

## The Heavens 881

Chapter 881: Sixth Demon Sealing Hex!

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“Dammit!” Meng Hao’s face fell. Everything that had happened moments ago seemed almost like a dream. When Qian Duoduo drew out his Devilish will, it influenced Meng Hao on an emotional level, and had also changed his personality. Although he had seemed calm and cool-headed, it was merely an external thing. He had actually lost any sense of what was going on around him.

Situational awareness was something incongruous with the Devilish will.

And now, here he was being ejected from the arena into the outside.

Because of the intense power he had just unleashed, the Devilish will had been completely set aboil, and because of the force that caused him to shoot out of the arena, it had dissipated by more than half. Because of that, Meng Hao’s consciousness was not being interfered with any more; it was almost as if he had awoken from a dream.

There was no time to worry about expelling the rest of the Devilish will. Meng Hao was now in the middle of a maelstrom of danger. As soon as he left the arena, the half-headed man closed in and grabbed ahold of him.

His hand was ice-cold, and as soon as it latched onto Meng Hao, Meng Hao’s entire body turned icy. He was just about to try to struggle when, all of a sudden, his face flickered. This was a result of something the half-headed man did, a magical art that he unleashed that Meng Hao was very familiar with!

It was... the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex!!

In an instant, Meng Hao was completely confined, incapable of even the slightest movement. At the same time, his life force, his cultivation base, everything was instantly sent toward the half-headed man, as if he wanted to voraciously consume it.

Meng Hao’s mind was reeling as the half-headed man instantly shot off into the distance with Meng Hao in tow, to disappear into the mists.

It all happened too quickly. Meng Hao was gone before anyone on the Dao Tree could react.

Ling Yunzi's face fell, and he flew up into the air. However, when he looked out into the boundless void, despite his anxiety, he knew... it was impossible for him to go out into the mists.

The other two old men also had dark looks on their faces as they stared out at the spot where Meng Hao had disappeared into the mists.

Everyone on the Dao Tree gaped in shock.

Everything had happened too quickly, and it was something nobody could have predicted. As for Zhao Yifan, he now lay crumpled on the ground beneath the Dao Tree, unconscious and hovering on the brink of death.

Outside in the Ninth Mountain and Sea, the cultivators who had been watching the battle now felt their minds trembling. Expressions of disbelief appeared on their faces as they watched the half-headed man take Meng Hao away.

“He... he got first place, but....”

“What’s going on? How could something like this happen? This is impossible!”

“Dammit! He got first place! He defeated Zhao Yifan! He got first place in the trial by fire, and then first place in the arena matches. He’s supposed to become famous in the Ninth Mountain and Sea. How come... how come it had to end up like this!?!?”

“I can’t believe the Ruins of Immortality are this dangerous! Why did they have to hold the arena matches in a place like this!?!?”

Many people in the crowds outside in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were furious. They had all just witnessed Fang Mu’s rise to prominence. Many had even come to view him as a future Paragon, and yet all of it disappeared in an instant.

There were some people who actually breathed sighs of relief. Fang Mu was far too powerful, to the point where cultivators of his generation felt stifling pressure. For him to simply disappear was the best outcome, as far as they were concerned.

“Fang Mu is definitely dead. That half-headed man took him away to experience an untimely death.”

“What an unlucky Chosen. Well, now there’s one less person for me to challenge in the future.”

While the crowds in the Ninth Mountain and Sea were abuzz, the Patriarchs in the starry sky palace looked on in shock. The Patriarchs from the Three Great Daoist Societies also wore grim expressions as they slowly rose to their feet. First, they looked toward the spot where Meng Hao had disappeared, and then they turned their attention to the white-robed woman who hovered above the Dao Tree.

The woman glanced down at the unconscious Zhao Yifan, then turned her head to look out into the void. She appeared to be muttering to herself for a moment, and then suddenly she turned and disappeared in the same direction Meng Hao had gone.

After seeing this, the Patriarchs from the Three Great Daoist Societies were extremely excited.

“Perhaps... Fang Mu isn’t dead!”

“Perhaps... we really will succeed this time!!”

“Ah the Echelon. In the great Nine Mountains and Seas, only the Ninth Mountain and Sea have yet to send someone into the Echelon....”

Meanwhile, outside of Planet East Victory, Patriarch Reliance floated among the stars, his eyes wide with astonishment, breathing heavily as he looked at the vortex screen.

“Is the little bastard going to die just like that? Impossible! If the little bastard was that easy to get rid of, well wouldn’t that be poetic justice? Although, how come... how come that half-headed man... looked so familiar...?”

The 10th Wang Clan Patriarch sat cross-legged on an asteroid shooting through the starry sky, watching silently as the events played out on the vortex screen up ahead.

In the Kunlun Society, Pill Demon was trembling, and a brilliant light shone from his eyes. Although he didn't believe Meng Hao could be killed so easily, it was the Ruins of Immortality...

Chu Yuyan was also shaking. Her breath came in ragged pants, and her face was pale white. She didn't dare to believe that Meng Hao was really dead. All of the energy seemed to drain out of her, and she staggered back a few steps. Tears began to stream down her face.

“He won't die....”

On Planet South Heaven, in the vast Eastern Lands, Meng Hao's parents sat in the Fang Clan, their faces pale, holding hands tightly. Fang Xiufeng's expression was calm, but in his heart, a monstrous desire to kill had risen up.

After a few deep breaths, he growled, “Hao'er is not the type of person to die young. He won't be killed. But if he does perish... then I, Fang Xiufeng, vow that I will continue to guard this planet. However, after the 100,000 years have passed, then I will personally open the door to release the evil Devils, and ensure that the Three Great Daoist Societies are buried together with my son!

“Furthermore, those Ruins of Immortality... will serve as burial objects!”

When Chen Fan, Fatty, and Li Shiqi saw what had happened, they trembled in disbelief.

All of the Ninth Mountain and Sea was in an uproar. Meng Hao had just earned first place, and then... had disappeared to who knew where!

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Naturally, Meng Hao was not dead.

The half-headed man grasped him tightly as they shot through the mists. Meng Hao trembled as his life force, cultivation base, and aura were absorbed by the man.

Slowly, the flesh and blood of the man's head began to heal. His aura gradually moved away from death, and a bit of life force could be detected. However, he still seemed to be lacking in terms of consciousness, as if he had no mental faculties, and was only acting on instinct.

Meng Hao couldn't move, and his thoughts were sluggish. Icy coldness filled him. However, as his life force was sucked away, the remaining Devilish will inside of him was also absorbed.

As the half-headed man absorbed more and more of the Devilish will, he suddenly stopped in place, and black flames flickered on his body.

The man had feared the flames of the Devilish will before, and now that he was absorbing Meng Hao's cultivation base and life force, he himself began to burn, and an expression of anguish appeared on his face.

In that instant, Meng Hao was suddenly able to move again. He also recovered his mental faculties, and was instantly shocked.

"He... he can use the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex!" he thought. "Who is he? Don't tell me... he's also from the League of Demon Sealers!?"

"That sword contains the Sixth Demon Sealing Hex, and it's stuck into his side. If he's from the League of Demon Sealers, then either there was infighting within the League of Demon Sealers, or... he stabbed the sword into himself, as a sealing!!" Numerous speculations ran through Meng Hao's head, but in this critical moment of danger, he had no time to think too much about it.

Eyes glittering, Meng Hao took advantage of the moment to unleash his cultivation base. His Immortal meridian began to emanate Immortal qi, which he attempted to use to struggle against the half-headed man. Unfortunately, the man was far too powerful, and Meng Hao's efforts were in vain.

However... Meng Hao was not interested in battling the man. Instead, he used the brief moment in which he could move to suddenly reach out and grab the sword that was stabbed into the man's side.

As soon as he touched the sword, the ancient Demon Sealing Jade in his bag of holding began to vibrate madly. At the same time, the half-headed man began to let out a miserable shriek. As this happened, Meng Hao used every scrap of power he could muster to yank the sword out from the man's side.

As he pulled the sword out of the man... a stream of black blood sprayed out with it. The man trembled, releasing Meng Hao, who then backed up at top speed, face pale and blood spurting out of his mouth.

He had lost a lot of life force, and his cultivation base was in chaos. He was in very sore straits, and yet, he didn't pause for even the least bit, but instead, unleashed every bit of speed that he could to escape.

The half-headed man trembled, and pushed his hand down onto his wound. However, no matter what he did, blood continued to stream out of the wound.

"Who am I...? Who... who am I?" the man murmured, a confused expression on his face. His mind seemed to be in chaos as his words echoed out.

"My sword... my sword..." As his words rang out, the blood flowing from his body suddenly congealed together to form into blood snakes. Their bodies were covered with long feelers, and they looked extremely vicious. More and more of them continued to pour out of the man's wound, until they filled the area, nearly a thousand of them.

Meng Hao's scalp was going numb.

It was at this point that a shrill whistling sound could be heard from off in the distance. A black wind was approaching, along with the decomposing roc, the same things Meng Hao had seen outside of the Dao Tree. The roc closed in greedily, heading straight toward the half-headed man.

As it neared, the man murmured something, and then his eyes glittered, and he performed an incantation with his right hand, then pointed at the roc.

Eighth Demon Sealing Hex!

That one wave of a finger caused the huge roc to stop in place and then fall downward.

Meng Hao's mind was trembling.

Next, the mists began to churn as more and more figures appeared. One of them was the naga cultivator, and all of them were staring greedily at the vicious blood snakes that were boring out from within the man's wound. From the look in their eyes, it was as if they were staring at treasures. In the blink of an eye, they charged forward madly.

"I am... the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer..." the half-headed man said. He looked around blankly at the incoming figures. His hand was pressed onto the wound at this side as he attempted to prevent the blood snakes from emerging. Within his eyes, a gleam of clarity suddenly appeared.

"Sixth Demon Sealing Hex... Life-Death Hexing!"

With that, he waved his finger.

Chapter 882: 13th in the Echelon!

Sixth Demon Sealing Hex, Life-Death Hexing!!

The Sixth Generation Demon Sealer pointed out with his right index finger, and instantly two streams qi poured out, one black and one white. They swirled around each other to form a vortex.

That vortex... was gray!

The gray vortex expanded rapidly; in the blink of an eye it was over 3,000 meters wide, and exerted a gravitational force in all directions. The figures that surrounded the area began to let out miserable shrieks; they trembled as their bodies decomposed, and magical symbols appeared all over them.

Those magical symbols were also gray, and they glittered as the figures screamed, then looked blankly toward the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer, dropped to their knees and bowed in worship.

Even the powerful naga did so.

As Meng Hao watched all this, his scalp tingled, and he continued to back up rapidly. However, it was at this point that the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer slowly turned his head to look directly at Meng Hao.

In that instant, the man's jaw dropped.

Meng Hao felt as if his blood were freezing. An intense sensation of deadly crisis appeared, and he suddenly stopped in place and stared back at the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer. He had the sudden feeling that if he continued to back up, the man would attack him.

Currently, the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer seemed to be hesitating, thinking.

Time seemed to slow down. More and more black snakes poured out of the man's wound, and they swirled around him, seemingly on the verge of escaping. However, for some reason they also seemed to be locked in one area, unable to leave.

After a long moment, the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer began to speak.

“End the League of Demon Sealers in exchange for keeping the spirit of Pāramitā asleep,” he murmured, “or... allow fate to run its course, and give hope to the League.” He gazed deeply at Meng Hao for a long moment, and then looked down at the sword Meng Hao held.

“Take this chance to contemplate the matter thoroughly,” he said softly, his expression kindly. Then he turned, keeping his hand pressed down onto his wound, and began to walk off into the distance, surrounded by shrieking black blood snakes. The snakes apparently wished to flee from the area surrounding the Sixth Demon Sealer, but were incapable of doing so, and were dragged along with him as he walked off.

As for all of the other figures in the area who had been caught up in the Life-Death Hexing, they seemed to have lost all sense of themselves, and slowly began to follow the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer.

“Senior!” Meng Hao suddenly cried out. “What happened to you? Where are you going!?!?”

“I was defeated in the third Mountain and Sea Tribulation....” The Sixth Generation Demon Sealer's voice was archaic and ancient. “I am going to search for my final resting place.... As for you... in the future, you will also face the Mountain and Sea Tribulation. If you are defeated, then we will be waiting for you on the road to that final resting place.

“Demon Sealers. The League. We are the most powerful in the Nine Mountains and Seas. We are also the ones... who bear the most grief.



“It is a rough and bumpy road, so take care of yourself....”

Meng Hao looked at the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer’s back as he floated off into the distance.

“Defeated?” he said, staring in shock. Then he suddenly thought back to the words uttered by the Eighth Generation Demon Sealer, which were recorded in the jade slip. He had also spoken of transcending the Mountain and Sea Tribulation!

“What is the Mountain and Sea Tribulation!?” Meng Hao asked urgently. As he looked at the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer, Meng Hao suddenly had an intense premonition that one day... he could end up just like this.

“Ancient Dao; Tenacious Desire to Seal the Heavens, Benefaction for All in the Mountains; Dao Tribulation Must Come to the Nine Mountains and Seas; My Fate is the Aeon!”

