

Countless Cultivators and innumerable divine abilities seemed to be on the verge of completely overwhelming him.

His face was pale white, and Patriarch Reliance appeared to be on the verge of gasping his last breath. As it turned out, he actually had no hatred for Meng Hao. During their path of battle up to this point, they had even come to form something almost like a friendship.

"At the most, I can hold out for twelve more breaths...." thought Meng Hao, his face flickering. He would quickly run out of Demon Stones, talismans, and magical items. In twelve breaths of time, he would no longer be able to fight back, and he would be teleported out in defeat.

"Don't tell me I'm really going to have to wait for that second chance...." he thought, breathing in deeply. He didn't want to have a second chance. He wanted to get everything he needed in one shot. If he was forced to try a second time, it would mean Ke Yunhai would have to forge even more magic items for him. Meng Hao wasn't willing to see that happen.

In this critical moment, the Demon Immortal Sect disciples on the outside were watching with rapt attention. Everyone was thinking different things; however, virtually, all of the Cultivators from South Heaven were hoping beyond hope that Meng Hao would fail.

They desired nothing more than Meng Hao to falter here. It was a case of ‘if I can’t have it, then nobody else can have it either.’ Almost as if their negative thoughts were actually effective in some way, Meng Hao had already wasted nearly an hour in the 89th level.

From the perspective of the onlookers, the glow of magical items was beginning to shrink and grow dim. This caused the South Heaven Cultivators to start to get a bit excited.

One of the Array Cultivators from the Eastern Lands Ji Clan was usually quite proud of the fame of his name. However, he apparently forgot that momentarily and suddenly said, “He’s gonna fail!! Hahaha! He opened the devil’s gate and strode a crooked path with his corrupt methods! But in the end, he has no way to achieve victory. He definitely won’t be able to get past this level!

“Heaven and Earth are deep and profound; the wind is vast and mighty. Cultivators like us must rely on our own power! How could we possibly rely on the power of others? This guy has had an unfair advantage today, so he will certainly meet defeat in the end!”

Even as everyone railed against Meng Hao, as everyone hoped that he would fail, the glow of his magical items continued to shrink down and get darker.

However... it was at this moment that Ke Yunhai’s eyes filled with determination. He suddenly sprang into motion, moving with incredible speed to appear outside the 89th level. He lifted his hand, within which appeared his Paragon’s medallion. His expression was solemn, and his hair whipped about him as he raised the medallion up to push it against the surface of the tower.

The other six paragons saw what he was doing and instantly began to speak to attempt to stop him.

“Yunhai, you can’t!”

The Seventh Paragon, the old man with the transcendent demeanor, seemed especially moved. He directly appeared next to Ke Yunhai and said, “Yunhai, think three times before you do this!”

Ke Yunhai was silent for a moment. Looking at the Seventh Paragon, he said, “My limit has been reached. I won’t live more than a few more months.”

The old man hesitated, looking at Ke Yunhai for a long moment before finally sighing. “If you do this, I’m afraid you won’t even last that long.”

“Old Seventh, you have lived your life for the Dao, and have no children. You don’t understand the responsibility of being a father. Right now, I only have one child, Jiusi. It doesn’t matter when exactly I return to the dust. I just hope that after I leave, he can be as happy as before.

“Jiusi has always been a silkpants, and I’ve never been able to rest at ease because of that....” Ke Yunhai sighed and glanced at the other Paragons. “But now, he’s chosen the path of body tempering. Since that’s the case, I will spare no effort to help him acquire the Nine Heavens Treasured Body Seal and... the mysterious art of Fleshly Sanctification.” Without any further hesitation, he shoved his Paragon’s medallion up against the outside of the pagoda.

When they touched together, Ke Yunhai’s body suddenly trembled. He was old to begin with, but now he grew even older. His aura instantly grew weaker.

It was at this same time that, Meng Hao, within the 89th level, ran out of talismans. His magical items were exhausted, and his protective shield was virtually completely faded. Booming sounds could be heard as it began to explode.

“It’s over....” he sighed. He watched as the shield exploded, and countless magical techniques threatened to overwhelm him. However, it was at this moment that a towering figure suddenly appeared to stand in front of him.

The figure’s face was the same one that Meng Hao had seen when he first arrived in this world.... Ke Yunhai.

Ke Yunhai stood by Meng Hao, as if he were his entire world. He was like a tree, protecting Meng Hao from the wind, blocking all of the countless divine abilities shooting toward him.

The divine abilities, Daoist magics, and countless figures, all suddenly came to a standstill. Everything grew still; the entire world became quiet.

When Meng Hao saw the figure, he trembled. His heart seized as he realized that he recognized the figure as.... Ke Yunhai.

Ke Yunhai smiled at Meng Hao, then reached out and tousled his hair. A dotting smile appeared on his face. A look appeared in his eyes that seemed to say that no matter the occasion, the person there in front of him was his young boy, still not yet grown up.

“Jiusi, don’t be afraid. Daddy’s here to take you the rest of the way.”

It was a simple sentence, but as soon as Meng Hao heard it, it caused uncontrollable emotions to swell up within him. He thought of his own father, but at the same time, the image of his own father that existed in his mind seemed to overlap with Ke Yunhai. In this moment, he actually forgot that he wasn’t really Ke Jiusi!

“Dad....” he said, gaping at Ke Yunhai. One breath earlier, he had been on the verge of failure. The next breath, he had hope. The intensity of the reversal was such that the image of Ke Yunhai was branded onto his heart.... It was the image of... a father.

“Don’t worry,” laughed Ke Yunhai. “Your dad isn’t dead yet. We’re going to get through this battle together. Our dad and son team is going to pass this level together!” With that, he turned and waved his hand. Heaven and Earth began to collapse, and a terrifying, indescribable power transformed into a roaring whirlpool that began to sweep about. As it expanded, everything it touched, collapsed. The sky grew blurry, and all the figures in the area were transformed into flying ash.

Next to Ke Yunhai suddenly appeared a floating oil lamp. The wick of the lamp was a phoenix and its body was a dragon!

Meng Hao took a deep breath, and his heart filled with incredible enthusiasm. He nodded his head, then stood up by Ke Yunhai, by his father, and proceeded forward.

One in front, one behind. One father and one son!

