

Three Realms 611

Chapter 611: Fleeing For His Life

Ever since the cloaked person had appeared, Cao Jin had completely fallen under their control like a puppet on strings, without even the slightest power to resist. When his body finally stabilized, his long hair had been completely sheared off from its roots. A cold breeze brushed against the back of his scalp, endless hatred and shame welling up within him. Only, no matter how fiery his rage was, how violent his humiliation, he had no one to vent it on.

He knew that if he turned back again, the only thing waiting for him would be death. That mysterious cloaked man could kill him as easily as lifting a finger! It was laughable that Cao Jin had previously threatened to take his opponent down with him. In the sphere of his opponent's control, he was like a sheep sent to the slaughterhouse. That person could slice off his head just as easily as he sliced off his hair. In that moment, Cao Jin was both ashamed and angry. But he could only flee for his life like a stray dog. This mysterious cloaked man was like a sudden nightmare who had not only foiled all his plans, but also completely shattered his misplaced sense of self-importance.

He'd originally had thought that as a peak sage realm cultivator, he could do as he wanted, rampage as he pleased in this decrepit Myriad Domain? Moreover, the Regal Pill Palace had never been known for its martial strength in the Myriad Domain. So as far as he understood, this Regal Pill Palace should have caved easily in his grasp like a ripe persimmon.

However, the first time he tried to squish one of the Myriad Domain's "ripe persimmons", he found himself mistaken, fatally mistaken. He had kicked directly at a steel plate instead. Not only had he not squashed a ripe persimmon, he had almost done himself in.

"Fortunately, this cloaked person shouldn't be part of the Regal Pill Palace. If he had been part of the Palace, I probably wouldn't have seen the sunlight again after entering the sect." Cao Jin felt rather lucky, but also sensed that things were rather strange. "This Regal Pill Palace is just a no-name fourth rank sect of the Myriad Domain. Since when did they have such powerful backing? They have the support of an emperor realm expert?"

Cao Jin was a little dispirited. He had long since heard that there wasn't a single emperor realm expert in the entire Myriad Domain, making them one of the weakest domains of the Divine Abyss Continent. Who'd have thought that the moment he'd arrived here, he'd run head-first into an emperor realm expert, what's more, a cultivator who thoroughly overshadowed him!

Cao Jin might not have been afraid if they'd been just ordinary first level emperor realm. After all, he was still one of the ten great disciples; his treasures were countless, his potential unparalleled. But he hadn't even been given the chance to show his cards in the face of this mysterious cloaked person. He'd been completely overpowered the moment his opponent had flared his emperor realm sphere.

Cao Jin believed that someone who was able to so effortlessly employ the sphere of influence was definitely not be at the first level emperor realm. The fact that shocked him most was that although he'd been unable to assess the parameters of that cloaked individual, that person's unreadable eyes had been exceptionally bright—it was clear that his opponent was relatively young!

This revelation was most startling to him. A person who might be even younger than Cao Jin himself was able to control a sphere of influence. Just the thought of this was enough to raise goosebumps along Cao Jin's body.

"I must have sensed wrongly. How could he be younger than me? I've seen so many geniuses from the Upper Eight Realms. There are definitely some juniors who are stronger than me, but not a lot. Which one of them can use the emperor realm domain as freely as this?" Cao Jin pondered on this matter for a long time but couldn't come up with an answer.

Just as he prepared to leave, a person hurried directly over to him. When Cao Jin saw who it was, his expression shifted slightly, but he turned around to leave as he did not want to deal with that person.

"Sir Cao." Unexpectedly, that person was actually the eleventh rank inspector from the Ninesuns Sky Sect, Weizi Kua. Upon seeing Cao Jin turn around to depart, he quickly called out. But, Weizi Kua soon realised why Cao Jin was avoiding him. Cao Jin's dishevelled hair looked as though it had been cut off with some kind of sharp tool, making the usually elegant and graceful youth appear with an extremely wretched appearance. With Cao Jin's pride, there was no way he was willing to show this sorry side of himself to Weizi Kua. In that instant, Weizi Kua was somewhat regretful that he had called out to Cao Jin.

"Sir Cao, what... what happened here?" Weizi Kua could only push through with his question when he saw Cao Jin's gloomy expression.

"Inspector Wei, were you following me?!" Cao Jin wasn't happy.

"I wouldn't dare," Weizi Kua hurriedly waved a hand. "I was just worried that Sir Cao might forget about our Sky Sect's grand plans in your battlelust."

"So in Inspector Wei's eyes, Cao Jin is the someone who ignores what's important?" Cao Jin's belly was filled with anger.

Inspector Wei silently cursed his bad luck, very much regretting that he had stopped Cao Jin just now. Judging from the latter's behavior now, he must have had a hard time at the Regal Pill Palace. But this was what Weizi Kua found difficult to understand. Amongst the 6 fourth rank sects of the Myriad Domain, the Regal Pill Palace was one of the weakest in terms of martial prowess. This was accepted as a general fact.

