

## Three Realms 291

### Chapter 291: A Magnetic Storm

Just as the organizer had said, there wasn't much pressure from the magnetic golden mountain at first. Climbing was as effortless as climbing a regular mountain.

The magnetic field fluctuated slightly on the second floor, but its influence was negligible to a practitioner.

Jiang Chen surged to the third floor in one go.

The magnetic force on the third floor was noticeably stronger than the second floor, but it still wasn't enough to affect Jiang Chen's footsteps.

Of course, he wasn't the type to just heedlessly charge forward with brute force.

It would be an easy thing for Jiang Chen to break through to the fifth floor with his training of third level spirit realm.

After all, this was just the first selection, one that was geared towards ordinary practitioners. Its level of difficulty wouldn't be so hard that someone of the third level spirit realm wouldn't be able to pass it.

When he reached the fourth floor, Jiang Chen started seeing some who had charged forward too quickly and run out of strength. They sat on the steps of the fourth floor, planning on meditating to recover their strength.

Jiang Chen also sighed when he saw this.

"These fellows don't understand that haste does not bring success. This is the magnetic golden mountain. The longer one sits down to meditate, the greater the magnetic pull will become on one's body. To meditate on this mountain is to fall into a pit of their own digging."

Jiang Chen had studied magnetic golden mountains in his past life and knew the characteristics of such mountains.

Once caught in a mountain like this, one could never sit down and meditate because there was no spirit power for you to absorb.

How would you replenish the spirit qi in your body without any external source?

It wasn't that there was no spirit qi on the magnetic golden mountain, but in keeping with the name, the spirit qi had the magnetic force of the metal element and its great killing force embodied within it.

Unless one was a practitioner born with a natural affinity for the metal element, once a practitioner began absorbing the magnetic force of the metal element, it would be akin to absorbing sharp knives into one's spirit ocean. In the end, it was just a slow form of suicide.

"You there, keep moving if you don't want to die. To meditate on a magnetic golden mountain is absolutely courting death." Jiang Chen snorted coldly but still issued a voice of warning.

He didn't bother to see if they had listened, and went on his way.

He'd only spoken out of kindness. As for whether or not they listened to him, that wasn't something he could control.

If they didn't listen to his warning and ended up with a face full of ashes or even lost their lives, it would be their own fault.

Jiang Chen's footsteps flitted lightly as he proceeded at an even pace to the fifth floor.

The fifth floor was a line of demarcation.

Reaching the fifth level meant one had passed the third trial.

Although thirty to forty thousand people were participating in this trial together on the magnetic golden mountain, he hadn't run into many of them.

All of the participants had been deposited on different areas and regions, scattered on every corner of the mountain.

On the fifth floor, Jiang Chen could clearly feel that the restraining force of the mountain had suddenly multiplied.

"The fifth level is indeed different from the previous floors. If one isn't at the level of a true qi master when they arrive at the fifth floor, they would likely be unable to continue the challenge."

However, since he made it to the fifth floor, he'd passed.

"The organizer said that some fortuitous occurrences would occur at the peak of each floor starting from the fifth, like a lottery. Shall I go try my luck now that I've passed the fifth floor?"

Thoughts raced through Jiang Chen's mind. There was a ten day limit to each trial anyways. He was in no hurry.

He took a spin around the peak of the fifth floor. With Jiang Chen's dao heart, he could deploy both God's Eye and Psychic's Head at the same time. Nothing was concealed to his perceptions.

However, Jiang Chen almost splurged out in laughter after he'd taken a look around.

The organizer had spoken the truth. The encounters and items on the peak of the fifth floor were indeed rare and valuable for ordinary practitioners.

However, with Jiang Chen's current level of training and breadth of vision, these items were useless to him. He didn't even have the desire to stretch out his hand.

"Forget it, let's leave these items to those in need of them."

There were precious few opportunities for secular practitioners to advance. These items were all undoubtedly priceless to them, and treasures that they could never have too many of. If utilized properly, they would truly have the ability to change their fate.

Jiang Chen wasn't the sort to take all the advantages for himself. Since he couldn't use any of these, why fight the ordinary practitioners for them?

He naturally couldn't be bothered to do something that harmed others and didn't benefit himself.

Jiang Chen arrived at the sixth floor in the span of a moment.

The magnetic force had become even stronger at this floor. The very air seemed to be inundated with sharpened needles.

The currents of the air seemed to pierce the skin.

Jiang Chen knew that this was a manifestation of magnetic force. However, to a third level spirit realm practitioner like Jiang Chen, this kind of discomfort was as effective as a gentle rain.

What Jiang Chen hadn't foreseen was the number of practitioners that had already arrived at the sixth floor.

He smiled wryly in his heart, "Although the organizer had continuously emphasized not to charge too hard, these ordinary disciples seem to be quite confident in themselves."

Jiang Chen naturally had no desire to contend with them for anything.

He had his own plan. This was a long race, and those in front may not necessarily be the ones who made it to the finish line.

He wanted to proceed at his own tempo and not be affected by the outside world.

Those who had made it to the sixth floor were, at minimum, all true qi masters.

When he arrived at the peak, he discovered that several geniuses were conducting a carpet style search of the place.

It was obvious that these fellows had tasted some of the sweet fruits of victory on the fifth level and so were even more enthusiastic in this level in the hope of receiving more fortuitous encounters.

Jiang Chen took a casual look around. The treasures of the sixth floor were indeed on another level compared to the fifth.

However, they were still mostly suited for true qi masters, with some also useful for half step spirit realm practitioners.

In Jiang Chen's eyes though, these items still weren't worthy of his notice. They were definitely not worthy of Jiang Chen reaching out to pick them up.

Some other spirit realm practitioners seemed to have come to a similar conclusion.

They didn't deign to linger in the sixth floor after casting an eye around, and instead made for the seventh floor.

Those that had the right to make for the seventh floor were all of the spirit realm.

A half step spirit realm could make it into the seventh floor, but they would need to make an extraordinary effort.

Therefore, when they made it to the seventh floor, the regard with which the geniuses held each other became complicated.

There was some wariness, some caution, and even some enmity.

After all, the ones who had made to the seventh floor were well aware that they were each other's greatest competition.

Since they were competition, it was a normal thing for them to stay guarded around each other.

Jiang Chen could also feel some gazes with traces of enmity and provocation coming his way. Apparently, even with his efforts at keeping a low profile, he had still elicited some attention by making it to the seventh floor.

It was a good thing that participants knew nothing about each other, and that no one knew of how exemplary his performance in the previous two trials had been.

If they knew, they'd likely think twice before provoking Jiang Chen.

Of course, Jiang Chen wasn't the slightest bit bothered by these boring gazes. He was entirely contemptuous of such low level tricks.

Not to mention that they were restricted from attacking each other during the trials. If anyone broke this rule, they would be disqualified even if they had passed through the first selection. They would have no chance of making it into the second.

The speed of the air currents had become noticeably faster after making it to the seventh floor, and the prickling feeling of the air had increased as well.

Even Jiang Chen couldn't be as leisurely as he was before.

However, although his forward motion had been slightly impeded, this was still not enough to bring him to a halt.

After an hour, he'd arrived at the peak of the seventh floor.

Not many could make it to the peak. Across the ground, practitioners were scattered in twos and threes, all panting severely and seemingly quite weakened.

As Jiang Chen scrutinized these practitioners, he knew they had no strength left to challenge the eighth floor.

As Jiang Chen leisurely walked forward, another group of practitioners arrived with dragging, weary steps.

He still didn't touch the so-called treasures on the seventh floor.

When he arrived at the eighth floor, the air currents around him burst into a bedlam of discordant noise, one moment sounding like shining spears and armored horses, and the next the furious beat of battle drums. Intermittently, one could hear the cacophony of horns, or the long howls of ferocious beasts.

The ear piercing sounds drilled into his eardrums, accompanied by the feeling of blades in the air and a far stronger killing intent.

A twister several meters thick suddenly came into existence in the air, taking away one of the ordinary practitioners with it.

It appeared as though a fierce beast from ancient times had just swiped a person away with a tongue.

“Ah!!”

The person only had time to emit one ghastly scream before he vanished without a trace in the twister.

“A magnetic twister?” Jiang Chen’s thoughts raced as he suddenly recalled something frightening.

A magnetic twister was a strong twister on the magnetic golden mountain, a vortex formed after the metallic air currents had become randomly mixed up. It could be big or small and was incredibly frightening.

When the magnetic twister reached several meters wide, it was strong enough to engulf a practitioner of the small spirit realm.

The appearance of the magnetic twister would infinitely increase the difficulty of the mountain.

With the strength of this magnetic twister, even Jiang Chen couldn’t let down his guard.

He deployed Psychic’s Head again and continued climbing.

As savage the magnetic twister was, it wasn’t like it came without warning. He would greatly decrease the danger to himself as long as he avoided the eye of the twister.

Therefore, at the heart of it, it wasn’t about how to fight the twister, but how to evade it.

Chapter 292: Treasure of the Ninth Floor, the Thundercloud Tree

Thanks to his studies in his previous life, Jiang Chen knew some of the secrets of the magnetic gold mountain.

Therefore, he had a unique advantage when climbing up the mountain.

Although the magnetic twister was quite frightening, its appearance was usually accompanied by minute magnetic pulses. So as long as he made the correct judgment call and stayed alert, he would be able to avoid the eye of the twister.

As long as he evaded the twister, he wouldn’t have to worry about being churned to death.

Of course, if he had enough strength, he’d be able to completely ignore the twisters. But that was been another matter entirely.

With the level of magnetic twisters within the eight floor, earth spirit realm practitioners would still be able to break free if they were caught within.

With Jiang Chen’s level of training, he was confident he’d be able to struggle free of the twister if caught.

However, even though that was the case, it would still be an enormous drain on his spirit reserves if he did so, and Jiang Chen didn’t want to take the risk.

Jiang Chen had given up his pursuit of speed in favor of a sure and steady pace.

With that in mind, he spent a lot more time climbing the eighth floor of the magnetic gold mountain.

When Jiang Chen arrived at the peak, the number of practitioners that greeted his eyes could almost be counted on one hand.

Jiang Chen knew that if one didn't wasn't at the second or third level spirit realm, it would be exceedingly difficult for them to reach the peak of the eighth level.

"Things sure are different at the top. The quality of the treasures have been increasing with the increased numbers of steps found on each floor. Although the treasures on the eighth floor aren't enough to make my eyes redden with desire, they're decent enough."

Since they were finally decent enough, Jiang Chen didn't abstain any longer and began to unabashedly assess the area.

He didn't tarry long afterwards. The organizer had said that they couldn't spend more than two hours at the peak of any area, or they'd be disqualified immediately.

He started climbing the ninth floor without the slightest hesitation.

The air currents on the ninth floor were like actual knives and spears, flashing with light and shadows as they hurtled towards him.

In addition to the magnetic force that fettered one like a shapeless vine, it was impossible to completely lift one's foot.

Even Jiang Chen didn't dare take this floor lightly as he held the nameless saber in his hand for the first time.

He had to leverage the power of his weapon and cleave through the air to ensure that he could continue to advance.

Whoosh whoosh whoosh!

The nameless blade carved the way as it slashed through one minor twister after another as Jiang Chen continued to climb.

It was a good thing Jiang Chen had a deep understanding of the magnetic golden mountain.

When he put his blade techniques to use, he tried to meld with it the metal attribute potential within his spirit ocean.

In this regard, every step he took on the ninth floor was quite firm and resolute, as if he was moving against the current in the great ocean.

The magnetic golden mountain kept sending out attacks on the ninth floor, almost completely lacking a pattern. Danger lurked behind every corner and a new test filled every second.

Jiang Chen had felt he'd spent a lot of time on the eighth floor, but it was sheer heaven compared to the ninth level.