Patriarch Reliance’s eyes went wide as he stared at Ke Yunhai. His mind trembled, and his expression filled with fear. His head shrank back into his shell as the gleam of realization filled his eyes. Now he understood Meng Hao’s background.

“Dammit. His dad’s a Paragon! No wonder he’s so crazy. No wonder he can bully me so easily!”

Chapter 587: Why Are You Doing This?

Ke Yunhai took up the lead. As of now, he seemed to have returned to the way he was in the prime of his life. His Cultivation base was at its peak, although Meng Hao had no way to comprehend what realm it was in.

“Jiusi, in the great Nine Mountains and Seas, the path of cultivation is comprised of Spirit, Immortal, Ancient, and Dao!” He waved his hand, and the world collapsed. The 89th level, which had been so difficult for Meng Hao, was destroyed in an instant.

As the 90th level neared, another battlefield spread out in front of Meng Hao. It was boundless, such that in the sky above, nine suns could be seen. The land was ancient and archaic. Meng Hao could see countless giants on the battlefield, and even giant Demons!

It seemed as if this battlefield were even more ancient than the Demon Immortal Sect.

“This place is a reflection of the Archeon world. It is neither real nor false. It exists within a thought.... According to legend, the Archeon world is the origin of the Nine Mountains and Seas.” Ke Yunhai moved forward, waving his hand. Countless incoming roaring figures instantly turned into ash.

Meng Hao stood behind Ke Yunhai, his expression one of excitement.

“It is said that the Nine Lords of the great Nine Mountains and Seas actually come from the Archeon world. They are not spirits of the Nine Mountains and Seas. That includes our Lord Li of the Ninth Mountain and Sea!

“Of course legends are just legends. They might be true, they might be false. Either way, you should know the story.” Ke Yunhai stamped his foot down, and a roaring sound filled the air. Ripples expanded out in all directions. Everything that existed for tens of thousands of meters in all directions began to shake, and then directly exploded into pieces.

“Your father is at the peak of the Ancient Realm, half a step into the Dao Realm. Originally speaking, I should have limitless longevity and be able to... enjoy a life as long as that of the Nine Mountains and Seas.” He proceeded forward, and the land beneath his feet began to shrink. He pulled Meng Hao along by his arm, striding forward with seemingly boundless steps.

Patriarch Reliance watched them from far off in the distance, and his heart suddenly trembled. He plastered himself down onto the ground, praying that Meng Hao had already forgotten about him.

Meng Hao moved along with Ke Yunhai, having completely forgotten about Patriarch Reliance. In a single moment, they were now in a completely different location on the boundless battlefield.

“However, Lord Li returned the life of Heaven to the masses,” he said softly. “He believes that for Cultivators to cultivate eternal life is an injustice to Heaven and Earth. He buried the path to the next life, sealed the Dao Realm so that it cannot be tread. In the end, we must forfeit our lives. That is how... the limit on longevity began.”

He stood there, his long hair draped around him, looking very much like a Paragon.

Or, you might say that... he truly was a Paragon. He pushed his hand down toward the ground. Instantly, it began to rumble, shattering into multiple layers, which then collapsed into each other.

“This level... is now passed,” he said. He lifted his hand, and the entire world was shattered into fragments. All the lives on the battlefield were destroyed, and a huge crater spread out on down below. There, in the deepest part of the crater, a coffin could be seen.

When Meng Hao saw the coffin, his entire person filled with rumbling. The surface of the coffin was carved with nine butterflies.

“According to legend,” Ke Yunhai said coolly, “a coffin existed in the Archean world. Although it existed for countless years, no one ever knew who rested inside of the coffin, nor did anyone know where it came from.” The entire world around them vanished. At the same time, a seal appeared, flying out to float in front of Ke Yunhai.

Ke Yunhai looked at it, and smiled. He turned, waving his sleeve to cause the seal to shoot toward Meng Hao.

“Assimilate this seal. Father will stand guard over you.”

As soon as the seal touched his forehead, it vanished. Meng Hao’s body trembled, and, shockingly, five huge characters appeared in his mind.

Nine Heavens Treasured Body Seal!

This was exactly what Meng Hao had wanted to acquire, one of the top 10 Daoist magics specifically focused on body tempering!

The seal spun in a circle in Meng Hao's mind, surging up with a power of expulsion. It almost seemed as if this Daoist magic was not destined to be with Meng Hao, as if it was not something he could gain enlightenment of to turn into a great Dao seed.

Seeing the Daoist magic suddenly beginning to grow faint, Meng Hao's mind shook. It was in this moment, however, that a warm hand clasped down onto his shoulder.

"Don't worry, father will help you subjugate the magic!" As soon as the gentle voice entered Meng Hao's mind, he grew calm. At the same time, an indescribable pressure exploded out from Ke Yunhai. As it bore down on Meng Hao, he did nothing to interfere with it. However, the seal in his mind began to tremble and struggle in frustration.

In response to the struggling, Ke Yunhai let out a cold snort. All struggling was destroyed, completely shattered. The seal lost any will of its own. It remained in Meng Hao's mind, slowly fusing in, transforming into the seed of a great Dao.

"I erased its will," said Ke Yunhai with a smile. "Although the Dao will is gone, it still does not conform to your spirit. You won't be able to cultivate it right away. Since it insisted on disobeying you, I had no choice but to destroy it.

"Okay, let's go. On to the next level!" With that, he turned and headed forward. Meng Hao took a deep breath and followed in his tracks.

The two of them passed the 91st level, the 92nd level, and the 93rd level....

Meng Hao didn't need to do anything the entire time. Everything was handled by Ke Yunhai. He was cool and unhurried, waving his hand to destroy worlds. The sight of it left Meng Hao completely shaken.

If Ke Yunhai could do this here, there was no need to even mention what he could accomplish in the outside world.

Earlier....

The Demon Immortal Sect disciples outside watched Ke Yunhai push his hand against the surface of the pagoda and then close his eyes in meditation. As soon as he closed his eyes, shockingly, a second dot of light appeared on the 89th level.

In addition to Meng Hao, there were now two glowing dots. This dot, however, was incredibly shocking. It might even be better to call it a sun than a dot of light.

“That’s... that’s Paragon Yunhai? It’s... it’s really him! This is too... too...”

“That’s definitely Paragon Yunhai....”

Everyone could do a little more than stare in complete stupefaction. Never could they ever have imagined that cheating... could possibly be carried out to this shocking extent.