A century ago, the Regal Pill Palace had a doddering old palace head. He'd lived close to two thousand years and by virtue of his age and experience alone, he had just managed to rise to the ninth level sage realm. But ever since that old palace head had exhausted his years, the Regal Pill Palace had not possessed any more sky sage level experts. This was the information that had been reported to the Ninesuns Sky Sect.

With the plans the Ninesuns Sky Sect had for the Myriad Domain, it naturally knew the domain's major sects like the back of its hand. Weizi Kua was no exception. Previously, he'd been concerned that Cao Jin was too hot-blooded. If he began a battle to the death with the Regal Pill Palace and massacred them, the other sects in the Myriad Domain would naturally be on their guard. If such a stifling enmity formed, the Ninesuns Sky Sect's plans would be derailed. But never in his wildest dreams would Weizi Kua have

imagined that Cao Jin would lose to the hands of the Regal Pill Palace. “Sir Cao, I have always deeply admired you. There shouldn’t be anyone who can threaten you in this Regal Pill Palace.”

With an icy laugh, Cao Jin replied, “If you want to know the whole story, why don’t you run over to the Regal Pill Palace and see for yourself?”

Weizi Kua smiled ruefully. A peak sage realm cultivator like you was beaten black and blue. I’m not even half as strong as you are, wouldn’t I just be looking to suffer if I went there myself? He knew that Cao Jin was in a bad mood so it would be difficult to question him any further.

Cao Jin didn’t seem to want to thoroughly offend Weizi Kua, so he gestured with a hand and dully replied, “There’s nothing to hide about it. The Regal Pill Palace is not worth considering, but this emperor realm expert suddenly appeared out of thin air. I was too careless and almost died at his hands.”

“An emperor realm expert?” Weizi Kua was dumbfounded. “There’s an emperor realm expert in the Regal Pill Palace?”

“Likely not part of the Regal Pill Palace. He only said that he shares a rather deep history with the Palace, but I don’t know if he was just making things up.”

A cautious expression crossed Weizi Kua’s face as he fell momentarily silent. There was too much information in Cao Jin’s words. If the Regal Pill Palace had an emperor realm expert, no matter if he was a member of the Palace or someone who backed the Palace, this was still an enormous unknown variable. The Ninesuns Sky Sect had never accounted for this factor in their plans. To suddenly involve an emperor realm expert... if this had not been discovered beforehand, this existence would’ve definitely fatally impacted their arrangements. It was lucky that Cao Jin had found this out early.

In a grave tone mixed with some amount of pandering, Weizi Kua said, “Sir Cao, although you did not manage to snatch those things this time, you’ve done a great service for our sect. This information that the Regal Pill Palace has the backing of an emperor realm expert heavily impacts our plans.”

Cao Jin was obviously disinterested in this kind of service. “I’ll count this as my own carelessness, but there’s nothing I can complain about losing at the hands of an emperor realm expert. Much less an extraordinary emperor realm expert who could actually effortlessly control the sphere of influence.”

“What?!” Weizi Kua’s expression changed again. “Effortlessly control the emperor realm domain?”

“That’s right. In addition, maybe I perceived wrongly but I felt like that person was even younger than me,” Cao Jin revealed this as well.

Weizi Kua’s expression took an even greater turn for the worse. “Younger than you? This kind of terrifying prodigy exists in the Upper Eight Realms that they can effortlessly control the sphere of influence?”

There were also a handful of emperor realm experts able to freely control the sphere within the Ninesuns Sky Sect. But among the younger generation, there wasn’t a single person capable of effortlessly doing so. After all, there were only a couple of young prodigies in the sect who were able to enter the emperor realm. There was an extremely limited number of existences in the Upper Eight

Realms who was younger than Cao Jin and could effortlessly manipulate the sphere of influence. In that moment, both Weizi Kua and Cao Jin were feeling downcast, their minds full of questions.

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Above the Regal Pill Palace, Palace Head Dan Chi cupped his fists in salute. "Dan Chi represents the Regal Pill Palace to thank this kind friend's act of justice..."

The cloaked man shook their gently. "There's no need. The Ninesuns Sky Sect has set its sights on the Regal Pill Palace, so you will need to take care in the future."

After he said this, the cloaked person's shadow wavered before they vanished into thin air. This caused waves of astonishment to spread through the Regal Pill Palace. By the time Dan Chi thought of retaining them, the person had already disappeared without a trace.

"This senior is truly mysterious. I couldn't even see how he left." Dan Chi murmured to himself. Then, he turned around and said, "This time, our Regal Pill Palace's misfortune has turned into a blessing thanks to this mysterious senior. Everyone should learn something from their mistakes. Take this as a warning."

"Indeed, from what happened today, it seems that Palace Head Dan Chi is correct in vigorously training our martial prowess. If our Regal Pill Palace was more prosperous in martial prowess, we would not have suffered such heavy losses today."

"Yes, a random prodigy from a first ranked sect could oppress our entire sect to the death. Thinking about it is so disheartening!"