“Ancient Dao; Study Demons of Myriad Variations; Tread not the Path of Immortals; Face the Tribulation of the Nine Mountains and Seas; My Dao is Eternal; the Masses Have Erred, but My Dao Is True; My Fate is the Aeon!”

Those same two verses!

Meng Hao’s mind trembled. They were the same words that had been uttered by the Eighth Generation Demon Sealer.

“What happens in the case of success!?” Meng Hao asked. The Sixth Generation Demon Sealer was already far off in the distance, but after a long moment, his ancient voice echoed weakly into Meng Hao’s ears.

“With a thought, the Nine Mountains came into existence. With a thought, the Nine Seas appeared. The Nine Mountains and Seas, return to the Essence.”

Meng Hao’s face was pale. Everything he had seen since leaving the arena was like a dream. It turned out that the half-headed man was actually... the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer.

“If all that happened was that he failed to transcend some tribulation... then what horrifying thing happened to his body? And what were those blood snakes?!”

“With a thought, the Nine Mountains exist. With a thought, the Nine Seas appear. Nine Mountains and Seas, return to the Essence. Just what does that mean?”

“Nine Mountains and Seas. The Essence.... The League of Demon Sealers....” Meng Hao was now panting.

“Also, how could the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer use the Eighth Hex?”

After a long moment, he grew silent and then looked around. Then, doing his best to remember the path the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer had taken to get to this place, he began carefully making his way back.

There were far too many dangers lurking in this place, many of which would be fatal to him. All he could do was remain as cautious as possible. The slightest misstep could lead to him perishing.

Time passed.

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The arena matches were over. A pained expression could be seen on Ling Yunzi’s face. He really had attached a lot of importance to Meng Hao. He couldn’t forget the steadfast expression on his face when he’d retrieved the Feng Shui compass.

He left, along with the other two men from the other Great Daoist Societies. They took the cultivators away from the arenas, the Dao Tree, the God corpse, and the Ruins of Immortality. They returned to the starry sky.

Some people went home, others were taken in by the sects as disciples. The Three Great Daoist Societies’ trial by fire and accompanying arena matches were officially concluded.

Zhao Yifan was taken back to the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto. When he regained consciousness and heard about what had happened, he balled his hand into a fist and slammed it into the ground. Blood spattered out of his fist, and intense regret could be seen in his eyes, along with determination.

In the end, Chen Fan was taken in as a disciple of the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto.

Fatty went to the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum. When his master accompanied him back to Planet South Heaven and found out that he had over a hundred beloved concubines, he stared in shock, and was speechless for a very long moment.

Li Shiqi joined the Church of the Blood Orchid. Considering her experience fusing with the Blood Orchid, she was immediately put into the running to become Holy Daughter.

Wang Youcai's unsurpassed brutal experience, a madness in which he had destroyed his own eyes, leaving him in a world of darkness, was actually in perfect concordance with the Dao of the Moonset Lake.

After moonset, there is no light whatsoever in Heaven and Earth. Before light arrives, when there is no moon, everything is covered by...darkness.

In addition to these four, there were quite a few others from Planet South Heaven who participated in the trial by fire and were accepted as disciples into other minor sects. Others returned home in disappointment.

Time passed, an entire month. During that month, the name Fang Mu became well-known throughout the Ninth Mountain and Sea. Even cultivators who hadn't been watching the vortex screens heard of the stories.

He was not Immortal, and yet was as powerful as a stage four Immortal!

He took first place in the trial by fire and first place in the arena matches. Because of everything that had happened, Fang Mu became a legend. That was especially true when it all ended with him disappearing into the Ruins of Immortality. Because of that, the legend spread even more widely.

Meanwhile, Meng Hao plodded along through the Ruins of Immortality, his face pale. He sent his divine sense out, but didn't dare to send it too far. During the past month, he had already faced several dangerous situations. On three of those occasions, he had almost ended up dead.

On more than one occasion, he saw a group of huge floating heads. Each of the heads seemed to be as big as a planet, causing Meng Hao to pant, and his mind to spin.

He saw an ancient battlefield, filled with countless corpses. Roving amongst the corpses were people who... feasted on the rotting flesh around them. He had no idea when the battle had actually taken place, but the corpses still had flesh on them, as if they would never rot away.

He saw a huge medicinal plant garden, choked with weeds. However, within the weeds, Meng Hao caught sight of some legendary medicinal plants, the sight of which left him panting.

They were plants that Pill Demon had spoken of back when he cultivated the Dao of alchemy in the Violet Fate Sect, plants that were supposed to be extinct. However, within that medicinal plant garden, he saw at least a hundred different varieties of such legendary plants.

There was something else he saw there that was especially noteworthy... an Immortality Illumination Vine!!

The only problem was that there were innumerable black beetles in the area, seemingly without end. If he got too close, they would fly up in great clouds, forcing him to flee off into the distance. If he had been even the slightest bit slower, it would surely lead to his death.

He saw something the size of a planet, but covered with tentacles. Even the mere sight of it in the distance caused Meng Hao's scalp to grow numb, and he immediately fled.

At one point, he saw a right hand that was so huge it looked as big as a galaxy....

In addition to these things, he saw innumerable corpses floating about in the Ruins of Immortality. There were shattered remnants of buildings, vast stretches of land, and even wild beasts whistling through the air.

Compared to these vast and mysterious Ruins of Immortality, Meng Hao himself was tiny and weak. Compared to all of the amazing things he saw, he was nothing.

During the month, some of his life force actually vanished. However, his cultivation base was slowly recovering, which gave him some more confidence. Most importantly, the Sixth Generation Demon Sealer's sword contained some strange power. Any time he faced some danger, the sword would emanate a bright light, which was one of the main reasons Meng Hao was still alive.

When he touched the surface of the sword, he was able to feel the Sixth Demon Sealing Hex. However, this hex was a difficult one, and during the month, Meng Hao was unable to gain enlightenment.

After walking around for a month, he was unable to find the corpse of the Pāramitā God. Nor did he ever see the Dao Tree. The only way for him to find his path back home was if he found that corpse and that tree.

One day, he saw an Immortal's cave, floating there in the air. It appeared to be in the midst of a phasing teleportation cycle, occasionally there, occasionally not there.

It was covered with cracks, as if countless battles had been fought outside of it. When Meng Hao looked at the cracks, his mind spun, as if there were shocking divine abilities and magical techniques inside of them.

In the instant that he caught sight of the Immortal's cave, its door opened soundlessly, and a white-robed woman could be seen sitting there. In that moment, it seemed as if everything else disappeared except for the woman, sitting there all alone.

Her gaze was tranquil as she looked off into the distance, and also seemed to be filled with an unending loneliness....

She seemed to be the type of person who could elicit the worship of all living things, who could cause the Ruins of Immortality to tremble. She seemed to have lost something that she could never get back, something that only the sad song that had echoed out by the Dao Tree could possibly clearly explain.

She slowly looked up, and her gaze fell onto Meng Hao.

Meng Hao trembled as he realized that this woman... was none other than the one who had appeared by the ancient Dao Tree, the one who had caused all the other figures to bow in worship.

"Henceforth you are 13th in the Echelon," she said slowly. Her echoing voice sounded as if it was resonating out from ancient times.

Chapter 883: Snatching Food From the Tiger's Mouth!

“13th in the Echelon?” said Meng Hao, gaping at the woman. He had no idea what she was talking about.

The woman didn't respond at first. She simply looked at Meng Hao, her expression one of seeming reminiscence, as if she were thinking of something she had once experienced. After a long moment, her cold voice echoed out once again.

“In the great Nine Mountains and Seas, there are only room for nine. There are a thousand years until the plan can be carried out. The nine people who break into the Ancient Realm first, can set off on the journey.

“There are already seven people ahead of you who have succeeded.

“The Ninth Mountain and Sea has already fallen behind by quite a bit.” With that, she extended her right hand and pointed at Meng Hao. He was incapable of resisting as a sealing mark flew out and settled onto his forehead.

The sealing mark glittered with dim light, flashing thirteen times before it faded away.

The sealing mark caused Meng Hao to tremble, and suddenly, he felt as if an additional stream of qi had appeared inside of him. The qi circulated throughout his entire body, then concealed itself, fading away.

“This sealing mark can protect your soul from being destroyed, but only twice,” the woman said, her ice-cold voice echoing about.

“After that, if your soul is exterminated, then naturally your qualifications will vanish. However, if you eventually enter into the top nine rankings... then your future potential is limitless.

“Seize this opportunity.” Having finished speaking, the door of the Immortal's cave began to close, and the Immortal cave itself began to fade, as if it were about to vanish.

“Senior,” he replied, “the opportunity you speak of, and this setting off on a journey. What's the destination?”

The woman's voice echoed out from within the Immortal's cave: "Outside the great Nine Mountains and Seas, to the outside world. To find out the true reason that ancient war was fought.

"There are some who wish to awaken a certain person," the woman murmured. "There are some who wish to bring a certain person back to life.... The fault does not lie with us!" She seemed to be on the verge of fading away.

"Senior, wait a moment," said Meng Hao. He still had the feeling that the sealing mark wasn't a good thing, and that the so-called good fortune was good fortune in word only. Currently, he was left with a sense of extreme danger. "I still don't understand," he continued. "If my soul is exterminated, and my qualifications vanish, then what about the person who kills me?"

"Whoever kills you will acquire the sealing mark. If they can come to me here, then they will be the successor of your qualifications." The Immortal's cave was now approximately seventy percent vanished, and the woman's voice was faint.

Meng Hao's eyes widened, and he anxiously said, "Senior, um... my father and mother are getting old, and I also have an older sister. I'm waiting for my beloved to return to me. Uh... can I decline to go? I don't really want this sealing mark."

"You were enlightened regarding Paragon magic, took first place in the arena matches of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, and have the qualifications of a Daoist Society. Therefore... you cannot decline to receive my sealing mark. If you do not wish to make the journey, then go out and find someone to exterminate your soul twice." The Immortal's cave was fading away rapidly, and now only ten percent remained.

"You..." Meng Hao was getting really anxious now. "Senior, I'm stuck here, and can't get out. If I'm 13th in the Echelon, is there any way you can get me out of here?"

"If I can't get out, then I might perish, then you putting me in the Echelon would have been completely in vain. Furthermore, this place is simply too dangerous for someone like me."

Meng Hao was pretty sure that most of the sects would have no idea what this woman was talking about when she mentioned the Echelon. However, the Three Great Daoist Societies definitely knew. And while they might not bear him any ill intentions, he didn't like his own life or death to be determined by a mere thought on the part of someone other party.

The vanishing of the Immortal's cave paused momentarily, and after a moment of silence that lasted for the space of a few breaths, a crystalline beam of light shot out from inside to land in Meng Hao's hand in the form of a jade slip.

"That jade slip will teleport you out of here. You can only use it once, and it will take you anywhere that you can mentally recall." After she finished speaking, the Immortal's cave vanished completely.

Meng Hao held the jade slip in his hand, and his eyes widened. Then he frowned and touched his forehead. After a moment passed, his eyes began to glitter.

"Forget about this Echelon business for now. Just finally being able to get out of here is good thing!" Meng Hao knew that if he only relied on the power of his cultivation base to get out, it would be far too difficult.

After taking a deep breath, he hefted the jade slip and was about to use it to teleport out, when suddenly he gave a start.

"Now that I can leave any time I want... well, if I left now, it would be a bit of a waste." After thinking about it for a moment, his eyes filled with determination, and he gritted his teeth.

"I'm gonna give it a shot!" he thought. That was Meng Hao's personality. To go out and return empty-handed was a waste. Therefore, he turned and retraced his tracks back to the medicinal plant garden.

Rewards come only with risk!

After Meng Hao left, the Immortal's cave that had just vanished suddenly reappeared. The white-robed woman also returned, and she watched Meng Hao walking off into the distance, a look of reminiscence on her face.

"The League of Demon Sealers...." she murmured. In that moment, a rare tenderness appeared on her face.

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Meng Hao proceeded cautiously through the Ruins of Immortality. In almost any location in this place, it was possible that there were terrifying things lurking about that could destroy him in body and spirit. There were many places that he couldn't avoid no matter how cautious he was. It was fortunate, therefore, that Meng Hao had already traveled this path before and thus didn't attempt to explore any of those locations. Instead, he proceeded slowly and carefully for about half a month until he once again found himself outside the medicinal plant garden, where he stood there and salivated at what he saw.

From a distance, the medicinal plant garden seemed like a vast stretch of land overrun with countless weeds. However, amidst the weeds were random medicinal plants, many of which were virtually extinct in the outside world, and which would be called Celestial medicinal plants. There were even some locations that had legendary holy medicinal plants.

The problem lay in the innumerable, frightening black beetles with razor-sharp mandibles that had occupied the entire garden and posed a threat to everything nearby.

“That's... Reincarnation Leaf!

“And there's a Sun Blossom!

“That's Arhat Grass!” Meng Hao was trembling with anticipation. Even from a distance, he was able to recognize these three Holy medicinal plants. Any one of them was enough to cause people in the outside world to go crazy.