Almost as soon as the sun appeared on the 89th level, the level collapsed. Meng Hao and the sun then proceeded on to the 90th level. Within a few breaths of time, a brilliant glow filled the sky as the 90th level was passed!

At the same time, countless beautiful flowers descended down in the area around the Demon Immortal Pagoda. They merged together to form one gigantic lotus.

Many people instantly recognized what this was. This was one of the top 10 Daoist magics. It didn’t count as a secret technique; this was the one and only body tempering Daoist magic known as the Nine Heavens Treasured Body Seal.

Even as an unprecedented surge of jealousy filled the hearts of the onlookers, suddenly, the beautiful flower began to show signs of instability. Immediately, the hearts of all the onlookers quivered.

“Incompatible! It’s incompatible! Hahaha! Ke Jiusi has no way to gain enlightenment of this particular Daoist magic!”

“The will of Heaven! This is definitely the will of Heaven!!”

Yet, even as their hearts raced, suddenly, pressure from Ke Yunhai spread out. Everyone watched dumbfounded as the pressure exerted by a Paragon caused the will of the previously unstable flower to be erased, and it was forced into submission.

The scene instantly caused the Demon Immortal disciples to stare with wide eyes. The ones who had just spoken instantly revealed expressions of incredible frustration.

Odd looks filled their eyes, and the exact same question spun through all of their minds.

“Dammit! Why couldn’t I have such an awesome dad!?!?!?”

A second question then filled the minds of some of the onlookers.

“How come my dad isn’t a Paragon...?”

By this point, they had no energy left to cry out about things being unfair. Ke Yunhai’s actions had obliterated any such arguments to the point of being dust and ash. It didn’t matter what anybody cried out, this father and son team would battle together....

It didn’t matter if you were talking about the Fang Clan or the Ji Clan, the Eastern Lands, the Northern Reaches, the Southern Domain, or the Black Lands. Everyone watched in a daze at the Demon Immortal Pagoda floating there in the sky.

They watched as Ke Yunhai, Paragon, escorted Ke Jiusi through the levels.

Fang Yu blinked, her heart feeling a bit unsettled.

“I can’t let dad find out about this....” she thought.

Zhixiang’s eyes were wide and she was panting. At the moment, even she was filled with intense jealousy toward Meng Hao.

Everyone was filled with complicated feelings as they watched the bright, sun-like dot of light on the outside of the Demon Immortal Pagoda. It charged through the levels. 94th. 95th. 96th....

Finally, it reached the 99th!

All of the observing Demon Immortal Sect disciples who were watching began to pant. It was as if they had forgotten about everything else except for this highest level of the pagoda.

The 99th level exceeded anything Meng Hao could have imagined. There was no danger here, no battlefield. There was only a valley. Within the valley was a lake, next to which was a house. Sitting cross-legged outside of the house was an old man.

The old man was fishing, and as Ke Yunhai and Meng Hao approached, he paid them no attention.

Meng Hao stood silently behind Ke Yunhai. Ke Yunhai came to a stop by the old man, and likewise said nothing.

After a long moment passed, the old man finally spoke.

“This does not conform with the rules.”

“I don’t have much life left in me,” replied Ke Yunhai coolly. Hearing this caused Meng Hao’s heart to tremble.

“It still doesn’t conform with the rules,” said the old man. He sighed.

“I’ve made many sacrifices for the Demon Immortal Sect. I’ve carried out Lord Li’s commands without hesitation. That’s not enough?” He turned his head to look off into the distance.

The old man said nothing at first. After a long moment, he sighed, then made a grasping motion with his right hand. Instantly, a seal appeared in the palm of his hand. It seemed to be formed of countless magical symbols, and contained a sense of shattered beauty.

“Fleshly Sanctification,” said the old man. “It is a secret art, not really a Daoist magic.” He looked at Meng Hao for a moment, and Meng Hao’s mind shook. That single glance was enough to pierce completely through him.

“Interesting,” said the old man, a serious look filling his eyes. He waved his hand, causing the seal to shoot toward Meng Hao and enter into his forehead.

“Night would have difficulty creating a copy of this art. However, since I approve, then after you leave this place, as long as I still exist, you can fully activate it. If I’ve already perished....” The old man shook his head, but said no more.

As for Ke Yunhai, he didn’t ask any questions about what had just been said. He turned to leave with Meng Hao.

As they made their way off, the old man suddenly looked up at Meng Hao once more. His eyes seemed to be filled with both understanding, and sorrow.

“Yunhai,” he thought, “considering you know the truth of it all, why are you doing this...?”

Chapter 588: This Life Will Do

Ke Yunhai took up the lead and Meng Hao followed. The two of them left the valley and headed off into the void.

Meng Hao felt a bit uneasy. Considering his personality and ability to concentrate, it shouldn’t be this way. After all, everything here was illusory. Furthermore, he hadn’t attempted to deceive Ke Yunhai. Therefore, there was nothing to feel uneasy about.

And yet, he was still somewhat nervous. He feared losing this identity. You might say that his original goal had been good fortune; now that he had acquired it, there was no reason for such uneasiness.

But the feeling didn’t go away. He feared waking up from this dream. He feared that after Ke Yunhai discovered that he was not Ke Jiusi, he wouldn’t look at him with that thoughtful, loving expression ever again.

In one breath, I can call you father. With the next breath, I can’t even open my mouth.

This was the feeling that caused Meng Hao to feel such uneasiness.

He feared losing what he had acquired.

Fatherly love. In Meng Hao's memory, the image of his father was already blurry. During his time spent in this illusion, he continued to be distracted to the point that he was forgetting that he wasn't Ke Jiusi.

"Dad...." he said softly. His heart was filled with bitterness as he saw Ke Yunhai moving forward, getting further and further away from him.

Ke Yunhai stopped and turned back, his eyes filled with a smile, and that same old doting expression. He softly tousled Meng Hao's hair.

"Don't let your imagination run wild," he said.

Meng Hao stared back, somewhat in a daze. His eyes felt moist, and at the moment, he didn't want to think about whether or not Ke Yunhai knew the truth about everything. He didn't want to consider all of that. There was only one thing he wanted to consider.

If there really is such a thing as destiny that caused us to become father and son in this place, then... I really am your son.