He didn't turn to look back, but used his peripheral vision to sweep his surroundings and discovered that there were no other practitioners moving forward.

"Did they all fail out of the ninth floor?"

Jiang Chen was also slightly surprised. He knew that premier geniuses were hard to come by amongst ordinary practitioners.

However, the four great sects had set up some sites in the mundane kingdoms and supported a lot of outer disciples. There were bound to be some geniuses amongst them.

Those outer disciples were also taking part in the first selection.

The disciples that Jiang Chen had met in the seventh and eighth floor had mostly been from the outer disciples of the sects.

Of course, Jiang Chen guessed that he wasn't the only one to make it to the ninth floor.

"Whatever, it means nothing to me whether someone else has made it here. My goal is to climb to the top and experience what it means to be the king of the hill, overlooking all the other minor peaks!"

Jiang Chen wasn't distracted as he continued climbing up the stairs.

Each floor had ten thousand steps, and he'd spent almost no effort to climb all ten thousand in the earlier levels.

But each step of this ninth floor was taken laboriously and arduously.

He spent a full day and weathered tests from countless magnetic twisters before setting foot onto the peak of the ninth floor.

"Hoo!"

There were no magnetic twisters at the peak of the ninth floor.

All was calm here, and he could finally take a break. However, he knew that the lack of a magnetic twister didn't signify the lack of a magnetic force.

This was the magnetic golden mountain after all. The restraining magnetic force was omnipresent.

The terrain was flat here, making for an ideal resting place.

But of course, Jiang Chen wouldn't waste time here. But this was the ninth floor, and according to his theory, the items here would be much better than those on the eighth floor.

If you were to say that the treasures on the eighth floor were just barely adequate, then those on the ninth floor may result in additional surprises!

"Mm? This is the Thundercloud Tree?" Jiang Chen's eyes suddenly snapped to a golden colored tree.

"This place actually has a Thundercloud Tree?" Jiang Chen began to recall what he knew about the tree.

The Thundercloud Tree had its place amongst the ranking of things beneath the heavens.

This particular one was likely only of medium to lesser quality. In the greater picture of things, no one would even pay attention to this tree if it grew by the side of the road.

After all, the experts beneath the heavens had seen too much, and a mere lesser Thundercloud Tree wasn't enough to capture their attention.

However, Jiang Chen was uncommonly surprised at this moment, as if he'd received a priceless treasure.

The Thundercloud Tree was one of the more useful metal attribute spirit trees. It had many uses, such as the ability to be forged as part of a divine weapon. Practitioners who walked the path of thunder and lightning would find this even more of a treasure, because it could attract thunder, and was curiously effective at that.

Attracting thunder was just one of its many uses.

Apart from that, the Thundercloud Tree could neutralize many poisons. Having a branch of it in hand made one almost impervious to ten thousand evils and immune to a hundred poisons.

Apart from this, metal attribute practitioners could even refine and absorb high level Thundercloud Trees to forge their own bodies.

If it was a divine rank Thundercloud Tree, once it was absorbed into the practitioner's tempered body, then the body could be labeled invincible.

No matter how many wondrous arts one had, a practitioner could never separate from their bodies.

Therefore, to body cultivators, the Thundercloud Tree was a priceless treasure.

A tempered body was more useful than any armor or external defense. This meant that one's own body was the pinnacle of defense. It was almost impossible for a practitioner on the same level to defeat an opponent possessing a tempered body.

Even if they were one or two levels ahead of their opponents, it was still an extremely difficult matter to destroy a tempered body. If one didn't have the aid of a divine treasure, fists and feet alone would be hard pressed to damage a tempered body.

Using the nameless blade in his hand, Jiang Chen used sixty percent of his strength to viciously chop down on the thickest branch of the Thundercloud Tree.

He too was quite excited about this tree. The branches and leaves were broad and full grown, and he wanted to take some for use in the future.

Clang!

A clear sound of impact rang out as Jiang Chen felt his hand go numb, with only a faint trace left on the tree.

The sharpness of the nameless blade and sixty percent of Jiang Chen's strength had only left a faint mark!

Even he was slightly surprised by this scene.



“I’ve heard that the Thundercloud Tree is so durable that it cannot be damaged. It looks like this is true!” Jiang Chen smiled wryly and looked at the edge of the nameless blade. It was a good thing that the quality of the blade looked to be on par with the Thundercloud Tree. It hadn’t been chipped at all. He was certainly in a quandary now.

He would likely have to expend tremendous strength to pick a branch of the Thundercloud Tree.

If Jiang Chen were to hack away like this with no thought to the cost, he’d have no problem cutting down two or three branches within the allotted time.

However, once he had used up all his strength here, what would he use to challenge the tenth floor?

Would he give up before he’d climbed up to the tenth floor?

This obviously wasn’t Jiang Chen’s style. Since he’d reincarnated, he hadn’t allowed himself to give up part way even once. The desire to challenge the tenth floor was far greater than his desire for the Thundercloud Tree.

“The Thundercloud Tree is precious, but this is only the peak of the ninth floor. If I can make it to the tenth floor and reach the peak of this magnetic golden mountain, then the treasure that awaits me there will surely be more valuable than this wood!”

Jiang Chen also warned himself that he couldn’t be blinded by the profit at hand.

Restraining his desire for the Thundercloud Tree, Jiang Chen was about to walk forward when he suddenly remembered something. He smacked his forehead, “How could I have forgotten? The Goldbiter Rats devour everything related to the metal attribute. This magnetic golden mountain is the best stage for them to display their talents!”

Jiang Chen’s eyes, gazing at the Thundercloud Tree, started to sparkle again.

He immediately took out the Millionditch Stonenest and let the Rat King out.

“Ole Gold, I need your help again. This magnetic golden mountain brings almost no pressure to you. Take a look at this Thundercloud Tree. Can you remove it, roots and all, within two hours?”

Jiang Chen’s appetite had grown with the aid of the Goldbiter Rats.

He’d only wanted two or three branches before, but was now thinking of uprooting it entirely.

The Goldbiter Rat looked around with shock, “This really is the magnetic golden mountain. This... this is a heaven for my Goldbiter Rats!”

“Don’t be touched, take a look at the Thundercloud Tree first.” Jiang Chen hastened to speak up in reminder when he saw the Rat King look around in stupefaction.

### [Sovereign of the Three Realms \(WN\)](#)

#### **Chapter 293: The Thundercloud Cicada**

The Rat King smiled diffidently after Jiang Chen’s reminder and he started circling the Thundercloud Tree. He grinned after a moment, “Young master, I can uproot this Thundercloud Tree in an hour. But it

won't be able to be replanted after it leaves the soil of the magnetic golden mountain. Are you sure you wish to dig it up by the roots?"

This question stumped Jiang Chen.

"Young master, this Thundercloud Tree is quite rare, and it may be a shame to dig it up by the roots. How about I pick some branches for you? It will be enough for your uses."

Jiang Chen smiled wryly, "Ole Gold, this doesn't seem like you. When did you have so much compassion?"

The Rat King smiled awkwardly "Young master Chen, I... sigh. I'll listen to you."

Jiang Chen spread out his hands. "Maybe, I won't be able to make it into this magnetic golden mountain in the future. Since the tree is right in front of me, this is my fortuitous occurrence. If I don't take it now, it may become my downfall in the future. Dig, dig it up by the roots!"

Jiang Chen hadn't touched any of the treasures on the previous floors because he didn't want to cheapen himself and fight with those ordinary practitioners for items he had no use for.

However, Jiang Chen could absolutely make use of this Thundercloud Tree. It had so many uses that he wouldn't naturally pass it by.

In the operations of the heavens, there was a reason behind every gesture and movement.

The Thundercloud Tree was here, and so was Jiang Chen. This meant that their fates were destined to intersect.

Jiang Chen knew full well that the laws of heaven operated according to their reasons and he naturally wouldn't pass up such a fantastic treasure.

The Rat King didn't protest after seeing Jiang Chen being so resolute. He cocked his head and then prepared to burrow into the ground. He planned on digging out the ground that the Thundercloud Tree stood on and thoroughly cut it off.

"Hold!"

A stiff voice sounded from atop the tree at this moment. It sounded very unpracticed, and it was using the ancient beast language.

The Rat King started and stopped his burrowing movements, turning and flashing up the tree with a curious speed.

Jiang Chen also lifted his head in surprise. He too could understand the ancient beast language.

Both he and the Rat King hadn't detected the presence of other life on this tree!

Flap, flap, flap.

The Rat King darted to and fro through the Thundercloud Tree, more agile than a monkey in its fluid movements.

“Hmm?” A golden streak of light suddenly shot out from the tree. Jiang Chen’s gaze followed the streak and he noticed a Cicada the size of a fist was dancing around frantically, flapping its gossamer wings.

“Thundercloud Cicada?” Information about this creature immediately popped into Jiang Chen’s mind.

This Thundercloud Cicada depended on the Thundercloud Tree for survival, so the tree was also called the Cicada Thundercloud Tree.

Due to their close relationship, the beetle was aptly named the Thundercloud Cicada after the tree.

The beetle was only the size of a fist, but it was obviously suffused with extremely abundant spirit power. Its intelligence had already reached the level of being able to speak the ancient beast language.

Although Jiang Chen knew that the Cicada was an exceedingly intelligent being, the fact that it could speak the ancient beast language meant that its bloodline was absolutely not that inferior.

A Cicada with an inferior bloodline would not be able to speak the ancient beast language at all.

The Rat King narrowed his eyes and he looked covetously at the flapping wings in the air, greed written all over his face.

It was obvious that this Cicada had a noble bloodline, giving the Rat King a heretofore unprecedented urge to feed.

It was obvious that although the beetle possessed a noble bloodline, its level of training was nowhere near the Rat King’s.

The Thundercloud Cicada wasn’t a type of creature that was skilled at battling.

However, it had a great reputation in the world not only because it possessed many of the advantages that the Thundercloud Tree possessed, but also many of the positives that it didn’t have.

The golden exoskeleton of the beetle could be used to craft battle armor. This armor was no ordinary armor, it was one that would make the wearer invisible.

The beetle had another stratagem especially for escaping. For practitioners, this meant that if they assimilated a Thundercloud Cicada, they would gain an additional art that would save their lives.

Once the beetle’s art was deployed, it could befuddle many. If a spirit realm practitioner practiced the beetle’s art and utilized it well, he would be able to outwit even an origin realm practitioner!

At the heart of it, the Cicada’s stratagem was an art on how to pretend to be dead, and using a fake death to allow one’s true body to escape and confuse the enemy at the same time.

The Rat King of course wasn’t paying attention to the Cicada’s art. In actuality, the Goldbiter Rats’ methods of escape wouldn’t be any inferior to the Cicada.

What it cared more about was the Cicada’s bloodline, which was a noble bloodline.

If he swallowed it, then it might be an undeterminable catalyst for the evolution of the Rat King’s bloodline.

In this moment, the Rat King's mind was filled with only thoughts of devourment, feeding, devourment, and feeding!

"Young master Chen, can I have this Cicada?" Although the urge to feed was topmost in the Rat King's mind, he was still well aware that he needed to obtain Jiang Chen's permission first.

"Old King, what are you in a hurry for? This Cicada understands the ancient beast language and it possesses a noble bloodline. It would be a waste if you devoured it." Jiang Chen wasn't the type to not share in the wealth with those below him, but he wasn't willing for the Cicada to be swallowed just like that.

The Rat King was depressed, "Young master, this beetle's bloodline is pure. If I devour it, then it may stimulate the evolution of my bloodline! You promised me..."

"Ole Gold, the evolution of your bloodline was indeed our agreement, but this Cicada is not yet your food. Not to mention that although you have the methods to enter the dirt, you aren't omnipotent. It'd be difficult for you to catch this beetle."