Further in, there were a greater quantities of even better Holy medicinal plants, but Meng Hao knew how to restrain himself. It would clearly be impossible to get that far in. Not to mention, even though everything in the area of the much-closer Reincarnation Leaf seemed harmless at the moment, Meng Hao remembered that when he had come here earlier, a step too close had given rise to clouds of black beetles.

The Reincarnation Leaves were growing on a small violet-colored tree. There were nine of them in total, and they were shaped like crescent moons; a unique magical symbol glittered brightly on each of them. Just looking at the tree gave a person the sensation that they were looking at the cycle of reincarnation itself.

As for the Sun Blossoms, they crept along the ground, tiny orange flowers that looked exactly like suns, glowing with brilliant light.

Then there was the Arhat Grass, which was an ordinary-looking plant that resembled a dandelion.

Meng Hao took a deep breath and then narrowed his eyes. Holding the jade slip in his left hand, he gritted his teeth and then slowly caused his aura to weaken.

“When I came here before,” he thought, “tens of thousands of beetles appeared when I got within three thousand meters of the medicinal plant garden.... It seems the beetles are sensitive to auras....” His aura continued to grow weaker and weaker, until he had suppressed himself to the point that he bore the appearance of a Core Formation cultivator.

“A bit more!” he thought, still not quite convinced that it was enough. After pushing his aura down even further, it was at the Foundation Establishment stage. This was the limit of what he could accomplish at the moment.

Next, his body flickered as the shapeshifting meat jelly was tossed out. It was just about to begin jabbering when it suddenly looked around and started shaking.

“Dammit! Dammit! I was only asleep for a bit and y-y-you... you brought me to a place like this? Heavens! Heavens! This... this place is way too dangerous!!”

“Quiet!” snapped Meng Hao. He quickly retrieved the black feather, gave it to the meat jelly, and then provided a few instructions. After hearing his plan, the meat jelly was shocked, and shook its head vigorously. However, after Meng Hao uttered enough threats, the meat jelly put on a long face and agreed to the plan.

Meng Hao crept slowly toward the medicinal plant garden. He’d already made the decision that if he couldn’t acquire the Holy medicinal plants, then he would swallow his regret and teleport out. However, by this point, he had reached the 3,000-meter position that had caught the attention of the countless beetles before.

His heart pounded madly as his foot stepped past that point. He stared up ahead, vigilantly preparing for the beetles to appear, yet none did.

“This method works!” Licking his lips, he continued forward until he was at the 1,500 meter mark. Suddenly, dozens of black beetles flew up from within the weeds. Meng Hao’s face fell, and he gripped the jade slip tightly. However, he held his ground, gritting his teeth and remaining stock still.

The dozens of black beetles all emanated ferocious auras as they flew about. However, after finding nothing, they slowly flew back down to the ground.

Beads of sweat rolled down Meng Hao's face. He knew that at this distance, if the black beetles suddenly attacked, he would be in great danger.

After a long moment passed, he gritted his teeth and crept forward again. He was now at the 1,000-meter mark, and a thousand beetles flew up buzzing into the air. Meng Hao was even more nervous than before.

"The only way I can get close is by suppressing my aura to the point where they think I'm too weak to be a threat." A moment later, the black beetles all flew back down to the ground, and Meng Hao crept forward once again.

600 meters. 300 meters. 150 meters!

As soon as he passed the 150-meter mark, his eyes widened, and his throat tightened as everything turned black.

Tens of thousands of beetles instantly shot up into the air.

In that moment, Meng Hao urgently sent out divine will. Further out, the meat jelly was trembling and cursing inwardly. Gritting its teeth, it used the black feather to suddenly cast out a shocking aura.

Immediately, the beetles up ahead of Meng Hao were sent astir. A black sheet of light rose up that was composed of tens of thousands of black beetles, all of whom shot directly up into the sky.

The auras cast out by the beetles brushed against Meng Hao, and blood sprayed from his mouth. However, his expression was one of complete determination and utter excitement. His body flickered as he shot down toward the Reincarnation Leaf. Without the slightest hesitation, he didn't collect the leaves, but actually tried to wrench the entire tree out of the ground, along with the Immortality Illumination Vine that was at its root!

Chapter 884: Family Reunion

The little violet tree was actually very tough; unexpectedly, it resisted Meng Hao's efforts to pull it out of the ground. A brutal gleam appeared in Meng Hao's eyes, and he used all the force he could muster; the power of a stage four Immortal exploded out as he tugged violently on the tree until a boom could be heard, and the tree was pulled up out of the ground.

"Rich! I've struck it rich!!" Meng Hao's eyes gleamed with excitement, and his heart pounded with happiness. He turned and sped toward the Sun Blossoms. Eyes burning with madness, he waved his sleeve to pull them up by the root as well.

All of this happened in the time it takes a spark to fly off of a piece of flint. In the meantime, the meat jelly was hollering and blubbing as it speedily retreated through the sky above, its entire body numb as it looked at the endless black beetles flying toward it. As it shot backward, the illusion created by the black feather fell away.

With its aura suddenly weakened, Meng Hao's actions down below were instantly noticed by the black beetles. Such provocation was something they hadn't experienced in years; no one had ever had the gall to try place themselves within the mouth of the tiger.

Rumbling could be heard as the beetles performed an about face and shot toward Meng Hao. They moved with incredible speed, blanketing the area as they closed in. The meat jelly gritted its teeth. It didn't want to follow the plan that Meng Hao had laid out, but it thought about how dangerous the place was and changed its mind. Wailing piteously, it used the black feather to make itself look like a black beetle, which then joined the army of other black beetles in their charge.

Such a transformation would be very difficult to pull off without the black beetles noticing, and sure enough, some of the beetles detected the anomalous presence of the meat jelly. Some of them charged toward it madly and began to voraciously bite it. The meat jelly howled, but continued to shoot toward Meng Hao as fast as possible.

Meng Hao's face flickered as he looked at the cloud of black beetles closing in on him. Scalp tingling, he used his left hand to press down on the jade slip. Rumbling could be heard, and a bright light began to shine as the power of teleportation exploded out.

In that instant, Meng Hao used the Star Plucking Magic to grab another Holy medicinal plant off in the distance. In the blink of an eye, the plant flew through the air to land in his hand.

At the same time, the black beetles roared down toward him. The quickest of them all was the meat jelly; when it saw the light of teleportation growing stronger around Meng Hao, it nearly went

crazy. It had no desire to be left behind in this place, so it burst forward with all the speed it could muster, latching onto Meng Hao's robe with its mouth and holding on for dear life.

The countless black beetles pounced onto Meng Hao, but in that instant, the power of teleportation peaked, and he vanished.

Suddenly, the land began to tremble in response to the provocation of the teleportation. In all directions, everything turned black as millions of black beetles flew up into the air, covering the sky. At the same time, the land continued to change violently. Even though the beetles had flown up into the air, the land didn't change color; it was as black as ever.

A muffled roar could be heard from the ground, and everything was shaking. Suddenly, it became clear that... the land was not land at all, but actually, an enormous black beetle!

In a scene reminiscent of Patriarch Reliance that year, the land in the area turned out to be resting on the back of an enormous black beetle!

Snatching food from the tiger's mouth!

If Meng Hao did not possess the teleportation jade slip, then even if he had a cultivation base in the Ancient Realm, it wouldn't have mattered. He would have been killed in body and spirit.

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In the vast Eastern Lands on Planet South Heaven, snowflakes drifted through the air, and the land was the color of silver. It was winter.

In the mountains where the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite Temple had once stood, a bright light rose up into the air as an enormous teleportation portal appeared.

Rumbling could be heard, and the bright light faded to reveal Meng Hao. As soon as he appeared, he shot forward at top speed. The meat jelly was still latched onto his robe, and there were seven black beetles following him that had been caught up in the teleportation.

The black beetles were streaks of black light that shot murderously toward Meng Hao.

He took a deep breath, and, sensing that he was back on Planet South Heaven, lifted his head up and laughed. The feeling of narrowly escaping a catastrophe was exhilarating. He turned and faced the seven black beetles, his eyes flickering coldly.

“Seven? That’s nothing!” He extended his right hand and unleashed the full power of his cultivation base, the power of a stage four Immortal. His Dharma Idol appeared, throwing a punch that gave rise to a tempest, which then bore down onto the seven black beetles.

Of the seven black beetles, five were similar to false Immortals, and two were even more powerful, emanating the aura of stage two Immortals. Back in the Ruins of Immortality, when the beetles were all grouped together, their collective power was like that of the peak of the Immortal Realm. It was something completely hair-raising. But now, there were only these seven, and under the power of Meng Hao’s punch they were all flung backwards. Their carapaces were crushed, and they were flung violently against the side of a nearby mountain.

Despite being injured, they were as vicious as ever. Radiating ferocity, they once again shot toward Meng Hao in a deadly attack.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered brightly.

“My attack just now could have killed a stage two Immortal with twenty opened meridians. But these seven beetles are as ferocious as ever. No wonder, considering they’re from the Ruins of Immortality. It would be a real waste to kill them!” He flickered forward, and as the seven black beetles closed in, he reached out, grabbed them, and threw them into his bag of holding, where he forcibly sealed them.

The seven black beetles struggled in vain as the sealing marks were laid onto their bodies. Even afterward, they still viewed Meng Hao as an enemy, and although they couldn’t escape, they would be difficult for him to control.

“When I have the time, I’ll refine them a bit. Or maybe when I fully understand the Sixth Demon Sealing Hex, I can use that to control them.” Meng Hao took a deep breath and then headed off into the mountains.

“The trial by fire ended with an unforeseen occurrence. I really need to get home to see dad and mom. They’re going to be worried.” Meng Hao turned into a beam of light that shot out of the mountains and headed toward the Fang Clan.

On the way home, Meng Hao saw snowflakes filling the sky, and colorful lanterns and streamers decorating the homes he passed. Children played happily, and a feeling of warmth and joy filled the air. Lights burned brightly in all the windows.

“Is it New Year already?” Meng Hao suddenly stopped in midair. He suddenly realized that he missed his family. During the New Year festival, such feelings tend to grow stronger. He was just about to continue onward when he suddenly thought of something.

“Hey, I got first place in the final arena match! But I never got my prizes!! My Immortal jades! My Immortality Illumination Vine! My Paragon’s blood!!” When he remembered these things, his jaw dropped.

When he thought of the value of the Immortal jades, how precious the Immortality Illumination Vine was, and how many Immortal jades the Paragon’s blood was worth, his eyes were instantly shot with blood. After a long moment, he clenched his jaw.

“This won’t do. Those things belong to me! I’m definitely going to be heading to the Nine Seas God World! The Three Great Daoist Societies had better pay me what they owe!!” There was nothing he could do about it now, though, so he had no choice but to sigh in frustration and fly back to the Fang Clan.

It didn’t take long before the Fang Clan fortress appeared up ahead, decked out with lanterns and colorful banners. The feeling of New Year was heavy in the air. All of a sudden, Meng Hao sensed an aura, not of a true Immortal, but perhaps twenty to thirty percent of that of a true Immortal.

At the same time, a young woman appeared. She flew out from the Fang Clan and hovered in midair, looking at Meng Hao.

It was none other than Fang Yu.

She had emerged from secluded meditation while Meng Hao was in the trial by fire. Her cultivation base had risen all the way to the peak of Dao Seeking. With some guidance from Fang Xiufeng, she was now more powerful than a false Immortal. She also would travel the path of true Immortality, although she would use an Immortality Illumination Vine to do so.

When Fang Yu saw Meng Hao, her face lit with happiness. Moments later, Meng Hao’s father and mother appeared from behind her, smiles on their faces.

Actually, Fang Xiufeng had sensed Meng Hao as soon as he had appeared on Planet South Heaven. He gazed at Meng Hao with a loving, although somewhat reserved, smile. As for Meng Hao's mother, tears were streaming down her face. The past few months in which they hadn't been certain whether Meng Hao was even alive, had left her haggard from grief.

"Dad, mom, I'm back," Meng Hao said, smiling. Then he looked at Fang Yu, and couldn't help but recall memories from Planet East Victory. This was his big sister, who had protected him when he was small. She had a violent personality, which as a youngster had left him awestruck, but there was a warmth between them that came from being family, and Meng Hao could never forget that.

"Sis...." he said cautiously. He actually felt a bit guilty. Before, when they had met for the first time, he had been unaware of who she was, and they had actually battled each other.

"When you say it like that, it sounds a bit forced," she said with an enigmatic smile. After emerging from secluded meditation and learning that Meng Hao had transcended his tribulation, she was very happy. When the two of them were young, and she was forced to watch as he never grew older, it had filled her heart with pain. It was a feeling she would always remember.

Seeing her own little brother in misery was a misery for her as well. His frustration left her feeling unhappy. She would never forget how she had watched him lying in their mother's arms, reverting from seven years of age back to infancy. Fang Yu had stood there, hands clenched into fists, tears streaming down her face as she watched.

She was willing to do anything for her little brother, as long as it would let him be happy, and actually grow up. Back when they were both young, she had stood in front of him on countless occasions, unleashing her violent personality onto any clan members who bullied him.