If this illusory world can count as my previous life, then you are my father from my previous incarnation.

Perhaps I am doomed to leave this ancient, illusory world, doomed to no longer have you as my father, doomed to no longer be your son. In that case, let the feelings we have between father and son that exist in this illusion... be something that I never forget.

Sir, you are my father.

I, sir, am your son.

Meng Hao nodded his head.

With a smile, Ke Yunhai clasped his shoulder and then the two of them flickered, disappearing from the 99th level and appearing outside of the Demon Immortal Pagoda.

As soon as they appeared, they became the focus of attention of all of the Demon Immortal Sect disciples. The gazes were filled with envy, jealousy, internal conflict and helplessness.

As soon as Ke Yunhai and Meng Hao left the Demon Immortal Pagoda, it began to shrink down, eventually transforming into a beam of light that shot up into the fissure up in the sky. As it did, the fissure rapidly began to mend itself; in the blink of an eye, there was no fissure at all left behind.

There was only....

A transparent staircase. It was hard to say when it appeared, but it stretched down from the heavens all the way to the ground, floating there above the pit between the Third and Fourth Peaks of the Demon Immortal Sect.

The light of the staircase did not emanate out, but rather, seemed to circulate about inside. It rose up far into the heavens, and if you looked closely, you could just barely make out a huge vortex at the top.

When he saw the staircase, Meng Hao gasped in shock. However, he quickly realized that the other Demon Immortal Sect Cultivators seemed completely indifferent to its appearance, almost as if... they couldn't see it!

However, as Meng Hao glanced out at the crowds, he suddenly saw Ji Xiaoxiao. From her expression, he could guess that she had seen the staircase.

“Could it be that only outsiders can see it?” he thought.

Now that Meng Hao had appeared, the South Heaven Cultivators were now concealing themselves within the crowds of other Demon Immortal Sect disciples.

They had no choice but to hide from and avoid Meng Hao. Although they had been going wild with jealousy moments ago, and despite the fact that this was an illusory version of ancient times, considering that Meng Hao had the identity of Ke Jiushi, if they tried to fight him, they would lose, even if they had a hundred lives.

They could only avoid him with great care. If they revealed their identities, they put themselves in critical danger. In contrast, of course, Meng Hao had no qualms about revealing himself.

That was because... with their identities, none of the South Heaven Cultivators could do anything to threaten him even the slightest bit.

Even still, despite how they were all concealing themselves, they could all see the staircase stretching up into the sky above the mountain peaks, and it caused their minds and hearts to tremble.

“That’s...” The young man from the Imperial Bloodline Clan of the Northern Reaches once again lowered his head and hunched his back. However, he was now panting, and his eyes glowed with a bright light.

“Could that be...?” Fang Yu’s pupils constricted. After a moment’s thought, her eyes went wide.

“The critical element needed to open the Third Plane!” thought Zhixiang. She stood off in the distance, breathing heavily, her hands clenched into fists and her eyes shining with excitement.

Even further off in the distance was Patriarch Huyan, who had left quietly much earlier. He was also starting to get very excited.

Even as everyone was thinking their various thoughts, Ke Yunhai led Meng Hao away. The ripples from the Demon Immortal Pagoda faded. There were others who had acquire some smatterings of Daoist magic. However, the Demon Immortal Pagoda had been opened specifically for Meng Hao, and he was the only one to have acquired the indescribable good fortune that he had.

Withering Flame Demon Magic True Self Dao, Nine Heavens Destruction, Nine Heavens Treasured Body Seal, and finally, the secret technique of Fleshly Sanctification. These were Meng Hao’s shocking acquisitions.

That was not even mentioning how he’d gotten the chance to punish Patriarch Reliance, as well as many other subtle matters. To Meng Hao, the Demon Immortal Pagoda had been nothing less than Heavenly destiny.

He returned to the Fourth Peak without stopping anywhere along the way. When he got back to his Immortal's Cave, Xu Qing was there meditating, her body surrounded by swirling light. A slight smile could be seen on her face; clearly she was immersed in gaining enlightenment of Daoist magic.

He didn't disturb her, but rather, sat down cross-legged to study the seeds of Daoist Magic which existed inside of him.

There was one that looked like a crimson flame, which was none other than the Withering Flame Demon Magic True Self Dao!

As for the Nine Heavens Destruction, the Nine Heavens Treasured Body Seal, and the last one... the secret art of Fleshly Sanctification, these arts existed in Meng Hao's mind, and could be seen, but not felt.

Meng Hao had the feeling that these three great Daoist magics would require continued contemplation before he could employ them. Thankfully, he would not forget them after he left this ancient, illusory world.

Having reaching this point in his train of thoughts, Meng Hao started to get excited. That was because in addition to all of that, there was one more thing he had acquired... the Mountain Consuming Incantation!

As of now, Meng Hao had fundamental control over the technique. Although he could only employ it up to the first level, according to the introductory information, that was enough to incarnate the body of a mountain outside of his fleshly body.

That in and of itself would make the power of his fleshly body exponentially higher.

"By cultivating it to the peak, I can extract the souls of mountains and then incarnate their wills, and cause the power of myriads of mountains to descend!" Meng Hao's eyes filled with a look of satisfaction. It was truly possible to say that his journey into the Demon Immortal Pagoda had pushed his good fortune to the pinnacle.

There were other magical techniques, restrictive spells, and other miscellaneous methods that he had picked up. Currently, they all existed in his mind. However, unless he actively gained enlightenment, then once he left this place, they would disappear.

He tried to brand the information onto a jade slip, but experienced no success and eventually gave up.

“The Mountain Sea Scripture... is most likely impossible to acquire,” he thought. A bright glow appeared in his eyes as he contemplated the matter for a moment. In the end he put it aside. However, within his mind, he could remember that voice he had heard in the 80th level.

Time passed, half a month. Meng Hao sat in meditation in his Immortal’s cave for the entire period of time, gaining enlightenment of the Daoist magic.

Xu Qing emerged from meditation a few times. They would simply look at each other and smile. They knew that their time here was limited, and that they needed to take advantage of every moment possible to be enlightened regarding Daoist magic. There was little time for idle chatting.

Finally one morning, Meng Hao sat cross-legged outside of his Immortal’s cave, studying the Fourth Peak. Within him, the enlightenment of the Mountain Consuming Incantation had already been branded on his mind. The first level of the incantation was almost completely cultivated when someone arrived, who, although he hadn’t been expecting, did not surprise him.