"Don't be dismayed, everyone. Didn't that mysterious senior say that boy is one of the ten great disciples? Among the younger generation of the Ninesuns Sky Sect, he ranks amongst the top. We don't have to belittle ourselves. The first ranked sects are have abundant resources and numerous prodigies. Our Regal Pill Palace will learn from our shame and work harder to reach the top," Palace Head Dan Chi encouraged, upon seeing everyone's low spirits.

Beside him, Elder Yun Nie also nodded, "Just now, that mysterious senior was very kind to our Regal Pill Palace, and was also an unexpected discovery."

Dan Chi gestured, "Everyone, dismissed. Let's check on the condition of Elder Hu and Elder Lian Cheng's injuries." n.-o)(\..E/-l-/B/-1-(n

The sudden arrival of this mishap created a strange sense of urgency in every member of the Regal Pill Palace. Cao Jin's unannounced presence caused them to recognize the cruelty of the the martial world. Even a fourth ranked sect like them could be easily extinguished with the flick of a finger by a higher power. When they thought about this, everyone in the Regal Pill Palace felt an even more pressing need to diligently train. A genius disciple of a first ranked sect had taught them what a gap in power truly meant. Compared to a genius from a first ranked sect, they realized that they were but frogs trapped at the bottom of a well.

Chapter 612: The Ancient Slaughter Formation

Although Elder Lian Cheng and Elder Hu had suffered relatively severe injuries, they weren't life-threatening. However, Dan Chi and Yun Nie's mood remained extremely downcast. This was because the

secret of the ancient herb garden had been exposed, which was definitely not good for the various sects of the Myriad Domain. Not only because everyone had received sky sage herbs but because of the existence of the garden itself. Once more powerful forces noticed the ancient herb garden, who knew how experts would flock over and join the turmoil that was the Myriad Domain. At that time, how much of a right to speak would the indigenous sects of the Myriad Domain hold then?

“Palace Head, judging from this, someone has betrayed our Myriad Domain,” Elder Yun Nie sighed.

Palace Head Dan Chi’s expression was grave. “I have already sent out several messages. Besides Wang Jianyu of the Sacred Sword Palace, the other sect heads will soon receive my message.”

The Regal Pill Palace had been attacked for the sky rank herbs, and the secret of the ancient herb garden was revealed! When the various other sects learned of this, they were all indescribably shocked.

These people were all old foxes so how could they not be able to predict the consequences of an event like this?

The primary suspect everyone had in mind was the Sacred Sword Palace since the conflicts between the Sacred Sword Palace and the Regal Pill Palace was an unresolvable grudge in the Myriad Domain. And only the Sacred Sword Palace would have the motive to expose the secret. Only, did the Sacred Sword Palace really dare to expose the secret? Were they not afraid of receiving heavenly tribulation?

In an instant, every member of the various sects felt a great sense of danger. In particular, the far-seeing leaders of the great sects could all sense that this might be the start of a chaotic era for the Myriad Domain.

Who was the traitor?

The air between the sects grew thick with suspicion.

Within Jiang Chen’s residence, Huang’er had returned to the wood spring. A set of black robes had been discarded to one side beside the fountain. Huang’er descended and soaked her perfect body into the waters.

“It’s so tiring to put up a threatening, dangerous front.” When she thought of her experience just now, she found it a little funny. Still, using the sphere of influence had caused her to recklessly tap into her consciousness, leading to a slight ripple in her mindset.

She did not dare to treat this lightly, so she had hurried back to the cavern to recite the Sacred Deliverance Mantra and play the Ethereal Soothing Melody few times. Only then did she barely bring her somewhat agitating consciousness back under control. She had always spent these days in a smooth and steady mindset, and the Generation Binding Curse had not flared up at all. That was because she held no complications in her heart and lived her life very simply, without recklessly disturbing her consciousness. And just now, she had originally decided to abstain from interfering with the Regal Pill Palace’s matters. But that Cao Jin was unreasonably tyrannical and would possibly have destroyed the entire Regal Pill Palace with a single word.

Moreover, Huang’er could see that the Palace Head Dan Chi actually had some history with Elder Shun. Huang’er was usually someone who treasured relationships. From an emotional point of view, she felt that she should take some interest in this matter.

Firstly, this was because of the relationship between Elder Shun and Palace Head Dan Chi.

Secondly, this was also a task she had been entrusted with by Jiang Chen. Before Jiang Chen had left, he had entrusted this residence to her so she felt obliged to protect everything.

Only, with her usage of the sphere of influence, her consciousness had been disturbed and that Generation Binding Curse she had kept under control seemed to be rearing its ugly head again. Fortunately, that Cao Jin had fled quickly. Otherwise, if Huang'er continued to fight, she would overstimulate her consciousness and it was entirely possible that the Generation Binding Curse would have backlashed on her.

Even so, Huang'er actions this time had been slightly perilous. Nonetheless, she didn't regret what she'd done.

"Sir Jiang freed me temporarily from the agony of the Generation Binding Curse. So what if I take some risks in helping him run some errands?" As Huang'er cleansed herself in the wood spirit spring, her consciousness gradually settled down.

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In the forbidden area of the Ancient Scarlet Heavens Sect.