Back on that occasion when they first met, outside the Rebirth Cave in the Southern Domain, she had immediately sensed something familiar about him. Then she saw the mark on his hand, and despite her violent personality, had been shaken inwardly, and had barely been able to hold back from crying.

In that instant, she recalled all the hardships her parents had endured, and then suddenly feared that Meng Hao might notice something about her, so she had deliberately spoken some confusing and meaningless words to throw him off the trail. From that day forward, she had been looking forward to the day when their whole family would finally be reunited.



Of course, there was also the time she ran into him in the ancient Demon Immortal Sect. At that time, she had an even stronger sense of family. After all, he was her little brother...

She couldn't refrain from forcing him to call her 'big sis.' Later, some of the other Fang Clan members had scorned Meng Hao, which had caused her rage to flare. She had even been worried that Meng Hao wouldn't be able to find a host body, and had given one of the Fang Clan's host bodies to him.

There had been one moment in the Demon Immortal Sect when she had been fighting Ji Xiaoxiao and the other Ji Clan Chosen. Meng Hao had turned to leave, and in that moment, she was assured that he didn't know who she really was. And yet, seeing him leave like that broke her heart.

Then he had stopped and turned back to look at her fighting the Ji Clan, and she had smiled.

"It's not forced!" Meng Hao replied quickly. He smiled. "Sis, you look prettier than ever!"

"Oh, really?" Fang Yu smiled and began to walk toward him. She lifted her hands up and cracked her knuckles. At the same time, explosive energy surged up, and a brutal aura began to emanate out from her.

Meng Hao's face fell, and he began to fall back. Even as he took his first step back, Fang Yu pounced on him like an explosive dragon.

"Back then you dared to say I was violent!? Well, today I'll show you what violence really is!"

Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li looked at each other and smiled. Then they turned to watch Meng Hao getting chased and beaten up by Fang Yu. He didn't even dare to fight back against her. Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li sighed emotionally.

"It's been so long since our whole family... has been together like this."

Off in the distance, magical fireworks exploded in the sky. A beautiful New Year had arrived.

Chapter 885: Revisiting Old Haunts

Meng Hao spent an entire wonderful year with his family. The laughter and happiness they shared would exist forever in his heart.

Some days after that year ended, Fang Yu left. She did not return to the Fang Clan on Planet East Victory. Fang Xiufeng made different arrangements. An Elder from the Church of the Emperor Immortal came to Planet South Heaven to personally take Fang Yu away.

Fang Xiufeng had decided long ago that Fang Yu should join the Church of the Emperor Immortal. Her latent talent conformed with their cultivation requirements. Furthermore, in the past, Fang Xiufeng and the current Pontifex of the Church of the Emperor Immortal had experienced harrowing adventures together.

With the Pontifex watching out for Fang Yu, and the threat of Fang Xiufeng himself, it was assured that no one would cause problems for her, despite the fact that Fang Xiufeng couldn't leave South Heaven.

Fang Xiufeng was very protective of his daughter, but when it came to his son, his line of thinking was different.

Before leaving, Fang Yu hugged Meng Hao tightly, and then gave him a long look. The affection in her eyes caused Meng Hao's heart to fill with a deep reluctance to part ways with her.

"Little brother, we'll meet again out in the stars," said Fang Yu, tousling his hair. In this moment, there was nothing violent about her at all. She was just a gentle older sister.

Fang Yu bade farewell to her parents, then took a deep breath and followed the respectful Elder from the Church of the Emperor Immortal as he stepped into the teleportation portal. Bright light flashed, and they vanished.

Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li were also reluctant to part with their daughter, especially Meng Li, whose eyes were filled with tears. Being unable to leave Planet South Heaven, she was very worried about Fang Yu, and currently clutched Fang Xiufeng's hand tightly.

Fang Xiufeng patted his wife gently on the shoulder and watched as his daughter left. His eyes were filled with both sadness and hope. Then he turned to look at Meng Hao.

He knew that it wouldn't be long before Meng Hao also left Planet South Heaven.

“Hao’er, your path doesn’t lie in becoming a true part of the Fang Clan,” he said. “I’ve already arranged for you to join the Immortal Ancient Daoist Rite, although, if you’re not happy with that, you don’t have to go there.

“Whatever choice you make, there is one thing that you absolutely must do before anything else.

“You must first go back to the Fang Clan on Planet East Victory. I left an Immortality Illumination Vine there for you, so that you can achieve true Immortal Ascension!

“Even more importantly... your two Nirvana Fruits are also waiting for you there!

“Those two Nirvana Fruits belong to you. Now that you’ve transcended your tribulation, you can assimilate them, and they will help you reach the peak of the Immortal Realm in a very short period of time. In the future, you must not fall behind the other Chosen, but instead, must surpass them! Leave them behind you for all eternity!”

Next to speak was Meng Li.

“If you have the chance,” she said softly, “you can go to the Eighth Mountain and Sea. That... is mother’s home.”

Meng Hao nodded his head solemnly. He understood the deeper meaning in his father’s words, the meaning that was left unspoken. His father wanted him to return to the Fang Clan and rise to prominence there. He wanted to make sure everyone knew that Fang Xiufeng’s son was no cripple, but rather, a blazing sun!

Therefore, Meng Hao vowed to himself that not only would he rise to prominence in the Fang Clan of Planet East Victory, in the future... he would definitely go to search for his Grandpa Fang and Grandpa Meng.

“You can leave the lands of South Heaven any time you want,” Fang Xiufeng continued. “When you’re ready, just let me know. I’ll arrange for someone from Planet East Victory to come and escort you there. Remember, your path is that of true Immortality. On Planet East Victory... you can become a true Immortal. Force all the people in the Fang Clan to tilt their heads back to look up at you; make them acknowledge that you are my son.” Fang Xiufeng looked deeply at Meng Hao, his son, and his pride in life.

Meng Hao took a deep breath and then nodded deeply.

A few days later, Meng Hao left the Eastern Lands. There were a few more matters he needed to attend to, after which he planned to leave Planet South Heaven.

“My path to true Immortality is different from that of others,” he murmured to himself as he flew through the air. “When the Immortal meridian inside of me is completely solidified, then I will become a true Immortal.

“I actually gained a lot from the trial by fire in the Ruins of Immortality, both in terms of the creation of divine abilities and in progress with my Immortal meridian...”

Meng Hao was able to sense when he cultivated via breathing techniques that his Immortal meridian was continuing to naturally solidify. However, the process was very slow, and unfortunately, things like the stone steles from the Ruins of Immortality were things that could only be encountered serendipitously.

“Back when master opened the Door of Immortality, the power that emerged from within the door was probably similar to the power in those stone steles. Both of them can be used to become a true Immortal.

“The fastest way to achieve true Immortal Ascension is via the Door of Immortality...”

“Could it really be true that it’s now impossible to achieve true Immortal Ascension here in the lands of South Heaven?” Meng Hao sped through the air, lost in thought. He passed over the Milky Way Sea and then reached the Southern Domain.

He flew down into the Violet Fate Sect, although nobody noticed him. He stood on a tall mountain, looking out over the sect. The statue of Reverend Violet East was no longer there, but this particular mountain that he stood on was one that Pill Demon had frequented.

As he stood there, he took a deep breath and closed his eyes. He rotated his cultivation base, and the Immortal meridian inside of him, at full power. The Immortal meridian was eighty percent solid, and shone with glittering light. Dense Immortal qi emanated out from Meng Hao, and eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal merged into the surrounding lands.

In the blink of an eye, winds began to sweep about, and the lands rumbled and quaked. All of the cultivators in the Southern Domain trembled inwardly. Soon, it wasn't just the Southern Domain that was affected. The Western Desert, the Northern Reaches, and even the Eastern Lands were all experiencing bizarre transformations.

Gradually, a vortex formed above the mountain peak where Meng Hao sat. However, almost as soon as the vortex appeared, some sort of incredible restraining power exploded out from Heaven and Earth, destroying the vortex.

It faded away, and everything returned to normal. The lands were quiet, and the cultivators of Planet South Heaven were left wondering what astonishing event had just occurred.

Meng Hao opened his eyes and sat there quietly for a long moment before shaking his head.

“Sure enough, it didn't work.... I can sense the path of true Immortality, but am not able to summon the Door of Immortality. In each of the Mountains and Seas, Immortal destiny will appear on one of the planets, every 10,000 years. The rule cannot be broken.

“What if I used the Immortality Illumination Vine...?” Eyes glittering, he produced an Immortality Illumination Vine from within his bag of holding, the one he had acquired in the medicinal plant garden in the Ruins of Immortality.

After a bit of muttering, he shook his head.

“The Immortality Illumination Vine can definitely lead to true Immortal Ascension. However, it also cuts off the Spirit Realm, and all the advancement made therein. It's a forced breakthrough.

“The Chosen of the other sects build themselves up for years, restrict their cultivation bases until the critical moment, and then use Immortality Illumination Vines to instantly break through.

“As for me, I'm currently at eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal. If I used the Immortality Illumination Vine to break through, I would become a true Immortal, but I would be stuck at eighty percent. That eighty percent would then become my one hundred percent.

“Apparently, my path of true Immortality really can't be tread here on Planet South Heaven. Perhaps going to Planet East Victory like my father said is really the best choice.” Meng Hao's eyes

flickered as he gave up on the thought of using a vine to make his breakthrough, and then he took a deep breath and turned to leave.

No one detected his arrival or his departure from the Violet Fate Sect. He next went to the Blood Demon Sect, where he stood outside of Patriarch Blood Demon's Immortal's cave. The only thing he could sense was an aura of death; there didn't seem to be even the slightest bit of life force inside.

Patriarch Blood Demon did not emerge.

After standing there quietly for a long time, Meng Hao went to Blood Prince Gorge. It was maintained by Blood Demon Sect disciples on a daily basis, who kept the entire valley neat and clean. Meng Hao looked at the log cabin, and all the other familiar sights in the valley, and suddenly he seemed to go into a bit of a trance. He saw the outline of a woman, smiling sweetly at him.

"Xu Qing..." he murmured. He would never forget the agreement that he and Xu Qing had made.

"Wait for me.... I WILL find you!" A warm look could be seen on his face as he recalled the times he had spent with Xu Qing in Blood Prince Gorge. After a while, he left the valley and walked over to the place where he and Xu Qing had held their wedding.

A few days later, Meng Hao left. This would be the final time he visited these places, where memories of Xu Qing abounded, before leaving Planet South Heaven.

After visiting the Blood Demon Sect, he traveled about in the Southern Domain. He stopped outside the Song Clan and swept it with divine sense. He could see Patriarch Song, who was incapable of detecting Meng Hao's presence.

Meng Hao also saw a familiar woman, Song Jia. She sat there cross-legged, meditating. Although she was beautiful, it was possible to see the signs of aging on her.

"She didn't go to the trial by fire to join a sect among the stars. Does she really want to stay behind on Planet South Heaven...?"

Images from the past flitted through Meng Hao's mind. After a long moment, he turned and left, leaving Song Jia undisturbed.

He went to the Rebirth Cave, walking through the pressure that had been so difficult to deal with all those years ago. Back then, it had been difficult to take each step, but now, it was as easy as walking down a paved road. The surrounding cultivators in the region of the Rebirth Cave looked at Meng Hao casually walking toward the Rebirth Cave itself, and their faces flickered with astonishment.

“Who is that?”

“He... he’s actually walking right into the depths of the Rebirth Cave region! The pressure here is difficult even for Spirit Severing experts.”

“Why does he look so familiar...?” As he neared the Rebirth Cave itself, more people saw him, and all of them were astonished.

He calmly proceeded deeper into the region, and was soon near the cave mouth itself.

About 1,500 meters from the cave, he saw two old men with Spirit Severing cultivation bases. They sat there cross-legged, resisting the pressure and staring at each other as if they had some enmity between the two of them. Their life forces burned low, and, they clearly hoped to find some good fortune within the Rebirth Cave.

As soon as Meng Hao approached, the two stared at him in shock.

“Who are you?” one of them growled. Then Meng Hao simply walked past them.

This left them in complete shock, and they watched wide-eyed as Meng Hao casually walked past the 1,500-meter mark and then entered the cave itself.

Panting, they exchanged glances, and could see the disbelief in each others’ eyes.

“He looks familiar...”

“Is... hey! That was Meng Hao! Heavens! He’s the Blood Prince of the Blood Demon Sect! He sealed the Dao Seeking experts from the Northern Reaches, and turned a hundred thousand Northern Reaches cultivators into felon citizens! That was Meng Hao!!”

When the two old men realized it was Meng Hao, their minds filled with a roaring like that of thunder.

Chapter 886: Another Challenge at the Dao Lakes!

[/expand]

Meng Hao calmly walked into the rugged interior of the Rebirth Cave. He saw bones lying about, which grew fewer the further he went into the cave. He stood in the spot where he had died, and as he looked down, his heart twinged in pain.

He thought of Xu Qing.