It was a female Conclave disciple from another of the peaks. She was pretty, with bright, flickering eyes. She carried herself with a graceful bearing, and as she neared Meng Hao, she attracted quite a bit of attention from the other Fourth Peak disciples.

What they saw was a young woman, blushing, apparently finally have overcome her shyness and mustered some courage. She came to a stop before Meng Hao and bashfully said, “Big bro Jiusi, I have a few questions about cultivation that I was hoping you could help me with.”

Her features, her voice, and her figure transformed into something shockingly alluring. Anyone who looked at her would feel their heart pumping with eagerness. Quite a few of the Fourth Peak disciples were looking at her, and all of them seemed to view her as being so amazing that she was nearly god-like.

Her face was beautiful, as was her body. Her skin was so delicate it seemed the wind could break it. She had a pure expression that was at the same time naturally charming. All of it made it so that the term ‘extraordinary beauty’ couldn’t even be used to describe her.

Meng Hao recognized her instantly. His entire body covered with goosebumps when he heard her speak. "I don't have the time," he replied.

She looked delicate and charming, as if she might fall over from the slightest blow. She bit her lip, seemingly mustering her courage. Anyone watching on would surely feel that it was a crime to refuse this young woman.

Meng Hao was about to do just that when he suddenly noticed a flicker of ill intent in the young woman's eyes. Clearing his throat, he rose to his feet and then proceeded forward.

The young woman was none other than Zhixiang. She lowered her head and followed Meng Hao off into the distance, surrounded by the envious murmuring of the other Fourth Peak disciples.

As they proceeded along, all of the Demon Immortal Sect disciples who saw the two of them stared with wide eyes, their hearts filled with fury.

"Another female disciple has fallen into his hands!"

"Dammit! How many has it been so far? When will it be my turn for something like that to happen?!"

Eventually they reached the vicinity of the Second Peak, whereupon Meng Hao turned impatiently to look at Zhixiang.

"Alright," he said, "tell me how I can help you."

"Straight to the point, I see," she said with a smile. "Well, you're a man, and you know that you owe me. However, what I'm most curious about is, what exactly did you encounter in the 80th level to cause the voice of Lord Li to bestow you with Daoist magic!?" Although she spoke with a smile, she clearly took her words very seriously.

When Meng Hao heard this, his pupils constricted. He looked at Zhixiang, his heart thumping.

"That was... the voice of Lord Li?" he thought.

Chapter 589: An Ancient Tale

Although inwardly his mind was racing, his expression didn't show any trace of that. He simply looked at Zhixiang with an enigmatic smile.

She blinked. Considering Meng Hao's expression, it was impossible to determine what he was thinking, and she could only inwardly curse his craftiness.

"Fine, if you don't want to tell me then just forget about it," she continued with a laugh. "Let's change the subject. The two of us had an agreement, and you owe me some help." A shrewd look appeared on her beautiful face.

"Actually," replied Meng Hao with a casual laugh, "the truth of the matter is that we don't have any formal agreement with each other. However, considering how you've helped me out throughout the years, I don't mind returning the favor. I can help you out a little, but regarding anything too complicated, my hands are tied."

"Don't be in such a hurry to refuse," Zhixiang said carefully. "If you help me, you'll also benefit. Considering your personality, I know that you'll require a thorough explanation before you make your decision." Meng Hao did nothing to prevent her from continuing.

"Let me tell you the current facts of the matter. Afterward, you can make your own determination about whether or not to help me. Either way is fine with me." A sudden breeze caused Zhixiang's hair to suddenly spread across her face, making her look indescribably seductive.

Meng Hao's expression was the same as ever. He didn't speak, but instead waited to hear what she had to say.

"We first encountered each other in the Bridge of Immortal Treading. I assume you're already aware that the bridge was created by one of the three Demon Emperors of the Demon Immortal Sect!

"Those three Greater Demons were the Frost Soil Demon Emperor, the Withering Flame Demon Emperor and the Blood Coral Demon Emperor. All you have to do is look up and you can see the dwelling places of those three Greater Demons here within this illusory ancient world." In accompaniment with her shocking words, she pointed up into the sky.

Meng Hao's mind reeled. He had never expected Zhixiang to reveal such shocking matters. He looked up at the three inverted Demon Mountains up above. The first time he had caught sight of the Demon Mountains, he had had his own speculations. Now that he heard Zhixiang's explanation, he could combine it with what he already knew to be relatively certain that she was not lying!

Of the three Greater Demons of the Demon Immortal Sect, the one who created the Bridge of Immortal Treading was none other than Frost Soil Demon Emperor Han Shan!

Meng Hao's pupils constricted. He looked up at the distant mountain of frost, and got the feeling of some type of separation, as if it had sealed itself away from the world.

"A long time ago in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, the Demon Immortal Sect was the number one great Sect. That was because it had Lord Li, who was in fact the person who founded the entire Sect!

"He was the Lord of the Ninth Mountain before the Ji Clan.... Among Lord Li's subordinates were two great generals who supported the Heavens, and three Greater Demons to act as Dharma Protectors! Of course, one of those generals was none other than the later Lord Ji." Zhixiang spoke all of these words calmly, but they caused Meng Hao's mind and heart to tremble.

He kept his expression solemn as he looked back from the three Greater Demon Mountains up above. As he returned his gaze to Zhixiang, he realized that he was suddenly much more curious regarding her goals and motives here in the Demon Immortal Sect.

"I am a disciple of the Demon Immortal Sect," she went on. "So, I know quite a bit about all these matters. The Demon Immortal Sect has a total of four Heavens. The First Heaven is comprised of the Seven Peaks. The Second Heaven is comprised of the three Greater Demon Mountains. The Third Heaven is made up of two Holy Lands.... As for the Fourth Heaven, that is where... Lord Li is!

"That is the Demon Immortal Sect, which was once... the number one Sect in the Ninth Mountain and Sea!" By this point, Zhixiang's eyes shone with a strange light that seemed to contain pride and dignity.

"Assumably, you have already made some speculations about the two so-called two Holy Lands. They are actually the lands of the two great generals, and their Clans. Because of their extraordinary service, Lord Li eventually bequeathed their lands with the word 'Holy.'