The Cicada had hovered nearby all this time, its eyes darting around intelligently, seeming to be listening to Jiang Chen and the Rat King's words.

The Cicada was extremely surprised to see a human speaking the ancient beast language.

"Human... thank you." The Cicada's voice was like a shy girl's, marked with a few traces of shyness and hesitation.

It had obviously heard the conversation between Jiang Chen and the Rat King, knowing that it had been this human who had prevented the Rat King from carrying out his nefarious intentions.

"You don't need to thank me. I don't have to kill you, but you have to make it worth my while." Jiang Chen faintly said.

The Rat King was skilled at burrowing through the ground and so he didn't have many skills in taking down the beetle, but that didn't mean that Jiang Chen had no tricks up his sleeve.

The Bewitching Lotus of Fire and Ice was the best weapon for an ambush.

However, he didn't want to take that step yet.

The beetle looked frightfully at Jiang Chen, "What... what can I do?"

It had obviously been a short while since the Cicada's heritage had awoken. It could speak the ancient beast language alright, but it spoke rather stiffly and stiltedly.

"What can you do?" Jiang Chen smiled. "What do you think that you can do that will make it worth it for us to allow you to live?"

"I... I don't know either." The Cicada was a bit lost, but it immediately said proudly, "It won't be that easy for you to capture me on this magnetic golden mountain either!"

"I don't need to capture you. I just need to dig up this Thundercloud Tree by the roots and leave you no resting place. You'll be dead without a doubt then!"

These words were obviously very useful as they hit upon the Cicada's weaknesses in one go.

"Don't... don't... don't do that human. I... know that you're not a ruthless and cruel person. I... can tell you a great secret!"

"A great secret?" Jiang Chen smiled. "You were born on this mountain and you don't even know how big the outside world is. What secrets can you speak of?"

The little Cicada grew anxious. "The secret I speak of has to do with this mountain!"

"Oh?"

"I'll tell you as long... as long as you swear not to capture me or destroy the tree. You and that dirty rat both have to swear to the heavens!"

The Rat King growled lowly, obviously greatly dissatisfied with the beetle's terminology of "dirty rat".

"Swear to the heavens?" Jiang Chen lightly stroked his chin and revealed a meaningful smile. "I don't think any sort of secret is worth more than a Cicada and a Thundercloud Tree."

"No, that's not all!" The Cicada hastily cried out. "This secret is absolutely worth more. It will give you the chance to refine the entire magnetic golden mountain! Would you say that this is valuable or not? At that time, whether it's the Thundercloud Tree or myself, we'll all be yours. Everything on this mountain will be yours!"

"What?! Refine the mountain?" Jiang Chen's face changed slightly.

The Rat King snorted coldly in successive times. "You're going crazy in your desire to live, aren't you? How is it remotely possible to refine a magnetic golden mountain?"

The Rat King plainly didn't believe the beetle.

However, Jiang Chen's facial expression grew grave. His knowledge of the mountain wasn't something that the Rat King could aspire to.

In the ancient times, a magnetic golden mountain was indeed a treasure that many great experts refined. The mountains could be large to the point of covering the heavens, or as small as a speck of dust.

In the greater plane of existence, there were external experts that no one dared to offend and they all had magnetic golden mountains.

After all, the might of one of these mountains was simply too frightening when it was refined into a treasure.

The level of this mountain was obviously far inferior to those held by the great experts, but if he could refine it into a treasure, it truly was much more valuable than any Thundercloud Tree or Thundercloud Cicada. Much, much more valuable!

"Human, think about it. I can tell you that in order to refine the mountain, not only is strength needed, so is a bit of technique. I just so happen to know this secret, and it lies on the tenth floor of the mountain."

One had to say that the the Cicada's words were quite, quite tempting.

With his knowledge of the mountain, if he could refine it, then that would greatly increase his advantages. Even if he met a sky spirit realm practitioner, he'd be able to face them head on if he brought out the mountain.

It wasn't an advantage that some sticks from the Thundercloud Tree could bring him.

"Young master Chen, don't you listen to its bullshit!" The Rat King had been with Jiang Chen for a long time and he knew that he was a bit swayed when he saw Jiang Chen's expression. The Rat King hastily called out in his haste.

"Little cicada, what if this secret you speak of is fabricated?" Jiang Chen coldly asked.

"It won't be! I can also swear to the heavens that if I speak false, I am willing to become your food!"

The Cicada was likewise panicked and hurriedly explained.

Chapter 294: Marching Onto the Tenth Floor!

Jiang Chen possessed unusual strength of heart, given his level of training in Boulder Heart. Thus, he could tell that the beetle didn't seem to be lying from its expression and words.

Once the notion of refining the magnetic golden mountain began to bud within Jiang Chen's heart, it became unstoppable.

"Ole Gold, since I promised you that I'd aid you in evolving your bloodline, I'll surely continue to try my best. However, you can't have this golden beetle today."

Jiang Chen turned his head and said to the Rat King.

The Rat King sighed in resignation. He knew that the fate of his tribe depended entirely on Jiang Chen.

If he didn't have Jiang Chen's help, he'd be unable to change the fate of his tribe, even though he was the king. Therefore, he had to listen to Jiang Chen.

He also knew that Jiang Chen was a man of his word. Since he'd promised to help them evolve their bloodline, he'd definitely do what he'd promised.

"Young master, I'll do whatever you want, so long as you remember that the fate of the entire tribe of Goldbiter Rats rests in your hands. Besides, I wouldn't have been able to capture this beetle without the young master's help."

Although the Rat King was a bit reluctant, it still recognized the situation that it was in, and made the painful decision.

"Alright then, little golden beetle, I now swear to the heavens that, so long as your secret is of value, I won't make a move against this Thundercloud Tree, or you."

He smiled at the golden beetle and swore another oath immediately afterwards. "May I be executed by heaven and destroyed by earth if I break my word."

“Mm. You’re not as capricious or as slippery as other humans I’ve met. Alright, I’ll tell you the secret of the magnetic golden mountain.”

“According to my inherited memories, this magnetic golden mountain should be a treasure from ancient times. Whoever makes it to the peak of the tenth floor will have a chance to refine this mountain. However, there are many conditions needed to refine the mountain, the most important of which are to pass the tests on the tenth floor.”

“Tests?”

“Yes, the tenth floor is different from all nine floors before it. There’ll be more tests than strong magnetic storms. When you pass the tests, you’ll gain the chance to refine the mountain for your own use, but only if you’re able to find the magnetic heart, and refine it within two hours.”

“The magnetic heart?” Jiang Chen’s eyes darted around. “Where is this magnetic heart located?”

The little beetle shook its head. “I don’t have any memories of where the magnetic heart is located either. I only know that the Lord of the Golden Seal has the magnetic heart. The only way you can obtain it is if you defeat the lord.”

Jiang Chen knew a lot about the magnetic golden mountain and knew that each mountain would have different characteristics based on its master’s preferences.

As for this Lord of the Golden Seal, although he didn’t know what it was, he knew that it was surely a strong spirit that’d been nurtured with the magnetic golden mountain’s essence, and was the ultimate protector of this place.

“What level of strength does the Lord of the Golden Seal have?”

If the lord’s strength was mediocre, then he could give it a try. But if it’s strength was so much that he had no chance against it, then he’d likely be quick to give up on this idea.

This kind of spirit had no human emotions at all, and wouldn’t listen to reason when it started to act wildly.

Although Jiang Chen wanted to refine the magnetic golden mountain, he knew that there was no point in them going towards it like moths to a flame.

“I’m not sure what level of strength the Lord of the Golden Seal has. If I recall correctly, the strength of the lord is dependent on the mountain’s spirit activity. If you happen to run into it at a time in which the mountain is erupting, then no one will be able to pinpoint how strong the lord is. If there aren’t great ripples in the strength of the mountain’s force, then the lord won’t be too strong, even if it is awake.”

The little beetle’s words strongly reminded Jiang Chen of something.

“That’s right, this mountain was once used as a testing ground in ancient times. Since this mountain belonged to an ancient mountain, it definitely won’t be subpar. If an origin realm practitioner came to this mountain, and stimulated this magnetic spirit power, then the result would surely be stronger than the level that’d occur if it were stimulated by us—ordinary practitioners. The stronger the stimulated spirit power, the more awake the lord will be. So the interesting aspect of the mountain is that it

becomes stronger when it meets the strong, but weaker when it meets the weak. Is it that it's testing the practitioner's potential, not his actual level of strength or combat experience...?"

Jiang Chen finally understood things and was delighted. "If this mountain grows stronger as its opponents grow stronger, then although many practitioners have arrived this time, because they've all confined their activities to below the fifth level, they haven't given rise to too much magnetic activity. If this is the case, doesn't that mean that even if the lord on the tenth floor has awoken, his strength will still be at a tolerable level?"

Jiang Chen had some more thoughts as he contemplated the magnetic heart.

"To hell with it all! With great risk comes great reward. I can't stay on the ninth floor much longer. The testing period runs for ten days, and the first nine floors used up at least three of those. That means I only have seven days to conquer the tenth floor."

"If the Lord of the Golden Seal is truly that mighty, then I'll retreat immediately. However, I won't give up as long as a strand of hope remains." Jiang Chen made up his mind.

The temptation that the mountain offered was obviously much greater than that of the Thundercloud Tree and Golden Beetle.

Not to mention the fact that these two were part of the mountain. If he managed to refine the mountain, then they'd naturally become his!

And of course, since Jiang Chen had promised that he wouldn't kill the golden beetle, he naturally wouldn't go back on his word.

The light of enthusiasm shone within Jiang Chen's eyes as he looked towards the Rat King. "Ole Gold, are you interested in braving the tenth floor with me? You're like a fish in water on this magnetic golden mountain."

The Rat King chuckled, "Don't you go provoking me young master. I'm gonna say this first—you have to think of me if there happens to be anything good on the tenth floor!"

Jiang Chen smiled, "Don't you worry, you'll share in the profits."

The Rat King's eyes creased in a smile, and he charged up to the tenth floor like a flash of lightning, murmuring, "I'll scout ahead."

The Goldbiter Rats were normally timid and cautious, but just as Jiang Chen had said, the Rat King was like a fish in water whilst on this mountain.

In an environment such as the magnetic golden mountain, the Goldbiter Rat's abilities were greatly enhanced.

Therefore, the Goldbiter Rats wouldn't even be afraid of an origin realm practitioner whilst on this mountain!

Origin realm practitioners would be restrained by the force from the mountain, while the opposite was the case for the Goldbiter Rats.



Not to mention the fact that the Rat King truly wanted to help Jiang Chen refine the mountain.

Once Jiang Chen made this mountain his own, in the future, his Goldbiter Rats would have an even more appropriate home. It was better than always hiding away in their nest, stored within Jiang Chen's space ring.

An environment like the magnetic golden mountain would be of utmost benefit to both the growth and evolution of the Goldbiter Rats.

Jiang Chen didn't hesitate either, dashing up to the tenth floor when he saw the Rat King streak forward.

The little golden beetle heaved a long sigh of relief as he watched Jiang Chen and the Rat King disappear.

"That human was quite strange... and he understands the ancient beast language? He... he actually really wants to refine the mountain? However, if it's refined by him, then won't he become the mountain's master, and therefore my master in turn?"

The little beetle's consciousness had awakened not too long ago, and so apart from instinct, it relied on the memories within its heritage to think.

Therefore, its thoughts towards the outside world were quite simple and naive.

Jiang Chen had long since been mentally prepared regarding the tenth floor, but when he actually set foot on it, he discovered that the tenth floor was indeed quite different from the previous nine.

If it wasn't for the fact that he was seeing it with his own eyes, Jiang Chen would've almost suspected that he'd arrived back in the outside world.

There was no end to the verdant forest. All of it was as a beautiful, green ocean.