She had used her own life force to keep him going, and then, in order to resurrect him, had ended up being imprisoned in a restricted area in her own sect. Everything that had happened after that flitted through Meng Hao's mind. After a long moment, he sighed.

He then walked further into the depths of the Rebirth Cave, but saw nothing there.

There was no Immortal's corpse like the one that had fallen from the sky all those years ago, nor were there any other bizarre beings. There was a strange power that he could sense, but other than that, there was nothing.

"Rebirth Cave.... Rebirth Cave.... Yes, it was here that I actually... experienced a rebirth." Meng Hao shook his head and was about to leave, when all off a sudden he stopped in place and turned his head to look toward the very end of the Rebirth Cave. The cave wall there appeared to be normal, but moments ago, he had sensed a strange aura emanating out from that very spot.

He walked over and examined the area carefully, after which his eyes suddenly went wide, and an expression of astonishment and disbelief filled his face. He had just seen a door in the cave wall.

A closed door!

He took a deep breath and looked closer, but saw nothing. However, he was very certain that moments ago he had not been mistaken in what he saw.



“Now this is the kind of mystery that makes the Rebirth Cave worthy of its name,” he thought. He stood there looking at the cave wall for a long time, before finally turning and leaving. He was very curious, but after his experiences in the Ruins of Immortality, he well knew that there were many great secrets in the world, secrets that the level of his cultivation base did not allow him to understand.

When he walked out of the Rebirth Cave, the two old men were still sitting there cross-legged. When they saw Meng Hao, they began to pant, and immediately got to their knees to kowtow.

“Greetings, Blood Prince Meng.”

“Greetings, your excellency Meng Hao!”

Meng Hao stopped, nodded to the two men, and then prepared to leave.

One of the old men, whose life force was very dim, hesitated for a moment and then asked, “Your excellency Meng Hao... uh... what exactly is inside the Rebirth Cave?”

Meng Hao didn’t respond at first. After a moment passed, he said, “Hope.”

Then he left.

The two old men’s spirits lifted. Sighing, they settled back down cross-legged, hope surging in their hearts.

“According to the legends, the exalted Meng Hao actually experienced rebirth inside of the Rebirth Cave!”

“He said hope exists in there, so maybe we do have hope!!” They glanced at each other, and their eyes shone brightly.

After leaving the region of the Rebirth Cave, Meng Hao flew up into the air and looked around emotionally. Finally, his gaze came to rest on the Ancient Temple of Doom.

After a moment of silence, he shot in that direction. It only took a moment for him to appear in midair above the Ancient Temple of Doom. He looked at the grand temple, and thought about Chu Yuyan, and the gorge they had spent time in, and the Blood Immortal Legacy tournament.

“Now that I think about it, this temple... protected me from the Heavenly Tribulation that year.” He floated down from midair to stand directly in front of the archaic and dilapidated Ancient Temple of Doom.

Stone steps led up to the temple itself, and numerous deity statues could be seen within, statues that bore the appearance of Immortal Divinities, solemn and grand.

There were quite a few cultivators congregated outside of the temple. This was one of the three most mysterious locations in all of the Southern Domain, and was the least dangerous of all, which attracted cultivators who wanted to try to acquire some of the good fortune inside.

Meng Hao’s arrival was noticed by a few of the cultivators, but no one paid very close attention to him.

Meng Hao looked at the temple for a moment, then walked forward. Not too far behind him was a cultivator who was observing the temple, but didn’t dare to get very close. When he saw Meng Hao walking closer the temple, he called out in a sincere voice.

“Fellow Daoist, you can’t get too close to the Ancient Temple of Doom! It’s very dangerous!”

It wasn’t just this man who noticed Meng Hao now. Many of the surrounding Southern Domain cultivators saw him approaching the temple. Quite a few looked on with cold sneers, or even open ridicule as they waited for something exciting to unfold.

“This temple is something that the average person can’t get close to. Our location here outside of the perimeter is the closest one can get. With the exception of some of the Patriarchs, anyone who gets any closer is dead for sure!”

“That guy doesn’t look very familiar, what sect is he from?”

As the crowd discussed what was happening, Meng Hao reached the staircase and then began to climb up one step at a time. The other cultivators looked on with wide eyes, panting. Expressions of disbelief and astonishment could be seen.

“He’s... he’s actually going up the stairs!”

“What cultivation base does he have? This is impossible!”

“How come... he looks somewhat familiar...?”

As the cultivators looked on in shock, Meng Hao finished climbing the stairs and now stood directly in front of the towering temple. The doors had long since been broken completely open, and as Meng Hao stood there, he could clearly see all of the deity statues inside.

Each and every one depicted a powerful expert from the Ancient Doom Clan.

“They fought with Ji Tian...” murmured Meng Hao, “and were defeated. Before their clan was exterminated, they built this temple, the Will of which shall eternally resist the Heavens of Ji....” As he stood there, he felt as if he were looking at a former mighty clan, displaying all the brilliance of their long history.

After a long moment passed, he clasped hands and bowed deeply to the temple.

The entire Ancient Temple of Doom trembled in response to his show of respect. Rumbling sounds echoed out, and all of the cultivators further out felt their minds trembling, and backed up in astonishment.

That astonishment came from the fact that they were witnessing Meng Hao bowing to the temple, and in response, more than half of the statues inside the temple bowed in return, as if they had come to life.

Furthermore, a brilliant light rose up from the temple, which spread out in all directions to cover everything.

“Heavens! What’s going on? How can this be happening!”

“The statues in the Ancient Temple of Doom, they’re... they’re actually alive!!”

“Who is that cultivator?! Can it really be that the temple cannot bear to accept his show of respect without returning the salute?” Even as the crowds were in an uproar, Meng Hao looked up and saw that roughly sixty percent of the statues were bowing to him. The other forty percent were looking at him with faint smiles.

At the very back of the temple stood three majestic statues who remained completely unmoving. However, they looked at Meng Hao without any ill will whatsoever.

“That’s... that’s his excellency Meng Hao!!”

“It’s Meng Hao!! That’s Blood Prince Meng Hao!” As more and more people recognized him, a buzz of conversation instantly rose up.

As Meng Hao looked into the temple, he gradually became aware of numerous ancient voices murmuring in his ears. The voices were obscure, but they seemed to contain anticipation, hope that one day they would be able to leave the temple and carry out a slaughter in the Heavens.

After a long moment, Meng Hao bowed again, then turned to leave. As he flew into the air, the light shining up from the Ancient Temple of Doom slowly faded, and the temple returned to its original condition.

After leaving the Ancient Temple of Doom, Meng Hao did not depart from the lands of the Southern Domain, but instead, headed toward the Ancient Dao Lakes.

“I wonder if Lu Bai and those others are still trapped under there,” he thought. He proceeded onward, passing the various locations where he had experienced such dangerous situations that year, and eventually came to a stop above the enormous Dao Lake in the middle of the region.

As he hovered there in midair, looking at the lake, a thoughtful look appeared in his eyes. Were he to pick one place in the Southern Domain that was the most dangerous place of all, the Ancient Dao Lakes would definitely be his choice.

That was especially true due to the third level of the trial by fire therein. When Meng Hao thought back to that incident, he was still unsure as to whether or not he could succeed if he went back. But then his eyes glittered, and he patted his bag of holding to produce a white crystal that emanated pulsing coldness.

The coldness seemed faint, but according to Meng Hao's speculations, there was something about this object that was completely extraordinary. This item... was the crystal he had acquired from the Feng Shui compass in the Warrior Pavilion in the Ruins of Immortality.

"The Essence of Divine Flame...." A gleam of curiosity appeared in Meng Hao's eyes. He still remembered the enormous flame seed inside the third level. The incredible intensity of that fire had been beyond his imagination.

Because of the level of his cultivation base that year, Meng Hao didn't understand what the term 'essence' meant. Even now, he still didn't fully understand; he only had a vague idea.

"Even with this white crystal, it will be difficult to pass the test in that level. I only want a little bit of that flame... but what can I take it away in?"

After a moment of silent thought, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a bronze oil lamp whose flame had long since been extinguished. As he gazed at the lamp, his eyes glittered.

"Once I leave Planet South Heaven, it's impossible to say when I'll return. I'll definitely be facing all sorts of peril. If I can take some of that flame essence with me, it can serve as a trump card for me in dangerous situations. I'm not sure if I can succeed, but I have to try." Meng Hao took a deep breath and then flew down to the surface of the Dao Lake, which he then sank down into.

In the blink of an eye, he was at the bottom of the lake. There was no entrance visible; everything looked completely ordinary. However, considering that he had eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal, when Meng Hao looked at the lake bottom, he saw a huge teleportation portal.

His body flickered as he moved to stand within the portal, and yet nothing happened.

As he stood there, he transmitted a message with divine will. "Oh senior member of the people who guard the world beneath the lake, I have returned to once again challenge the third level!"

In response to his divine will, the lake began to churn. After a moment, the teleportation portal rotated into operation, and brilliant light swallowed Meng Hao up.

A moment later, Meng Hao could see again, and he was underground. He was surrounded by numerous mountains formed from magical items, and countless beasts of different colors. There

was an enormous door, before which lay a golden beast. All of a sudden, the beast turned to look at Meng Hao.

“You... wish to challenge the third level?” The echoing voice had been very intimidating the first time Meng Hao had come here, but now he simply looked out calmly over the first level. At the moment, he couldn’t see any of the other people he had come here with that year.

“There’s no need to look for those people,” the voice continued. “With the exception of Lu Bai, all of them... have long since perished.

“Are you certain that you wish to challenge the third level?” asked the golden beast, its voice rumbling out like thunder. All of the other beasts in the area looked at Meng Hao, their eyes radiating ferocity.

Meng Hao took a deep breath and nodded.

“Yes, I wish to make the challenge!”

Chapter 887: The Essence of Divine Flame!

The golden beast looked deeply at Meng Hao, then threw its head back and roared. Instantly, all of the other beasts in the first level parted, creating a path for Meng Hao to follow to the huge door.

Meng Hao proceeded forward, passing through the animals, his gaze fixed on the door. Suddenly, an enormous beast off to the right who possessed a Spirit Severing aura, roared and pounced toward Meng Hao.

Meng Hao’s expression was normal, and he didn’t even look at the beast. He simply raised his right hand and made a grasping motion toward its forehead.

When compared in size to the enormous beast, Meng Hao’s hand was miniscule. However, he viciously grabbed onto the beast’s head, instantly causing it to begin to howl miserably. In response, the surrounding beasts leapt angrily to their feet.

Meng Hao’s expression was calm as he continued to walk forward. He did not loosen his right hand, but instead, dragged the enormous beast along with him as he walked.

The golden beast lying beneath the huge door looked on with wide eyes. However, it did nothing to interfere. It allowed Meng Hao to approach the door, where he finally released the beast from his hand, then looked at the golden-colored beast and nodded. Then he stepped through the door.

When he reappeared, he was on the second level, where he saw the same ancient, white-colored overseer beast that he had seen the last time. He also saw Lu Bai, sitting cross-legged in meditation, just a single pace away from the final level.

The stubble of a beard could be seen on Lu Bai's face, and his clothing was in tatters. However, his face shone with a brilliant light, and as soon as Meng Hao appeared, he glanced over. A look of shock appeared on his face.

Meng Hao stood down below and looked up at the ancient beast. "Senior, I would like to attempt the third level."

The beast looked down at Meng Hao and, after a long moment passed, nodded its head. Meng Hao immediately flew up to the peak of the level.

The beast's pupils constricted, and a look of concentration appeared on its face.

"You've changed," said the beast. "You're far more powerful than the last time we met.... However, I would like to give you a bit of advice. Considering the level of your cultivation base, you will not be able to pass this third level."

"Considering how you passed the second level last time, you were given a chance to experience the third level for a moment, which is how you escaped death. This time... if you fail, you will likely have no chance to leave the level, and will perish inside."

"The test of the third level is to completely absorb the Essence of Divine Flame into your body."

Meng Hao looked back silently at the overseer, but his eyes gleamed with determination. He nodded.

The beast thought for a moment, but did nothing more to block Meng Hao's way. It waved its hand, and an enormous vortex appeared, within which could be seen the flicker of flames. This sea of flames was none other than the entrance to the third level.

Meng Hao was just about to step in when....

Lu Bai couldn't hold back from calling out.

“Meng Hao.... Um... how are things outside?” He had been privy to the Northern Reaches' invasion plans, and as such, he knew that the Southern Domain should have been occupied. However, now he saw Meng Hao, with a cultivation base even more terrifying than before. He himself had performed his third Severing, and had successfully stepped into Dao Seeking. However, with his early Dao Seeking cultivation base, he was unable to clearly see Meng Hao's cultivation base.

He had a very bad feeling, a feeling that caused his face to go pale.

Meng Hao stopped in place and looked back at Lu Bai silently for a moment before replying.

“The Northern Reaches' invasion failed. Most of your Dao Seeking experts were killed.”

“Impossible!” replied Lu Bai, his voice hoarse. “The Grand Elder, the High Priest, and all the others aren't just at peak Dao Seeking. Some of them are comparable to false Immortals! Plus, they have powerful magical items! Even a false Immortal who went up against the Northern Reaches would perish! How could they all be dead?!”

