

The Heavens 691

Chapter 691: Extend the Broken Bridge of Life Force

Half a month passed by.

Xu Qing did not return.

Meng Hao lay surrounded by coldness and deathly silence. He did not decompose, nor would he for some time. His body lay there, completely lacking any life force whatsoever.

He was dead.

Normally speaking, his soul could enter the cycle of reincarnation. However, because of the Ninth Mountain and Sea lodestone that existed in the Rebirth Cave, the soul was sealed, and could not dissipate. Furthermore, his soul did not leave his body, preventing the soul-devouring entities from doing anything other than look at him.

As time passed, they were able to see that within Meng Hao was a strand of silk wrapped tightly around his soul.

As long as the silk did not break, the larva could not be destroyed. As long as the larva was not destroyed, the silk could not break!

Life or death hung by a thread... the thread of the eyeless larva! It allowed the existence of Meng Hao's soul to be forever preserved, even if his body perished. From these seemingly contradictory circumstances arose a state of undeath which was virtually unheard of in Heaven and Earth!

In some ways, it conformed with the Soul Divergence Incantation. However, it was not rebirth.

Another half month passed, and finally, someone appeared outside of the Rebirth Cave.

It was not Xu Qing. It was a fat, middle-aged man. He had a somewhat bawdy look to him, and his body was almost like a sphere. He had freckles on his face, and the Daoist robe he wore was a bit too tight. The way his body bulged out of it made his whole image seem disharmonious.

Apparently, however, he thought of himself as burly and muscular. A greatsword could be seen strapped to his back, and it glittered with golden light.

This was the same Fatty from years ago, Li Fugui.

He was alone, shivering as he moved at high speed into the region surrounding the Rebirth Cave. His face quickly turned pale.

“Dangit, I’m gonna be dead meat! Meng Hao, you jerk, your cons are going to be the death of me!”

“And Elder Sister Xu, aiiiiii...” Fatty looked upset, but his steps didn’t pause for even a moment. Even though his life force was dissipating rapidly, he shot forward at top speed.

When he reached the 3,000 meter mark, he coughed up a mouthful of blood. Immediately, multi-colored beams of light shot out from inside of him. Within each beam of light could be seen the image of a meditating old man.

“I’m the only heir of my bloodline in the Golden Frost Sect, fools!” bellowed Fatty. “I might not have many kinds of treasures on me, but there’s one thing I have a lot of, and that is life-saving treasures!” It was impossible to say how many life-saving treasures Fatty actually had on his person, but as of this moment, vast amounts appeared as he passed into the 1,500 meter area.

By this time, the glow that surrounded him was starting to fade away. His body no longer looked like a sphere. His flesh withered, and in the blink of an eye, he was suddenly much skinnier.

“Meng Hao is my big bro. For him, all of my precious flesh is disappearing... Uh... well, a bit of gorging will restore it.” With a howl, Fatty shot into the 1,000 meter mark. By now, he was so skinny that he looked like a normal person. At the same time, cracking sounds could be heard coming from his body.

Those would be his numerous lifesaving treasures treasures being destroyed.

“Dammit, still 1,000 meters to go. The only reason Elder Sister Xu is in such a heartbreaking situation is because of Meng Hao. I don’t even know if she’s still alive.... Everything is up to me now. If I can’t get through, then I’ll regret it for the rest of my life!” Li Fugui’s eyes were completely bloodshot. Roaring, he pulled out more life-saving treasures and, ignoring the rapid withering of his body, continued on, pushing forward another 250 meters.

By that point, his life force was reaching the limit. His vision was growing blurry and dark. If he went any further, he would die.

Actually, the only reason he was able to make it this far was because of all the magical items, and the fact that earlier, he had consumed vast quantities of medicinal pills designed to invigorate his life force.

“750 meters!!” Tears welled up in his eyes as he looked at the squat mountain up ahead. Although he seemed unaffected on the outside, the truth was, when he learned about Meng Hao’s situation, he had dropped everything to rush to this place where life was prohibited. Clearly, in his heart, Meng Hao really was his big bro!

Meng Hao was the same big bro from back in the Reliance Sect, when they had first started practicing cultivation together.

“Meng Hao, I’ve done my best!!” Tears began to roll down his cheeks as he lifted up his right hand. In his palm rested a black pill bottle, which was surrounded by a rotating black halo. As soon as the pill bottle appeared, the death aura in the area rapidly increased.

At the same time, the wills that lurked in the depths of the Rebirth Cave emerged. They swirled about inside the cave, staring at the pill bottle in Fatty’s hand.

Fatty gritted his teeth and then hurled the pill bottle toward the Rebirth Cave. It transformed into a black beam that shot directly into the mouth of the cave.

Fatty coughed up a mouthful of purplish-black blood. His body continuing to wither, he turned and transformed into a beam of light that shot off into the distance. Tears continued to stream down his face as he flew away.

“Meng Hao, you have to be reborn.... You must come out of there!”

Back in the Rebirth Cave, the pill bottle landed on the ground. The wills approached and were about to begin fighting over it when the cold snort of a woman could be heard. Although no outsider would be able to detect it, the wills could hear it clearly, and they instantly began to tremble.

At the same time, an overbearing will emerged from the depths of the cave to sweep up the pill bottle. It then transformed into the very same woman who had sent Xu Qing out of the cave.

She looked around, and the other streams of will scattered, returning to their various places of origin within the Rebirth Cave. The woman turned back around and walked up to Meng Hao's corpse. She looked him over and then looked at the pill bottle.

She said nothing for a long moment.

Xu Qing had not returned, which was something the woman assumed would happen when she sent her away. Except, she had assumed that love-smitten Xu Qing, after regaining some clarity and having more options to pick from, would hesitate about the difficult decision.

She had assumed that Xu Qing would choose to protect her own life.

But now that the pill bottle had appeared, this woman, the embodiment of the goodness of the Resurrection Lily, suddenly felt her heart trembling.

"She didn't come," the woman said softly, "but she sent someone in her stead to deliver the pill. And that person had strange, incredible treasures to prevent his soul from dissipating...." Although she didn't know the details, she could guess what had happened. Poor Xu Qing had paid an indescribable price to get her hands on the medicinal pill.

The woman sighed.

"My life has been one of sorrow...."

"There is no rebirth here. Perhaps there is no rebirth at all. But I did give her my promise, after all...."

"I have already existed for far, far too long, and no longer desire to live."

“Since that is the case, why not help her achieve her aim?” The woman looked at the pill bottle in her hand. After a long moment, she suddenly clenched her hand into a fist. The pill bottle shattered with a bang, and a medicinal pill flew out, which the woman immediately consumed.

Instantly, her previously illusory body suddenly became material. Shockingly, she now possessed flesh and blood.

“It feels good to have a flesh and blood body again, even if it’s temporary...” she said softly. This time, her voice was real.

“I will help her achieve her aim. Then she will see whether faithful people truly exist. She will see what decision this final successor of the League of Demon Sealers will make when it comes time to sever emotion.

“The reason I am saving you is not for your sake, but for her,” she said softly. “When the time comes, we will see whether or not she will become like me.

“I take my promises very seriously. It is with the same faithfulness that I treated HIM, all those years ago, that I will treat this girl who wishes to follow in my footsteps.

“I did not come to the Rebirth Cave to look for death, but rather, rebirth. I wanted to have a chance at a new self. I wanted to sever the past, and finally be free when I emerged.

“But this place... has no rebirth!

“What does exist here, though, is my long life... which I can use to extend the broken bridge of your life force!” The woman made a grasping gesture toward the depths of the Rebirth Cave, toward a three hundred meter wide black boulder, half of which was buried in the dirt.

The black rock trembled and shook until a piece of it tore off of the top, which then flew toward the woman.

She grabbed it and crushed it, transforming it into a black powder that she sprinkled over Meng Hao’s body.

At the same time, she performed an incantation gesture. Her eyes filled with a look of reminiscence as she recalled beautiful memories. After a long moment of silence, she pushed two fingers down onto the forehead of Meng Hao's stiff, withered corpse.

As soon as her fingers touched his forehead, his previously unmoving body suddenly spasmed. In the same moment, the woman began to slowly wither, starting with her feet.

Her life force, her vitality, her everything, poured through her two fingers into Meng Hao.

She looked up into the blackness around them, and images appeared in her mind. She saw herself, and the man who she could never forget.

"You live, I live. You die, I die.... I spoke words like that too," she murmured. Her body continued to wither, whereas Meng Hao's was recovering. He was no longer ancient, and signs of life could be seen within him.

"Back then, I looked at you and you looked at me....

"From that day on, I accompanied you. I followed you through so many deadly situations....

"Every time you were hurt, I felt pain. Every time you smiled, I was happy. I know... that you tried to part with me on more than one occasion, but your reluctance held you back." Her legs were now withered, almost like roots connected to the ground. Her life force poured into Meng Hao, causing his hair to grow long, his face to flush with life. He was not old any more, but rather, middle-aged.

The life force gathered up in Meng Hao, filling up what had once been empty.

"I also know that you had your wife, your Sect, your responsibilities, and your mission. You had everything that was yours.

"But I... really only had you.

"Even my name was given to me by you. I liked it when you called me Da Nu....

“If you grow old, I’ll grow old with you. I also said the same thing.” The woman’s voice was soft as she spoke, filled with beauty and mystery and pain. By now, her body was almost completely withered. Because of the life force she was giving to Meng Hao, he was now a young man again. Except for the fact that his eyes were not open, he looked exactly as he had so many years ago.

“There is only one thing that I said which she didn’t.

“If you reach Immortal Ascension, then I... will become Immortal with you!

“I never broke your heart. I would never, ever hurt you. But on that particular dawn, on the day of vicissitudes, when I saw you severing your emotions, I wept....

“I took all the goodness that was in me, and left it in a coffin in the Milky Way Sea. I don’t blame you....

“If something is to blame, it is that I am not a real woman, but only... a Resurrection Lily who fell in love with you.”

The image of herself in her eyes suddenly was that of a beautiful Resurrection Lily, planted deep within the body of a man. After being inside of him for countless years, she... fell in love with her own host.

Chapter 692: A Promise to Keep

Far away in the Great Tang of the Eastern Lands, in a random village, a somewhat sloppily-dressed painter was looking askance at a rich man who fawned over him with endless words.

“Immortal, sir, I beg of you to paint me. I’m willing to pay any price.”

“My paintings are very expensive,” was the response.

The rich man nodded enthusiastically, then waved to his retainers to carry over several large chests.

The old painter glanced at them out of the corner of his eye, then cleared his throat. “Well, it seems that the two of us are connected by destiny. Because of that, I’ll paint something for you.”

He was just about to begin painting when a frown appeared on his face.

“Something just came up,” he said. “I need to take a mental journey. Please wait for a moment.” With that, he sat down cross-legged and closed his eyes.

The rich man didn't dare to disturb him, and simply stood there off to the side, waiting.

Back in the Southern Domain, in the Rebirth Cave, Da Nu looked off into the nothingness, lost in her memories.

She was a lily that had bloomed with seven colors. On the day of vicissitudes, she had reached Immortal Ascension. However, she mistakenly fell in love with her host. When she reached Immortal Ascension, she severed her goodness and buried it at the bottom of the Milky Way Sea.

On that day, her tears had merged into the Milky Way Sea, and she became... the Dawn Immortal.

As for her goodness, it remained at the bottom of the Milky Way Sea, the same Da Nu as before.

Many years later, she emerged from the coffin and entered into the body of the fish. When she splashed out from the water, she became a roc that flew toward the Rebirth Cave, emanating an intense aura of death.

That aura of death came from her dead heart.

In the Rebirth Cave, she had hoped to experience a baptism, a rebirth, to become new. But no matter how she searched, there was no rebirth to be found in the Rebirth Cave. It was then that she understood. The Rebirth Cave was nothing more than a fantasy.

She could not achieve rebirth, so she remained there, submerged in her memories. No one in the world could understand her pain. But then she saw Xu Qing, and when she did, she realized that Xu Qing was just like herself all those years ago.

She sighed. The memories flashing in her mind's eye seemed to grow more beautiful. In contrast, her body was already more than half withered up, like a dying flower.

The hand that touched Meng Hao's forehead was visibly draining as her boundless life force poured into his body. He was now completely recovered, and didn't look old at all.

Inside of him, glowing motes of light appeared. They packed together densely, interlocking to form into the shape of an arched bridge.

However... the bridge was incomplete. In the very middle, there was a broken section, making it impossible for the bridge to be whole.

Those motes of light were the life force that Da Nu was sending into Meng Hao, and that bridge was none other than the Bridge of Life!

"I don't blame you...." murmured Da Nu softly. Her eyes were blank, her mind submerged into memories that no one could see.

Her entire arm was now dried up. The withering spread to her neck. It looked almost like tendrils, climbing up to her forehead, and eventually covering her entire head. When the tendrils reached her eyes, she was thinking about the first time she had met her host.

In that moment, he had looked at her, and she him. It was a moment that seemed as if it would last an eternity.

"I have never blamed you...." When the withering took Da Nu's eyes, two teardrops fell. They rolled down her withered face and then landed on the ground with a soft patter.