Jiang Chen had unknowingly cultivated in this Ancient Scarlet Heavens Sect for over half a year. By now, he had risen another level, reaching eighth level origin realm. "If I wasn't in a hurry to leave, this cavern is actually a very suitable place to train. If I continue at this pace, considering the resources I have at hand, there should be less than three months to go before I break through to the ninth level."

Jiang Chen was still fairly satisfied with his current progress. He had given himself the target of leaving this place within two years. By now, half a year and passed and he was already in the eighth level origin realm. He would enter the ninth level in another three months. Once he successful broke through to the ninth level, he would be qualified to start assailing the sage realm. Once he broke through to sage realm, he would not dally here any longer.

If it was anyone else, no matter how urgent matters outside were, they still would not be as determined to leave this place as Jiang Chen. After all, the Ancient Scarlet Heavens Sect's inheritance was truly extraordinary. But to Jiang Chen, no matter how wondrous this inheritance was, it was still overshadowed by the people he held dear.

"Judging from my calculations, there's only a year and a half to that Myriad Grand Ceremony. No matter what, I need to leave this place before that ceremony." Jiang Chen set this goal for himself.

It wasn't so much that Jiang Chen felt strongly about that ceremony, but more that he had a premonition. The Myriad Grand Ceremony would prove to be a turning point for the Myriad Domain. The betrayal of the Tristar Sect, the machinations of the Ninesuns Sky Sect, there was danger hidden everywhere, waiting to erupt. Once it erupted, the structure of the Myriad Domain would be completely overturned. *n/-0xelbIn*

Jiang Chen obviously did not possess a savior complex, but if great change occurred in the Myriad Domain, he hoped that he would have enough ability to protect those he needed to protect. Moreover, Palace Head Dan Chi had brought him to the Regal Pill Palace from the Precious Tree Sect. When it came

to crucial moments, Jiang Chen hoped that he could return the favor and help him out. Palace Head Dan Chi was a heroic and ambitious person, but Jiang Chen knew that the Palace Head's dream of unifying the Myriad Domain would prove to be an even more difficult and tedious task than he could ever anticipate. It was just, there were some things that Jiang Chen could not easily speak of.

Palace Head Dan Chi's martial prowess was middling in the Myriad Domain to begin with. The betrayal of the Tristar Sect was also adding fuel to the flames. What was more, the Myriad Domain had yet another potential enemy—the Great Scarlet Mid Region. Why had the popular and powerful Myriad Domain fallen down to the backwards location it was today? Why had the Myriad Empire completely crumbled?

This was because the royal family of the Myriad Empire had offended the Great Scarlet Mid Region. Six hundred years ago, a son of the royal family had wandered outside and unintentionally sullied a certain powerful holy maiden of that mid region, thus inciting the monster known as the Great Scarlet Mid Region. The formidable Empire had almost collapsed entirely within the span of a night, and every cultivator above the sage realm had been killed.

That battle had caused the Myriad Domain to lose a large fraction of its power. Six hundred years later, the Myriad Domain still had not improved in status, even today. Some of the elders in the Myriad Domain had experienced that previous assault. Only, these elders had only been insignificant ants back then.

Jiang Chen had previously heard Palace Head Dan Chi talk about these historical anecdotes, and the palace head had also viewed Jiang Chen as the single transformation factor of the Myriad Domain. It was just that Jiang Chen himself wasn't too passionate about this cause. As an reincarnator, he was not particularly attached to the Myriad Domain and he had set his sights far above this tiny region. Nevertheless, no matter which angle he view Palace Head Dan Chi, Jiang Chen still admired this leader. Therefore, should his strength allow it, Jiang Chen was willing to help him.

Once a disciple of the Regal Pill Palace, always a disciple of the Regal Pill Palace. Jiang Chen naturally did not wish for any mishaps to fall upon the Regal Pill Palace in the impending assault.

"Power. In the end, I still need more power. If I don't have enough power, I will only be controlled by others when the tumultuous storms arise. Only if I have domineering power will I be able to dictate the winds and clouds. No matter what changes the future will bring, I will grasp control with one hand!" As he thought of this, Jiang Chen stood up.

He decided that it was time to challenge the second formation!

The second formation was purely a killing formation that tested him on his combat abilities. Since he had continuously raised his martial prowess, Jiang Chen's actual combat ability had also naturally greatly improved. This was the perfect time to put it to the test. He stood by boundary of the formation and gazed upon it. When he saw nothing but a haze of blurry ash, Jiang Chen knew that this formation would certainly not be simple.

These three great formations that led to the inheritance possessed one positive. Their foundations all lay within the formations themselves. No one ruled over them and no one guarded them. As long as

Jiang Chen could find the key to the foundation, he could break it. What's more, these formations gave him a free disk each time. This was absolutely receiving a nice reward after receiving a hard slap first.

If someone was presiding over these formations, then the key could be moved at any time according to the will of its master. In that case, there would be no way for a challenger to find the location of the foundation. This meant that there was an enormous difference between a human-controlled foundation and one without.