“The Northern Reaches has vast resources! How could an army of a million cultivators suffer a defeat like that!?!?”

Meng Hao's voice was calm as he responded, “The Grand Elder you speak of, as well as the High Priest, and a few of the other strongest Dao Seeking experts are all suppressed under a mountain called Sin of the North. Their cultivation bases are being used to replenish the spiritual energy in the lands of the Southern Domain.

“As for the army you speak of, most of those million cultivators died. The surviving hundred thousand or so had their cultivation bases severed and were turned into felon citizens. For generations to come, the bloodlines of the Northern Reaches' cultivators will never produce Nascent Soul cultivators.



“And then there’s you. If you get out of this place, you can go to Sin of the North to bear witness yourself. If, from this day forward, you agree to practice cultivation peacefully, then I won’t kill you where you stand. However, if you cause any problems... there are people in the outside world who will slaughter you.” With that, he ignored Lu Bai and stepped into the vortex.

Lu Bai’s face was pale white, and he coughed up a mouthful of blood. From the way Meng Hao spoke, he could tell that his words were not false. Everything he had said was true.

He was silent for a moment, and then began to chuckle bitterly. He thought of his friends from home, his master, his Patriarch. He had never imagined that while he was stuck in this place... the entire world outside would be turned upside down.

In the moment that Meng Hao stepped into the vortex, he felt as if he were passing through a boundless sea of flames. At the same time, a terrifying roaring could be heard.

The roaring became very clear as soon as Meng Hao stepped fully into the world of the third level. In front of him was no sea of flames, but rather, a blood-colored field.

The lands were also filled with white grass.

A total of 990,000 pagodas could be seen circling out in all directions, in the middle of which was a black city. The city was overgrown with the white grass, and a flame spark hovered in midair above it. The flame seemed as if it would burn for all eternity, and cast brilliant, flickering light throughout the entire world.

Then, the same voice Meng Hao had heard the previous time he had been here echoed out.

“Dao Fang, you must die!!

“You killed me, Dao Fang, and if I’m reincarnated, I’ll definitely kill you!

“The Immortal World is doomed to experience tribulation! The Immortal lands will grow old, and the Immortals will perish! But I refuse to give in!!

“I know the truth! No matter how long you suppress me, I won’t admit defeat!

“Damned monkey! If I can get free, I’ll have your hide!

“If I’m transmigrated, I will slaughter myself out of this place! If my transmigration fails, I will fall into oblivion like all other living things, with virtually no hope of reawakening even after countless cycles of reincarnation. Therefore, I will leave a Dharmic decree for this place!

“My decree contains the essence of my Dao flame, the last vestige of me, Huoyan Zi. I hope that countless years later, that vestige will still exist!”

The voice was like a sharp sword, stabbing into his mind. His head spun, and he felt as if his body were about to collapse into pieces.

However, this time, not only had Meng Hao come prepared, but also, his cultivation base was far different than before. It was like the difference between Heaven and Earth. Now, the only thing that happened was that he bled from his eyes, ears, nose and mouth. His body did not begin to fall apart like last time. As the sound echoed out, Meng Hao looked at the enormous Essence of Divine Flame up ahead.

The Essence suddenly burst with power that rumbled out through the entire world. Originally, there had been no flames here, but now, everything burst out with fire. The land, the sky, everything turned into flames. In the blink of an eye, the whole world was aflame.

The flames were shocking, and Meng Hao felt a sense of deadly crisis as soon as they spread out. These flames were definitely powerful enough to kill him.

In the moment of crisis, Meng Hao unhesitatingly produced the white crystal from his bag of holding. As soon as he grabbed ahold of it, icy coldness spread out to cover his body, blocking the flames.

When that happened, Meng Hao sighed in relief. The whole reason he had dared to come to this place was because of the crystal. However, he had only been eighty percent sure that it would be successful, and had thus hesitated. However, now that he saw that the crystal was indeed effective, Meng Hao’s eyes glittered brightly.

He looked up at the Essence of Divine Flame, and smiled in anticipation.

The huge flame spark hovered in midair, spewing out a sea of flames, as if it were the source of all flames.

Meng Hao took a deep breath. Then, hefting the crystal, he began to slowly move forward. The flames around him raged ferociously, battering against him in waves. The power of the fire was shockingly intense, and he knew that if even the tiniest ember from those flames touched him, even his Eternal stratum would only keep him alive for a short time before he was completely destroyed.

Time passed, and Meng Hao continued to get closer and closer to the enormous Essence of Divine Flame. After a while, he came to a stop a few thousand meters away from the flame. He found it very difficult to progress further, not because the crystal was incapable of absorbing any more of the flame's power, but because he was physically unable to approach any further even by employing his cultivation base at its maximum power. The pressure in the area was just too intense.

If he didn't have the crystal, at most, he could reach a point around ten thousand meters away from the flame.

Meng Hao took a deep breath and looked around at the sea of flames. By this point, he could see images within the flames, including beasts, magical items and types of vegetation.

Each image was intensely powerful, something that would shock even someone at the peak of the Immortal Realm. The closer he got to the Essence of Divine Flame, the more terrifying the flame spirits became.

"I don't want to take away the entire Essence of Divine Flame," he thought. "I just want a bit of fire to use as a trump card in the future." He cautiously sent his divine sense out, opened a gap in the protective shield created by the crystal, and pulled in a flame spirit that looked like a butterfly. Once it was inside, he backed up at top speed, and used all the power of his cultivation base to use the power of the crystal to envelop the flame butterfly.

After backing up some distance, the power of the flame sea decreased a bit, and Meng Hao stopped. Panting, he looked at the butterfly fluttering around within the power of the crystal. Then, he carefully sent a stream of divine sense toward the flame butterfly. As soon as it made contact, his divine sense ignited into flame, and he instantly severed the connection.

Determination appeared in his eyes as he produced the ancient bronze lamp from his bag of holding. Exercising the utmost caution, he extended it toward the flame butterfly.

“If this works, then I’ll have an excellent trump card to use in the future. If I fail, well... I won’t have lost out on anything.” Gritting his teeth, he touched the bronze lamp to the flame butterfly.

In that instant, the bronze lamp suddenly flickered. The flame butterfly landed on the lamp’s wick, and a puffing sound could be heard as the flame blazed to life!

It only burned for a moment, and then went dark. However, there was now a glimmering spark inside the lamp.

Meng Hao excitedly attempted to put the lamp back into his bag of holding, and was successful. Then he pulled it back out and blew on it. Instantly, a sea of flames erupted out, and Meng Hao held his breath. A moment later, the flames died out, and only a spark remained in the lamp.

“Success!” he said, laughing loudly. Licking his lips, he thought about trying to collect some more flame, but then he looked at the Essence of Divine Flame floating there in midair and considered the bizarre nature of the place. In the end, he decided that it wasn’t wise to act rashly. Reigning in his greed, he backed up a bit and then put the the crystal away. He allowed the flames to burn him a bit, then, eyes glittering, stepped into the exit and vanished.

In the moment that he vanished, a vertical eye suddenly appeared within the Essence of Divine Flame. It stared coldly at Meng Hao as he faded away, and then, after a moment, a long sigh could be heard.

“After all these years, he is the first person to succeed.... He... will definitely be back!”

Chapter 888: Let Them Fly On Their Own!

As soon as the old white-colored beast saw Meng Hao appear back in the second level, he looked a bit surprised.

“Considering your cultivation base, you were doomed to fail,” he said, his voice echoing about. “And yet, you didn’t perish in there....” He looked deeply at Meng Hao, and when he noticed his tattered, charred clothing, his suspicions mostly vanished.

Meng Hao smiled wryly and shook his head, then took a deep breath.

“Senior, I was crude and rash. I thought that my cultivation base was different, and that I could give it a try. I never thought that, as you mentioned, I would fail.... Thankfully, I didn’t get too close, otherwise I would have ended up dead and buried in there.”

The old beast nodded, and Meng Hao clasped hands and bowed. The old beast did nothing to prevent Meng Hao from vanishing into the exit portal.

As for Lu Bai, he silently watched Meng Hao leave.

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In a certain region outside the Ancient Dao Lakes, glittering light rose up as Meng Hao was teleported out of the underground world. His expression was one of excitement as he patted his bag of holding and took a deep breath.

“That fire spirit from the 3,000-meter region is a trump card I can use if I ever run into a dangerous situation involving someone at the peak of the Immortal Realm. Unfortunately, the fire isn’t eternal. I wonder how many times I’ll be able to use it? Not many, I’m sure.” With that, Meng Hao vanished.

Meng Hao appeared in many places throughout the Southern Domain over the following days. He went to many familiar places, including the Black Lands, where he visited many old friends.

The Western Desert was still, for the most part, covered by the Violet Sea, and was lifeless.

After bidding farewell to his friends in the Black Lands, he went to the place where he’d once encountered the being who had fought with the Heavens of Ji. When he got there, there was no trace of anyone present at all.

After that, he went to the Milky Way Sea, where everything was still and silent, a sharp contrast to how it had once been. It was in the Inner Ring was where he had seen the ancient ship to which he felt so much gratitude, the same ancient ship he had also seen in the Ruins of Immortality.

After circling about the Milky Way Sea, he went back to the Eastern Lands. Finally, he let out a long sigh as he realized that it really was time to depart.

“Fatty is now in the Paleo-Immortal Mausoleum, Elder Brother Chen Fan went to the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto, and Wang Youcai joined Moonset Lake.... Even all those Chosen I know from the Ji Clan have left to go to the Ninth Mountain.” These were all things Meng Hao had recently been told by his father.

All of the Chosen that he had known from the Southern Domain were either dead, gone, or far beneath him in terms of power. Most did not even qualify to meet his gaze.

“It’s really time to leave,” Meng Hao thought with a sigh. He was now walking through the Eastern Lands, past mountains and through plains, making sure that his memories of the lands of South Heaven were firmly implanted in his mind. One day, he found himself on the shore of a mighty river in the Eastern Lands, where he suddenly stopped in his tracks.

He had sensed a familiar aura, although it was incredibly faint. If he hadn’t been walking through this area, he would never have noticed it.

“This aura....” He looked at the river in front of him, which was considered the main river in the Eastern Lands. It divided the sub-continent in half, and actually flowed out from the Milky Way Sea.

The strangest thing was that this aura was not just familiar, it was incredibly familiar. It was... his own aura!

Muttering to himself, Meng Hao followed the traces of the aura until he found himself on a remote shore of the river. There were no people anywhere nearby, and evidence of wild animals could be seen.

At a certain point, he suddenly caught sight of an object on a shallow bank nearby that instantly caused him to stop in place and stare with wide eyes.

Time seemed to suddenly come to a standstill, and the world seemed to cease its rotation. Everything else in front of Meng Hao vanished, except for that one item, floating there in the water. It seemed as if it were something eternal, and quickly became the only thing he could see.

It was a bottle gourd.

It was stuck between two rocks, battered by the elements, having soaked in the river water for countless years. It was thoroughly dilapidated and apparently on the verge of rotting to pieces completely. It floated there quietly, as if it were waiting for someone to come along and pick it up.

Perhaps, were it not for the two rocks that kept it stuck in place, the bottle gourd would have floated away long ago. Perhaps... it would have made it to the Great Tang.

Meng Hao began to tremble. The bottle gourd looked ordinary, but it was something he would never be able to forget.

Back when he was a young scholar, he had yet again failed in the Imperial examinations, then stood atop Mount Daqing, where he wrote something on a slip of paper, stuck it in a bottle gourd, and threw it into the river at the bottom of the mountain.

That river had been said to flow all the way to the Eastern Lands, but Meng Hao had long since learned that it connected not to the Eastern Lands, but to the Milky Way Sea.

It was as if, over the years, there were some power that had guided the bottle gourd across the Milky Way Sea and all the way to the Eastern Lands, where it got stuck in this river.

Meng Hao stared at the bottle gourd with its familiar aura. He had never imagined that one day he would once again see this bottle gourd. He had assumed that it had long since sunk to the bottom of the river or the sea, or had been picked up by someone.

“I threw this bottle into the river before I began to practice cultivation. Now, just when I’m about to leave, I’ve run into it again....” He walked quietly over to the bottle-gourd, then bent down to pick it up.

It was rotting, and as he held it in his hand, he felt as if he didn’t even need to expend any effort to break it open.

“But how... could it possibly still be around after hundreds of years...? It’s just an ordinary bottle gourd. It should have vanished long ago.” After looking at it for a long moment, he uncorked the gourd. Inside, it was slightly damp, but there was no water. Meng Hao turned it upside down, and a rolled up strip of paper fell out.

When he saw the paper, an emotional expression of reminiscence appeared on his face. He thought back to the youthful version of himself, standing there on Mount Daqing, and the bellowing rage he had flown into after each time he failed the Imperial examinations.

He also thought about his life in Yunjie County, and all the things that had happened there.

He gingerly uncurled the strip of paper. Although the words were somewhat blurry, he was able to vaguely make out the grand aspiration that he had written down that year...