Her eyes grew listless, and she closed them. Then she lifted up the hand that was pushing down onto Meng Hao's forehead. After a moment, she softly struck his head.

The blow seemed light, but the force hit him like lightning. He trembled violently, and roaring filled his mind.

The countless nodes of light inside of him that formed the Bridge of Life suddenly vibrated and then expanded. In that moment, the two sides of the bridge linked together, and it was whole.

When the Bridge of Life was complete, Meng Hao's body spasmed in unprecedented fashion. He suddenly breathed again. His previously still heart began to emit a thumping sound.

When his heart started beating, the powder Da Nu had created from the Ninth Mountain and Sea lodestone swept toward his chest and fused into his heart.

Ba-dump. Ba-dump!

His heart continued to beat, and the sound of it echoed throughout the Rebirth Cave. Suddenly, an incredible gravitation force exploded out inside of his heart.

At the same time, his soul, which had been wrapped up by the Eyeless Larva silk, was caught up by the gravitational force. It merged into his heart, and then was superimposed over his body.

In this moment, the Bridge of Life was thoroughly linked and whole. Blinding light shone out to fill the Rebirth Cave, dispelling all of the darkness. The resplendent light was dazzling to the extreme.

Meng Hao's blood began to flow. His life force was vigorous! His soul was back in place! He had returned to life!

His eyes snapped open.

The first thing he saw was Da Nu. He saw her withered body, and felt his own surging life force. He could immediately sense the connection between it and the woman.

His mind trembled. If by this point he couldn't understand what had happened, then his over two hundred years of life would have been lived in vain. It was obvious that this woman had given him her own life force.

“Senior...”

Da Nu looked at him, and her eyes suddenly flickered open. “I gave you life, not for you, but for her.”

An image suddenly appeared in his mind.

He saw himself fall down outside the Rebirth Cave, and he saw Xu Qing arrive. She picked him up and struggled to carry him forward. She had once been beautiful, but now, her hair was white and she was ancient. Purplish-black blood oozed out of the corners of her mouth.

And yet, no regret could be seen in her eyes. She looked at Meng Hao with gentleness and determination.

He watched as Xu Qing used her own life force to sustain him. Every time she delivered her life force to him, it would keep him alive for a bit longer, and make her weaker.

However, her smile never faded.

When he saw these things, Meng Hao trembled. He watched Xu Qing carry him into the Rebirth Cave and sit down cross-legged. He watched her stroke his face.

Xu Qing was ancient, her hair white, and yet she continued to give him her life force, one bit at a time, no matter the consequences to herself.

“You live, I live. You die, I die!”

Tears streamed down Meng Hao’s face. Next, he saw Da Nu appear. She sent Xu Qing away.... And then Fatty came to deliver the medicinal pill.

All of these things struck into his heart and mind like lightning. He trembled violently, and an intense dread suddenly filled him.

“Why... why didn’t Xu Qing bring it herself?” Meng Hao didn’t dare to think about it. He jerked his head up to look at Da Nu.

At the same time, he rose to his feet. Inside, he knew... something bad had happened to Xu Qing!

He had to go find her! He had to find Xu Qing!

However, in the moment that he stood, his face suddenly fell, and he stood there, terror-stricken and motionless. His hands clenched tightly into fists as he realized that he was constrained to the absolute limit.

He shivered ceaselessly as he remembered that he had no cultivation base. He was completely empty....

“There is no such thing as rebirth....” murmured Da Nu to herself. Her body was almost completely withered. She looked at Meng Hao and was just about to deliver the last of her life force to him, and then slip into death, when...

Suddenly, everything began to shake and rumble!

A black mist sprang out from within the depths of the Rebirth Cave. It quickly filled every corner of the cave, as well as the area hundreds of thousands of meters surrounding the cave, turning it all into a world of black mist.

The black mist rose up into the sky, shockingly transforming into an enormous head. The head had black hair, and its facial features were blurry, but it was clearly immeasurably ancient.

“Who said there is no such thing as rebirth!?” growled the voice.

Da Nu looked up, and her eyes filled with a strange light. She had lived inside the Rebirth Cave for many years, and had visited all the areas within, but she had never sensed anything like this black mist.

Even more shocked was Choumen Tai. He could hear the voice from his position deep in the cave, and it filled his mind with roaring. He shot to his feet, his face covered with astonishment. He had also been concealed in the cave for many years, and was very familiar with every inch of the place. However, he was completely unaware that anything like this existed inside!

“Who is this?” he thought with a gasp. He suddenly realized that the Rebirth Cave... was not at all how he had believed it to be.

There were mysteries here... that even he couldn't detect.

“The Dao of rebirth exists outside of the laws of Heaven and Earth. You can’t feel it, that’s all....

“On this day, you chose death to help this person. That... is true rebirth!

“Rebirth is a death and a life, a cycle. Henceforth, he will represent you on the path of cultivation. You die for him in the cycle of reincarnation. That... is true rebirth!

“If you understand, then you can free yourself from your worldly concerns. If you don’t understand, then... your next life will be one of darkness.”

Da Nu’s body quivered in shock and her breathing grew ragged. She listened to the voice’s words and her eyes gradually flashed with signs of comprehension.

“Rebirth.... Senior, please instruct me.” She slowly closed her eyes, and in that moment, completely withered up, transforming into a Resurrection Lily, right there in the Rebirth Cave.

“Goodness personified, and in the end you still perform good deeds, imbuing your very breath into his body. You are the embodiment of truth and law.... Because of this, I will help you this one time!” Even as the voice echoed about, the black mist contracted. It began to congeal inside of the Rebirth Cave, next to the Resurrection Lily, where it turned into a brush. The brush moved about, seemingly using the air as its canvas to paint an extremely realistic Resurrection Lily.

The brush swished, and the illusory Resurrection Lily settled onto Da Nu’s withered body.

“Sleep for 10,000 years. After that, if you can awaken, then you will be reborn.” As the voice echoed out, the black mist seemed to turn its attention onto Choumen Tai, who was deep in the recesses of the Rebirth Cave.

Choumen Tai’s mind trembled.

“You are a soul who has experienced many years of life, and many reincarnations. You have relied on your persistence to reach this day.... Continue on. I can sense something very familiar about you.”

Choumen Tai began to pant. “Are you....”

Before he could finish speaking, the mist seethed, and Choumen Tai was suddenly swept up. He had no control over his body as he was ejected out of Planet South Heaven and sent out into the starry sky.

“Regardless of whether or not the person you are waiting for is here,” said the voice, “if all you know how to do is use others, then if the time ever comes in which you can bring back to life that person who exists in your heart, well... you will feel only regret. Leave. When the time comes that you understand, you can return here.”

Back in the Rebirth Cave, everything was quiet. The mist spun around and around, and a figure seemed to become visible, looking at Meng Hao.

Trembling, Meng Hao rose to his feet and walked to the mouth of the Rebirth Cave. Although he was merely alive as a mortal now, he still... had a promise to keep.

You live, I live. You die, I die!

In the moment in which Meng Hao was about to step foot out of the Rebirth Cave, the blurry figure behind him coolly said, “Why do you care about the Perfect stratum so much anyway?”

Chapter 693: Eternal Stratum!

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A tremor ran through Meng Hao. He turned around and looked at the misty figure behind him. His eyes were bloodshot, and he was on the verge of insanity, albeit a silent insanity.

“Do you remember me?” The misty figure gradually grew clear to reveal an old man. He looked ordinary, and yet, within the ordinariness was an indescribably extraordinary disposition.

“Senior Shui Dongliu?” said Meng Hao, trembling. Of course, he instantly recognized that this man was Shui Dongliu.

Shui Dongliu. Whoever existed in his memory could not be destroyed by the Karmic Severing of the Ji Clan.

“The Perfect stratum is great and all, but it’s only a foundation. The ignorant masses think that the Perfect Foundation is the most supreme. It comes from the three classic scriptures, and can qualify you to become a Doyen!

“But! As far as I’m concerned, the Perfect stratum is like a leafy branch. It spreads throughout your body and eventually blooms with flowers that turn into Dao Fruit. That fruit is the key to being truly supreme!

“You may have lost your foundation, but the Dao Fruit is still there. Why are you acting like what you lost was the important part?!”

Meng Hao was startled, and his mind filled with an intense roaring. “Dao Fruit?!”

“Of course, Dao Fruit,” replied Shui Dongliu coolly. “The whole purpose of the Perfect stratum is to solidify the Dao Fruit of Perfection!

“That Dao Fruit of Perfection is none other than the Supreme stratum. And yet, that stratum also counts for little!” He swished his sleeve.

“Above the Supreme stratum is the Eternal!

“That is the true pinnacle of these strata. Shattered, Fractured, Flawless, Perfect, Dao Fruit, Eternal. These are the six great strata of any stage of cultivation. You only reached Perfect.

“To achieve the Dao Fruit, you need to sever your Perfection!

“As for the Eternal... you already meet the requirements; someone even severed your Perfection for you already. Why is your heart... still imprisoned? Why... don’t you just go ahead with your Second Severing?” Shui Dongliu’s voice echoed like thunder in Meng Hao’s ears, giving rise to enormous waves within his mind.

Meng Hao’s brain reeled, his body shook, and an unprecedentedly bright light shone in his eyes. Shui Dongliu’s words thoroughly crushed all traces of his muddlement. It was as if in the darkest of nights, a ray of bright light suddenly pierced through the blackness of his world.

“Dao Fruit.... Dao Fruit....” thought Meng Hao, panting. “Sever Perfection, achieve Dao Fruit!

“The 10th Wang Clan Patriarch took away my Perfect Foundation. However, that Perfection... completely preoccupied my heart! Therefore, this time, I will Sever... my heart!

“Sever away the Perfection in my heart!

“When I had my cultivation base, I could sever it. Without a cultivation base... who is to say that... I can't still Sever it!?”

“Spirit Severing. Spirit Severing. What is Severed is the spirit. What is Severed is the heart. This... is my second blade of Spirit Severing!

“Sever away the Perfect stratum. Sever the past. Carve out my Perfect Dao Fruit!” A boom could be heard in Meng Hao's mind as he gained enlightenment. Although he clearly possessed no cultivation base, a billowing aura shot towards the sky.

Within that aura appeared Heavenly transformations, roiling clouds, and seething winds. Shockingly, precursors of the descent of a great Dao's reverberated out, something he had previously experienced in the Milky Way Sea.

In that instant, the sky above all regions of the Southern Domain exploded into motion. Winds surged, lightning cracked, thunder boomed. Every expert in the Southern Domain was shocked, and countless people looked up into the sky in amazement.

At the same time, in the starry sky outside of Planet South Heaven, from inside the Ninth Mountain, a shocking will suddenly appeared. It swept out over the Ninth Mountain and Sea, after which it zeroed in on the lands of South Heaven.

This was the will of the great Dao of the Ninth Mountain and Sea! It was the natural law of Heaven and Earth, the basis upon which the Ninth Mountain and Sea operated.

This will itself was also a great Dao! Its appearance filled the sky of South Heaven with a boundless light. Even the Ji Clan's Immortality Bestowal Dais outside of Planet South Heaven was shaken, and ceased functioning.

In the lands of South Heaven, the Ji Clan elders, as well as countless powerful experts from other sects and clans, fell to their knees in shock and began to kowtow.

In the sky above South Heaven, the will of the Ninth Mountain and Sea suddenly solidified into a blade that shot down toward Meng Hao in the Rebirth Cave.

This descending will far exceeded the first blade of his First Severing. All of the lands of South Heaven were shaken.

The Heavens opened up, revealing the heavenly bodies. Countless rivers of stars glittered and shined, seemingly prepared to bear witness to what was happening.

In the Rebirth Cave, a blade appeared in front of Meng Hao. This was his Spirit Severing blade, floating there in front of his head, glowing with shocking light.

Hair in disarray, he lifted his head up and roared: "SEVER!"

As his voice echoed out, the great Dao blade descended, slicing into the Rebirth Cave, fusing into the blade above Meng Hao's head, then slashing into the top of his head.

As soon as the blade touched Meng Hao's head, it sliced through him all the way to the ground. His body looked as if it had been cut in two.

Shattering sounds could be heard, not from his body, but from the fetters inside him, the shackles created by his reluctance to accept the loss of the Perfect stratum!

All such restraints were completely Severed!

Meng Hao instantly began to shake violently. Then, he experienced a sensation of relaxation, an incredible calm that filled his entire body. It felt as if moments before, the weight of an entire mountain was crushing down on him. Then, that mountain disappeared.

At the same time, shockingly, an image of a fruit appeared on his forehead, emanating a glow like that of a magical item.

This was... a Dao Fruit!

It was made up of countless magical symbols, and looked perfect in every aspect.

The 10th Wang Clan Patriarch could steal away Meng Hao's Dao Foundation, but he could not take away his Dao Fruit. The Dao Fruit belonged solely to Meng Hao, and could not be taken away by anyone.

In the moment that the Dao Fruit appeared, a cultivation base suddenly exploded out in Meng Hao. First it was Qi Condensation, then Foundation Establishment, then Core Formation, and after that, Nascent Soul.