Keeperless formations were relatively easy to break. Most masterless formations were fixed formations, which made their foundations immovable. On the other hand, because human-controlled formations had someone at the helm, they were living creations. These formations had unpredictable changes to them and once within the formation, the keeper held an insurmountable advantage, making them far more difficult to break.

Of course, these were all approximations. In reality, many formation masters were able to design living formations even if they did not have a keeper. It was even possible to insert a formation into another, using one technique to propel the next, turning the formations into a chain reaction that would kill the challenger before he even figured out what was going on. Therefore, the strength of a formation lay in the methods used by its master, and not whether it was a fixed or a living formation. But if they were on the same level, live formations were indeed more difficult to break than fixed ones. The second formation that Jiang Chen faced was called the Ancient Slaughter Formation of Seven. Jiang Chen had already made plenty of simulations of the formation before taking it on.

Whoosh!

Jiang Chen turned into a streak of light that dissolved into the formation. Numerous vines from the Lotus surrounded his body, protecting him from harm. He descended to the ground and found that an expanse of yellow sand lay below his feet. There was only a yellow desert in the distance as far as his eyes could see. As he hesitated, the sand before him began to toss and turn like frothing water. His vision was filled with sand as countless sandstorms surged towards him as if golden dragons.

"Bring it on!" Jiang Chen shouted lowly, using his Golden Cicada Wings to propel himself high into the sky. With a grasping motion of his hand, a golden colored mountain fell into his palm.

"Suppress." Jiang Chen held nothing back, choosing to employ the newest card in his arsenal straight away—the magnetic golden mountain.

That magnetic golden mountain transformed into a hill and smashed downwards with a crash.

Chapter 613: Jiang Chen Challenges the Formation

The power of the magnetic gold mountain was beyond Jiang Chen's expectations. As the golden hill crashed down, the billowing sands were subdued and the sand dragons helplessly dissipated into nothingness. The scene suddenly changed before Jiang Chen's eyes.

The rolling yellow sands disappeared and were replaced by a sea of fire. Billowing thick smoke ascended into the sky, and all around was bubbling magma that occasionally spawned horrifying flame dragons. As birds flew overhead, some of them were swallowed up by the flame dragons, turning into lumps of

charcoal and tragically falling into the rolling magma. Jiang Chen found that he had actually been surrounded by magma.

Boom! Boom!

The crimson magma surrounding him constantly erupted in streams that closed in on Jiang Chen. Jiang Chen did not dare disregard this phenomenon. Countless ice lotuses materialized to protect his body. At the same time, an outer ring of fire lotuses roiled forwards, their vines reaching swept out over thirty meters long. Like an ancient beast opening their mouths, their enormous petals opened up and wolfed down the incoming magma streams.

The Bewitching Lotus of Fire and Ice's natural talent was very high since it was at a divine rank. Although Jiang Chen was currently only in the eighth origin realm, the Lotus' ability was already quite good.

The numerous fire lotus petals devoured the magma streams as soon as they drew near. Some magma would occasionally slip the net, but they were all blocked and frozen by the wall of ice lotuses. As things stalemated, Jiang Chen's view changed once again.

That field of boundless magma suddenly decided to sing a song of fire and ice and transformed into a silvery snow-covered world.

The wind was howling and the snow flurries were dancing across a thousand miles. Snowflakes larger than goose feathers continued to fall and soon covered the ground like a heavy blanket beneath his feet. Jiang Chen was slightly surprised; the changes of the Ancient Slaughter Formation of Seven changes were astonishingly fast. Fortunately, the Lotus of Ice and Fire had not been put away yet. The countless fire lotuses had just absorbed a large amount of magma, so their pedals opened wide and spewed out numerous tongues of flame.

Boom!

A radius of a few thousand meters around Jiang Chen were swept clean by a few dozen tongues of flames, and the impacts caused the icy ground to form spider web cracks. This icy snowy world could not deter Jiang Chen in any way. As Jiang Chen tread on the ground, the ice beneath his feet shattered into fragments.

At this moment, an unexpected situation arose as the pieces of ice all suddenly levitated into the air. They were sharpened in a flash of light and turned into razor-sharp icicles.

In that instant – over a hundred thousand icicles shot towards Jiang Chen like a mighty army. Jiang Chen scoffed as a sudden burst of heroism rose up within him.

He stretched out both of his hands and strands of magnetic storm surged forth while his whole body started overflowing with a golden light that illuminated the surroundings.

Jiang Chen's body arts, the Nine Transformations of Demons and Gods, had long since transformed his body into iron-like muscles and steel-like bones. As soon as he activated this body art, his golden body became full of explosive power, like an indestructible small mountain range.

Pfft. Pfft. Pfft!

As the numerous icicles came near, a portion of them were swallowed up by the magnetic storm, while the rest crashed into Jiang Chen's golden aura. A bizarre scene appeared at this time. The icicles were actually unable to penetrate the golden aura around Jiang Chen. The most powerful icicles could only pierce through about three feet of light before stopping. Jiang Chen called upon his art and the golden aura churned, crushing all the suspended icicles into vapor which dissipated into nothingness.