Stone stairs stretched out endlessly through the forest, forming a winding path amidst a secluded place with no end in sight.

"Is this... is this really the tenth floor?"

If it wasn't for the stairs giving off the same feeling as before, Jiang Chen would've absolutely suspected that he'd left the mountain.

"Mm, can't get careless. This mountain was refined by an ancient expert, thus it's normal for all sorts of scenes to appear. If I'm mesmerized by the scene at hand, then there might be another magnetic storm that churns me away the next second!"

Jiang Chen followed the steps, and continued climbing upwards.

He'd climbed three, four thousand steps before too long.

There were ten thousand steps on each floor, yet he'd climbed between three and four thousand steps in one go, and hadn't met any obstacles at all.

There were faint magnetic pulses in the air, however the feeling was the same as what he'd felt in the first three floors—so faint that it was almost negligible.

It was also a good thing. These faint pulses reminded him to never be off-guard while he was in the magnetic golden mountain.

A terrace appeared about a third of the way up.

The terrace was several hundred acres wide, like a big courtyard. However, there was an enormous statue that stood proudly and aloofly in the middle of the courtyard.

Some humanoid sculptures were also scattered randomly around the statue. Each of them seemed almost lifelike in appearance, as if they'd been built according to actual, human proportions. Their features stood out amidst the flowing lines of their clothes and their accessories. Their gestures and expressions were also incredibly vivid.

The situation seemed to be one where real people had simply fallen asleep whilst standing up, and that a single crack of thunder would be able to wake them all up.

"These sculptures are incredibly lifelike!" Jiang Chen felt that things were slightly odd. Ever since he'd set foot on the terrace, a strange feeling had risen in his chest.

The sculptures were all standing on the terrace in twos and threes, following no particular pattern, as if they were pedestrians rushing to and fro on the streets.

However, Jiang Chen quickly discovered an area of commonality, in that all of the sculpture's heads were slightly lifted and looking in the same direction.

It seemed as if all of their attention had been caught by the same thing in the moment that time had frozen them.

Jiang Chen followed their gazes, and noticed that they were all focused on the eyes of the giant statue.

Suddenly, the giant statue's eyes seemed to blink.

"Eh?" An extremely ominous feeling suddenly rose in Jiang Chen's heart.

Chapter 295: Danger Lurks All Around

Just as the sense of danger enveloped him, the enormous statue's eyes suddenly opened, and a frightening beam of light shot towards him with no forewarning.

In that critical moment, Jiang Chen closed his eyes and the Boulder's Heart formed a layer of protection around his consciousness.

The beam of light shot straight into his eyes and attempted to pierce his consciousness through the eyes.

The mental defenses of the Boulder's Heart blocked this beam of light.

Jiang Chen felt his consciousness waver strongly as it was almost shattered by this blow. His muscles tightened in response, and the feeling arose like he was about to freeze spontaneously.

"This is bad!"

The ominous feeling grew even stronger in Jiang Chen's mind as he restrained that feeling of horrified fright in his heart, picked up his feet, and ran frantically forward.

He knew that he couldn't spend even a second longer in this place.

The beam of light shot out from the statue's eyes was enough to pierce through a soul, attack it directly, and then completely turn the person into metal and thus into a humanoid sculpture!

Jiang Chen was now a hundred percent certain that those humanoid sculptures weren't poured out of metal at all, but candidates who had once appeared on the tenth floor.

It might have been decades ago, or hundreds of years ago, or even thousands of years ago.

The legacy realm of ancient times had seen generations upon generations of people, and countless numbers must've braved the magnetic golden mountain as well.

Those randomly scattered sculptures were definitely practitioners who had once passed by here and hadn't been on their guard against the metallic eyes of this statue.

This was simply too frightening.

Jiang Chen ran up a few hundred steps in one go, slowing down only when he was far, far away from the statue.

He was still a bit frightened when he thought of what had just happened.

If his reaction had been a little slower just now, or the defenses of the Boulder's Heart a tad bit weaker, then he would've surely joined the ranks of the sculptures.

Even with the speed of his reaction and the Boulder's Heart defending against the majority of the light beam attack, that attack had been enough to make him suddenly feel like his body had been poured full of lead, his muscles immediately stiffening as well.

There had likely been less than five percent of the original strength left in the light beam attack after it had broken through the defenses of the Boulder's Heart. This less than five percent had been enough to almost hold him in place! This frightening might was enough to cause cold sweat to pour from Jiang Chen's body.

He kept circulating the fire spirit power from the Lotus within his body, slowly refining the remnants of the metallic beam attack in his body.

Of the five elements, the fire of the south was the antithesis of the metal of the west. The power of fire was a natural check on the power of metal.

Beneath the refinement of the fire Lotus, the slight bit of metal power that had stolen into his body was slowly cleaned up and Jiang Chen's body slowly recovered itself.

"The beauty of the tenth floor was just a temptation alright. Although it's not as frightening as the magnetic storm, but the evil golden eyes of the statue is more terrifying than any magnetic storm."

Jiang Chen's heart still palpitated in fright.

There was at least a warning to the magnetic storm as there were always some warnings before the twister formed.

However, this evil eye was completely perverse. Its eyes had suddenly opened and the beam had shot into his soul. The speed of that attack had been as fast as light and caught him completely off guard.

If it hadn't been for Jiang Chen training the Boulder's Heart to the level of being able to deploy it with one heartbeat, that evil gaze likely would've invaded his soul and turned him into a sculpture.

Frightening. All too frightening.

To count the steps, he'd walked precisely one third of the three thousand steps in front of him.

"Can it be that there are three tests on the tenth floor, and that the evil golden eye of the status is just the first?"

Jiang Chen postulated and felt that this was very likely.

If this truly was the case, then the path up to the second test would be relatively safe.

Indeed, things were as Jiang Chen had calculated. Nothing much happened to him between three thousand and six thousand steps.

"It looks like the meaning behind the tests of the tenth floor is more deliberate than the previous nine floors. Those on the previous nine floors were all random, but there are noticeable signs of the tests being planned on the tenth floor. Therefore, what will be the second test?"

Jiang Chen also knew that there was no way back now that he had made it this far.

He walked up all six thousand steps and had neared two thirds of the way according to his mental calculations.

If things really were as he'd simulated, then he wasn't too far from where the second test was.

Jiang Chen's gaze suddenly froze as soon as he followed this thought through to the end.

There was a large ravine in front of him. It was as if an ancient god from the heavens had lifted a giant axe and viciously carved it into the mountain.

This long ravine was like an enormous scar on the side of the mountain. Grotesquely shaped rocks were at the bottom, giving rise to awe to onlookers as soon as they'd taken a look.

Jiang Chen stood in front of the ravine and looked outwards. If this was the outside world, a third level spirit realm practitioner could fly for short periods of time and could make it past this ravine.

However, thanks to the restraining force of the mountain, Jiang Chen estimated that he'd have to split his trip into three, four trips before he could fly over the ravine.

But, grotesquely shaped rocks dotted the surface of the ravine and there was no place he could push off from at all.

"Can this be the second test?" Awe grew in Jiang Chen's heart as he looked at the intersecting rocks beneath him.

If this ravine was the second test, then all would absolutely not be as calm as it appeared on the surface. This calm could be harboring an exceedingly frightening test.

“Who cares about all this, time waits for no one.” Jiang Chen’s thoughts moved as he immediately called upon six vines of the fire Lotus, forming a bridge over the ravine.

Since there was no bridge on the two sides of the ravine, Jiang Chen planned on using the Lotus to form a temporary bridge.

He needed to leap three or four times to clear this ravine. His lotuses would help him push off six times. That would be more than enough if he didn’t run into any accidents.

The Rat King wasn’t as unbridled as before at this moment and also hopped onto the first fire lotus with Jiang Chen.

Whoosh, whoosh.

His figure cutting through the air, Jiang Chen landed on the second lotus with another leap. The enormous size of the petals was enough to accommodate several adults, so it was more than enough to support Jiang Chen.

One of the grotesque rocks below suddenly moved and emitted a sharp sound.

That sharp sound suddenly broke through the peace of the ravine, and all the rocks started moving, as if ancient creatures awakening from their slumber.

Their bodies twisted as they transformed into different beings, surging upwards from the bottom.

Although these beings all looked different, all of them were shaped like weapons, exuding a frightening intent to kill.

“Kill him, kill him!”

“How can a human blaspheme the magnetic golden mountain?! Kill!!”

“It’s been a long time since a human has barged into the tenth floor, kill! Kill! Kill!!”

The golden monsters all shrieked and shrilled with stilted language. Those were the cries of wild beats and were extremely irritating to the ear.

Whoosh, whoosh, whoosh!

Countless numbers of grotesque rocks squirreled out of the ravine and transformed themselves into weapon shaped monsters with a shake of their bodies, surging straight to Jiang Chen with extreme ferocity.

It looked like these golden monsters had a primal hatred towards humans. They seemed to have been instilled with a particular notion that they had to kill any human they saw.

Jiang Chen’s body was surrounded by thousands of golden monsters in a second.

Clang!

Jiang Chen's nameless blade swept out as it brushed off the two golden monsters out in front. His body leapt upwards again beneath the aid of another fire lotus as his blade struck out once again.

This strong stroke was enough to rip four monsters into shreds. Metallic fragments rained down into the ravine below.

However, killing four monsters was just a drop in the bucket compared to the thousands of them present. It made no change in the situation.

The countless numbers of golden monsters swirled towards Jiang Chen like locusts. He dodged and weaved but was still unable to evade them all.

However, his body was midair and had no place to push off from. He'd used up all the strength in his body and was about to fall!

The distance of his jump was not yet enough to reach the third fire lotus.

His position was quite awkward. If he fell down now, he'd be doing so in the empty space between the second and the third lotus.

Without leverage, a free fall was inevitable unless he grew wings.

It was a good thing that Jiang Chen didn't panic in the face of danger. The nameless saber danced like a mad demon, blocking all golden monsters that tried to attack him.

Although the monsters numbered many, they weren't enough to contend with Jiang Chen one on one.

However, he also found it hard to extend his strength fully as he hung in midair.

Seeing that he was about to fall into the ravine and into the nest of the countless golden monsters, Jiang Chen's heart raced as he deployed his spirit ocean to the utmost.

He summoned the third fire lotus vine and it grew bigger, shooting towards the direction Jiang Chen was descending it. The petals opened and dragged Jiang Chen away with them like a large mouth.

This sudden development surprised all of the creatures.

"Kill him, kill!"

All of the creatures exploded towards the third fire lotus.

The fire lotus vine was as if a water snake as it weaved and threaded, suddenly flinging Jiang Chen towards the fourth lotus.

The strength of this throw was uncommonly fast and stunning, leaving the creatures no time to react.

"Cleave!"

A creature in the shape of an enormous golden axe chopped straight toward the fourth fire lotus, like it was a small mountain in itself. Judging from its momentum, it wanted to destroy the fire lotus along with Jiang Chen.

Jiang Chen was also rather ticked off by these golden monsters.

He formed a seal with his hands as the three lotuses in front moved swiftly towards him. Their vines turned into flaming red ropes as they latched onto the golden axe creature, holding it in midair.

The petals of the four lotuses opened at the same time as four gouts of flame rushed out, akin to four fire breathing dragons and cooking the creature alive.

Beneath the power of the true flames from the lotuses, the creature was swiftly burnt to a crisp.

Chapter 296: The Lord of the Golden Seal

Although the golden axe creature had been burnt to cinders, it was far from enough to cow the other monsters. Their lack of consciousness had erased all fear of death, or even the notion of death itself.

Countless monsters shot out from the ravine, their numbers ever increasing. They'd cut off all paths of retreat in the span of a few minutes.

Jiang Chen may be swift, but he wasn't faster than them.

An endless tide of monsters greeted him no matter where he looked. Feeling the pressure, he hastily summoned all six fire lotuses to his side.