After the peak of Nascent Soul, Meng Hao's desire for freedom and independence caused his First Severing to reappear.

His cultivation base was completely restored!

Tribulation can also be good fortune!

Meng Hao's energy was like a multicolored beam of light. His optimism for what would happen after severing the Perfect stratum caused his body to tremble again. An even more powerful cultivation base aura suddenly spread out from his body.

This was a Second Severing cultivation base!

"Dao Fruit Paragon!" A strange light gleamed in Meng Hao's eyes, and he began to breathe heavily. His fleshly body returned to the Heaven-defying state it had reached because of the art of Fleshly Sanctification. Furthermore, because of the indescribable boundless life force imparted to him by Da Nu, it was even more powerful than before.

"Dao Fruit is good," said Shui Dongliu levelly, "but since you qualify for the Eternal, why don't you sit down and try to gain enlightenment!" He flicked his sleeve, causing Meng Hao instantly drop cross-legged to the ground. "Ask yourself, what is the Eternal?!"

"What is the Eternal?" The question echoed out in Meng Hao's mind.

The Eternal....

The Eyeless Larva was eternal. If the larva was not destroyed, the silk could never be broken. If the silk was never broken, the larva could not be destroyed!

That was an eternal cycle!

The Soul Divergence Incantation was eternal. An undying soul could be created. Once that happened, the cycle of reincarnation of Heaven and Earth could not destroy it. Even if you died, years later, your flesh and blood would be born again.

“The Eternal is something that exists eternally within me. No living thing in Heaven and Earth can do anything to take it away from me. Even the will of Heaven and Earth itself would be incapable of wresting away the Eternal which belongs to me!

“The Eternal is a type of determination, an overbearing attitude!

“What is mine, belongs to me alone!” Meng Hao suddenly looked up at Shui Dongliu.

“Did you figure it out?” said Shui Dongliu, looking at him.

“Yes!” In the instant in which he replied, a rumbling sound filled his body. The Dao Fruit shattered into pieces, causing countless magical symbols to scatter about. They filled his entire body, then fused into his cultivation base, his flesh, and his soul.

At the same time, the Soul Divergence Incantation began to rotate in Meng Hao’s mind. After only a single rotation, Meng Hao suddenly understood the true meaning of the incantation.

It was a supreme Daoist Magic that could lead people to an understanding of the Eternal stratum!

To cultivate the Soul Divergence Incantation, one needed to experience death, to have incredible willpower and unusual good fortune, and most importantly, to experience hanging onto life by a thread, a razor’s edge between life and death where a single misstep would lead to either truly perishing or failing to cultivate this magic.

As for Meng Hao, the reason he could gain enlightenment was because of the Eyeless Larva. Its thread of life and death had thoroughly entwined his soul so that it could not depart. His soul had been alive while his fleshly body was dead.

In that space between life and death, Meng Hao's soul... earned the qualifications for the Eternal!

All those years ago, the coffin prepared for Ke Jiushi by Ke Yunhai served just such a function. That was how Ke Jiushi ended up succeeding in cultivating the Soul Divergence Incantation.

Meng Hao trembled as the magical symbols penetrated every part of his body. Because of the fusing of these symbols into him, although his cultivation base was only at the Second Severing level, his level... was that of the Eternal!

He was no longer Perfect, but rather, far above Perfect, in the Eternal stratum!

The Eternal stratum! What's mine is mine, and no one can steal it from me!

Meng Hao rose to his feet. His energy surged with power. Because of the Eternal stratum, his Second Severing cultivation base could far exceed the gap between it and the Third Severing. In fact, in combination with his Fleshly Body, he was now... the number one person beneath Dao Seeking!

Meng Hao turned to Shui Dongliu, clasped hands, and bowed deeply.

“Senior, many thanks for your kindness in pointing out the correct path!”

Shui Dongliu looked at him for a moment and then said, “There's no need to thank me.... I only hope that from now on, you don't hold any grudges against the Wang Clan. If you wish, you can kill the person who stole your Dao Foundation, but not others. Don't be a monster who kills those who haven't provoked you.

“Now, go. You have something bothering you, I won't keep you any longer.”

Meng Hao stared back at him, then nodded silently. He clasped hands and bowed again, then turned and shot out of the cave like an unsheathed sword, radiating intense killing intent.

Shui Dongliu watched Meng Hao leave, then, after a long moment, turned and walked back into the depths of the Rebirth Cave. To people like Choumen Tai and Da Nu, the Rebirth Cave wasn't very big. But to Shui Dongliu, it was limitless.

He walked and walked until finally he reached a room carved from stone.

The stone room was empty except for a half-painted canvas.

The painting depicted a countryside village. A white-haired old man stood there with his hands clasped behind his back, looking off into the distance. Next to him was a boy who appeared to be pleading for something. In return, the man shook his head.

Shui Dongliu looked at the painting, and a look of reminiscence appeared in his eyes. Finally, he closed his eyes.

In that instant, the old painter sitting cross-legged in the Eastern Lands suddenly opened his eyes. He smiled at the rich man standing in front of them, and then cleared his throat.

“My mental journey went well. Now, let me start that painting for you.”

Chapter 694: He Came!

Meng Hao emerged from the Rebirth Cave.

In that instant, his cultivation base exploded out. He really was like a bared sword emanating monstrous sword qi. His killing intent radiated out, causing the air in the area to freeze.

Frost spread out across the ground, covering stones in the nearby stone forest with sheets of ice. As he walked forward, his divine sense spread out until it encountered a familiar figure, standing outside of the Rebirth Cave Region, looking on anxiously.

“Fatty....” thought Meng Hao. He changed directions and, a moment later, reappeared directly next to Fatty.

“Who’s there!?!?” cried Fatty, clearly scared half to death and on the verge of fleeing. He backed up nervously, and popping sounds could be heard as several dozen magical items suddenly appeared.

When he saw Meng Hao, he stared in shock. Then he started hollering at the top of his lungs. “Meng Hao! Meng Hao!!”

A smile appeared on Meng Hao’s face. It had been many years since he last parted ways with Fatty, but as of now, he could clearly sense the feelings of friendship that existed in Fatty’s heart. Neither of them said anything more. They strode forward and shared a manly embrace.

Fatty’s heart was completely filled with joy. He looked at Meng Hao and then thought back to everything that had happened in the Reliance Sect. All of a sudden, he remembered Xu Qing, and his face fell. “You have to go save Elder Sister Xu!!”

When Meng Hao heard this, his eyes flickered. “What happened?”

Fatty hesitated for a moment and then shook his head. “N-nothing....”

It almost seemed like he wasn’t willing to explain.

Meng Hao was silent for a moment. He didn’t ask any further questions, but instead, flew up into the air. Actually, he didn’t need to ask anything else. All he had to do was go to the Black Sieve Sect, and he would naturally find the answers he sought.

Fatty understood Meng Hao quite well, so seeing him flying away like that, it wasn’t hard to guess what he was thinking. Fatty gritted his teeth and then yelled out, “Meng Hao, go save Elder Sister Xu. Because she got that medicinal pill for you, she’s now suppressed at the bottom of the Black Sieve Sect. The entire sect is working to dissolve her alive!!”

Meng Hao jerked to a halt in mid-air, his eyes instantly turning blood-red. “What did you say?”

A preternatural fury and desire to kill roared through him. His body trembled and the air around him rumbled as if it were about to shatter.

Fatty clenched his jaw. Having spoken up, he decided that he might as well explain everything. “Hurry up and go save her! Soon... it’s going to be too late!

“News leaked out that she is the first person in countless years to emerge from the Rebirth Cave! She risked everything to steal that medicinal pill, which she entrusted to me. I brought it here for her.

“In the end, the Black Sieve Sect captured her. They say that because she came out alive from the Rebirth Cave, her body is infected with its aura. The Black Sieve Sect Patriarchs want to refine her into treasured medicinal pills, which they hope to consume and thereby acquire the aura of rebirth.”

The roaring in Meng Hao’s mind was like that of millions of thunderbolts, all striking and exploding at the same time. Heaven and Earth shook, and it felt as if his mind were about to explode into pieces.

Meng Hao’s killing intent exploded out with incomparable intensity. He thought back to what he had seen, to Xu Qing delivering her life force to him. He thought about everything that had happened in their homeland, the State of Zhao. He thought about the grave she had dug, and the gravestone.

He thought about the determination in her eyes when she looked at him and murmured, “You live, I live. You die, I die!”

No other woman had ever treated him in such a way. No other woman cared about his life so much. Never....

Meng Hao lifted his head up and let out mournful roar that caused the colors to fade away from Heaven and Earth. The clouds and wind churned, and the power of his cultivation base exploded out. A tempest kicked up, which swept out in all directions. The air in the area seemed about to collapse.

“BLACK SIEVE SECT!!

“If you dare to harm a hair on her head, I, Meng Hao, will tear your bodies to pieces and crush your bones into powder! I will not rest until you are exterminated!!” He waved his right hand and slapped his bag of holding, causing the war chariot to appear. He stepped inside. Immortal Shows the Way had also been restored to normal; he rotated it and sent some Immortal qi out. The war chariot instantly vanished.

Fatty watched him leave, and then murmured, “Meng Hao, after everything Xu Qing did for you, if you let her down... it will be an intolerable injustice!”

Meng Hao’s eyes shone with a horrific balefulness. His rage and insanity fused into his killing intent, which exploded with monstrous intensity. “Xu Qing, wait for me. I’m coming to save you.

“Xu Qing, just hold on. I’m coming, I’m coming!!”

His cultivation base was at the Second Severing stage, and he was in the Eternal strata. He was the number one figure under Dao Seeking!

He was qualified to do whatever he wished. And he was even more qualified to fight back against an entire sect!

Even if it was the Black Sieve Sect!

Even if it was the countless discarnate souls that existed in the depths of the land!

Even if it was a super sect of the Southern Domain, the Black Sieve Sect!

Meng Hao didn’t consider those things. They weren’t worth even thinking about. In a situation like this, if a man worried about whether or not he would win or lose, worried about his own life, then he... was not even human!

The war chariot sped along, screaming through the air. The wind itself seemed to be filled with memories. Meng Hao saw the events at Mount Daqing. He saw the Reliance Sect. He saw the things that happened in the Blessed Land. He saw the Black Sieve Sect and the Rebirth Cave.

He saw all of the times he and Xu Qing had been together. The images floated there in the wind in front of him. He saw Xu Qing’s gentleness, her simplicity, her determination.

All of those things were now rooted deeply in Meng Hao’s heart.

Most moving of all was how she had sacrificed her own life force for him. It caused his heart to fill with stabs of pain. As of this moment, the killing intent he felt was greater than at any point in his entire life.

“Xu Qing, if you can sacrifice your life for me, then I can do the same for you!”

“From this day forward, you are my beloved. Heaven and Earth can bear witness to my words. You live, I live. You die, I die!”

**

The Black Sieve Sect was a grand place. The Hundred Thousand Mountains surrounding it served as a foil to the Ninety-Nine Mountains within their center. Above the Ninety-Nine Mountains floated the First Mountain, upturned to create something that was almost a continent. On its underside, willows draped down, some a few dozen meters long, others hundreds. Clouds curled up around this massive land, giving it a truly celestial feeling.

Richly ornamented buildings, pagodas, and temples covered it. Beneath it, the Ninety-Nine Mountains were all connected with colorful arching bridges. It was extraordinarily beautiful.

Gurgling water dripped off of the ragged rocks on the bottom of the floating mountain, making the sect a place of indescribable beauty. The faint sound of bells filled the air, creating an incredibly serene air.

Currently, the entire Black Sieve Sect was enveloped in a thick, black fog. Outside of the black fog were Black Sieve Sect spell formations, all in full rotation. They let out pulsing ripples, filled with crushing energy that formed the shape of a lotus.

The lotus had ninety-nine petals, each one of which was made up of ninety-nine lotuses. The entire thing formed into a gigantic, shocking lotus.

Inside the formation were the disciples of the Black Sieve Sect, sitting cross-legged in meditation. From up above in the sky, it was possible to tell that of the hundreds of thousands of disciples of the Ninety-Nine Mountains, all disciples were participating in the meditation, regardless of the level of their cultivation bases.

As for the Ninety-Nine Mountains themselves, they formed a central spell formation within the larger spell formation. They too rotated, combining their power with that of the hundreds of thousands of cultivators, all of the Black Sieve Sect's resources, to pour into the First Mountain... into the sect's legacy precious treasure.

It was a gigantic incense burner that existed on top of the First Mountain, which was so high that it seemed connected to the Heavens. The enormous incense burner was the subject of generation after generation of worship and sacrifice. Three huge sticks of incense eternally burned inside of it, and the smoke that rose up into the sky was blown by the wind into wisps that resembled willow branches. It was as if within these strands, one could see visions of fleeting, ever-changing lives that belonged to spirits from the underworld.

Sitting cross-legged around the incense burner were three old men. Each one had ancient features, and rarely stepped even half a foot outside of the Black Sieve Sect. As for their cultivation bases, all were in the Spirit Severing stage.

These were the Dao Reserve of the Black Sieve Sect, its very foundation.