Jiang Chen was overjoyed with complete delight. "I didn't expect that after practicing the 'Nine Transformations of Demons and Gods' into the fifth transformation, my Golden Body of Demons and Gods would reach such high success. With this defense level, I have a seventy percent confidence in enduring a mortal sage realm cultivator's full strength attack, not to mention these icicles."

One had to know, Jiang Chen was only at the eighth origin realm. Once he reached sage realm, he would be able to use his physical body alone to withstand one or two blows of a sky sage realm expert. One or two blows was nothing to scoff at. During a duel between experts, if one side was willing to take a blow to their body, then the probability of striking their opponent in return would also greatly increase. After all, this risky method of fighting was akin to gambling with their lives. One could increase their chances of dealing a devastating blow if they took one in return as well.

After continuously receiving the brunt of attacks from sandstorms, magma fire dragons, and the icy world, Jiang Chen felt more confident in facing this Ancient Slaughter Formation of Seven.

"Seven should mean that there are seven kinds of slaughter, and thus seven kinds of attacks." Jiang Chen had an overall understanding of this formation by now and his confidence was enhanced quite a bit with this understanding. Sure enough, as Jiang Chen finished his words, the icy world changed once again and transformed into an endless forest with him landing in the midst of a dense jungle. Various vine-like creatures surrounded him like thousands of snakes and rushed toward him in an attempt to entangle him.

Vines? Jiang Chen smirked coldly. What vine would be stronger than the Lotus of Ice and Fire? However, Jiang Chen did not plan on using the Lotus here. One of his hands grasped at the air and the magnetic golden mountain appeared once again. Boundless metallic spirit power emanated from his hands and turned into rays of golden, rippling light. Jiang Chen's eyes suddenly glared as his fingers pointed forward, "Try the power of my Supernova Point's fourth technique!"

His index finger started pointing and waving, as drawing a picture of the mountains and rivers. Streams of golden spirit power radiating from the magnetic mountain started coiling around Jiang Chen's index finger, accumulating energy that was poised to spring into action. Suddenly, Jiang Chen shouted lowly, "Galaxy Slash!"

Sfzzzt. Sfzzzt!

Countless crisp cutting sound came from the void and formed layers of rampaging, deadly sword qi. The vines surrounded by the cutting power of the void were helplessly grinded into pieces. "Not bad, this Supernova Point's fourth technique is indeed a lot stronger."

The Supernova Point's first three techniques of the Skyblaze Point, Profound Dark Point, and Galaxy Point were all powerful single target attacks. However, Galaxy Slash wasn't just a single target skill now,

but rather a frightening area of effect attack. Explosive force could burst forth from a single finger like a wave of shooting stars decimating all the King's men and all the King's horses. The Ninesuns Skysect's Cao Jin would certainly be shocked if he had seen this move.

This was because this art was very similar to Cao Jin's vaunted Milky Wave Point, although the Supernova Point's inherent mysteries were far deeper and more complex. Compared to the Supernova Point, the Milky Wave Finger was only a beginner technique.

Of course, Jiang Chen had played a trick with this previous move as well. Because the magnetic golden mountain was a strong source of metallic energy, Jiang Chen had borrowed the power of the metallic spirit power and fused it with his Supernova Point to counter the wood properties of the vines.

In the five elements, different elements beget and restrain one another. In this case, since metal happened to counter wood, the wood property vines were completely overpowered by the strong metallic attribute attack.

Jiang Chen's nose lightly twitched. "Mm, not bad. These vine are not only a physical attack, but also poison as well? Thankfully I've already refined the Thundercloud Cicada's bloodline, or else I really might have fallen to this." Jiang Chen now fully understood everything. "Five of the seven attacks of this formation correspond to the five elements." The representations were: the sandstorm, earth; the magma fire dragons, fire; the icy world, water; and the vines, wood. Thus, it was likely that there would be a metal property attack next?

Jiang Chen wasn't afraid at all since with the magnetic golden mountain, the treasure could absorb any metallic attack that came at him. How would Jiang Chen be injured by such an attack?

The endless forest disappeared and Jiang Chen abruptly appeared amidst a cacophony of fighting sounds, as if he had suddenly been transported to an ancient battlefield. Countless shadows of swords and other weapons charged towards Jiang Chen.

His lips quirked. As expected.

These shadows were just like the weapon-shaped monsters he had encountered during the tenth level trial of the magnetic golden mountain. However, these sword shadows were a bit stronger and more violent. Countless shadows made from metal power postured and brandished weapons, storming over. Violent sounds of "kill!" rose in the air. A vast ocean of sword shadows appeared before Jiang Chen's eyes while his ears were full of a powerful army's battle cries.

"Kill! Kill! Kill!"

The hundred thousand strong army shouted vigorously in unison, their murderous aura overflowing as if wanting to split the heavens and shatter the air itself.

"Insignificant tricks. Magnetic golden mountain, swallow them all!"

The magnetic golden mountain went forth and like a black hole, its powerful magnetic storms mercilessly swallowed all the sword shadows. In a blink of an eye, everything became tranquil as the suppressive murderous air disappeared just like that.