A tough battle was ahead of him.

His scalp tingled with numbness at the sight of the boundless golden tide. This wasn't an even battle, it was just shameless bullying from a mob

The fighting capabilities of one or two golden monsters was nothing to fear, even eight or ten of them together weren't too strong.

However, hundreds, thousands, and even tens of thousands of the golden creatures had gathered in one place. Their accumulated killing aura was an incredibly terrifying thing.

Jiang Chen himself could only barely manage to stand firm in the face of that lethal intent from the wall of golden creatures with the aid of his six lotuses.

If it was any other practitioner, they likely would've already been devoured to the point where not even bone fragments were left.

"This won't do, there won't be an end to the fighting if this continues. There's no point to all this other than just wearing away at my resources. There's no end to these creatures. If I fall into their tactics, I'll be dead without a doubt!"

Although there was temporarily no danger to his life, Jiang Chen was still greatly anxious.

Bam! Bam!

The nameless blade also began to awaken a fierce aura as it pulverized some of the golden creatures.

However, this kind of defense was analogous to putting out a fire with a cup of water. To the countless golden creatures, killing two or three was as harmless as scratching an itch.

"What to do?" Jiang Chen's thoughts spun furiously as he tried to think of a way out.

He'd only come to the second test of the tenth floor and was already feeling this pressured. He hadn't even met the Lord of the Golden Seal that the little beetle had spoken about.

If the lord's power awoke, wouldn't he be able to destroy Jiang Chen with just a finger then?

Jiang Chen became even more worried the more he thought about this.

He could no longer afford to delay. The ten days limit would be up at this rate before he saw the Lord of the Golden Seal.

At this moment, the rat king's body's suddenly flashed out and he cried out, "Young master Chen, release my children!"

This shout rather reminded Jiang Chen, and a flash of inspiration shot through his mind. It was like a man whose muse had deserted him suddenly looking up and seeing endless snowflakes of good ideas descending upon him.

That's right!

There were an uncountable number of golden creatures alright, but would they outnumber the Goldbiter Rats?

Once the Goldbiter Rat tribe was released, their numbers would start from the billions.

This type of spirit creature liked to nibble on all sorts of metallic objects as well. Their affinity for the metal attribute was beyond anything.

They surged out of the Millionditch Stonenest without a moment of hesitation.

The Rat King's children had been cooped up in their home for far too long, so it was easy to imagine the level of their pent up energy as they came surging out.

If it could be said that the ravine had previously been the golden monsters' domain, the situation had been utterly reversed in an instant.

The golden colored tide beneath him was slowly overcome, partitioned and devoured piece by piece.

What replaced it was an ocean of Goldbiter Rats. The entire ravine was filled with their figures in the span of an instant.

This had been so easy that even Jiang Chen found this incredulous.

He almost had the mentality of taking a stroll through the park as he sauntered leisurely to the other side of the ravine. He retrieved the fire lotuses and watched the Goldbiter Rats wreak havoc amongst the golden creatures.

The entire ravine had been thoroughly trampled by the Rats in about an hour.

There weren't even any bones left of the golden creatures. All had been cleanly devoured by the Goldbiter Rats in short while.

Even still, the Rats still seemed to be a bit unsatisfied, and they seemed to even want to start munching away at the magnetic golden mountain.



It was a good thing that the Rat King kept them all firmly in check, and all the Rats went docilely back into the Millionditch Stonenest after their king released his aura.

“Young master, how about that?” The Rat King simpered and looked at Jiang Chen with a look of wanting to be recognized for his contribution.

“Not bad, not bad. The strength of your children are going to be advancing greatly after eating so many of those creatures. If you’re lucky, some of them may even have their bloodlines advance naturally. This depends on their fortune as well.”

Jiang Chen naturally had to give a few compliments at this time. It wasn’t like saying those words cost him anything.

The Rat King seemed to be quite satisfied with Jiang Chen’s compliments as he twitched the six golden whiskers by the side of his mouth proudly, beaming brightly.

Jiang Chen looked resolutely upwards.

He’d already walked two thirds of the steps in the tenth floor and would reach the peak after this last bit.

At this moment, Jiang Chen had thrown thoughts of this being a trial of potential to the back of his mind. What filled his mind now was to challenge the highest peak and refine the mountain for himself!

“Ole Gold, let’s go!”

Jiang Chen recalled the Goldbiter Rats when he thought of the little beetle’s words.

If the Lord of the Golden Seal was as the beetle had said, waking up the more it suffered from outside interference, then the wisest decision was to recall the Goldbiter Rats.

Otherwise, if the lord was overly awake, even if all the Goldbiter Rats attacked together, a strong aura fluctuation was enough to destroy the entire tribe.

Jiang Chen had seen much and knew that the greater a being was, the easier it was to destroy the lives of those on a lower level.

Although he didn’t know what level the Lord of the Golden Seal was, of one thing he was certain, and that was that since the lord depended on the mountain for survival, and since the original ancient in charge of the mountain had designated it as the last keeper of the trials, then he would be quite a challenge.

There were still three, four thousand steps left before he reached the peak of the tenth floor.

“There is no way I can turn back now that I’ve gotten so far. Nothing ventured, nothing gained. I still have to meet him no matter how strong the Lord of the Golden Seal is. Retreating in the face of difficulties is the act of a coward.”

With this in mind, Jiang Chen no longer hesitated and dashed straight up to the peak.

All would be determined in this final battle!

The surroundings had once again returned to those of the eight, ninth floors in the three thousand stairs. Magnetic twisters and turbulence suffused the air.

It was a good thing that Jiang Chen was prepared.

Contrary to when he faced even stronger magnetic storms on the ninth floor, Jiang Chen didn't lose track of his steps as he placed one foot in front of another on his way to the top.

Jiang Chen was forced to use the Lotus of Fire and Ice to protect himself when a magnetic storm came with unexpected ferocity and swiftness.

The standing of the Lotus was in the top five plant spirits beneath the heavens, so even the ferocious magnetic storms only buffeted it around without destroying it.

However, this largely impeded his progress forward as well.

It took him a full day to finish climbing the last three thousand stone steps.

When he finally set both feet onto the peak of the mountain, he could almost see the stars swaying above his head as magnetic storms bayed like wild beasts next to his ears.

Dust and sand swirled in his vision. It was a desolate scene of randomly flying rocks.

"This... this is the peak of the tenth floor?"

Jiang Chen found it hard to believe his own eyes. The environments at the peak of every level had always been relatively calm.

But the savagery in which the magnetic storms whipped around with at the peak of the tenth floor made it extremely difficult to even stand in.

Jiang Chen stayed rooted, as if his feet had been poured from lead. Desolation greeted his eyes as he gazed out, as if this was a place that humans shouldn't have come at all.

Jiang Chen suddenly felt the ground tremble slightly beneath his feet.

His expression changing, he immediately dashed to the side and looked back with alert, wary eyes.

Spiderweb cracks spread out abruptly over the surface of the rock strewn ground. They expanded with utmost speed.

Bam!

Countless numbers of rocks flew into the sky and landed after reaching heights of several thousand meters. It seemed to be suddenly raining rocks.

Jiang Chen protected his vitals as he fixed his eyes on the center of the cracks.

An aura vortex formed in the center. It greedily sucked in all the magnetic twisters around it, funneling all of them into the ground below.

"Lord of the Golden Seal?" A frightening thought flashed through Jiang Chen's mind.

Wham!

A mystical beam of light soared to the sky in the next moment as an enormous figure crawled up from the vortex, like a mountain suddenly rising from the ground and continuing to grow.

It was twenty, thirty feet before long.

The giant figure gave a shake and flew forward like a loosed arrow, gathering immense aura in the air and making for Jiang Chen.

Jiang Chen's hands spread out as six lotuses formed a barrier in front of him, their large petals catching all the flying rocks like nets spread out across the heavens.

"Human!"

The figure roared lowly, not articulating very clearly. It rather seemed to be an alien race voicing human language, stilted and unpracticed.

Jiang Chen looked up at this enormous figure, clocking in at twenty, thirty feet tall. It looked to be formed completely of metal as all the lines of its muscles seemed to be poured bronze, giving off an invincible feeling.

"Lord of the Golden Seal?" Jiang Chen asked subconsciously.

"Mm? You know my name?" This enormous giant was indeed the Lord of the Golden Seal.

The lord seemed to have just woken up. This sentence was much clearer than the one it'd voiced before.

"Lord of the Golden Seal, ultimate protector of the magnetic golden mountain, am I correct?" Jiang Chen was happy rather than surprised to see that the being was willing to converse with him.

Things would be easy as long as it was willing to talk.

Jiang Chen also wanted to make use of this opportunity to observe this Lord of the Golden Seal and see if he could find any weaknesses. After all, these muscles that looked like they'd been poured from metal gave one a scalp numbing feeling just looking at them. Jiang Chen didn't feel that he had the strength to engage in direct battle.

The Goldbiter Rats?

They were strong, but Jiang Chen wasn't sure if he would thoroughly provoke this lord if he released the Rats, resulting in his opponent awakening to another level.

Jiang Chen didn't want to run the risk of causing the Lord of the Golden Seal to awaken to a higher level unless he was forced too.

Besides, judging from the way the lord was currently slurring its words, it seemed rather low level for now.

Chapter 297: The Test from the Lord of the Golden Seal

The lord's enormous body suddenly took a step forward.

It pointed his thick arms and spoke lowly, "Human, don't think of playing any sort of tricks. On this magnetic golden mountain, all your thoughts are reflected through this magnetic mirror."

The figure's arm swept in an arc as it spoke. It seemed to turn stones to gold as golden flecks shimmered up from a radius of several hundred meters. They formed countless numbers polished metal mirrors. They were scattered with some sort of pattern all around, segmenting the air into an endless number of fragments and seemingly pulling Jiang Chen into an alternate universe.

All of the mirrors were reflecting a countless number of Jiang Chens alongside with all of his thoughts.

Jiang Chen was greatly astonished as a few rumors regarding the magnetic golden mountain floated up in his mind.

These mirrors were formed of the magnetic force of the mountain altering gravity, causing temporal rifts to form and disrupting dimensions.

These magnetic mirrors not only could reflect all beings beneath heavens, they could even reveal a person's thoughts. They were incredible beyond imagination.

Jiang Chen knew that there was certainly some wondrous telepathic abilities on these mirrors that they could depict a person's thoughts.

However, thanks to this, he was forced to be on the passive side.

Jiang Chen deployed the Boulder's Heart and concealed all of his thoughts.

Indeed, his thoughts were blocked as soon as the Boulder's Heart was activated. All of the mirrors suddenly lost their subject and the images within them became blurry and indistinct.

"Mm?" The Lord of the Golden Seal started. "Human, you've practiced the arts of the heart and mind? With your mere capabilities at third level spirit realm?"

This Lord of the Golden Seal was strong alright, it'd sized up Jiang Chen's level of strength with one look.

"However, it's still useless even if you've concealed your thoughts." The lord's tone was remote. "There are only two outcomes for all humans who reach this place."

"The first one ends in death."

"The second one is that they pass my test and become the master of this magnetic golden mountain." The lord's tone was very brittle, completely lacking human emotion as if a pre-programmed system. "There is no third alternative."

Even the four forefathers possessed only surface level knowledge of the magnetic golden mountain.

They'd naturally never come to the tenth level before.

"You've sealed off your consciousness so that the mirrors cannot detect your thoughts. Your skills are quite good. This lord says one more time, either pass the test or die."

Jiang Chen knew that the lord was likely not blustering.

"How does one pass the test?" Jiang Chen asked. He knew that he was caught between a rock and a hard place now. Judging from this figure's tone, there was no way out for him at all.

"Very simple. Answer one of my questions, then take one of my blows."

“That easy?” Jiang Chen was incredulous.