“Therefore... those two lands are two great Holy Lands of the Ninth Mountain and Sea!

“As for the names of these two great Holy Lands, one is Fang, and the other... is a name that cannot be spoken out in the world without incurring great calamity. As of now, we can only say Ji!” As Zhixiang’s words filtered into Meng Hao’s ears, his mind filled with a roaring sound. At long last he understood this most ancient of stories!

He had long since become aware of the matter of the Ji Clan seizing the Ninth Mountain and Sea, and becoming its new Lord. However, this was his first time hearing that the other of Lord Li’s generals came from a Clan named Fang! Meng Hao’s mind was spinning.

He immediately thought of Fang Yu, and of the Fang Clan in the Eastern Lands!

For some reason, he had the feeling that this Fang Clan was the same Fang as the name of that great general, as well as the Holy Land. How could he ever have imagined that the Fang Clan would have such an astonishing origin!

“Considering how astonishing the two generals’ Clans were, and how shocking the three Greater Demon Emperors were, then... since they were in subservient positions to Lord Li, I can’t help but wonder just how powerful Lord Li must have been!?” All of a sudden, he recalled the words he had heard within the 80th level of the Demon Immortal Pagoda.

“When Lord Li achieved his Dao, he decided to no longer monopolize the life of Heaven, but returned that life to the masses. He caused the Dao Realm to become invisible, and imposed restrictions on longevity. He sealed the path one could tread to see him, and no longer appeared in the flesh. The two Holy Lands were forced to seal themselves!

“After that, the three Greater Demon Mountains were also sealed!

“Later, Lord Li fell. Some people say he went missing, others say he died in battle. There are many legends. Eventually, war was waged over the two Holy Lands. That war affected all of the Ninth Mountain, and in the end... the Heavens were placed on top of Li, and the Ji Clan gained victory!

“The Demon Immortal Sect was part of that war, and as a result, it was destroyed.... The Bridge of Immortal Treading was also shattered. The three Greater Demon Mountains collapsed, and the three Greater Demons perished. The Ji became the new Lord, and the Fang Clan was out.

“As the Demon Immortal Sect reached its end, a handful of survivors managed to flee, sticking together to form the modern-day Demon Immortal Sect.

“That war was like a foul wind and a bloody rain of carnage for the Ninth Mountain and Sea.... Obviously, I didn’t experience it, but the records within the Sect contain clear descriptions.” At this point, Zhixiang stopped speaking.

Meng Hao stood there silently for a moment, breathing somewhat raggedly. Great waves surged through his heart. Based on everything he knew, it seemed to him that the things Zhixiang was telling him, although perhaps not completely accurate, were at least seventy to eighty percent true.

“That is the story of the Demon Immortal Sect!” continued Zhixiang.

“Within the Demon Immortal Sect, there are two great legacies. One is that which was shockingly famous throughout the Ninth Mountain and Sea, the great... Mountain and Sea Scripture. According to legend, the scripture is formed of nine manuals, any one of which gives you the right to be a Mountain and Sea Lord!

“Years ago, Lord Li possessed the ninth manual!

“Unfortunately, the only way to acquire the Mountain and Sea Scripture is by means of a special method prescribed by Lord Li. After he fell, the legacy dissipated. Even the current Lord Ji only possesses a smattering of knowledge of the Mountain and Sea Scripture, not the true scripture itself.

“That is why among the nine Lords of the great Nine Mountains and Seas, Lord Ji is the weakest!

“As for the other legacy of the Demon Immortal Sect, many restrictions were placed on it. Nowadays, it is rare to find anyone who can meet all the requirements. Although... I do meet the requirements! That is why I am here to acquire... the Demon Immortal Body!” Although she was speaking softly, by the time she reached the final three words, her eyes glowed with a strange light.

Hearing all of this caused Meng Hao’s eyes to glitter.

“Long ago,” continued Zhixiang slowly, “Lord Li used his own body to form a type of physique cultivation called the Demon Immortal Body. Those who possess such a body will find it much easier to practice Demon magic cultivation. In fact, one can return to a truly natural state, incarnate a spirit of a Demon, and then transform into a matchless Greater Demon!

“In this manner, the Demonic Qi of the Ninth Mountain and Sea can be consumed, and good fortune can be split with the Ji Clan!

“What I want to accomplish can’t be done alone. In order to get this one chance, I have the backing of the full power of everyone in the Demon Immortal Sect. Therefore, if you help, you won’t just be helping me, but rather, the entire Demon Immortal Sect.

“When it becomes necessary, later on after you achieve Immortal Ascension, we can offer you shelter in the outside world. In fact, we might even recruit you to join us!”

Meng Hao looked at her for a moment. “Why me?” he asked.

“I don’t need much help from you here in the Second Plane. However, in the Third Plane, if you’re willing to assist, you can help me increase my chances of success significantly.

“Actually, I’m not too certain of exactly what you can do. Perhaps, the fact that you have Ke Jiusi’s identity shows that you have some mysterious destiny connecting you to the Demon Immortal Sect.... Perhaps that is why the curse power in the Bridge of Immortal Treading didn’t affect you!

“That curse power is nothing other than the rancor of those who died in the Demon Immortal Sect that year. They feel rancor toward Lord Li, Lord Ji, and toward everything living. Such feelings have fermented for ninety thousand years, eventually transforming into a curse.

“Because of that curse, anyone who touches objects of the ancient Demon Immortal Sect at the wrong time, will disturb the dead souls and die instantly!

“It is only when the Third Plane opens that good fortune can be acquired. During that time, the curse is the weakest.

“Even still... there are some core areas in which the curse power will not be reduced at all, no matter what. So, I need your help... to forge a path to the place I need to go in the Third Plane!”

“Third Plane?” said Meng Hao, his eyes glinting sharply.

Zhixiang gave a cool laugh, apparently not fazed at all by the question. Her expression the same as ever, she replied, “The first two Planes of the ancient Demon Immortal Sect are guaranteed to open. However, the Third Plane depends on destiny or luck. To enter that Plane requires a lucky coincidence. However, all it takes is for one person to enter, and then the path will be opened to everyone who is within the Second Plane.

“For example, after you barged your way through the Demon Immortal Pagoda, a ladder appeared that we could all see, stretching up into the Heavens. That is destiny, and the entrance into the Third Plane. However, that entrance is only for you. You are the only one who can use it to enter the Third Plane.