“The five element’s attacks have passed, what’s left? There should be two attacks left.” Jiang Chen did not let down his guard and paid close attention. He was confident in facing the five elements, but the remaining two attacks were likely more formidable.

At this time, Jiang Chen felt the air fluctuate. “Oh?”

His ears twitched as he suddenly detected a hint of a weird presence. The air suddenly ripped apart as a wind blade slashed towards Jiang Chen’s chest.

Jiang Chen’s Golden Body once again erupted into being and the wind blade screeched to a halt upon striking his aura. But following this, the crack in the air continuously blew out wind blades, slashing towards Jiang Chen.

“Wind attack formation?” Although Jiang Chen was surprised, he remained undaunted.

He once again rotated his inner power and his Golden Body flared up and expanded into a golden body that ten meters tall. Jiang Chen slapped or kicked aside the various wind blades. At this time, the air violently shook and an enormous hole in the air appeared in front of Jiang Chen. Like a black hole, a strong sense of suction pulled at Jiang Chen. A spatial rip and spatial storm? Jiang Chen was immensely surprised.

Chapter 614: The Mystery of the Myriad Domain

Spatial turbulence would often appear in spatial rips. Ordinary turbulence was easy to deal with, but it was difficult to handle when they formed into storms. This formation had actually formed a storm in the void through a spatial rip. How would this not possibly surprise Jiang Chen?

“This sect was an ancient sect alright! There are so many changes in just a formation. This is absolutely much superior to any sect in the Myriad Domain. Even those first rank sects might not be a match for this sect.” As shocked as Jiang Chen was, he knew that he couldn’t be churned into the spatial storm. He guessed that he wouldn’t actually be faced with life threatening danger if he was embroiled into the storm. He might just be thrown out of the formation. However, since he’d entered to break the formation, he wouldn’t let himself be stopped halfway!

He called upon the magnetic golden mountain continuously and also increasingly strengthened his body. The golden body that had been nine meters tall previously increased to thirty meters before long. Jiang Chen made a pushing motion with his hand and gathered the mountain into a ball of golden light, smashing it ferociously on the spatial rip.

Wham!

The spatial rip instantly collapsed when pummeled by the immense magnetic energy.

Bam bam bam bam!

Several enormous explosions rang out as the spatial rip winked out of existence, restoring clear skies to the surroundings again. Jiang Chen was in a great mood after being able to take care of a threat like this with one move.

“An increase in strength allowing me to crush opponents with absolute strength is hell of a lot more satisfying than any tricks or plots!” Jiang Chen discovered that his practical strength had risen noticeably

after he'd entered the sky origin realm, particularly as he was able to tap into the true strength of all sorts of treasures now. His battle strength was increasing in leaps and bounds. Although he was eighth level origin realm now, he'd still have a roughly eighty percent chance of winning if he was in a face to face battle with Wang Han.

When he thought of how Wang Han had attacked him, a ball of rage welled up in Jiang Chen's heart. Wang Han had strutted in front of the Regal Pill Palace more than once, and now that Jiang Chen's strength had increased tremendously, his first thought was that he wanted to crush Wang Han.

However, he didn't let his thoughts drift too far away. He knew that he had only gone through six stages in the formation, so there should be another one coming up. But looking at how clear the skies were, what could possibly be the last stage?

Jiang Chen didn't dare treat this casually as he knew that the formation could flicker through formations incredibly quickly. He couldn't relax his guard as long as he was still caught in this active formation. He focused his concentration and scanned an area of several thousand meters with his consciousness.

He suddenly squinted in the midst of deploying God's Eye and looked up at the sky. A turquoise cloud had drifted over.

"Hmm? What's that?" As Jiang Chen wondered, the cloud suddenly split open as turquoise lightning arced through the sky and came crashing down.

"No way... a slaughter formation of thunder?" Jiang Chen was taken aback. He knew how impressive this formation was, but hadn't anticipated that it would embody even a thunder formation. Just who was the person who'd set this formation up, and how incredible was his strength?!

Although this formation wasn't quite fatal and it was used more for testing than to slaughter those trapped within, Jiang Chen still had to sigh with admiration at the transformative ability of the formation.

The Ancient Slaughter Formation of Seven well deserved its name! And, it just so happened that Jiang Chen was least afraid of thunder. Even if he hadn't refined the Thundercloud Tree into him, he was impervious to all thunder and lightning thanks to the Golden Cicada Bloodline. How would he be afraid of the thunder formation? He could count on one hand the number of kinds of thunder that could harm him now.

He smiled faintly and retracted the golden body, allowing the turquoise lightning to strike him at will.

Boom!

When the lightning arc grazed him, it was as if a raindrop had dropped onto him and disappeared. Numerous clouds flurried over in a multi-colored dance, blue, purple, green and orange...

Lightning the colors of the rainbow rained down like a rain shower. Jiang Chen stood in the midst of a dome of lightning with no reaction at all. The lightning always seemed to be swallowed by some sort of power when they neared Jiang Chen, disappearing completely.