“Easy?” The figure laughed coldly. “Anyone who’s ever come here has also said the same thing, but they’ve now all become ghosts haunting the mountain.”

“What?” Jiang Chen was slightly startled. “There were others who have been here before?”

“Others? There have been countless numbers of people who have come here ever since ancient times. However, as time elapsed, those who have come have been becoming weaker and weaker. It’s because of this decrease in strength that the level of my awakening has become lower and lower.”

“Ai, this is actually quite a lonely thing. When can I fully awaken again?” The Lord of the Golden Seal sighed.

“Level of awakening?” Jiang Chen immediately thought of the little beetle’s words. Then, the golden beetle’s memory heritage was correct? The level of awakening of the Lord of the Golden Seal is indeed determined by the level of strength of practitioners who make it thus far?

The stronger a challenger was, the more magnetic force he would provoke out of the mountain, and the stronger all the tests on all floors.

The stronger the level of awakening from the figure as well.

Jiang Chen’s shifting thoughts were reflected by the mirrors. The golden being snorted coldly, “It’s that busybody little beetle who told you my name alright. Humph. That’s of no matter. On this mountain, the rules are impartial to all who makes it here!”

“Human, make your choice! Either be killed or face my test!”

Obviously, no one would choose to be killed on the spot.

Jiang Chen was confident that there was a ray of hope in answering a question for the test.

“I choose to face the test.” Jiang Chen’s eyes were resolute as he met the golden being’s eyes.

“Good!” The Lord of the Golden Seal nodded faintly. “Although no one’s ever successfully passed the test, I can feel that you’re a little bit different from the others. I hope your answer will not disappoint. Remember, the quality of your answer will determine the difficulty of the next test.”

“What do you mean?” Jiang Chen’s gaze focused sharply.

“If your answer is satisfactory, then perhaps my blow will be very gentle and just a symbolic gesture. If your answer disappoints, then you will face a fierce blow at my full strength.”

The Lord of the Golden Seal broke out in a wide grin as cruelty raced across its face. “You should know that out of all those who have come before, their answers have greatly, greatly disappointed me.”

“So they all died from one of your blows at full force?”

“Yes, you’re quite smart.” The golden being laughed coldly. “You will be the same. Don’t think that you’ll have any trump cards or special abilities that will be able to withstand one of my wild blows. Remember, the magnetic mirrors are reflecting all of your thoughts and I know full well all of your trump cards.

Therefore, my wildest blow will take into account all of your abilities and won't give you the slightest chance to survive."

"This is to say that my life and death will be determined by how I answer this question?" Jiang Chen was a bit speechless.

This Lord of the Golden Seal was an interesting character alright, to set down such an... interesting rule.

"Don't think I'm odd, I'm just a puppet of the one who created the golden magnetic mountain. Everything I do is a function of a strand of thought that he's left in my body. Only those who pass the test will receive the magnetic heart, be able to replace the original master, and claim the mountain, receiving the heritage of the magnetic golden mountain. Before that, what compels me is the will of the original owner."

"Original owner? Who was he?"

"I don't know." The Lord of the Golden Seal shook his head. "He's only left a strand of will in my body. I know nothing of when and how this mountain appeared. Ever since I was born and became conscious, I've been under the control of this will. I don't know who the original owner is and cannot receive any answers in the magnetic golden mountain."

The being's expression darkened. "Alright, human. I've spoken a lot more with you because you seemed a bit different from other humans. It's your turn to answer my questions next."

Jiang Chen's expression was severe as he nodded. "Alright, ask away."

"My question is this. How is a spirit creature such as me, with no parents, no flesh and blood, formed out of energy between the heavens and earth to leave this mountain? Am I able to exist if I leave this mountain?"

"Is this one question?" This was plainly two!

"It's two questions, but there's only one meaning underlying them." The golden figure responded coldly.

Jiang Chen smiled, "Lord of the Golden Seal, I only ask you, will your blow be lighter if my response is satisfactory?"

"Stop talking nonsense! If your answer is satisfactory and not empty bluster, then I will definitely be satisfied. As long as I am satisfied, then I will hit lighter. Remember, don't use nonsense to fool me. Those who had come before tried to play some tricks and enraged me instead."

Jiang Chen nodded and smiled leisurely, "Those who had come before of course had no way of answering your question. However, I'm an exception."

"Oh? You're this confident?" The lord smiled coldly.

"Yes." Jiang Chen was greatly self assured. "I can tell you now that between the heavens and earth, the countless numbers of spirit creatures are mostly free. But your spirit body is formed and nurtured from the magnetic mountain, and it won't be that easy to break free of it. But of course, there are still methods to."

“Mm?” The golden being was expressionless as it fixed its eyes on Jiang Chen. The mirrors sparkled and twinkled, attempting to reflect Jiang Chen’s thoughts.

However, the defenses of Jiang Chen’s Boulder’s Heart made the mirrors come up empty handed.

“Alright, human, I admit that you’re different from the others. The others responded almost without thinking that I can leave the mountain and still live afterwards. However, the mirrors quickly reveal their true, inner thoughts and unmask their lies. In reality, they didn’t know the answer to this question either and was just fawning up to me with their answers.”

“You’re different from them, you’re also smarter. At least, I am unable to find evidence of you lying. Therefore, I won’t use my full strength in my blow, just seventy percent. Although you may not be able to withstand it, you’ll at least have a chance to live.” The Lord of the Golden Seal adhered to its principles.

The golden mirrors couldn’t reflect his inner thoughts and so the being couldn’t find evidence that Jiang Chen was lying. Therefore, it wouldn’t use its full strength in the next blow, just seventy percent of it.

Jiang Chen laughed heartily, “My answer is not yet complete. Does the Lord of the Golden Seal not have interest in hearing me out?”

The golden figure froze, “What do you mean? You... you have a way to help me leave/”

Jiang Chen nodded his head resolutely. “I naturally have my ways, but I can tell you that it won’t be easy.”

“How difficult will it be?” The being asked.

“Difficult, very difficult. It will be impossible without the outside help.” Jiang Chen sighed.

“What do you mean?” The Lord of the Golden Seal kept a close eye on the mirrors. He noticed that thus far, the human hadn’t lied and the mirrors hadn’t shown any sign of movement.

Therefore, he decided to keep asking.

“Tell me. No matter how difficult it is, as long as you tell me truthfully, no matter how unrealistic it is, I can control the strength of my next blow to be at thirty percent of my strength. If at thirty percent, you’ll have a fifty percent chance of living.”

The Lord of the Golden Seal was now truly tempted.

#### Chapter 298: A Transaction and A Compromise

Since the Lord of the Golden Seal was a spirit entity, it was a bit less crafty compared to humans.

Since it’d spoken thus, then it was a true representation of its thoughts.

Jiang Chen mused silently and nodded, “Your power has to awaken to the point of surpassing the level of this mountain if you wish to leave it. However, you also know that your body was formed and nurtured from the mountain. As high as your level of awakening can get, it will never surpass that of the mountain itself. Thus, this is a paradox. Theoretically speaking, you can never leave the mountain, unless —“

“Unless what?” The being asked anxiously.

“Unless you receive outside aid or the master of the mountain is willing to forgo the mountain and allow it to be fully absorbed by you, allowing you to become the mountain or the mountain to become you!”

“You mean for the mountain and I to fully become one?” The figure asked.

“That’s roughly it, but with the will of the original master controlling you, how will you possibly become one with the mountain?”

The Lord of the Golden Seal was greatly depressed when it heard this. “So this means I have no hope of escaping? I can’t attain the freedom I want?”

“I don’t think that’s what I said?” Jiang Chen smiled ruefully.

Two beams of light shot out of the Lord of the Golden Seal’s eyes. “Then you mean...?”

“My meaning was quite clear, you have two ways ahead of you. First, that the will of the original master no longer controls you and so you are able to assimilate with the mountain, or secondly, you receive outside aid.”

“The will of the original master no longer controls me?” The golden figure murmured to itself. Joy suddenly appeared on its face. “Human, if you pass the test and I give to you the magnetic heart, you will become the master of the mountain. Then, the will of the original master will no longer control me, and so that means I have hope of becoming one with the mountain?”

“Theoretically, yes. However, if I refine the magnetic heart, then the mountain is my mountain and I likely wouldn’t want you to absorb it.”

“Don’t want me to? Why?” A violent light shone from the golden figure’s face.

“You also know that I’m just of the third level spirit realm and am weak. This magnetic golden mountain is a treasure that will protect my life. So tell me, why should I give it up?”

The golden figure snorted coldly, “Aren’t you afraid that I will kill you with one wave?”

“You can’t kill me because the will of the original master controls you. Since you are satisfied with my response, you can only use thirty percent of your power in your blow. I have hope of surviving such a blow, and will be able to refine the magnetic heart according to the rules set by the original master. I will be your new master after refining the heart. At that time, any one of my thoughts will be enough to control your life and death.”

The Lord of the Golden Seal was depressed. It’d discovered that after making all these logical loops, it’d ended up trapping itself in the end.

This was indeed the case according to the rules left behind in the will of the original master.

Since it was satisfied with the challenger’s answer, then it could only use thirty percent of its strength in the next blow.

If it disregarded this rule, then it would automatically disassemble, and would have no idea when would be the next time he’d awaken.



“Human! As long as you forgo the mountain and let me absorb it, I swear to protect you for a thousand years. I will be your servant for a thousand years, is that enough time for you to grow into your strength?”

The Lord of the Golden Seal thought of this compromise after a moment. In its eyes, this was already a great concession.

That faint smile still remained on Jiang Chen’s face as he shook his head. “I cannot give up the magnetic golden mountain. And, even if I agree, you’ll spend at least a thousand years absorbing the mountain. Therefore, even if you swear, you’ll be unable to protect me for this thousand years. I don’t have the interest to wait a thousand years for you either.”

“Human, don’t you push your luck! Aren’t you afraid that our talks will fall through? If I go against my master’s will and kill you, I’ll just disassemble and keep sleeping. I will awake again one day. However, if you die, you’ll be unable to revive!” The Lord of the Golden Seal threatened.

“There is sense in what you say, but I can also promise that even if you wake ten thousand times in the future, you won’t meet someone like me. Only I can help you leave the mountain and attain the freedom you yearn for. Apart from me, those who’ve come before me and who will come after me will be unable to do so. You can gamble on this if you don’t believe me!”

Jiang Chen had also grasped the golden figure’s psychological weak point at this time.

Indeed, the being froze upon hearing these words.

A pair of bronze eyes stared at Jiang Chen. This enormous body would be able to crush this human to death by just taking a few steps forward.

This was without any doubt at all.

However, the Lord of the Golden Seal couldn’t see any fluctuations in the magnetic mirrors. This meant that this human wasn’t lying.

If a person lied, the images in the mirrors would fluctuate greatly.

But the mirrors were calm without the slightest ripple. What did that mean?

This meant that this human’s words were true without the slightest lie. The mirrors couldn’t find any flaw and agreed with his words.

Kill this human?

The Lord of the Golden Seal had always been a violent one. It’d brutally killed countless numbers of humans who’d come here since ancient times.

However, it wavered now.

Because, its dream of freedom had never been so close to fulfillment. It’d never seen any hope from anyone.

However, this young human made it glimpse a ray of hope.

Killing a human was an easy thing for the Lord of the Golden Seal to do. However, if it killed this human in a rage out of shame and broke the rules set by the master, it would fall to pieces and awaken again at some unknown time.

It wasn't even sure if the consciousness that woke up in the future would be it.

"Can't kill him, can't kill him. This human is my only hope of obtaining freedom." The being restrained its inner savagery with effort.

"Lord of the Golden Seal, I have a suggestion, are you interested in hearing it?" Jiang Chen's voice sounded leisurely at this point.

"What, what suggestion do you have?" The being hastily asked.