“Once you enter the Third Plane, then the illusion around us will fade away. Everyone will appear along with you in the Third Plane.”

Having heard this, Meng Hao chuckled, but didn't say anything. However, Zhixiang responded with a beautiful light laugh of her own.

“Don't worry,” she said, “I don't need your help getting into the Third Plane. The ones who need your help for that are all the other people from South Heaven. The Demon Immortal Sect has been preparing for this for a long time, and finally have uncovered a method to get me into the Third Plane on my own. Although, as soon as I enter successfully, so will all the others.”

Meng Hao thought for a moment. “Not many upsides for me,” he said.

Zhixiang looked at him for a moment. Actually, his words just now had caused her heart to start beating with excitement. She didn't fear requirements being made on his part; it was only by mutual benefit could they work together smoothly.

“Within the Demon Immortal Sect is the Demon Immortal Cistern. That cistern is the key to the legends. I plan to go there while in the Second Plane, in order to secure the qualification to enter it later. Only by a bit of deception can I go to the true location of the Demon Immortal Cistern in the Third Plane.... That is where I can acquire the good fortune to transform my body into the Demon Immortal Body!

“If you help me, then you'll be helping yourself. We can share the Demon Immortal Cistern. By bathing within, even if you don't qualify to get the Demon Immortal Body, you can still experience incredible strengthening of your fleshly body!

“In other words, this good fortune can be acquired by both of us!” Having made her greatest expression of good faith, she looked at Meng Hao expectantly.

Meng Hao was silent for a moment as he analyzed how much he could trust everything Zhixiang had said. After a long moment, his eyes filled with determination.

“I have one condition,” he said. For some reason, a somewhat bashful expression appeared on his face. People who didn’t know him very well might think it made him look very charming. However, to those who truly knew him, such an expression was enough to fill one with abhorrence....

Chapter 590: He Definitely....

“What condition?” replied Zhixiang, gaping. When she saw the bashful look on Meng Hao’s face, she suddenly smiled seductively, and her eyes glittered with a charming light.

“You sly fox!” she laughed. “So young and yet quite the ladies’ man already.” Suddenly, her expression turned solemn. “However, I warn you. I may speak a bit frivolously, but I know how to maintain my chastity. I’ve long since sworn myself to live for the Dao. I won’t even talk about matters of illicit love.

“Therefore, you might as well get rid of those dirty thoughts of yours, kid! I won’t agree!”

Meng Hao gaped in astonishment at Zhixiang.

“What are you talking about?”

“Don’t try to cover it up. Do you really think I couldn’t see that look in your eye? Humphh! I’ve encountered many similar situations before in my life.” She seemed to hesitate for a moment, then gritted her teeth and continued, “Fine, fine. Since there’s obviously some destiny between us, then I suppose I can promise to hold hands with you. However, that’s my bottom line!” It seemed that to her that this was a great price to pay. Without even waiting for Meng Hao to respond, she reached out and clasped his hand.

She just as quickly released it and then stepped back a few paces, her face somewhat flushed.

“Okay?” she asked.

“Huh?” It was only after a moment that Meng Hao finally put all the pieces together. He suddenly laughed bitterly. That wasn’t at all what he was interested in....

“I don’t really have any feeling toward older women....” he said with a dry cough.

When Zhixiang heard this, her eyes went wide, and a cold air suddenly began to spread out around her. Meng Hao blinked, then leaned forward and, said in a low voice, “My condition is that I want to be the first one to step into the Third Plane.”

Zhixiang frowned, then gave Meng Hao a look.

“Do you mean...? Oh!” It took Zhixiang only a moment to react. She smiled mysteriously at him.

Looking a bit embarrassed, Meng Hao said, “I’ve been running a bit low on Spirit Stones recently.”

Zhixiang placed her hand in front of her mouth to cover up a smile. Such a condition was no trouble for her whatsoever, so she had no reason to refuse. As far as she was concerned, as long as Meng Hao agreed to help, it would be easy to comply with.

She went on, “The Demon Immortal Cistern is an important place in the Demon Immortal Sect. Because of the help of my Sect, I’m one hundred percent confident that within a few months, I can acquire qualifications for you to enter.

“The only thing you need to do is just need to come with me. If we familiarize ourselves with the place now, then when the Third Plane opens we can go back.

“How about this? Give me a month. I’ll do my best to acquire an identity that can get you into where we need to go, then....” Before she could finish her sentence, Meng Hao interrupted her.

“In the First Heaven of the Demon Immortal Sect,” he said coolly, his voice dripping with a domineering air, “I can go anywhere other than the Immortal’s Caves of the other six Paragons. I don’t need any identity from you.”

Zhixiang’s eyes widened as she stared at Meng Hao. Gradually, a look of envy and jealousy appeared. Even she couldn’t help but feel indignant at the situation. She’d already forgotten that the person in front of her had a Paragon for a father.

Then she thought of her own identity, and how the Sect had prepared for years, how they had expended vast resources and personal wealth, just to give her these few months of time in which to succeed.

However, compared to Meng Hao and his identity, all of that counted for almost nothing....

“In the ancient records of the Sect,” she said, “there is information regarding certain people in the Sect. One of the entries is about Ke Jiusi. You were an overbearing silkpants who committed countless unimaginable misdeeds. Anywhere you went within the Sect, chaos followed. You oppressed the people, both men and women alike. According to the estimates, by the time the Sect fell, you had over four hundred beloved, and more than three thousand children!

“You were definitely a....” She didn’t finish this particular sentence.

“For the most part, your life was a joke,” she continued calmly, “something no one would keep a record of. However, in the final war, you went all out, even expending your longevity. You didn’t fear death in battle, and ended up making illustrious achievements in the fighting. All of your beloved died, and you buried them in the First Peak.

“Your sons all died too, and you personally buried them in the Second Peak. As for the Fourth Peak, that is location of your father’s tomb. You ended up deciding to bury yourself there too.

“The day the Sect was destroyed, you and a few others chose to perish along with the Sect. You slaughtered many Ji Clan Immortals, and as death loomed over you, Lord Ji himself personally arrived. Because he prized your valiant heart, he offered you a way to keep on living. All you had to do was bow your head, something you had done many times in the past.