The strongest of the three was the ruddy-faced old man in the center position, Murong Duo. His cultivation base was at the Third Severing level.

Of the other two, one was in the Second Severing level, the other the First.

These were the Patriarchs of the Black Sieve Sect!

They sat cross-legged, using the power of the spell formation, and thus, the power of all the cultivators of the sect, to operate the sect's precious treasure, and refine the person inside of it into medicinal pills!

This was a magical technique known as Heaven and Hearth Reincarnation Refinement, in which the subject was dissolved over a period of forty-nine days. No one could hold out for any longer than that. Eventually, the subject would melt into blood, which would then congeal into the medicinal pill.

An indistinct figure could be seen within the incense burner. It was only possible to tell that it was a woman; her face was not clearly visible, and her body was covered with countless magical symbols. The symbols were deeply imprinted into her flesh and blood, and glittered with bright light as they slowly worked at dissolving her.

The woman was trembling, gritting her teeth as she continued to endure. It seemed that her body might be fully dissolved at any moment.

The aura of the Rebirth Cave pulsed off of her. Every time it did, it would be absorbed by the incense burner, which would then burn hotly and send out a shocking red glow.

The three old men began to discuss the matter.

“So, it turns out that she has been able to endure for thirty-seven days!”

“This Xu Qing sure has unswerving determination. Sadly, her body is infected with the aura of the Rebirth Cave. She’s the first person in years to emerge alive from the Rebirth Cave....”

“In that case, she is simply destined to be refined into Rebirth Pills. With such medicinal pills... the slumbering ancestor of the Black Sieve Sect will have a chance to be reborn!”

“It’s a real pity she has the soul of Matriarch Phoenix within her. Unfortunately, her Dao of Nirvana will be lost, never to be handed down. However, sacrificing her and losing a single legacy to improve the entire sect means that her death will be worth it!”

“This matter is not just something that must be done by the Black Yang Sect, but also your Sieve Yin Sect. After all, our ancestor is your emperor!”

The three old men looked at the incense burner, and their eyes burned with passion.

At the same time, the trembling, indistinct figure inside of the incense burner let out a quavering murmur.

“Meng Hao, are you okay...? If you ever are reborn, by the time you emerge, it will be too late.... Well, I was the one who failed to keep my promise, you’re not to blame....”

“If it turns out that you weren’t reborn, well then... I’ll be going to accompany you soon.

“As we said. You live, I live. You die, I die....”

In that exact moment....

An incredible boom could be heard outside of the Black Sieve Sect spell formation. It was far more shocking than thunder; an ancient war chariot appeared, emanating intense killing intent and madness. The air shattered as it appeared!

Meng Hao stood in the war chariot, clothed in a green robe. He gripped the flag of three streamers in his right hand, which he waved out in front of him. It stretched out, creating a black screen that seemed capable of blotting out the entire sky. At the same time, Meng Hao's eyes flashed with an unprecedented desire to slaughter.

He came!

He came to keep his promise!

Chapter 695: Attack the Black Sieve Sect!

Meng Hao's appearance on the scene shook the Heavens and rocked the Earth. Everything trembled, and enormous, endless ripples spread out.

A massive roaring echoed out as the war chariot appeared, shattering the air. Meng Hao stood in the middle of the war chariot as cracking sounds filled the air; countless fissures sprang into being.

The entire sky was like a mirror that someone had punched their fist into. Although it was not completely shattered, shocking cracks could be seen spreading out in all directions.

That was especially true because of the flag of three streamers that he wielded. This was his first time truly and intentionally unleashing the full, incredible power of the flag. It whipped about, its blackness covering everything, splitting the sky into two worlds, one of light, one of darkness.

Meng Hao's eyes were completely bloodshot as his gaze swept over the scene in the Black Sieve Sect; he saw the black mist, and he saw the domineering lotus flower!

He sent his divine sense out, but the lotus spell formation and the black mist therein formed a great spell formation that completely protected the mountains of the Black Sieve Sect. This was no ordinary spell formation; even Meng Hao's powerful divine sense could not penetrate inside.

His killing intent instantly surged.

“Black Sieve Sect!” he shouted. The sound rumbled about, more intense than lightning. His fleshly body was at the peak of Spirit Severing, and his cultivation base was at the peak of the Second Severing. This was the first time he had ever shouted in such a way after entering the Eternal stratum. He pushed his hand down onto the chariot, and instantly, the flag of three streamers swished. The blackness, which was like nighttime consuming light, swept toward the huge lotus that surrounded the Black Sieve Sect. Booms could be heard echoing out.

Heaven and Earth trembled, and the sound of explosions filled the air. The lotus instantly collapsed, but then reappeared. Apparently, the aura of the Hundred Thousand Mountains was sustaining what would be an endless succession of enormous spell formations.

Because of Meng Hao’s shout, as well as the collision between the flag of three steamers and the great spell formation, the ground quaked violently. The sounds merged together, creating a shocking barrage that rattled out in all directions, even into the black mist within the Black Sieve Sect.

The disciples of the Black Sieve Sect suddenly could all hear Meng Hao’s enraged voice.

“Hand over Xu Qing!” he said. This was his second sentence. The power of his words far exceeded that of his first sentence. An even more shocking rumbling shook everything; the lotus dimmed and the mist seethed. All of the Black Sieve Sect disciples felt their minds trembling violently.

The beautiful palace buildings began to shake, and some even collapsed under the power of Meng Hao’s voice. The eyes of the Black Sieve Sect disciples in the Ninety-Nine Mountains went wide with shock.

The three old men who sat cross-legged around the incense burner on the First Mountain opened their eyes. Bright glows could be seen.

“Spirit Severing!”

“Second Severing!”

“A powerful expert!”

When they exchanged glances, they could all see the serious look in each others' eyes.

“We only activated the spell formation to be prepared for all contingencies and to prevent other sects from detecting what was happening. Who is this stranger?”

“It doesn't matter who he is. Even if he's a Spirit Severing expert, now that he's come to the Black Sieve Sect, he'll be forced to drop to his knees in front of us!”

The three men muttered to themselves for a moment before the Third Severing old man gave a cold snort. “He can't even get inside! Continue with the dissolving!”

Surrounded by rumbling sounds, the hundreds of thousands of Black Sieve Sect disciples once again continued with their refinement, causing the incense burner glowed bright red. As for the figure inside, when she heard Meng Hao's voice, she suddenly trembled.

“He... came....”

Outside of the Black Sieve Sect's spell formation, Meng Hao's eyes were completely shot with blood. He raised his hand and caused the flag of three streamers to swish through the air. Blackness roiled out to slam into the Black Sieve Sect's spell formation.

The incredible booms continued to rattle out. The great lotus spell formation suddenly rotated, causing the power of Heaven and Earth to emanate out. The power was indestructible, seemingly eternal. No matter what Meng Hao did to cause the formation to collapse, it would instantly restore itself.

A short period of time passed in which it seemed nothing would work.

The disciples of the Black Sieve Sect were now starting to calm down and focus on their orders from the sect. The dissolving continued. As for the old men surrounding the incense burner, cold smiles twisted their lips as they proceeded with the refinement.

They were not worried. The protective spell formation was so powerful that nothing could compare to it, except perhaps a Dao Seeking cultivation base. Any Spirit Severing expert who tried to break through the formation wouldn't be able to do so unless they spent months trying.

As for the refinement process, they only needed a few more days to finish.... Then they would be able to go against this opponent with the full strength of the sect. Even if he was a Second Severing cultivator, he would be dead for sure.

“How rash and ridiculous,” said the Third Severing old man, his voice cool.

Meng Hao stood in the war chariot glaring at the enormous lotus. He had already destroyed the damnable thing at least a hundred times with the flag of three streamers.

However, no matter how many times he shattered it into pieces, it would completely recover, seemingly completely undamaged.

“They mustered all the power of Heaven and Earth from all Hundred Thousand Mountains of the Black Sieve Sect to back this spell formation.... What I’m fighting against is not the formation, but the power of Heaven and Earth from these Hundred Thousand Mountains!

“If the power of Heaven and Earth doesn’t break up, then the formation cannot be pierced!

“If only... I could use just a bit of Dao Seeking power to force the spell formation to reach its limit. Break it at least ten times in a row, to the point where the spiritual energy from the Hundred Thousand Mountains can’t keep up. Then I can see its weak points!

“One point of weakness is all I need to completely shatter it.” Meng Hao lifted his right hand and made a grasping motion, causing the flag of three streamers to return to him. It swirled through the air around him, almost like a black cloak that covered his green robe.

He placed his hand onto the war chariot and rotated Immortal Shows the Way, sending pulses of Immortal qi into the chariot.

“Unfortunately, I don’t have the power of Dao Seeking!

“Even the flag of three streamers can’t smash through this succession of spell formations. Well then... I’ll just have to bash it head on!” A light of madness shone in Meng Hao’s eyes.

He would not attempt to pierce it; he would smash head on into the formation!

The war chariot began to thrum, and countless magical symbols appeared, along with numerous roaring wild beasts that began to pull it forward into a charge.

The incredible speed was difficult to describe. In the blink of an eye, the war chariot had left its original position and... was shooting like a meteor directly into the lotus, bashing into it.

The lotus instantly fell apart, but almost at exactly the same time, began to reform.

However, the war chariot continued onward, charging forward without stop. It was like a sharp sword, stabbing madly, allowing no time for the spiritual energy of the Hundred Thousand Mountains to rush forward.

“Ninth Anima!” roared Meng Hao. His body was powerful to the extreme, and his Cultivation base exploding with full power. Although this was not the power of Dao Seeking, he was eminently qualified to be called the number one figure under Dao Seeking.

BOOM!

The war chariot shot forward another three hundred meters. Meng Hao’s body trembled, and vast pressure bore down on him. However, nothing could prevent him from advancing. Nothing could stand in the way of the war chariot; it was like caged animal that roared as it charged forward.

The further they got, the greater was the pressure that weighed down on them. The interior of the lotus collapsed, but as before, began to heal. The Hundred Thousand Mountains rotated, and the spiritual energy poured out boundlessly. Meng Hao raised his hand up and then pointed out.

“Demon Sealing, Eighth Hex!

“Seal the spiritual energy of these hundred thousand mountains!”

An incredible roar filled the air as the Hundred Thousand Mountains shuddered. Meng Hao shouted out as the war chariot charged forward madly, another three hundred meters. It was now only about six hundred meters from the position where the black mist began.

It was at this point that violent shaking overtook the Hundred Thousand Mountains. Some of the outermost mountains, perhaps a thousand in total, began to split and crack and then directly exploded.

They simply couldn't endure the way Meng Hao fought back against them. After having their spiritual energy sealed, a backlash occurred that instantly shattered them!

As thousands of huge mountains collapsed in the Black Sieve Sect's Hundred Thousand Mountains, the faces of the disciples of the Black Sieve Sect fell. As for the three old men who sat next to the incense burner, their pupils constricted.

One of them gave a cold snort, then lifted his hand up and pointed out.

“Send 10,000 disciples to form a spell formation. Use deadly force. If they're capable of killing him, kill him. If they can't kill him, delay him for three days.”

In response to his words, a group of 10,000 disciples flew up into the air. They shot through the black mist and then entered the lotus spell formation to sit down cross-legged on the lotuses inside. They unleashed their cultivation bases as they took control of the lotus spell formation.

In unison with their actions, the lotus spell formation began to rotate, sending out pulses of killing will. In the blink of an eye, innumerable lotus petals flew out, sweeping toward Meng Hao like sharp swords.

The lotus petals almost looked like rain, filled with a desire to kill. However, before they could even get near to Meng Hao, his eyes radiated murder and madness. He pushed the war chariot onward, then waved his wide sleeve. The flag of three streamers shot out, sweeping out with echoing booms. The 10,000 disciples who had just emerged from the black mist trembled and began to cough up blood.

As for Meng Hao and the war chariot, they shot forward with urgency, fighting back against the pressure which weighed down. They moved another three hundred meters. By this point, Meng Hao felt as if a hundred thousand mountains really were pressing down onto his body.

They would soon crush him into a pulp.

As for the Immortal qi inside of him, he couldn't control it any more. It would be difficult to push the war chariot through the final three hundred meters. A bright glow appeared in Meng Hao's eyes as, without hesitation, he put the war chariot away and then relied on the strength of his fleshly body to continue on through the last three hundred meters.

As soon as he proceeded forward, the pressure from the Hundred Thousand Mountains bore down. Meng Hao trembled, and cracking sounds could be heard. He stopped in place. Seeing him stop moving caused the 10,000 disciples to feel a bit more confident. They all began to perform incantations, causing the lotuses they were sitting on to teleport forward toward Meng Hao. Shockingly, the lotuses started forming together into a huge statue of a three headed, six-armed god.

The statue was incredibly formidable. Not only did it have three heads and six arms, but lotuses swirled around it, and it was formed from 10,000 people! The three heads all looked at Meng Hao, and the six arms all pointed directly at him.

"Screw off from this place!" roared the statue with the combined voices of 10,000 people. Meng Hao looked up with a vicious smile. The killing intent in his eyes was thick, and his desire to slaughter suddenly surged even higher.