"I said that there were two methods. I can't bear to give up the mountain, but there is another way apart from having you absorb the mountain. Receiving outside aid will enable you to obtain your freedom all the same."

"What outside aid?"

"Hope is minuscule with outside aid. If you can meet another treasure such as the magnetic golden mountain in the future, you can possibly leave the mountain if you leverage the strength from it. However, treasures such as this mountain are hard to find."

"What's the point of all this talk if it's hard to find? Do you want me to compromise with you because of some minuscule hope?" The golden figure said unhappily.

"Of course not. My suggestion is that I refine the magnetic heart and obtain the mountain. I will try my best to hunt down treasures for you in the future. If I can't find any, when I grow into my strength and no longer need the magnetic golden mountain, I will naturally help you absorb the mountain and make it become part of your body, helping you thoroughly obtain your freedom. How about that?"

Jiang Chen offered his final suggestion.

"Lord of the Golden Seal, you can refuse, but this is the only condition that I can agree to." Jiang Chen's tone was quite final.

The Lord of the Golden Seal huffed heavily, heaving loudly, apparently quite conflicted as well.

Suddenly, the being's gaze focused on Jiang Chen again. "Human, you are merely of the third level spirit realm, on what basis can I believe that you will grow into your strength? How many years will I have to wait?"

"How long was it until you achieved consciousness?" Jiang Chen asked faintly.

"I... I've never counted, I think around a hundred thousand years?" The golden being murmured faintly.

"A hundred thousand years?" Jiang Chen smiled. "A hundred thousand years is too long. I don't need ten thousand, I will only need ten thousand years to grow into my strength."

"Humph, who doesn't know how to bluster? What gives you the right to say that?"

Jiang Chen spoke proudly, "What gives me the right? The fact that I'm standing right here, the fact that you want to kill me but can't bear to. Is this not reason enough?"

The Lord of the Golden Seal started and couldn't retort back.

How many had made it to the tenth floor since ancient times, and how many had there been who'd been stronger than Jiang Chen?

However, those who had made it so that it'd couldn't bear to kill them and continuously chip away at his psychological defenses, this human in front of him had been the only one.

This young man seemed less than twenty years old, but was abnormally self assured. He was coolly composed even in front of him.

It was as if the matters of life and death were nothing in this young man's eyes.

This kind of breadth of mind and shrewdness, this kind of bearing and aura all made the Lord of the Golden Seal couldn't help but revise his estimate of Jiang Chen.

However, what truly tempted the being was Jiang Chen's words.

The Lord of the Golden Seal was well aware that the young man in front of it wasn't just talking drivel. He truly understand the relationship between the Lord of the Golden Seal and the mountain.

He also truly knew how to help the being break free of the mountain and obtain its freedom.

The Lord of the Golden Seal looked at the resolute young man and gave a long sigh, murmuring to himself, "Alright, alright. It seems that I have no choice."

"Young man, I want to hear an oath from your lips."

"I can do that." Jiang Chen raised three fingers to the sky and spoke gravely, "I, Jiang Chen, swear in the name of the heavens and earth that I will help the Lord of the Golden Seal to break free of the magnetic golden mountain in the future. If I still have yet to succeed in ten thousand years, then I will let the Lord of the Golden Seal absorb the mountain to gain his freedom. If I break my world, may the heavens and earth rip me asunder."

The Lord of the Golden Seal nodded after hearing these words and opened his arms, making all the magnetic mirrors transform into dots of star light and vanish without a trace.

"Jiang Chen, be prepared. You have to take one of my blows according to the rules. However, I will control my strength to ten percent in this blow. If you cannot take even ten percent of my strength, then you are destined to be unworthy of the magnetic golden mountain!"

The Lord of the Golden Seal's massive legs took a few steps forward, as if a moving mountain, his aura overwhelmingly powerful.

Chapter 299: The Disappearance of the Magnetic Golden Mountain

Since the Lord of the Golden Seal had thought through things, then this blow with ten percent of his strength was just following the words of the original master's rules.

If he didn't follow the rules and went against his master's will, the Lord of the Golden Seal would be immediately wiped out and his consciousness dispersed, only able to passively await the next time he awoke.

Legs as thick as columns charged forward and stomped heavily on the ground. The entire mountain seemed to be trembling.

"Watch my blow!"

The being's muscular arms waved out a punch.

Although there was only ten percent of the being's strength in that blow, it still encompassed the essence of the mountain and froze even the air around Jiang Chen.

Jiang Chen only felt that a mountain was charging forward at him, and a mountain that bristled with gleaming blades at that.

Laughing wryly, he had to admit that the strength of the Lord of the Golden Seal was incredible indeed. Even if he'd decreased the level of his strength to ten percent, the power behind this punch was still something that a third level spirit realm would be able to handle.

Six lotuses formed a neat wall as their petals seemed to be layers of tenacious air walls, holding up beneath the brunt of this punch.

The six lotuses bent backwards beneath the force of the invincible punch.

However, flexible petals still fully blocked all of strong boxing aura.

As strong as the Lord of the Golden Seal was, the Bewitching Lotus of Fire and Ice didn't rank in the top five of all plant spirits for nothing.

Although its currently evolved was less than that of the Lord of the Golden Seal, it was six against one now, and the golden being had only used ten percent of its strength in this blow. So although the Lotus was currently a bit weaker, it didn't suffer any damage.

"Mm?"

The Lord of the Golden Seal looked at the six lotuses, then raised its fist and looked at its hand, shock written all over his face.

"Jiang Chen, there's something odd about your lotuses."

Jiang Chen smiled. "Don't underestimate this Lotus. If it evolves into its final form, then even yourself at your peak may not be its match."

If the Lotus was to evolve to its final form, even the supreme experts of all planes of existence would find it to be a thorny opponent. This Lord of the Golden Seal was just a spirit creature on the magnetic golden mountain. When their ultimate forms faced off, it truly wasn't a match for the Lotus.

"That strong?" The Lord of the Golden Seal asked in amazement.

“The Bewitching Lotus of Fire and Ice can rank amongst the top five of all plant spirits. How strong do you think it is?” Jiang Chen chuckled as he countered with a question.

“Top five?” The Lord of the Golden Seal was flabbergasted. It murmured, “Jiang Chen, you really are a perverse existence. You don’t seem like a third level spirit realm practitioner at all. Some origin realm practitioners may not even know as much as you, nor have as good equipment as you.”

Jiang Chen was indifferent. “The magnetic heart?”

The Lord of the Golden Seal threw back its head and said loudly, “Don’t worry, since you’ve passed the test, the mountain is immediately passed down onto you according to the will of the original master. The magnetic heart is here!”

The Lord of the Golden Seal suddenly extended its arms. They started endlessly transforming amidst shimmering golden lights and had transformed into two sharp swords after a short while.

“Open1”

It waved its arms and the swords turned into severe golden light, cutting into the ground.

A crack slowly formed and continued to grow.

Golden light shot to the heavens from the crack, like the golden rays of the sun spilling out over the earth, giving one an exceedingly holy feeling.

The being’s arms pointed upwards as the golden light dissipated into mist and continued to rise.

A golden item the size of a goose egg slowly rose from the ground into the mist.

“Go!” The Lord of the Golden Seal pointed its arms. The golden item turned into a beam of light as it shot towards Jiang Chen.

Jiang Chen mobilized the lotuses to solidly catch this item.

“The magnetic heart?”

The Lord of the Golden Seal nodded. “The mountain is yours after refining this magnetic heart. You will inherit it and can manipulate it as you will. It can be big or small and answers to your thought.

Joy crept over Jiang Chen’s face. He’d striven so hard for so long and had finally welcomed the moment in which the magnetic heart appeared.

The organizers of the third trial were rather bored.

Six to seven days had passed. Most of the candidates had either been disqualified, or had no strength to continue on after the fifth level.

Of course, the numbers of people who exited didn’t quite match up to the numbers that had entered.

However, those who hadn’t made it out by now was very unlikely to emerge, unless they continued moving forward and continuously assailed the highest peak of the mountain.

However, according to the knowledge of the organizers, these ordinary practitioners basically had no possibility of taking another step further after making it to the eighth level.

“I’ve heard that the freak of the boulder’s heart has yet to emerge?”

‘Indeed, it’s the seventh day already. If he still hasn’t come out, he should’ve made it to the ninth level by now. The magnetic storms of the ninth level are quite frightening. Ai, I hope such a great genius doesn’t fall in the magnetic storms.’

“I doubt it. A genius is a genius and is born with immense luck. Didn’t someone say he would die in the cavern of the vein of skyfire? And what now?”

“That’s true. A true genius is different from the masses. If this freak of the boulder’s heart is really that kind of genius, he will possess his own kind of luck and won’t fall that easily.”

“Right, so let’s wait patiently. No one is certain what’s happened inside before the timeline of ten days is reached. The mountain will automatically bounce him out if he’s still alive after ten days. If he died within the mountain, then the so-called genius was just a shooting star.”

“Ai, the sixteen kingdoms have been quiet for so long with nothing exciting happening in the four sects. How many years has it been since such a perverse genius has appeared? I really don’t want such a good seed to fall just like this.”

“Who knows? It looks like there’s less than twenty thousand left after this third trial?”

A beam of golden light filled the void betwixt the sky and heavens as they were talking. It lit up the skies, piercing everyone’s eyes so that no one could open them.

Everyone closed their eyes involuntarily and didn’t dare take a direct look, as if the golden light was ending the world.

Bam crash thud!

Enormous thuds like the sounds of the order of heaven and earth collapsing rang out, as if countless numbers of gods were crashing about in the heavens, or akin to thunder and lightning rampaging wildly across the skies. Lightning flashed and thunder cracked, great sound explosions ringing out continuously.

That golden light accompanied the noise and become brighter and brighter, lighting up everything. There was only this golden color left in the world, and no one dared open their eyes.

in that moment, even the forefathers had the feeling that armageddon had arrived. Their bodies seemed to be lonely craft floating amidst a wild ocean, buffeted to and fro as their fortunes weren’t under their control.

There seemed to be an invisible force around them that was restraining them, making their footsteps heavy and their bodies clumsily leaden.

“Magnetic force?” The forefathers were privately astonished. How would they not know this feeling!

The enormous magnetic force gave them the impression that their bodies, their very lives weren’t under their own control.

“What’s going on?” Sunchaser’s face darkened and was about to open his eyes to take a look when the terrifying golden light seemed to pierce towards his eyes like sharp swords.

A sense of danger swept him as he immediately closed his eyes, not daring to face this light.

The other forefathers were also all shocked and in similar circumstances to Sunchaser. However, in this situation, they were powerless to do anything and could only activate all their defenses, protecting their sect and probing about with their consciousness, trying to see what was going on.

However, the golden light seemed to have swallowed everything. It was a hazy mist of golden light no matter where their consciousness traveled and probed. It was an unformed world of chaos without any clues, any hints at all.

It was a good thing that this golden light didn’t maintain for long.

It started slowly fading out and disappearing after fifteen minutes.

The immense oppressive feeling also faded from around the forefathers. Everything was as usual when they’d opened their eyes again. All of the organizers were also crawling out of various corners with looks of shock and astonishment.

Judging from everyone’s expression, no one knew what had happened.

Suddenly, an organizer looked dead ahead as his entire face twisted, the muscles on his face twitching rapidly.

He extended a finger and pointed ahead as if he’d seen a ghost, “Look... look. Everyone, hurry and look. Look...”

“Look what? A ghost?” Another organizer beside him said with ill temper as his eyes followed his colleague’s finger.

“What?!”

“Eh, wheres the Endless Mountain?”

“The magnetic golden mountain disappeared!” The organizer who’d sneered at the other for having seen a ghost now also looked like he’d seen a ghost as he started crying out exaggeratedly.