He looked at the piece of paper, and as he smiled, it seemed as if the bottle gourd no longer bore the weight of his desire, and it transformed into ash. The strip of paper also gradually disintegrated into tiny pieces that drifted through his fingers and vanished with the wind.

Meng Hao then felt that familiar aura fade away.

He stood there quietly for a moment, saying nothing. Finally, he closed his eyes. Time passed. One day after another went by, until an entire week passed. The river water flowed, the sun and moon rose and set. Birds and beasts scampered to and fro along the river bank.

Seven days later, Meng Hao opened his eyes, and they shone with enlightenment.

“There is a mysterious power in the world....” he murmured.

“And that power is desire.

“That ordinary bottle gourd was able to survive down to this day because it was sustained from within by my desire. As a cultivator, the desire that I had back then has grown stronger even as I have grown stronger, however far away the realization of it was.

“It was my own familiar aura which helped that bottle gourd... to survive all these years.

“After picking it up, the desire that had coalesced in the bottle gourd and the piece of paper vanished and returned into my hand. That is why it disappeared into Heaven and Earth.



“It’s similar to what Xie Yixian from the Burning Incense Stick Society said during our arena match. Burning Incense... coalesces the desires of all living things, and the cultivation of that desire is burning incense.

“I never imagined that I would be enlightened here regarding the power of burning incense.” After a moment he looked down at his hand, which he then waved.

Time seemed to move in reverse, as the drifting pieces of ash from seven days before suddenly reappeared. They transformed into a piece of paper, as well as the bottle gourd which had vanished.

Meng Hao’s expression was calm as he once again placed the strip of paper into the bottle gourd and tossed it into the river. As the water flowed, the bottle gourd bobbed up and down, drifting off into the distance.

“I still haven’t achieved what I desire, so how could I let that bottle gourd disappear...? Perhaps years from now, someone will find my bottle gourd and open it up to reveal my desire... and my aura....” As he watched the bottle gourd disappear into the distance, a faint smile broke out on his face.

“It’s time to leave,” he said. Taking a deep breath, he turned and, his expression one of determination, strode off into the distance. Eventually, he appeared up in the sky, where he became a beam of light that disappeared off into the distance.

One day later.

In the Fang Clan of the Eastern Lands, a huge teleportation portal had been set up in a rear courtyard. Glittering light rose up from the portal, next to which stood Meng Hao, his parents, and another middle-aged man.

The middle-aged man acted extremely respectfully toward Fang Xiufeng and Meng Li, and when he looked at Meng Hao, an emotional and loving expression could be seen.

“Hao’er,” said Fang Xiufeng, “this is your 19th Uncle. He’s my younger cousin and a member of our bloodline.”

Meng Hao clasped hands and bowed deeply.

19th Uncle laughed heartily and quickly straightened Meng Hao up from his bow. His expression of fondness only continued to grow deeper.

“You’re a good kid,” he said. “Wonderful, truly wonderful. When we get back to the clan, I hope that you can help me take care of my own son. He loafs around all day and is always a big headache.”

“The Fang Clan is on Planet East Victory, which is far away from Planet South Heaven,” said Fang Xiufeng, looking at Meng Hao with a serious expression. “With your cultivation base, you can’t travel directly through the stars. You will need two teleportation portals to get there. Your 19th Uncle has come here personally to escort you along the way.”

Meng Li stood next to Fang Xiufeng, clearly reluctant to part from Meng Hao. However, she knew that Meng Hao’s path lay among the stars, not on Planet South Heaven.

All she could do was start straightening up his luggage. Although he had a bag of holding, she had personally sewn some luggage for him. She straightened up his clothing, then looked over her son, tears welling up in her eyes.

“Mom,” he said softly, “don’t worry, I’ll be fine.”

“I can’t leave Planet South Heaven,” said Fang Xiufeng. “If you face any dangers out there, I can’t protect you. This crocodile can temporarily act as your Dao Protector, but in the end, you must watch out for yourself.” He waved his hand, causing the crocodile to emerge and obediently shrink down and descend onto Meng Hao’s palm, then scurry up into his sleeve. Fang Xiufeng continued quietly, “If you perish....”

“Father will get revenge for you!”

Meng Hao and 19th Uncle stood in the teleportation portal. Soft light glittered out as Meng Hao looked at his parents standing outside of the portal. Suddenly, his eyes felt moist, and he dropped to his knees to kowtow three times to his parents.

“Dad, mom. I’m leaving now.... You don’t need to miss me or worry about me, I’ll come back to visit often.”

Rumble!

The light from the teleportation portal rose up into the air. In the moment before he vanished completely, Meng Hao waved at his parents.

Meng Li couldn't hold the tears back any longer as she watched Meng Hao disappear. Her heart filled with worry, and in that brief moment, she grew older.

Fang Xiufeng seemed strong on the outside, but even his eyes grew blurry.

“The kids have grown up. We have to let them fly on their own.”

Chapter 889: Killing Intent Lurking Everywhere!

[/expand]

The scintillating lights on Planet South Heaven lasted for the time it takes an incense stick to burn before fading completely away.

Out in the starry sky was an asteroid field that seemed to be eternally drifting among the stars.

The largest of the asteroids were tens of thousands of meters wide, the smallest were dozens. From a distance, the asteroid field almost looked like a river of stars floating through space.

This portion of space was actually not completely black; occasional dots of sparkling light glittered to and fro. At first glance, the starry sky seemed without end, but in fact, it was not so. It also seemed to pulse with life.

The asteroid field was filled with many large asteroids that were apparently surrounded by shocking power, almost like shields.

One of those asteroids was tens of thousands of meters wide, and emanated glittering light. It was possible to see numerous teleportation portals carved into its surface, over a thousand of them packed tightly together.

One of those teleportation portals was currently emanating dazzling light, and the figures of Meng Hao and 19th Uncle slowly became visible.

“Hao’er,” 19th Uncle said with a smile, “there is a vast distance between Planet South Heaven and Planet East Victory. It would be difficult to teleport there directly. That’s why we need to transfer teleportation portals here.” When he looked at Meng Hao, the emotion and love in his gaze was apparent.

He was very pleased that his older cousin’s son had successfully transcended his tribulation, and was finally able to return to the clan.

When he thought of the steep price Fang Xiufeng had paid over the years, he couldn’t help but sigh in his heart.

“You can take a look around,” 19th Uncle continued. “This asteroid belongs to the Fang Clan, so we’re in no danger. I need some time to make some adjustments to the teleportation portal. The way it is now, your body probably couldn’t handle it. I need about... enough time for an incense stick to burn.” With that, he began to make adjustments to the teleportation portal.

Meng Hao nodded in response, then stepped out of the teleportation portal to look around.

There was no sun and no sky. The only things he could see were sparkling stars amidst pitch black darkness. Although this was not Meng Hao’s first time stepping out into the starry sky, it was different than those other times.

“I’ve really left Planet South Heaven....” He looked off into the distance, but actually had no sense of direction, and no way to determine where Planet South Heaven might be. His heart felt a bit empty, and he was also nervous about arriving as a stranger on Planet East Victory.

Of course, that was where he had been born, and was also a planet that belonged to his own Fang Clan.

He patted his bag of holding, within which was a jade slip given to him by his father. It contained a map of the Ninth Mountain and Sea, along with various paths among the stars.

“Once I’ve finished making these adjustments, we can be on our way,” 19th Uncle called out, smiling as he continued to adjust the teleportation portal to suit Meng Hao. “The Patriarchs are all in secluded meditation, and have left the Grand Elder in charge. He was very happy to hear that

you're returning, and has arranged for large numbers of clan members to gather together and receive you.

"It's going to be very lively! Hahaha! Once we're back, you really have to help me get my son in line!"

Meng Hao nodded, and for some reason, he wasn't able to keep a bit of warmth from rising up in his heart. That was the warmth of family, a warmth that had begun to grow cold almost as soon as he left Planet South Heaven and stepped out into space.

"19th Uncle, does all of Planet East Victory belong to the Fang Clan?" he asked.

"Your father didn't tell you? Well, that makes sense. Cousin is a bit resentful of the clan. Ai....

"Hao'er, you probably already know that all the lands and stars are actually part of nine mountains and seas. Another way of putting it is that nine mountains exist in the starry sky, and each mountain has a sea, thus, nine seas.

"The Nine Mountains and Seas are divided into groups of mountains and seas, and thus nine worlds.

"In each of those, there are four planets which rotate eternally around their respective mountains. Outside of the Nine Mountains are two enormous heavenly bodies; the sun and a moon.

"Because of the reflections cast by the sea of stars, the sun and moon look different on each of the planets, but in fact, there is only a single sun and a single moon for all the Nine Mountains and Seas.

"In the Ninth Mountain and Sea, one of those four planets is Planet East Victory, which belongs completely to the Fang Clan. Although there are other sects and power structures on the planet, if the Fang Clan wanted to, we could unify the other powers. Instead, we permit them to exist.

"Actually, the largest planet in the Ninth Mountain and Sea is not Planet East Victory, but rather Planet North Reed. It is several times larger than Planet East Victory, and is where the Wang Clan, Song Clan, and Li Clan, the Three Great Clans, all call home.

“Then there is Planet West Felicity, where you can find the Sublime Flow Sword Grotto, one of the Three Great Daoist Societies, as well as other illustrious sects.

“To further analyze matters, you have to look at the Ninth Mountain and the Ninth Sea as a whole.

“Compared to everything else, Planet South Heaven is special. Since your father didn’t tell you the details about that, then I won’t presume to talk about them.” After providing his explanation, 19th Uncle smiled and continued with his adjustments to the spell formation.

Meng Hao’s eyes glittered with an intense light. 19th Uncle’s description overlapped with his own understanding of matters to provide a much larger picture in Meng Hao’s mind.

“19th Uncle, what other sects are on Planet East Victory?” he suddenly asked.

“The most famous are the Church of the Blood Orchid and the Church of the Puppet God, which are listed among the Three Churches and Six Sects. In addition to them is the Medicine Immortal Sect. They might not be listed among the Three Churches and Six Sects, but when it comes to the Dao of alchemy, in all the Ninth Mountain and Sea, they are second only to the Kunlun Society.

“Most accurately speaking... the Medicine Immortal Sect has a deep connection with the Fang Clan. Ai... it was actually founded by a Patriarch of the Fang Clan who got angry and left to start his own sect.

“After we get back to the clan, my son, your cousin, can tell you more about all that.” 19th Uncle extended his right hand and pushed down onto the surface of the teleportation portal, causing bright light to glitter up.

“Alright, that’s it! Let’s get going, Hao’er. After enough time passes for an incense stick to burn, you’ll be able to lay eyes on Planet East Victory!” Laughing loudly, 19th Uncle stepped into the teleportation portal, followed closely by Meng Hao. As the light of teleportation surrounded them, a glow of anticipation could be seen in Meng Hao’s eyes.

Meng Hao and 19th Uncle soon vanished with the light. However, in the moment that they faded away, a black-robed cultivator appeared above the teleportation portal.

He wore no expression at all on his face, which was as cold as ice. He almost seemed completely devoid of emotion. He appeared without making a single noise, and when he saw that Meng Hao

and 19th Uncle had disappeared into the portal, he stamped down viciously with his right foot, instantly shattering the teleportation portal.

The teleportation portal was fundamentally very difficult to shatter. Otherwise, Meng Hao and 19th Uncle would not have been so confident in using it; after all, this asteroid belonged to the Fang Clan, and was protected by a shield, making it very difficult for outsiders to get into the place.

The black-robed man pulled out a jade slip and sent some divine will into it.

“Target acquired. Teleportation portal’s foundation destroyed.” With that, he vanished.

Almost in the same moment that he vanished, brilliant lights could suddenly be seen at a point somewhere between the asteroid and Planet East Victory, accompanied by massive rumbling. In the middle of the light was a hole that had been ripped in the void, from which a multicolored glow surged out, as well as deadly ripples. A roar could be heard, which was 19th Uncle, who shot out from within the hole, his hair in disarray, his expression that of rage, and his cultivation base rotating at full power. Next, Meng Hao stepped out from within the hole, surrounded by thunderous roaring.

19th Uncle’s face was grim, while Meng Hao’s eyes gleamed with an intense light. Moments ago, they had been in the midst of teleportation, when suddenly, the teleportation tunnel collapsed. If 19th Uncle hadn’t protected Meng Hao with his powerful cultivation base, then Meng Hao would definitely have been killed.

Almost as soon as 19th Uncle and Meng Hao appeared, ripples began to spread out all around them. In the blink of an eye, nine completely emotionless black-robed figures appeared. From the look of things, they had already calculated any avenues of escape that would be open to 19th Uncle and Meng Hao, and had sealed them off; this was a deadly ambush!

Rumbling echoed out as the nine people attacked in unison... all with peak Immortal Realm power!

“Dammit!” roared 19th Uncle. “You people really have gall! Didn’t you know that was a teleportation portal of the Fang Clan!?” He immediately performed an incantation gesture with his right hand, causing an explosively destructive aura to surge out in all directions.

However, it was at this point that a faint aura suddenly materialized in the void, and then roared out explosively. This aura was not that of the Immortal Realm, but a step beyond that, the early Ancient Realm!