Ninth Anima. Second Spirit Severing cultivation base. Eternal stratum. All of this thrummed inside of Meng Hao. He strode forward, clenching his right hand into a fist.

One man versus a great spell formation, and 10,000 enemies.

"Time to break you!" he cried.

Chapter 696: Breaking the Formation

Meng Hao's fist connected. It was powered by the rage and frustration of having his Perfect Foundation stolen, as well as all the regret that he had severed away.

One fist connected, and everything exploded!

A huge boom filled the air as the statue's six arms burst into pieces, and its three heads crumbled. The entire statue exploded like a bomb!

It was impossible to describe exactly how much power was unleashed. Blood sprayed from the mouths of the 10,000 Black Sieve Sect disciples as they were sent spinning backward into the spell formation. The gale-force wind generated by Meng Hao's blow then smashed into them, shredding their bodies to pieces, killing them instantly.

Meng Hao's eyes shined with determination as he strode forward and punched a second time.

Then a third time, a fourth time and a fifth time!

Every time a blow landed, more of the surrounding lotus spell formation crumbled. With each strike, Meng Hao proceeded forward another thirty meters. By the time the ninth blow landed, he was already at the very edge of the spell formation. The final blow... was the Nine Heavens Destruction!

The lotus collapsed into fragments, and a massive boom rocked Heaven and Earth.

The sound of it filled the Hundred Thousand Mountains, roughly 10,000 of which directly collapsed into pieces. Finally, the Black Sieve Sect's mountain-protecting spell formation was broken.

In that moment, Meng Hao emerged from the spell formation and entered the black mist.

"Give me Xu Qing!" he said. His tone of voice made him sound like he was the ruler of the entire world. It was filled with an indescribable potency and madness that filled the entire Black Sieve Sect.

As his voice resonated out, the surrounding mist seethed, and narrow gaps formed. Through one such gap, Meng Hao caught a glimpse of the Ninety-Nine Mountains on the other side of the mist, and the incense burner on the First Mountain.

Sitting cross-legged inside the incense burner was a trembling figure, indistinct, but with a very familiar aura....

Xu Qing!

It was Xu Qing, who would live and die with him!

Hundreds of thousands of Black Sieve Sect disciples were refining Xu Qing!

Meng Hao's mind felt as if lightning bolts were striking it. An indescribable fury rose up inside of him, transforming into an inexhaustible desire to slaughter.

KILL! KILL! KILL!

In that moment, Meng Hao's hatred for the Black Sieve Sect reached the degree where it could never possibly be reconciled. Every single last disciple of the Black Sieve Sect HAD to die!

“Kill him!” cried the centermost of the three old men by the incense burner. The faces of all three were currently filled with shock; how could they possibly have imagined that Meng Hao would be able to break through their great lotus spell formation?

The First Severing cultivator immediately rose to his feet. He had a violent temper, and his face was grim as he flew up into the air.

“Disciples of the rear twenty peaks of the Hundred Mountains,” said the old man, “follow me into the Sieve Yin Formation. We will kill this drudge!” With that, he entered the black mist. Simultaneously, 30,000 disciples flew to follow him. The weakest among them were Foundation Establishment cultivators, the strongest were Nascent Soul.

Even as they entered the mist, Meng Hao's voice, filled with unprecedented bereavement and anger, suddenly sounded out.

“Black Sieve Sect! I hereby vow that... I will eradicate your entire sect! The lands of South Heaven will have either you or me, not the both of us!”

Meng Hao's desire to kill had reached a heinous level. He lifted his right hand and produced the flag of three streamers. It swept out in all directions, causing the mist around him to roil, and rumbling sounds to fill the air. As for the Black Sieve Sect First Severing Patriarch, as soon as he stepped into the mist, it seemed to come alive, as if it were sentient.

“Will of the Black Sieve, understanding of all creation! I shall go to battle, and pluck the stars from Heaven! First formation!” The voice of the First Severing Patriarch echoed about as the 30,000

Black Sieve Sect disciples entered the mist one after another. Shockingly, the mist condensed into eight formations that resembled black dragons.

The black dragons looked incredibly ferocious. Roaring with rage, they circulated around each other and then shot toward Meng Hao, attempting to devour him.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered with a cold glow as he looked at the eight dragons. His desire to kill had reached a level it never had before. From the day he had begun practicing cultivation until now, he had never felt a stronger desire to slaughter.

As the eight dragons neared, Meng Hao strode forward and waved the flag of three streamers. Blackness spread out, sweeping over three of the black dragons. The flag began to glow with a bizarre light, and on its surface appeared countless faces, their features twisted as if with greed and the thirst for blood.

At the same time, Meng Hao's body flickered and then reappeared in front of one of the other dragons. Without the slightest hesitation, he punched. A boom echoed out and a huge spasm ran through the black dragon. It began to break apart in layers, accompanied by miserable shrieks. Behind Meng Hao, three more black dragons roared and charged. They moved with such incredible speed that even in the moment in which he turned to look at them, they were directly in front of him.

"Demon Sealing, Eighth Hex!" he said, pointing out his right hand. Instantly, the three black dragons trembled, as if countless invisible bonds were tying them up.

"Demon magic, art of Righteous Bestowal, soul extraction!" Meng Hao performed an incantation, and a vicious gleam appeared in his eyes as he pointed forward.

The gesture instantly caused the indescribably shrill cries to echo out from within the dragons. Inside the dragons were over 10,000 cultivators, their faces twisting and distorting as they screamed. Ghost images appeared, which were their souls being extracted from within!

The three dragons instantly collapsed; over 10,000 corpses suddenly fell to the ground.

The art of Righteous Bestowal was a magical technique of the Demon Sealers. Righteousness came with a thought, bestowal came with a thought. Life came with a thought, death came with a thought!

In the same moment, the three dragons caught up by the flag of three streamers trembled violently and collapsed into pieces. As for the final dragon, it froze in mid-air. The image of the First Severing Patriarch magically appeared in the head position of the dragon, and his face was filled with shock.

“Second Formation!” he cried. Immediately, what remained of all the dragons fell apart and turned into black mist that shot toward the First Severing Patriarch. Within the mist were the rest of the disciples who had not been killed, about 10,000 of them.

In the blink of an eye, the black mist transformed into a three hundred meter tall giant. It wore black armor, and looked like a god. As soon as it appeared, it charged toward Meng Hao.

“DIIIEE!!” roared the giant, the combined voice of 10,000 people echoing out to shocking effect. At the same time, the Hundred Thousand Mountains suddenly released a boundless aura that enveloped the giant, causing its body to grow. All of a sudden, it was 1,500 meters tall!

Compared in size to the giant, Meng Hao was nothing more than a bug.

Meng Hao looked up at the approaching giant, and the coldness in his eyes grew stronger. Then he suddenly realized that he wasn't sure whether or not Xu Qing was alive or dead inside of the incense burner, and his heart grew even more anxious. At the same time, he understood that if he didn't destroy this spell formation, then he would be unable to enter into the Black Sieve Sect.

“DIE!” the giant roared, stretching its arms out to either side and then smashing them together toward Meng Hao, as if to crush him between its palms. They moved with incredible speed; in the blink of an eye, the hands were almost upon Meng Hao.

He did nothing to evade, allowing the hands to smash into each other around him.

To anyone observer, it would appear as if Meng Hao was completely enveloped by the hands of the giant. However, if you looked closely, you would see that... the giant was trembling.

Not only was it trembling, its expression was one of disbelief and shock.

“What... what fleshly body is this?!” said the Second Severing old man next to the incense burner. He rose to his feet, his face filled with astonishment.

“Calm down. There’s no need to get agitated,” said the Third Severing Patriarch, his voice cool. “That’s only the second transformation out of three total.”

Even as they exchanged words, the giant’s hands suddenly exploded. Black mist spread in all directions as Meng Hao walked out, not harmed even in the least bit. He stepped up to the giant and then instantly punched out.

A huge boom could be heard as the giant opened its mouth and expelled a mouthful of mist to block Meng Hao. At the same time, it retreated at full speed. On the giant’s forehead, the image of the First Severing Patriarch appeared, his expression one of terror and astonishment.

Instantly, he shouted, “Third formation!”

In response, the body of the giant fell apart into boundless black mist that shot toward Meng Hao and surrounded him. It seethed and spun as it then formed into an enormous globe. Rumbling sounds filled the air as black fire erupted out. Then the globe began to shrink, as if it intended to refine Meng Hao inside of it.

It shrank relentlessly. 300 meters. 150 meters. 100 meters. 30 meters....

Next to the incense burner, the Third Severing Patriarch coolly commented, “The third transformation, in combination with the power of Mo Li’s cultivation base, can easily kill an expert of the Second Severing level. It doesn’t matter how powerful his fleshly body is, the soft can defeat the hard. He will not escape.”

The other Spirit Severing Patriarch next to him smiled in agreement. “The Sieve Yin Formation can refine all living things. The only sad thing is that... it can’t produce medicinal pills. Otherwise, that person could be refined into a pill that would definitely be considered a precious treasure.”

As the two of them chatted, a huge rumbling sound suddenly rang out. Their faces flickered as they looked up. Down below, hundreds of thousands of Black Sieve Sect Disciples all had similar reactions.

What they saw was an enormous black globe of mist, shrunken down to only 10 meters in size. Then, a matchlessly vicious aura was released from within the mist globe.

The viciousness of the aura was difficult to describe, as was its incredible coldness. Everyone watched on as, in the blink of an eye, a ferocious figure appeared inside the 10 meter mist globe.

I was not a person, but rather, a flower!

A multi-colored flower!

Its branches and leaves swayed, its petals fluttered. When its aura spread out, the mist globe was incapable of enduring. It exploded with a boom. As it did, blood and gore splattered everywhere, from the corpses of the Black Sieve Sect disciples. In addition, an old man emerged, his face covered with fear, shock, and disbelief as he retreated at top speed.

That old man was none other than the First Severing Patriarch.

“Save me!!” he howled as he fled.

However, before he could get very far, and before anyone could even do anything in response, a black branch snaked out at high speed. It wrapped around the old man and violently dragged him back. The old man screamed miserably as the branch hauled him down toward Meng Hao, who then grabbed him by the neck.

Meng Hao strode forward. Behind him was a five-colored Resurrection Lily, fully sixty meters tall, swaying about with unbridled fury as it floated along.

This was Meng Hao’s Spirit Severing Treasure, his Resurrection Lily!

Chapter 697: Hundred Thousand Mountains!

The black mist spell formation was broken!

Meng Hao was enveloped by killing intent as he emerged. He violently twisted his right hand, instantly crushing the life out of the Black Sieve Sect First Severing Patriarch. Bones shattered, and then Meng Hao loosened his grip, sending the old man’s body tumbling down to the ground.

Meng Hao didn’t even think about the man’s bag of holding.

Behind him, the Resurrection Lily swayed about, emanating its vicious aura, making it seem as if Meng Hao were silhouetted against a terrifying, pitch-black backdrop. The Resurrection Lily had actually been ready for use as soon as he completed his Second Severing.

Furthermore, the life force inside of him came from Da Nu, a seven-colored Resurrection Lily. Because of that, although he had long been long locked in a life-or-death entanglement with the Resurrection Lily, after erasing its will, it was now fundamentally amiable.

Such amiability made it so that there was an unbreakable connection between the two of them.

Such a connection superseded that of the Spirit Severing Treasures created by most cultivators.

As of this moment, there was no one else in Meng Hao's world except for the figure inside the incense burner. The instant he emerged from the spell formation, he transformed into a green smoke that shot directly up toward the First Mountain.

Looks of shock could be seen on the faces of the two Spirit Severing cultivators next to the incense burner. The Second Severing Patriarch flew up into the air and shouted, "Stop him!"

At the same time, all of the Black Sieve Sect disciples down below flew up to form a huge spell formation. The power of Heaven and Earth descended, and the Hundred Thousand Mountains emitted spiritual energy. The spell formation surged with power.

The Third Severing Patriarch didn't fly up, but rose to his feet and put his hand onto the incense burner. His eyes flickered as his cultivation base rotated. He was using only the intense power of his cultivation base to perform the refining!

"This man is not weak," he thought. "The fact that he made it this far leaves me uncertain of whether or not I can defeat him. Therefore, I will disturb his emotions. Considering Zhou Tie's cultivation base, and the spell formation formed by the other disciples, if his heart is in chaos, then there is a high likelihood that he can be defeated."

As soon as Meng Hao emerged, he met the resistance of the Second Severing Patriarch. Dense killing intent filled Meng Hao's eyes, especially when he saw the Third Severing Patriarch next to the incense burner attempting to hasten the refining process. Meng Hao's eyes turned completely red.

“SCREW OFF!” he roared, waving his sleeve. Instantly, the Second Severing Patriarch was sent tumbling back, blood pouring from his mouth. Astonished as he was, his attempt to block Meng Hao’s path had actually slowed him down a bit.

Simultaneously, the hundreds of thousands of cultivators down below were rapidly unleashing the power of the spell formation. Bright light shot up into the air and then completely enveloped the area. Shockingly, glowing figures shot up into the air, one after another. They resembled shining souls, and represented all of the countless Black Sieve Sect disciples down below.