Everyone looked to the front after hearing these words, with their expressions becoming unified as they did so. Everyone looked like they’d seen a ghost.

The magnetic golden mountain, that towering and boundless mountain had truly disappeared!

Everything was flat to the eye, as if there had never been any mountain!

It was as if a god had moved away that awe inspiring, endless mountain.

“What’s happened? Was that golden light the dismantlement of the mountain?”

“That’s crazy! What kind of power would make the magnetic golden mountain fall to pieces?”

“Can it really be a god having descended and moved the mountain away?”

The organizers discussed hotly as they were full of shock, confusion, and befuddlement. They'd never heard of anything like this, much less seen anything like it.

A towering mountain had disappeared, just like that.

How great must one's arts have been to move such a mountain?

Even the forefathers had likely never heard of anything like this, much less the others present?

The stronger one became the more one trained in martial dao, that was true.

However, to destroy a small mountain in one blow, even the forefathers likely couldn't do this.

But to move a towering mountain away, even the forefathers couldn't do so if their strength increased by ten times!

Moving mountains and shifting seas, chasing the stars and stealing the moon, those arts only existed in legends.

Even origin realm practitioners couldn't do so.

But, where was the magnetic golden mountain? If no one had moved it away, then where had it gone?

Chapter 300: Interrogation and Friendly Indications

Everyone looked dumbly at the empty field in front of them, their minds buzzing with questions.

The magnetic golden mountain had vanished right in front of their eyes. This scene had destroyed all the knowledge that they had painstakingly built up throughout half of their lives.

The four forefathers had also come in pursuit of answers. The four figures stood out in front, looking at the empty ground left in the wake of the vanished magnetic golden mountain. Shock was writ large in their eyes.

They looked at each other, traces of wariness beginning to appear in each other's eyes.

Even the forefathers wouldn't be at ease if changes had taken place in the legacy territory of ancient times.

The appearance of this bizarre scene belied their previous self assurance.

Jiang Chen was now sitting cross legged with the other disciples that had passed. He had arrived in the midst of this crowd when the golden light exploded, catching no one's attention nor appearing out of place.

As for the golden magnetic mountain, he'd naturally put it away by now.

And of course, he wouldn't give even the slightest clue of his involvement in such an earth shattering issue.

Although his potential was quite strong, much trouble would come knocking on his door if the secret that he'd refined the golden magnetic mountain was leaked.



He would never place himself in the midst of trouble before he had gotten a full grasp of all the aspects of a situation.

The forefathers came up empty handed after looking at the scene for quite some time.

The organizers in charge of the third trial all presented themselves in front of the forefathers, undergoing interrogation.

After all, they were in charge of the trial. The four forefathers hadn't seen things firsthand and such had no idea what had happened.

However, they still came to no conclusions after questioning everyone.

"Logically speaking, this is the seventh day of the trial of potential, if it was to disappear, the mountain would vanish only after the tenth day. It's gone, just like that. Have you interrogated the ordinary disciples?" Sunchaser asked.

The organizers were speechless. Interrogate? How do we interrogate them? It's not as if ordinary disciples can cart away the golden magnetic mountain.

"Stop joking old monster Sunchaser. There must be a reason for the mountain vanishing, and it has nothing to do with the ordinary disciples. Even the four of us combined and our strength increased tenfold, we likely wouldn't be able to move this mountain!" Ninelion laughed oddly.

Sunchaser snorted as his dark gaze swept over all of the disciples that had completed the trial with a trace of coldness.

There was less than twenty thousand left after the third trial.

However, all of them felt a mountain's worth of pressure descend upon them under the severe gaze of forefather Sunchaser. Their breathing hitched as their meridians expanded, and their blood starting frothing. It was as if they'd all spontaneously combust if Sunchaser exerted the slightest bit more pressure.

"Those who have passed the seventh floor, present yourselves in front of me!" Sunchaser roared out sternly.

Some disturbances occurred amidst the crowd as the participants who had surpassed the seventh floor all walked warily to the front row.

They had all brought their participant tokens over to register their results when they'd left the mountain.

"Take out your participant tokens." Sunchaser said faintly.

Jiang Chen was privately alarmed as he knew that it'd be difficult to get past this now.

All of these practitioners had long since been bounced out by the mountain, and their tokens registered with their results shortly thereafter.

Jiang Chen's token had yet to be registered, and that meant he'd still been on the mountain when the mountain had disappeared.

Indeed, as the tokens were inspected, Jiang Chen's unregistered token was quickly discovered.

"It's him!" The organizers naturally recognized this token. It was the freak with the boulder's heart that they'd been discussing!

"This genius didn't fall in the magnetic golden mountain alright!"

"But, the mountain's gone and disappeared, how could he be alright if he was on the mountain then?"

"Can it be that he has something to do with the disappearance of the mountain?"

"Tsk tsk, he's in for it now that forefather Sunchaser has his eye on him."

The organizers discussed hotly amongst themselves. Some looked at Jiang Chen with sympathy, others with the look of delighting in another's misery.

Sunchaser stood with both hands behind his back, his expression remote. Although his gaze wasn't as severe as before, it seemed to lock onto Jiang Chen, as if not even a single hair on Jiang Chen's body could escape his gaze.

"Explain yourself. Why is your token unregistered?"

His tone was faint, but was suffused with an enormous aura. Seemingly there, and also not, was a blade of judgement hanging over Jiang Chen's head.

If an origin realm practitioner leveraged even thirty percent of his aura, it was still enough to send a third level spirit realm into spasms.

Sunchaser had leveraged precisely thirty percent of his aura.

Jiang Chen's eyelids twitched faintly and his heart was as still as water in the face of Sunchaser's oppression. He didn't resist, just swayed slightly and pretended to be at the limits of his endurance.

"What would the forefather have me explain? I had yet to complete my test and thus my token was not registered. Isn't that normal?" Jiang Chen asked in confusion.

"Huh. Young man, don't get up to any tricks in front of me. The mountain wouldn't have vanished for no reason. You were still within it when it disappeared. Speak. What did you see inside? Or rather, what did you do inside?"

Sunchaser's tone grew a bit more severe.

He added another ten percent aura. When forty percent of Sunchaser's aura descended onto Jiang Chen, the latter's body grew much heavier all of a sudden. Shapeless strength pressured the blood vessels and bones of his body, as if wanting to roll him up into a ball.

Sweat poured down his forehead, but Jiang Chen refused to take even a half step back. He lifted his head and said stubbornly, "Forefather Sunchaser, I only sought to climb to a higher level on the Endless Mountain. I was still within the mountain before the trial was over, what was untoward about that? If participating in the trial is a crime, then I ask forefather Sunchaser, what is the Purple Sun Sect doing in the great selection? Is it just to glorify yourselves in front of the ordinary practitioners?"

Jiang Chen had never been kindly disposed towards the Purple Sun Sect. Now that he was being publicly interrogated by this old monster and subjected to the continual pressure of the origin realm aura, he was naturally enraged. The pride in his bones made him loudly denounce the forefather.

“Tsk tsk, stiff upper lip huh?”

Sunchaser snorted coldly and increased his aura by another ten percent.

Even an earth spirit realm practitioner would find it difficult to hold up beneath fifty percent origin realm aura for long.

Jiang Chen’s face was beet red but even more stubborn, his aggrieved expressions exploding all of a sudden. He threw his head back and started laughing wildly, “So this is the Purple Sun Sect and an origin realm forefather. You of the origin realm are suppressing me, your junior. How mighty and lofty you are! That’s right, you’re an origin realm forefather and can easily trample me, but don’t think of making me a scapegoat and forcing me to heel! Even if you kill me today, I’d like to see what you bring out to stopper the mouths of all practitioners beneath the heavens!”

Jiang Chen’s facial muscles began twitching in the face of Sunchaser’s continued pressure. It was as if countless mountains were weighing down on him.

“Enough!” Ninelion roared and stepped forward, sending his aura crashing into Sunchaser.

Wham!

The two forefathers’ strength hurtled into each other, giving rise to countless air currents and forcing organizers on all sides to continuously back up.

Thousandleaf also stepped forward and chuckled. “Daoist Sunchaser, the disappearance of the mountain isn’t something that either you or I can determine. Why vent your spleen out on a young man?”

Icemist also spoke up, “Forget it, both you and I know that there is no way a young man can move away the magnetic golden mountain. Not to mention that if this young man is involved with this matter, that is his fortuitous occurrence as well. All sorts of fortune exists in the world of martial dao, why must Daoist Sunchaser be fixated on this?”

Ninelion chuckled, “Hear that old monster Sunchaser? A just cause enjoys abundant support while an unjust cause finds little support. It won’t do if you’d like to cover the skies with one hand. Our four sects cannot afford to lose the face involved in bullying a young practitioner.”

Sunchaser’s face darkened as he surveyed the three forefathers and looked at Jiang Chen again.

His face suddenly split into a grin as he said coldly, “The three of you, stop pretending to be on the side of good. You’ve just set your sights on this young genius. Don’t think I don’t know your schemes.”

Sunchaser’s gaze shot towards Jiang Chen again after speaking and he smiled faintly. “Young man, I had only wanted to test you earlier and determine the depths off your potential and talents. Not bad, not bad. You’re the once in a century dao heart genius alright. For a young man to have such pride and a resolute heart of martial dao, your potential is limitless. I was treasuring such a talent and thus couldn’t help but test you. I’m sure that you will understand my efforts with your intellect and wit.”

Sunchaser certainly was an origin realm practitioner alright. The speed in which he twisted black and white around was nothing short of incredible.

If Jiang Chen truly was an ordinary genius, then in his youth, he would've surely been convinced and greatly gratified by Sunchaser's show.

He was only testing you because you had entered his vision. That was suppression, it was treasuring talent, a show of love. What did that mean? That meant he looked upon you with favor and wanted to recruit you.

However, Jiang Chen was still Jiang Chen after all, not just some ordinary practitioner.

His previous lifetime of a million years had enabled him to be perceptive of the minutest detail.

So as flawless as forefather Sunchaser's act and words had been, it appeared a completely phony fraud in Jiang Chen's eyes.

Jiang Chen wasn't the sort to be easily led astray by the nose like this. The more Sunchaser was thus, the more Jiang Chen was on his guard.

"This old monster Sunchaser is strong and flinty one second, then gentle and warm another. His personality reverses in a heartbeat, and is a sign of crafty, slippery person. I must keep an eye out for him in the future, no matter what."

Jiang Chen had come to some conclusions in his heart, but still maintained a look of being incredibly overcome by this attention. "This kid is dull and didn't understand the forefather's efforts previously, and almost misunderstood the forefather."

Sunchaser nodded with a faint smile. "That is right, you are promising and worthy to be taught. I've heard that you only chose to be tested for martial dao in the second trial. Such a resolute heart of martial dao is truly impressive and honorable."

There was a long established rule that the four sects had to compete fairly and could not recruit during the selection.

Ninelion laughed coldly upon hearing Sunchaser's words. "Old monster Sunchaser, what a good show. It's easy to hoodwink the young, but not your peers. Not to mention that private recruitment is forbidden during the great selection, don't you think you're overstepping yourself?"

Sunchaser smiled faintly, "I've only complimented him a bit, what recruitment is this?"

"Pah! You shameless old thing! You compliment his resolute heart of martial dao and say that he shows promise and is worthy of teaching. Do you think the three of us are brainless idiots and can't make out such naked hints?" Ninelion blustered in protest.

"Daoist Sunchaser, we're all smart people, why act in this way?" Thousandleaf smiled faintly.

"Alright, the third trial is over. Let's keep moving and head directly into the fourth trial. Us old fellows should not overly intervene." Icemist tried to gloss over the situation.

Jiang Chen made use of this opportunity to take his place amongst the group again, but was on his guard against Sunchaser.

He was well aware that Sunchaser was keeping an eye on him.