The appearance of this new aura caused 19th Uncle's face to flicker. He gritted his teeth, and a look of determination appeared on his face. He quickly grabbed Meng Hao and threw him off into the distance, as well as some other object, which turned into a beam of light that followed Meng Hao.

"Hao'er, they're probably after me. You get out of here, and I'll come after you later!" 19th Uncle then began to perform a double-handed incantation.

"Great Heavenly Void!" cried out 19th Uncle. His entire body suddenly transformed into an enormous vortex that instantly sucked in the hidden Ancient Realm aura, as well as the nine peak Immortal Realm cultivators. Then, they all vanished.

Everything happened extremely quickly. From the collapse of the teleportation to 19th Uncle unleashing his divine ability and swallowing up his opponents, barely enough time passed to blink an eye.

Meng Hao was panting as he tumbled through the void. The beam of light that had been following him materialized into a flying shuttle, which surrounded Meng Hao and sped off into the distance. The shuttle would provide Meng Hao protection from the starry sky for quite some time.

Meng Hao's face flickered, and he turned to look back at the spot where 19th Uncle had fought the mysterious assailants. There was nothing to be seen; apparently, Meng Hao was now the only person out here among the stars.

"Were those people after 19th Uncle, or were they... coming after me!?" Meng Hao's eyes flickered. He was not a novice in the Cultivation world. Contrariwise, he was extremely discerning. After all, he had traveled the road of cultivation all the way to the peak of Dao Seeking completely on his own power and ability, all without even knowing his father and mother. The tempering he had gone through had left him with shocking willpower and intuition.

Without pausing for a moment, he sent some divine sense into the flying shuttle. After a moment of thought, he realized that while he didn't distrust 19th Uncle, he also knew that if those people weren't targeting him, then he could do whatever he wished right now. However, if they were targeting him, then that meant they had the ability to determine not just 19th Uncle's location, but his own. Therefore... he was not safe in this shuttle.

He decided not to use the shuttle after all. He took a deep breath, gritted his teeth, and then flew out of the shuttle into the starry sky.



As soon as he left the shuttle, a suffocating pressure bore down on him. His body was immediately sent out of balance, and he began to sweat profusely. Fundamentally speaking, anyone who was not Immortal could not tread among the stars.

“I have eighty percent of the power of a true Immortal. I can kill false Immortals as easily as turning over my hand, and I’m actually comparable to a 40-meridian Immortal. Plus, my fleshly body is incredibly powerful. Therefore... I can rely on myself to fly through the stars!

“Although my speed might not be that great, I can still do it safely!” He lightly tapped the shuttle, sending it flying off in another direction, and splattered some blood onto it at the same time, which instantly transformed into a crude Blood Clone that could not wield divine abilities.

The flying shuttle speedily drifted off into the distance carrying his Blood Clone.

With that, Meng Hao turned into a beam of light that shot off into the distance.

Chapter 890: Battling Formidable Opponents!

Traveling through this endless void was different than traveling through the Ruins of Immortality. Here, Meng Hao had experienced an intense sensation of weightlessness. Here, things were different.

However, with his cultivation base, Meng Hao was able to quickly adjust and find his center of gravity, then was able to right himself and proceed along stably.

“So, I really can travel among the stars with this cultivation base,” he thought, his eyes glittering. He could not breathe, but to cultivators, merely rotating their cultivation base was enough. He did not need anything from outside his own body to sustain himself.

He tapped his bag of holding to produce the jade slip his father had given him. After scanning it with divine sense, he quickly pulled up the map, and found Planet East Victory. When he found his own location and compared the distance between the two, he realized... that although it didn’t look too far away, his current location was actually incredibly remote.

He muttered to himself for a moment, then put the jade slip away and continued speeding along. As he traveled, he would frequently unleash magical techniques and divine abilities, all to get more used to magical combat among the stars.

Several days later, as he proceeded along, his face suddenly flickered. He had just sensed that the Blood Clone he had left in the flying shuttle had disappeared.

“So, they were targeting me after all!” he thought. His eyes flickered with the desire to kill.

At the same time, in another location in the starry sky, two black-robed men hovered there, frowning. They wore the same type of clothing as that which had been worn by the black-robed men from earlier, although they were clearly not among the ten who had already shown their faces.

In front of them was the wreckage of the flying shuttle. Moments ago, a body could be seen inside the shuttle, but it had vanished, leaving behind only a spatter of blood, which then turned into a mist and faded away.

“What a cunning little son of a bitch,” said one of the men. “I never thought someone so young could be such a profound schemer. He’s really playing it careful.”

“He’s just a Spirit Realm cultivator,” replied the other. “Even if he’s comparable to a false Immortal, with forty or fifty percent of the power of a true Immortal, he won’t be able to get very far. It will be very difficult for him to travel through the starry sky. Let’s split up and look for him. There’s still time to track him down!”

After exchanging a glance, the two men split up and began to search in two different directions with their divine sense.

Each of these men was at the peak of the Immortal Realm. However, they were incapable of opening 80 meridians, and in fact only had 70 or so. That made them stage 7 Immortals, which was their apex .

Meng Hao’s face was grim as he sped along. As he grew more familiar with the starry sky, his speed increased. Soon, there was little difference between this type of travel and moving about on a planet.

Anyone else would be incapable of achieving something like that. However, based on all the things Meng Hao had experienced, he was naturally able to quickly adapt.

“I’m not sure how they managed to interrupt the teleportation process in the first place,” thought Meng Hao, “but it shows that they’re clearly very powerful.

“If 19th Uncle hadn’t unleashed his divine ability, they might have just tried to pin him down, then go after their true target, me!

“Who is it exactly that wants to kill me?” Meng Hao frowned, killing intent flickering in his eyes.

“Could it be those Chosen that I crushed back then on South Heaven? Or was my identity as Fang Mu revealed?

“There’s also another possibility, that the enemy tracked down and destroyed the flying shuttle to simply get rid of witnesses. Maybe they weren’t targeting me.” There was really no way for Meng Hao to be sure, but there was also one other guess as to the enemy’s motives that he had contemplated in silence...but it was an answer that he didn’t dare to lightly consider, and instead, focused on continuing forward at top speed.

Seven days passed, during which time the black-robed men continued to thoroughly search the area. Another black-robed cultivator arrived, making a total of three. Despite their combined efforts, there were no results.

Finally, they met back together to confer.

“Dammit! Did the kid grow wings and fly away? There’s no sign of him anywhere!”

“Maybe he has a magical item that allows him to survive for long periods out in the stars. Let’s widen the area of our search. We absolutely must track him down and kill him!”

“Once we find the son of a bitch, he’s dead for sure!”

The three headed off in different directions to carry out a wider search.

One of them ended up searching the area where Meng Hao actually was.

A few days later, Meng Hao was speeding along when suddenly, his face fell. An intense killing intent exploded out from behind him, and he turned to find a black-robed cultivator closing in on him through the void.

The black-robed man was expressionless, and a flicker of ridicule could be seen within his cold eyes. Before he even got close, his voice echoed out.

“We underestimated you,” he said. “Never thought you could get this far.” As he closed in, the power of a stage seven Immortal exploded out, and a huge statue appeared behind him.

The statue was 21,000 meters tall, and pitch black. It was fearsome in appearance, and looked absolutely nothing like the black-robed man.

He wasn't a true Immortal, but a false Immortal. However, even a false Immortal who had reached the seventh stage, and opened 70 meridians, possessed shocking energy that would pose quite a bit of difficulty for Meng Hao.

Meng Hao's eyes flickered, and his expression was one of alarm and terror as he edged backward.

“W-what do you want?!” he cried out loudly, his voice quavering. “I'm from the Fang Clan! My father is Fang Xiufeng! How dare you try to kill me!!” It was almost impossible to see in his eyes that he was actually gauging the distance between him and his opponent.

The black-robed man grinned viciously. He didn't respond, but instead got closer, raising his right hand into the air. The eyes of the statue behind him glittered, and it sent its massive hand out toward Meng Hao, clearly intending to crush him to death in a single blow.

Meng Hao stood in place as if he were scared stiff, allowing the huge palm to fall down toward him. At the same time, the black-robed man continued to get closer. He was now less than three hundred meters away.

In that instant, Meng Hao's eyes flickered with killing intent. Three hundred meters was close enough for him to unleash some of his divine abilities. He stretched out his right hand and pointed toward his opponent. Instantly, the Eighth Demon Sealing Hex was unleashed. The starry sky distorted, and the black-robed man was suddenly locked in place.

Blood began to ooze out of Meng Hao's eyes, ears, nose, and mouth, a result of the backlash caused by using this Hex on someone whose cultivation base vastly exceeded his own. However, no look of pain could be seen in his expression, only the desire to kill. His expression grew more and more fierce.

In the same moment that his opponent was locked in place, Meng Hao waved his sleeve. A black beam flew out, along with a astonishing energy, as the crocodile appeared. Shockingly, the crocodile was also comparable to a stage seven Immortal, and as soon as it appeared, it swished its tail. A boom could be heard as the black-robed man's eyes went wide and blood sprayed from his mouth. Because he was so close to Meng Hao, there was no way for him to dodge. He had no choice but to take the blow straight on and then shoot backward in retreat. The enraged crocodile pounced on him, and they began to fight back and forth.

"Dammit!" said the black-robed man, his face pale. He now realized that he had underestimated his opponent, and had been fooled. The battle hadn't even started, and he was injured, causing his killing intent to boil. He was just about to make an attack, when Meng Hao waved his hand out in a claw-like gesture. Immediately a long spear appeared that had a haft made from the World Tree, and a bone spearhead. Even as he hefted it, his Dharma Idol appeared behind him, and his cultivation base exploded out. Now was not the time to hold back, so in the blink of an eye, his Dharma Idol grew to 12,000 meters.

As soon as the Dharma Idol appeared, the black-robed man's face flickered with disbelief. According to the report he had received, his opponent only had power equivalent to thirty or perhaps fifty percent of that of a true Immortal. However, he was now obviously facing a stage four Immortal, which was especially shocking considering his target... was clearly not in the Immortal Realm.

"No wonder his majesty ordered this kid dead. He's incredibly discerning and cunning, and has a Heaven-defying cultivation base! He can't be left alive!" Astonishment filled the black-robed man's heart as Meng Hao closed in, killing intent glittering in his eyes. Behind him, his Dharma Idol barreled forward, and at the same time, the Mountain Consuming Incantation was unleashed, causing countless mountains to appear, which then linked together to form a mountain range that crushed down onto the black-robed man.

The black-robed man's face fell, and even as he prepared to fight back, the crocodile roared and lunged forward again. The already injured black-robed man was once again forced into retreat.

Rumbling could be heard, and blood poured out of his mouth. However, it was at this moment that a second black-robed man suddenly appeared, moving toward them at incredible speed. In the blink of an eye, he was upon them. A boom rang out from the shocked Meng Hao's chest as it instantly

caved in. He was sent tumbling backward like a kite with its string cut, blood spewing from his mouth.

It didn't matter that Meng Hao's cultivation base was so much lower than the second black-robed man; he attacked him with full power anyway. However, when the man caught sight of Meng Hao again, a look of surprise could be seen on his face.

"Not dead?" His body flickered into motion as he attacked Meng Hao once again.

Meng Hao's chest was wracked with intense pain, and blood flowed from his mouth continuously. His chest was a mangled mess, but his eyes overflowed with killing intent. His Eternal stratum was currently healing him, but even as it did, Meng Hao realized that a third black-robed man had appeared off in the distance.

"There are actually three of them!" he thought, an imperceptible flicker running through his eyes. Temporarily suppressing the restorative power of the Eternal stratum, he transformed into a golden roc to evade the second black-robed man. A boom rang out, and Meng Hao transformed back into human form, blood spraying from his mouth. The second black-robed man frowned and then shot toward Meng Hao once more, utilizing bizarre speed.

However, just when the man was almost upon him, he suddenly extended his right hand, within which appeared the Lightning Cauldron. Electricity danced, and rumbling echoed out as he vanished to switch places with the third black-robed man.

The sudden switch in position aggravated Meng Hao's wound, and blood sprayed from his mouth. As he back up anxiously, the third black-robed man's eyes lit with a bright light.

"Precious treasure!"

A gleam of greed could be seen in the second black-robed man's eyes as well. He and the third black-robed man employed the full explosive power of a stage seven Immortal at almost the same time. To them, Meng Hao was something that could easily be killed, and yet, even still, they employed all the power they could possibly muster, transforming into beams of light that shot toward Meng Hao in quick succession.

They looked like strings of light flashing through the air, like arrows that, in the blink of an eye, were only thirty meters away from Meng Hao.

“Die!” the second cultivator said coldly. The killing intent in Meng Hao’s eyes flickered, and suddenly, his body split in two as his second true self appeared. His second true self stepped forward and spread his hands wide to block, while Meng Hao’s true self backed up. Then, he slapped his bag of holding to produce a bronze lamp.

As soon as the bronze lamp appeared, a weak flame flickered inside, and a terrifying aura exploded out. The two black-robed men’s faces fell completely.