They quickly shot in tight formation toward Meng Hao in an attempt to block his path.

“Let’s see how you break through that!” said the Second Severing Patriarch malevolently. As his voice echoed out, the spell formation rotated, causing the colors in the sky and on land to fade. Wind spun, and spiritual energy from the Hundred Thousand Mountains surged out.

“Are you people looking to die?” said Meng Hao, his killing intent surging. He shot forward and lifted up the flag of three streamers. In addition, Blood Immortal divine abilities appeared, instantly wreaking death and destruction.

Miserable screams echoed out constantly. The incredible power of Meng Hao’s cultivation base made these enemies like nothing more than bugs. However, the sheer number of Black Sieve Sect disciples was such that it was impossible to kill all of them in a short period of time.

The Second Severing Patriarch ambled over to cautiously make sneak attacks when possible. Whenever he and Meng Hao exchanged blows, incredible booming sounds echoed out. Each time, the Second Severing Patriarch would cough up blood, and his heart would fill with astonishment.

Outside of the spell formation, the Black Sieve Sect’s Third Severing Patriarch pushed the refining process even faster. Then Xu Qing’s plaintive cry rang out from within the incense burner, filled with resigned weakness, and Meng Hao went crazy.

“All of you, DIE!” He suddenly jerked his hands up, then pushed them down toward the ground. When that happened, the land below began to quake. Meng Hao’s hair flew about wildly, and blue veins bulged out on his forehead. He seemed to be slipping into a hitherto unseen type of insanity.

“Mountain Consuming Incantation! Hundred Thousand Mountains, RISE UP!” Meng Hao tilted his head back and let out a violent roar. Down below, the ground churned like liquid, and the Black Sieve Sect’s Hundred Thousand Mountains began to shake.

They seemed on the verge of breaking away from their foundations, as if some indescribably powerful force had transformed into a hundred thousand hands that were now trying to rip the mountains up from the earth.

This... was the Mountain Consuming Incantation!

The Mountain Consuming Incantation, powered by Meng Hao's Second Spirit Severing Eternal stratum!

When the incantation was unleashed, it was shocking to the Heavens and could cause the Earth to tremble!

"RISE UP!!" roared Meng Hao. The Hundred Thousand Mountains trembled again, and this time 10,000 mountains were violently torn away from their bases. Rocks and stone showered down as the mountains rose up into the air.

At their jagged bottoms, plants and roots were snapped and hung down, some only a few meters long, some dozens.

This sight left everyone in the Black Sieve Sect completely and utterly flabbergasted. That included ordinary disciples, Nascent Soul Elders, and even the two Spirit Severing Patriarchs. Their astonishment had reached the complete, ultimate pinnacle.

"Who is this?! How come he looks so familiar...?"

"He looks familiar to me too! What exactly is he doing!?"

"Dammit! What divine ability is that?!"

Rumbling sounds filled the air, and everyone was dumbstruck. The Hundred Thousand Mountains of the Black Sieve Sect were being uprooted. By now, quite a few people realized that Meng Hao looked familiar, as if they had seen him somewhere before. However, considering how quickly everything was happening, they couldn't recall exactly when they had seen such a fearsome expert.

“Stop him!!” bellowed the Third Severing Patriarch. The Hundred Thousand Mountains were the foundation of the entire Black Sieve Sect, what it relied on to ensure long-term growth. In addition, the protective spell formations in the sect required their spiritual energy to operate.

As such... if the Hundred Thousand Mountains really were ripped out of the ground... even though the sect couldn't be considered completely destroyed... essentially, it would be!

By this point, the matter of refining Xu Qing was relatively insignificant. The Third Severing Patriarch immediately strode forward and shot toward Meng Hao. Any other Black Sieve Sect disciples who hadn't done so already also disregarded all danger to charge at Meng Hao.

Meng Hao was now surrounded by the flag of three streamers, the vicious Resurrection Lily, as well as 10,000 magical symbols which had just flown out from inside his bag of holding. The spirits of the magical symbols formed together into a tempest that swept out in all directions.

RUMBLE!!

Thousands of mountains among the Hundred Thousand Mountains were severed from their bases. They floated up to hover in mid-air, their auras shocking, leaking spiritual energy chaotically in all directions.

“Tell me, you people, do you know fear now?” He lifted his head up and laughed maniacally. His eyes were red, and his killing intent monstrous. Gritting his teeth, he once again roared: “Mountain Consuming Incantation! RISE UP!!”

RUMBLE!!

Another 10,000 mountains were ripped up to and began to float in mid-air. By now, more than 20,000 mountains were floating there. The remaining 80,000 mountains trembled violently and let out ceaseless, deafening rumbles. Occasionally, the very peaks of some of the mountains would break off and fly up.

Meng Hao was surrounded by divine abilities as the Black Sieve Sect disciples, including the Second and Third Severing Patriarchs, nearly went mad in their attempts to get to him. Blood sprayed from Meng Hao's mouth, but then, the power of his Eternal stratum erupted, leaving everyone else in shocked disbelief.

Meng Hao's wounds all healed up immediately!

He possessed the Eternal stratum, and a virtually undying soul!

With an undying soul, as long as a sliver of the soul remains, then death can be overcome, and one can come back to life!

With the Eternal stratum, as long as only a drop of blood remains undestroyed, one can live again!

“Still haven't risen up yet?!” Meng Hao roared. Rumbling filled the air as the bases of another 30,000 mountains crumbled, and they rose up into the air. Currently, more than 50,000 now floated in mid-air.

More than half of the mountain range was now afloat. Without their pressure to suppress the veins of spiritual energy that ran through the earth, the spiritual energy in the area was now in complete chaos. Spiritual energy pulsed out, smashing vegetation and trees, causing the entire land to look as if it had been scraped clean!

By now, the violent developments had attracted the attention of the whole Southern Domain.

In the Violet Fate Sect, Pill Demon was in the midst of meditation when suddenly his face flickered. He rose to his feet and jerked his head up. What he saw was a drop of blood hovering in the air above the Violet Fate Sect.

The drop of blood was bright red, and as soon as it appeared, it spread out to form a blood shield that covered over the entire Violet Fate Sect.

“Patriarch Blood Demon, what are you doing?!” cried Pill Demon, flying up into the air. Simultaneously, countless other cultivators flew up from inside the Violet Fate Sect.

Pill Demon waved his sleeve, and the world shook. A massive power shot toward the blood shield, causing an enormous boom. The blood shield trembled, but remained in place.

An ancient man wearing a red robe appeared outside of the shield. He looked down at the Violet Fate Sect. “Fellow Daoist Pill Demon, this blood is from the ancient Demon Immortal Sect. Do you really think you can break through the blood of a Demon King?”

This old man was none other than the Patriarch of the Southern Domain's Blood Demon Sect!

According to legends, deep within the Blood Demon Sect lurked a greater Demon of Heaven and Earth. It had been asleep for many years, and only occasionally awoke. That greater Demon was the Dao Reserve of the Blood Demon Sect!

Normally speaking, what people saw outside of the sect was this Patriarch Blood Demon.

"I bear you no ill will," continued the old man. "I have utilized this blood, a special treasure, for the purpose of restraining you for seven days.

"After the seven days are up, the shield will fade away. As for the drop of blood... you can keep it as a form of apology."

"You!" said Pill Demon, his face turning grim. Outside the blood shield, the red-robed old man turned and disappeared off into the distance.

Similar scenes played out at the same time in the Golden Frost Sect, the Solitary Sword Sect, the Li Clan, and the Song Clan. In total, five drops of blood appeared across the Southern Domain to cover over the headquarters of all the superpowers.

The drops of blood became seals, preventing anyone from emerging from the sects, and even preventing their Dao Reserves from awakening!

"Just what is the Blood Demon Sect up to?!"

That was what everyone was wondering. However, what shocked them even more was that the sky... suddenly turned completely red!

Moments ago, 100,000 Blood Demon Sect disciples had appeared in the air above the Southern Domain. Each and every one of the disciples cut open their arms, causing blood to spurt out. Li Shiqi, who floated in their exact center, lifted up an austere magical bottle up into the air. Within this bottle was a drop of golden blood that flew out and soaked up all the fresh red blood. The golden blood then turned bright red, after which all of the drops began to spread out, forming a huge glowing red shield that covered the entire Southern Domain.

The Southern Domain was sealed!

Such a huge seal could not be preserved for very long. At the most... seven days!

In the moment that the sealing occurred, Meng Hao was in the Black Sieve Sect, having just ripped up 50,000 enormous mountains. The spiritual energy was now in chaos, and spreading out through all of the Southern Domain.

The blood-colored shield prevented the ripples from escaping out. None of the super sects or clans of the Southern Domain would find out... nor any of the powerful experts.

Meanwhile, in the depths of the Blood Demon Sect, there existed a blood-colored pond.

Within the pond, a man sat cross-legged in meditation. He was extremely withered, and looked almost like a corpse. Suddenly, his eyes opened, and they were filled with boundless ancientness.

“I’ve been waiting for such a long time. Finally... the day has come!”

Chapter 698: Deranged

In the Southern Domain’s Black Sieve Sect, Meng Hao was surrounded by a bright red glow. The crowds of Cultivators from the Black Sieve Sect were sending all sorts of divine abilities and magical techniques against him, as well as magical items. Even with his incredible fleshly body, it was something he couldn’t stand up against for long.

The flag of three streamers was in full retreat, and even the Resurrection Lily was falling back. The Black Sieve Sect disciples had gone mad. There was not a single one who could watch the Hundred Thousand Mountains, the very foundation of their sect, being pulled up by the roots, and not go mad.

“No time to wait for all 100,000,” thought Meng Hao. “50,000 will do!” With that, he suddenly stretched his right arm out and pointed up to the sky. The 50,000 mountains began to rumble, and then descended with shocking speed.

They shot directly toward the spell formation made up of the hundreds of thousands of Black Sieve Sect cultivators, then began to slam into it. Miserable shrieks filled the air one after another. Meng Hao's eyes suddenly flickered with burning madness.

“Explode!” he said. It was only a single word.

That one word caused everything to shake. One by one, 50,000 mountains exploded. The sky ripped and the land quaked. Even the Ninety-Nine Mountains were severely affected, and began to crumble.

Blood sprayed from the mouths of hundreds of thousands of cultivators as the spell formation collapsed into pieces. At least half of the people who made up the formation let out bloodcurdling screams as they were destroyed in body and spirit.

“NOOO!!” roared the Second Severing Patriarch. He unleashed a divine ability, causing a gigantic Xuanwu turtle with a viciously spiked shell to appear. As it shot toward forward, Meng Hao waved a finger, causing portions from five enormous, crumbling mountains to crush down toward the old man. Blood sprayed from his mouth as he was sent tumbling backward. At the same time, Meng Hao pushed his hands down toward the ground another time, causing the ground within the Black Sieve Sect to split open.

Spiritual energy surged out, mountain peaks crumbled, the sky dimmed. Meng Hao strode forward toward the First Mountain.

However, even as he stepped foot onto it, the air in front of him rippled, and the Black Sieve Sect's Third Severing Patriarch stepped out.

A ferocious expression could be seen on his face, as well as surging hatred. The moment he appeared, he waved his sleeve. Shockingly, nine white tigers appeared, each of them fully thirty meters long.

Behind the white tigers, the Third Severing Patriarch let out a roar and then raised his hand up. A seal mark appeared from within, which rapidly increased in size as it shot toward Meng Hao.

Off in the distance, the Second Severing Patriarch gritted his teeth because of the injuries he had sustained, but approached nonetheless. His hand flashed in an incantation gesture, causing black mist to swirl around him and then turn into a statue of a Xuanwu turtle. It emitted a mysterious glow, and also emanated the sounds of wailing, which shook everything in the area.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and he slapped his bag of holding. Immediately, the only Time Sword tip he still possessed appeared. He grabbed it with his fingers and then suddenly vanished. When he reappeared he was directly in front of the Second Severing Patriarch. He waved his hand, and the sword tip flew out.

When it slammed into the Xuanwu turtle, the beast instantly began to wither. It let out a miserable shriek and then began to collapse and dissipate. The Second Severing Patriarch's face fell as the sword tip neared him. He was just about to attempt to dodge to the side when Meng Hao stretched out his finger.

“Hex!”

It was a single word, but it instantly caused the Second Severing Patriarch to tremble to a stop. The sword tip stabbed through him, causing not only blood to spurt out, but also 10,000 years of longevity!

“AAHHH!!”

Physical pain didn't count for much, but the pain caused by the destruction of longevity cause the old man to let out a miserable shriek. By this point, Meng Hao had already turned around. He flicked his sleeve, and a gale-force wind sprang up to send the nine white tigers sprawling backward. Then he looked up at the sealing mark that was bearing down on him. By now, it was already three hundred meters tall, and causing everything to rumble as it neared.

“Suppress!!” roared the Third Severing Patriarch, gesturing with both hands, sending the seal mark smashing down toward Meng Hao.

“Anywhere that mountains exist, that is my Area world!” said Meng Hao. He performed an incantation with his right hand and then pointed out. Shockingly 50,000 illusory mountain suddenly appeared around him. These were the 50,000 mountains that he had just destroyed!