“But you didn’t bow your head. Instead, you lifted it up and laughed to the Heavens, then charged into battle once again. When the moment of your death arrived, you fell from above and landed into your coffin. In the last moment before you died, you uttered one final sentence.”

As he listened to all this, Meng Hao’s expression grew more and more complex. In the end, it almost looked as if he felt all of the things she was describing had happened to him. He said nothing.

Zhixiang continued. “You said... ‘Father, are you proud of me?’”

When he heard this, Meng Hao's mind felt as if it were exploding. He closed his eyes for a long, long time before opening them. For some reason, tears were streaming down his face.

They were tears that did not belong to him, but rather, came from another life.

"You can stop now," he said. His mood was dark as he suddenly spun and walked off into the distance, filled with sentiment.

Suddenly, Zhixiang regretted upsetting him. She was about to say something when she heard his voice drifting back.

"We'll meet back here in three days to go to the Demon Immortal Cistern."

Meng Hao returned to the Fourth Peak. He stood outside his Immortal's cave and looked up at the darkening sky. Evening was falling, and the sun was setting. Within his mind, Meng Hao saw the images of everything that had happened with Ke Yunhai after he came here.

"He is my father in this life..." murmured Meng Hao. He thought again about how Ke Jiusi must have felt. It was a complexity that no outsider could possibly understand. In this world, in this Heaven and Earth, from ancient times until modern, only Ke Jiusi could possibly have understood. Except now... there was one more person who could.

Only the two of them could have such a sympathetic resonance. Only they had experienced such similar things, and such similar complex emotions.

"A son wants to care for his parents, but they aren't there any more..." Meng Hao closed his eyes. If he didn't understand the Soul Divergence Incantation, he would believe Ke Jiusi to be dead. However, now that he did understand it, and heard Zhixiang's story, Meng Hao suddenly had a strange feeling.

He could imagine how Ke Jiusi's flesh and bones had faded as the years passed. The Demon Immortal Sect became nothing more than corpse-filled ruins. Finally one day, Ke Jiusi's body slowly formed back together from nothing inside that coffin. He opened his eyes.

He finally saw the sky again, and his Sect. He looked around at all the things that had once been so familiar, only to realize that everything was now different. He was the only person left. He missed his father, and regretted his silkpants lifestyle. That regret then transformed into tears.

He had most assuredly wept for a long time atop the Fourth Peak.

He had most assuredly looked out at everything and felt as if he were living a life filled with pain.

He had most assuredly drunk alcohol in front of his father's tomb, blabbering like an idiot and knocking his head against the ground as he kowtowed.

He had most assuredly visited all the grounds of the Demon Immortal Sect. He had seen all the corpses, including those belonging to his relatives and friends, the people he had hated and the people he had liked. All of those people had become corpses, and their thoughts were nothing more than wisps on the wind.

After returning to the Fourth Peak and looking out at everything, he had realized that he was the only protector of this world.

Perhaps the most correct thing to say was not that he was the protector of the Demon Immortal Sect, but rather, the protector of his beautiful memories, especially the memories of his father.

As of this moment, Meng Hao understood. He understood Ke Jiushi's heart, and what he was thinking.

"You're definitely next to me," thought Meng Hao, "or perhaps within my soul. You're watching me live this version of your life, treading a different path than you. Every time I look at father, you are most assuredly using my eyes to look at him too."

Meng Hao glanced up again at the evening sky for a moment, then closed his eyes again.

Two days later, it was the appointed time to meet Zhixiang. Meng Hao left the Fourth Peak and traveled with her toward the Seventh Peak!

This was the final peak in the First Heaven, and also the most important one.

Behind the Seventh Peak was a vast, hazy forbidden zone. Disciples without the proper authorization were not permitted to step even half a pace inside. In fact, few people actually knew what lay inside the haziness.

After entering it, nothing would be visible. One could only use a command medallion to find one's way through the mists to the destination.

Zhixiang had such a command medallion, but Meng Hao didn't.

When the two of them reached the indistinctness, they caught sight of two enormous stone statues that looked like Demons. They had eight arms and four heads, and were fully three hundred meters tall. They glared out fiercely in all directions.

Each of the two statues held a gigantic stone greatsword in hand. They were criss-crossed, stabbed down into the earth to form a door of swords.

The enormous door didn't seem to offer any hindrance to any who wished to pass through it. However, if anyone attempted to do so without the proper qualifications, they would be instantly killed.

Zhixiang's face was covered with an expression of piety and awe. She kneeled in front of the statues and used both hands to hold aloft a purple-black jade slip. It was a command medallion that emanated a warm glow as it floated up into the air toward the right-hand statue. As it landed in one of the statue's hands, the statue's eyes suddenly flickered and opened. It slowly pulled its sword up out of the ground, revealing a path.

A powerful, rumbling voice filled the air. "Third class qualifications. Where do you intend to go?"

"The Demon Immortal Cistern!" replied Zhixiang immediately.

"According to the regulations," said the awe-inspiring voice, "you may travel thirty percent of the paths in this place, and may stay for no more than 38 hours."

Zhixiang took a deep breath as she tried to stifle her excitement. It had taken quite a bit of power from the Sect, plus a special technique as well as a hefty price, to be able to bring this command medallion with her into the Second Plane.

It was a command medallion which provided third class qualifications. Even that was something rare, and was one of the reasons she was convinced she would be able to acquire great rewards in this place.

As she stood up, the command medallion flew back to her. She carefully reached out to take it; after all, it represented third class qualifications, which made it incredibly valuable. After putting it away, she bowed deeply to the two statues. Then she walked forward to step onto the path between the two swords. She looked back at Meng Hao with a bit of a snide look. As far as she was concerned, the Ke Jiushi from this time period would most likely only be able to acquire fourth class qualifications.

Meng Hao looked up silently at the statues for a long moment before walking forward. As he neared the door of swords, the sword belonging to the right-hand statue suddenly began to rumble.

A blinding light shot out from the eyes of the statue as it looked down at Meng Hao, its gaze filled with seeming intelligence.

After only a glance, it seemed to be able to examine him inside and out. It slowly lifted up the stone sword to reveal a path.

“Paragon’s qualifications. You may go anywhere you wish, and stay inside indefinitely.”

Zhixiang’s eyes went wide, and her brain filled with a roaring sound. She stared blankly at Meng Hao, madness rising up in her heart.