As the mountains made their appearance, they turned into Meng Hao's Area world. It spread out toward the incoming seal, causing rumbling to fill the air. It also shot toward the Second Severing Patriarch, who was already injured. This new attack caused him to let out a scream of defiance as his body trembled and then exploded. He was dead in body and soul.

At the same time, Meng Hao borrowed the momentum of the blast to shoot at high speed past the Third Severing Patriarch. In the blink of an eye, he was on the First Mountain, next to the incense burner.

Without the slightest hesitation, he anxiously approached and reached out his right hand. Just as he was about to lay hands on the trembling figure inside, an enraged roar echoed out behind him.

The roar spread out, and it contained something that caused Meng Hao's scalp to go numb with a sense of crisis.

“You want to save that girl? I'd rather let the Rebirth Pill refinement fail than let you succeed! Heaven and Earth furnace, shatter the pill and destroy the body!”

The instant the voice rang out, the incense burner trembled and began to emit intense heat.

“If you fall back, your beloved in the furnace will be killed. If you don't fall back, then you will die together!”

Meng Hao's face flickered as he eyed the leaping flames in the incense burner. Critical danger was also approaching him from behind. His eyes flickered with determination. Without hesitation, he stopped in place. He did not fall back.

His two hands flickered in incantation pattern and, ignoring both the danger from behind and the blistering heat from incense burner, he shot forward. He entered the incense burner and wrapped his arms around the stiff figure inside.

His body was instantly attacked by the intense heat. His hair burned, and the flesh of his face was charred black. His fingers dried and withered, revealing bones. Even his chest was eaten away until his heart was visible.

However, he still entered the incense burner to wrap his arms around Xu Qing. In that instant, a tremor ran through him as the danger from behind finally arrived.

Whhhzzzzzzzzzzzzz....

Meng Hao trembled as the eight white tigers, which had transformed into eight white spikes, stabbed into his back.

Actually, as far as physical pain went, he didn't even notice it. Currently, he was staring blankly at Xu Qing as he held her in his arms. She was not beautiful like he remembered. Her body was emaciated and withered, her features ancient. She had no life force in her, no soul.

She had... nothing.

Meng Hao quivered, and his eyes filled with tears.

“Elder Sister Xu....” Stabs of pain filled his heart, as if it were being ripped directly out of his body. He instantly fell completely into his madness. At this same time, the voice of the Third Severing Patriarch rang out behind him.

“Eight Tigers Immortal Extinguishing Tribulation!!”

In coordination with the words, the eight spikes that had stabbed into Meng Hao began to emanate an indescribably terrifying power. It instantly filled every corner and recess of his body.

Meng Hao's eyes were crimson as he looked at Xu Qing. He laughed bitterly, doing nothing to prevent the Third Severing Patriarch from approaching and attacking with a divine ability.

Blood sprayed from his mouth, only to be instantly incinerated.

“First Tribulation!” said the Third Severing Patriarch. Booming filled Meng Hao's body.

“Second Tribulation!”

“Third Tribulation!”

Booming rang out constantly as, one by one, the eight spikes inside of Meng Hao shattered. They battered his soul and shredded his body, but he didn't care. The only thing he cared about was the corpse of the woman he held in his embrace.

He felt hatred, madness, insanity, and regret.

He had arrived too late....

“You live, I live. You die, I die....”

“If you grow old, then I’ll grow old together with you....” Meng Hao heard the words from the past echoing in his ears. He laughed bitterly as the explosions wracked his body.

“Fifth Tribulation!

“Sixth Tribulation!

“Seventh Tribulation!

Suddenly, an intense hope filled Meng Hao’s face. He began to breathe raggedly, and even as the words ‘Eighth Tribulation’ rang out behind him, he realized that there was a problem.

“Xu Qing’s soul.... Her soul is not in her body any more. Her soul....”

“Bodies can be restored. As long as her soul has not dispersed, she isn’t dead. However, there are no traces at all of a soul within her. It’s almost like... someone extracted it!” Meng Hao’s entire body trembled, and roaring sounds filled his whole body. He slowly put Xu Qing’s corpse into his bag of holding. As he did, his Eternal stratum, seemingly in unison with his sudden lucidity, exploded out along with the Eighth Tribulation.

It was at that point that roaring flames suddenly burst out all over Meng Hao’s body. The more than 100,000 remaining Black Sieve Sect disciples saw this, as did the Third Severing Patriarch.

They saw flames, and inside of the flames, a person. Everything else above and below faded, and the Black Sieve Sect disciples’ faces filled with excitement.

The Third Severing Patriarch finally breathed a sigh of relief. The menace of Meng Hao was something he couldn’t quite handle, and he had even been worried that, because of Xu Qing, he wouldn’t be able to kill him.

“Finally, the matter is ended....” murmured the Third Severing Patriarch. And yet, even as the words left his mouth, his face suddenly flickered and filled with shock. Without hesitation, he shot backward.

Even as he fell into retreat, Meng Hao strode out from within the raging flames, which were then immediately extinguished. Meng Hao was eternal, and what is eternal cannot be exterminated!

The only way to kill him was to simultaneously exterminate him in both body and soul. Using any other method would be very difficult.

As for the Third Severing Patriarch, he was obviously not qualified to do something like that!

Even as the man began to retreat, Meng Hao’s killing intent exploded out in shocking fashion.

“Where is Xu Qing’s soul!?” he said, glaring directly at the Third Severing Patriarch. He spoke slowly, and his eyes were thoroughly bloodshot. His voice was filled with the thirst for blood and slaughter, and anyone who heard it would feel an incredible sense of danger.

The more than 100,000 surrounding Black Sieve Sect disciples were trembling. By this point, there were a few who finally realized why Meng Hao looked so familiar. Before, they had sensed the familiarity, but didn’t have time to think deeply about the matter. Now, though, they suddenly thought of a name from the past.

“Meng Hao!!”

Chapter 699: Sieve Yin Sect

“That’s Meng Hao!!”

“Violet Furnace Lord Meng Hao of the Violet Fate Sect! He even came to the Black Sieve Sect once to give a lecture about the Dao of alchemy!!”

It had been silent before, but suddenly, the sound of gasping filled the air as everyone suddenly thought the same thing.

“Two hundred years ago he was in Core Formation.... But now, he can slaughter Spirit Severing Patriarchs!!”

Meng Hao completely ignored the astonished buzz of conversation. He stared straight at the Third Severing Patriarch and slowly walked forward.

As he neared, an enormous energy rose up from Meng Hao's body, which transformed into an incredible pressure that covered over everything. The hubbub instantly died down, and even the wind ceased to blow. The only thing left behind was the indescribable pressure.

At the moment, it was evening, and the sky was just starting to turn dark.

“The Sieve Yin Sect! Her soul is in the Sieve Yin Sect!!”

When the Third Severing Patriarch felt the pressure, and saw Meng Hao's gaze fixed upon him, his heart grew numb, and a sense of despair filled him. He was certain that if he didn't tell Meng Hao what he wanted to know, he would die this day. It was then that he remembered that the Sieve Yin Sect was actually the true Dao Reserve of the Black Sieve Sect, so he quickly blurted out the name.

The Black Sieve Sect was divided like Yin and Yang.

In accord with that division, it was split into two factions. On the surface was the Black Yang Sect. However, beneath the Hundred Thousand Mountains was the Sieve Yin Sect!

The two factions were inextricably linked, which was how the name of the Black Sieve Sect came to exist in the Southern Domain.

Of course, Meng Hao was not aware of this, but he did know a bit about the Black Sieve Sect. He knew about the countless discarnate souls that existed underground. It was years ago that he had first sensed the discarnate soul of Matriarch Phoenix in Xu Qing.

He also knew that some Chosen of the Black Sieve Sect had Sieve Yin Sect souls hidden within them.

As for which of the two factions occupied the position of leadership, and which was subservient, well... no outsider knew the answer to that question.

Meng Hao said nothing in response. He simply lifted his right hand up, performed an incantation and then pushed his hand down toward the ground.

As he did, his Demon Sealer's aura exploded out. As a result, the Demonic Qi of Heaven and Earth in the area surged toward him in a constant flow. It swept about, causing his view of the entire world to change instantly.

Shockingly, he could see that the land was covered with boundless auras of sinister death. The auras swirled together to form a vortex that actually existed in the ground deep beneath the Black Sieve Sect.

Gradually, he could also make out what appeared to be a turbid river flowing underneath the surface of the ground. It was surrounded by countless discarnate souls. Surrounding the river were ten enormous, illusory palaces that floated in the air, which seemed to be guarding the river.

In the center of the ten palaces was an altar formed from bleached bones. It was filled with a bizarre, awe-inspiring aura, and above it floated a black, crystal ball. Within that crystal ball was a soul, apparently sleeping.

As soon as he saw the soul, Meng Hao's entire body began to shake.

It was... Xu Qing.

Beneath the crystal ball were four blurry figures sitting there cross-legged. A sinister aura of death radiated off of them, which made it clear that these four figures were corpses that had been there for countless years.

The moment in which Meng Hao saw the four corpses, they all lifted their heads. Bizarre, underworldly light shone in their eyes as they looked at Meng Hao.

There were four corpses, but it was three wills that suddenly exploded out in Meng Hao's mind.

“Screw off!”

“Get the hell out of here!”

“This is not a place you can enter. If you don’t screw off within three breaths of time, you’ll end up remaining here forever!”

In response, Meng Hao lifted his foot up and then stamped it down onto the ground. The surface of the land rumbled, and a huge fissure opened up. Determination filled his eyes as he shot down into the fissure.

As soon as he entered, a sinister, cold aura rose up. Furthermore, countless discarnate souls emerged from within the river. Their eyes glowed with strange lights, as well as greed, as they shot toward Meng Hao.

An archaic voice echoed out from the turbid waters below: “In the Yellow Springs, the discarnate souls of Heaven and Earth see not the sun. They wish only to remain buried in the depths!”

The countless discarnate souls shot forward, causing an evil wind to spring up.

A strange light gleamed in Meng Hao’s eyes as he proceeded onward three hundred meters. He slowly extended his right hand toward the tens of thousands of incoming discarnate souls. Then, he chopped his hand down, creating an illusory blade imbued with his Dao.

The slash of this blade was like the slash of the Dao!

This blade contained Meng Hao’s Dao of freedom and independence. His life was a journey, and he would be free and unfettered! This Dao was a severing of fetters!

Rumbling filled the air as, in the blink of an eye, the blade grew to 3,000 meters in length. It slashed down, sending out monstrous ripples that swept about in all directions. As the blade swept out, countless discarnate souls let out miserable shrieks, and burst into flames.

Meng Hao proceeded forward another measure, advancing six hundred meters. He was now only 1,500 meters from the altar. At the same time, ten streams of divine will appeared from within the ten palaces that surrounded the altar. They shot forward, carrying with them auras of death. Shockingly, they transformed into 100,000 discarnate souls, all of them with eyes full of avarice. As they flew through the air, they merged together to form what appeared to be a waning moon that sped toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao lifted his hand again, and when it descended, a second blade appeared!

This was his second Dao, the severing of Perfection and the acquisition of a new life. It contained his determination, his will, and his enlightenment. As the blade descended, Heaven and Earth shook, as if a great Dao were arriving. In front of Meng Hao, it transformed into a blade that exceeded the 3,000 meter length of the previous blade.

The blade slashed toward the moon!

Booming sounds rattled out in all directions!

Wherever the ripples of the blade passed, the discarnate souls screamed miserably. The waning moon emitted a bright glow as it attempted to fight back.

When the two slammed into each other, the waning moon trembled. Meng Hao's blade slashed directly into its center, completely slicing it in two. It instantly shattered into pieces.

When the waning moon exploded, the ten temples trembled. All of the discarnate souls in the area looked completely astonished. Even as the waning moon began to reform, Meng Hao waved his hand and pointed.

“Demon Sealing, Eighth Hex!”

RUMBLE!

Demon Sealing magic was incredibly potent when used against the discarnate souls; the waning moon shuddered, and instantly began to disperse. At the same time, countless disconsolate wails could be heard echoing about.

“It's him!”

“It's the Demon Sealer from that year!!”

“He's a Demon Sealer!!”

Even as the voices rang out, Meng Hao advanced a third time, crossing a span of 1,500 meters to directly near the altar. At the same time, three of the four figures opened their eyes and lifted their hands to point toward Meng Hao.

“Discarnate Soul Dao! Dao of Soul Destruction!”

Shockingly, these three corpses had cultivation bases at the Third Spirit Severing level. When they attacked simultaneously, the power was shocking, causing the surroundings to suddenly sink into an illusory world where it seemed Heaven and Earth were transposed. In front of Meng Hao, a vortex appeared.

The vortex, which seemed capable of consuming anything living or dead, sped directly toward Meng Hao.

If that were all there were to it, it wouldn't be a big deal. However, before Meng Hao could employ any divine abilities, the fourth figure on the altar opened his eyes, rose to his feet, and began to walk toward Meng Hao.

“I am the Yin Divinity. I neither descend to the underworld nor ascend to the shining Heavens. I control my own reincarnation. I possess the Yellow Springs of the Ninth Mountain....” As he spoke, he passed through the vortex to appear in front of Meng Hao. He lifted his hand and pointed out.

The gesture caused what appeared to be an illusory, yellow-colored river to appear above his hand. Something appeared to exist inside the illusory image, and it struggled to emerge, releasing an incredible will of death.

The finger attack caused Meng Hao's entire body to fill with rumbling, along with an intense sense of deadly crisis. In his estimation, this person... was even stronger than the three people from moments ago!

“Back on that ancient ship, I came to understand two types of Daoist magic....” Meng Hao's eyes glittered as he took a deep breath, and then began to perform an incantation. In the blink of an eye, the Mountain Consuming Incantation appeared.

This incantation was something he had acquired in the ancient Demon Immortal Sect. It was not the most powerful magic, however, as far as Meng Hao could tell, the limits of its power likely depended on which mountain was being replicated!

Ordinary mountains, such as the Black Sieve Sects' Hundred Thousand Mountains, or perhaps other mountains in the Southern Domain, would be incapable of fighting back against this vortex.

“The most powerful mountain that I have had a chance to study... is the Ninth Mountain!” Meng Hao's eyes went blank. One breath of time later, shockingly, the image of a mountain appeared in his pupils.

It was a mountain that towered among the stars, a boundless, enormous mountain that defied description.

The Ninth Mountain!

As soon as the Ninth Mountain appeared in his eyes, it also manifested in his palm. He lifted his hand up, and the Ninth Mountain grew in size. Along with it, indescribable ripples began to flow out from within it.

The self-proclaimed Yin Divinity discarnate soul in front of Meng Hao suddenly looked shocked, and it began to tremble involuntarily.

“That's... the Ninth Mountain!

“To produce a copy of the Ninth Mountain requires incredible destiny and good fortune!

“Not only have you summoned an image of the Ninth Mountain, but you've summoned it into your palm! Such an action requires incredible luck, as well as... vast audacity!

“How are you capable of all of this! How could you possibly have had a chance to lay eyes on the entirety of the Ninth Mountain?!?!”

He was shocked, as were the three discarnate souls on the altar behind him. Their faces filled with complete disbelief as they looked at the Ninth Mountain.

It must be said that South Heaven is only one of the four planets that orbited the Ninth Mountain. That made the Ninth Mountain... something of supreme importance, above all living things!

To summon an image of the Ninth Mountain, was like summoning Heaven and Earth!

“If he can summon the image of the Ninth Mountain, that means that if he can achieve Immortal Ascension he will have a Mountain Consuming qi! This man cannot be allowed to develop any further!

“He only has the image of the mountain, not the will! Destroy him, seize his blood, wrest away his fortune! Transform this into a great success for the Sieve Yin Sect!”

Instantly, the three discarnate souls on the altar shot out.

It seemed that they were just about to slam into Meng Hao, when suddenly a vast power from the Heavens above suddenly descended to the lands of the South Heaven. As it neared, South Heaven shook and trembled.

This was a great Dao. This was the arrival of the will of the real Ninth Mountain!

The will arrived because Meng Hao replicated its image. It descended because of the mountain in his hand!

Chapter 700: True Patriarch Six-Daos

In almost the exact moment in which Meng Hao used the Mountain Consuming Incantation to summon the image of the Ninth Mountain, far out in the starry sky outside of Planet South Heaven, the indescribably majestic Ninth Mountain suddenly trembled.

Along with the trembling, the will of the mountain, as if in response to some mysterious call, neared South Heaven and descended into Meng Hao's palm, onto the rapidly expanding image of the Ninth Mountain.

It was only a sliver of will, but to Meng Hao and the surrounding discarnate souls, it was shocking to the extreme.

The astonishment of the discarnate souls was at a pinnacle.

“Resonance!!”

“He... actually formed a resonance with the Ninth Mountain!!”

The discarnate souls trembled, and Meng Hao’s eyes were now anything but blank. He suddenly waved his right hand, and the Ninth Mountain in his hand shot forward.

As it bore down on the self-proclaimed Moon Divinity, the discarnate soul defended with every bit of power it could muster. Countless heavenly bodies appeared around its and shot forward to block the mountain.

BAM!

The heavenly bodies collapsed, and the Moon Divinity discarnate soul let out a disconsolate shriek as the Ninth Mountain slammed into it, completely destroying it in all aspects....

Then the Ninth Mountain smashed into the enormous vortex, shattering it into pieces. It seemed as if the mountain was completely unstoppable. The other three discarnate souls on the altar retreated in complete terror, but they were too slow for the Ninth Mountain.

Amidst the rumbling, one managed to dodge to the side. The other two, however, howled miserably. They unleashed all of their divine abilities and magical items, but in the end... they were completely destroyed.

At this point, Meng Hao, his face pale, coughed up some blood. The Ninth Mountain slowly faded away.

As it disappeared, weakness surged through Meng Hao’s body. He had never imagined that the image of the Ninth Mountain would be so shockingly powerful; just now, he had used it to resist Dao Seeking!

Unfortunately, the price paid was something his cultivation base couldn't handle. Although his soul contained an undying will, the backlash had still injured him. He now knew that if he used this particular divine ability for too long, it would wither his soul!

As for the discarnate soul who had escaped, it was now fleeing in horror. It had completely lost all its nerve, and was panic-stricken because of Meng Hao.

Meng Hao completely ignored it as he strode forward onto the altar. He raised his right hand and was just about to grab the crystal ball when suddenly, a desiccated hand appeared out of nowhere in front of his face.

It pointed at him, and as it did, Meng Hao could see an incredible ancientness emanating off of the finger and its blackish-yellow fingernail.

The finger did not send out any ripples, nor did it emit any of the power of Heaven and Earth. However, it gave Meng Hao the sense of a great Dao, almost like natural laws of Heaven and Earth.

He was incapable of evading or dodging. He could only watch as the finger tapped him gently on the chest.

In response, he heard an incredible roaring, and blood sprayed out of his mouth. He spun up violently into the air, as if he had been delivered a huge blow. He slammed into one of the huge temples, which then shattered into pieces, incapable of sustaining the force of Meng Hao smashing into it.

He shot through the wreckage of the temple and then slammed into the roof of the cave up above. The ground trembled, and roaring echoed out in all directions. The earth split and Meng Hao shot up into the air above the Black Sieve Sect. It was almost like he was passing from the dark of Yin into the light of Yang. When he reached the end of his trajectory, his chest finally exploded into a cloud of blood.

Immediately, his undying soul and Eternal stratum surged into action, causing the wound to begin to heal. And yet, even after it healed, it exploded once again, a vicious cycle. Meng Hao coughed up blood continuously until his green robe had turned violet.

Down below, the disciples of the Black Sieve Sect watched on with expressions of shock on their faces.

At the same time, coughing sounds could be heard from deep within the ground.

A black mist began to rise up from down below, which then flooded out to cover the entire Black Sieve Sect.

The coughing sound grew louder, as if someone were lurching out from within the depths of the ground.

All of a sudden, an ancient voice could be heard. "I was just sleeping for a bit and you had to go stir up such a ruckus!"

A skinny, shriveled old man appeared. He wore a black robe, as well as a hat. His features were wizened and ancient, pale in a way that was frightening to look at. His eyes were vacant, and his entire body radiated an aura of death, almost like a vampiric zombie.

As he walked out, everything around him became freezing cold, and black snowflakes began to drift about.

When the Third Severing Cultivator saw the zombie-like man appear, he immediately began to tremble and sweat. Without even thinking about it, he dropped to his knees and kowtowed. "Greetings from the junior generation, true Patriarch Six-Daos!"

Simultaneously, the discarnate soul expert who had survived Meng Hao's attack earlier immediately flew out trembling. He, too, dropped to his knees and kowtowed.

"Greetings from the junior generation, true Patriarch Six-Daos!"

Back underground, countless discarnate souls all dropped to their knees to kowtow, their faces filled with awe and terror. At the same time, their voices echoed out in greeting. As for the Black Sieve Sect disciples standing on the ground, they shook uncontrollably, and although they actually didn't know who this old man was, they kowtowed nonetheless.

Meng Hao's face was unsightly, and he could feel the wound in his chest continuing to fight against his Eternal stratum. He stared fixedly at the old man for a moment before realizing that the man's cultivation base...

Was at the peak of Dao Seeking!

Meng Hao could also tell that this man seemed to be slightly stronger than the 10th Wang Clan Patriarch.

This was the true Dao Reserve of a great sect. Any of the five great sects or three great clans in the Southern Domain would have a similar Dao Reserve. Were it not for that, how could they possibly pass their legacies down for ten thousand years or beyond?

The old man coughed a bit, then stretched a stiff hand out and made a claw-like gesture toward the ground. The turbid, underground river suddenly surged and then flew up out of the ground. As it did, it shrank down until it could circulate in the air around the old man.

At the same time, the old man pointed toward the incense burner on the First Mountain, causing it to shudder and then fly through the air toward him. It shrank down until it was the size of a fist, and then opened up, after which the turbid river flowed inside. Finally, the incense burner came to rest on the old man's palm.

By now it didn't look like an incense burner, but rather, a flagon of alcohol.

The old man raised it up to his lips and took a sip. Then, his eyes glowing with a strange light, he looked over at Meng Hao.

"You have a pretty good cultivation base," he said. "If it weren't for me, the Black Sieve Sect's foundation of ten thousand years would actually have been destroyed." The old man then pointed toward the ground, causing the crystal ball with Xu Qing's soul in it to fly out. He clasped it between two fingers. "Do you want her?"

Wisps of black mist circulated out from the old man's hand to encircle the crystal ball. They transformed into vicious, wicked spirits who peered into the crystal ball with greed and avarice as if they wanted to rush inside.

Xu Qing's soul immediately began to tremble, as if it was experiencing intense fear.

Meng Hao's heart also began to quiver.

“I can sense the aroma of rebirth,” the old man said hoarsely. “My disciples and apprentices must have been refining her for my use. What is she to you? Your beloved?”

Meng Hao glared at the old man, but didn't respond. Pain stabbed through his heart, and his entire body was trembling.

“Not going to say anything?” The old man gently squeezed his fingers down. Cracking sounds could be heard as fissures appeared on the surface of the crystal ball.

“She's my beloved!” Meng Hao took a deep breath and continued to stare at the old man.

“Then it's proper for you to have come,” the old man said calmly, the aura of death around him growing thicker. “If you didn't show up, her soul would have become nourishment for me, and her body would have been refined into a medicinal pill to add to my collection.”

By now, the sky was completely dark, and the moon was out. As its rays shone down, the old man looked up for a moment, then caused the black mist to cover it up.

“Unfortunately, you coming here was useless. Although, I might as well give you a chance.” His murky eyes began to glow with a strange light. “Go ahead and use your best divine abilities and magical techniques. If you can handle one blow from me, then I'll let you leave with her soul. What do you say?”

Meng Hao stared at this true Patriarch of the Black Sieve Sect, the most powerful person in the entire sect. Inside, he smiled bitterly. In actuality, he knew before coming here that things would probably not go smoothly. However, he had come anyway.

Not coming would have violated his own Dao!

Furthermore, he came without the intention of leaving!

“You live, I live. You die, I die.... That is a promise.” Meng Hao took a deep breath and then lifted his hand up. In his left eye, a bright glow like day gradually appeared. In his right eye could be seen a darkness like night.

This was his most powerful divine ability, which he had acquired after gaining enlightenment about darkness and light from the armored man on the Underworld Ship.

In his right hand, a black mist appeared, along with a white mist.

As soon as the two streams of mist appeared, the Black Sieve Sect's true Patriarch, Six-Daos, stared in shock.

"So, it's this...." he said.

The reason he hadn't killed Meng Hao immediately was because he had sensed some type of good fortune on him. Considering the level of true Patriarch Six-Daos' cultivation base, he could feel premonitions for both crisis and good fortune.

He was now eying Meng Hao in much the same way that the 10th Wang Clan Patriarch had eyed Meng Hao for his Perfect Foundation. He could faintly sense that Meng Hao had something that could be considered incredibly useful good fortune.

A stiff smile appeared on the face of true Patriarch Six-Daos. His eyes flickered as he watched the black and white mists grow rapidly thicker until they finally formed into two pearls.

Black Pearl!

White Pearl!

The instant the two pearls appeared, true Patriarch Six-Daos' pupils constricted. Despite his cultivation base and level of power, his face still filled with disbelief.

"This is... a Dao!

"It's not an ordinary Dao, either. These black and white pearls give me a sense of limitlessness, as if they contain...."

Meng Hao's eyes flashed and he suddenly stretched out his right hand. He actually didn't know how to use the two pearls, but they were definitely his most powerful magical technique.

As he waved his hand, the two pearls transformed into two beams, one black, one white, that shot toward true Patriarch Six-Daos.

In that instant, the sky suddenly changed colors. The entire world became one of black and white. There was no third color that existed!

“Heavenly Dao!

“This is a Heavenly Dao, not of the Ninth Mountain, but from outside the great Nine Mountains!!”