The thunder formation was the last strike of the Ancient Slaughter Formation, the strongest and most frightening of its attacks. But who would've known that it'd actually be the easiest of the formations to

get through for Jiang Chen? He seemed to be taking a walk in the park as he stood in the midst of the thunder formation.

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When the thunder formation vanished, all the scenery in front of him disappeared as well as a formation disk once again landed in Jiang Chen's hand, and he found himself standing in the hallway again.

Successful attempt on the Ancient Slaughter Formation of Seven!

Jiang Chen toyed with its formation disk. As he peered at the etchings on it, he could see that this disk had a higher degree of precision and was more complex.

"Tsk tsk, this disk is uncommon alright. It can actually adjust the level of the formation?" Upon closer study, he saw that this disk was actually quite sophisticated and could adjust the difficulty level of the formation. "So it seems that the version I was in was actually the simplest level that this disk could produce, and there are two higher level difficulties?"

Jiang Chen suddenly felt that he'd picked up quite a treasure. "Having this formation disk means I grasp a great weapon! If even the simplest level is thus, then wouldn't the power of the mid and upper levels be even more astounding?"

Jiang Chen was quite delighted and felt that it was still somewhat worth it to be trapped in the forbidden area of the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect. With the successful challenge of the second formation, he was drawing ever closer to the tower of inheritance. However, he didn't plan on continuing to challenge the third formation. He wouldn't take this risk before he broke through ninth level origin realm. Although he wanted to leave immediately, he also knew that great haste was not always good speed.

Back in the library, Jiang Chen started perusing the books again. He'd flipped through all of the journals of the residence master in these days and read many of the tomes here, gaining a better understanding of the Divine Abyss Continent. However, he still had no memory of the so-called ancient times of the Continent.

"This is odd. I feel that there's a connection between the Continent and my past life, but I haven't heard of any of the ancient characters and happenings mentioned in these books. Can it be that the Divine Abyss Continent wasn't one of the planes of existence in my prior life?" The more Jiang Chen understood, the more confused he was.

"Just what kind of world have I arrived in? What plane of existence is this? If I say it's a secular plane, it's refuted by the fact that gods and demons warred here in ancient times. But if I say it's of a divine level, its level is obviously not there."

Ordinary secular planes could also give birth to gods and demons, but definitely not large numbers of them. This was because such a plane could support large numbers of them at all. Any secular plane suffered from limited resources and land. It could possibly nurture billions of mortals, but it might not be able to accommodate a hundred gods and demons. After all, the resources and energy required by a divine being was absolutely greater than countless ordinary cultivators.

This was also why that in the world of martial dao, the higher in cultivation levels one went up to, the fewer there were at that level. When one reached a certain level, limited resources would never satisfy all of their needs. This was how wars arose, why there were fights and killing and those who perished. This was how the food chain of the martial dao world was sustained. Otherwise, if all cultivators ascended continuously with no end in sight and continued consuming resources, this plane of existence would collapse due to exhaustion of resources in less than a hundred years.

However, this Divine Abyss Continent was really quite odd. Ever since he'd entered the forbidden area that was the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect, Jiang Chen had steadfastly felt that this Continent was just a secular plane. It wasn't until he'd come here that he knew that wars between gods and demons had occurred here in the ancient times. This was proof that things weren't as simple as he thought, and this plane had once had an exceedingly glorious history in ancient times.

"How is this possible?" Jiang Chen felt that this plane was truly a riddle, and the more he dug into it, the more extraordinary he felt it was. He was now wondering how many years it'd been since he'd reincarnated. How long had it been since his timeframe? However, answers were lacking.

"Ai, this is all too far away. I'm not even in the sage realm at the moment, it's a bit too early to think of all this. Cultivation... I need to continue to cultivate! Only through continued increase in strength will I be able to uncover more useful information..."

Once Jiang Chen had worked through this train of thought, he flung all this to the back of his mind and once again entered a state of oblivious cultivation. Although refining dragon crystals to cultivate was a very wasteful method, it was very effective. He successfully broke through to ninth level origin realm after three months!

"Mm, there is still a year and three months until the Myriad Grand Ceremony. I wonder how the Regal Pill Palace is doing?" After consolidating his grasp on the ninth level origin realm, he finally had some time to himself. He had decided that he would challenge the third formation after another half of a month of cultivation. He'd be able to enter the tower of inheritance as long as he broke through that one. Although there would certainly be many trials within, it would bring him one step closer on the path of exit.

"I'll challenge the third formation in the ninth level origin realm, then fully challenge the tower of inheritance when first level sage realm!" Jiang Chen set down his targets. According to the journals of this residence's master, he would be able to receive the sect's inheritance after passing through the tower's test and become the sect's successor. He would be able to control all of the hidden formations of the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect then. n..o)/V/-e--l--b(-1.-n

There was a key formation hub for all the formations in the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect. Whoever controlled this hub would thoroughly become the new master of the forbidden area. That meant he'd be able to come and go as he would then.

"Time to get back to work!" Jiang Chen mused briefly and then began to cultivate again.

Chapter 615: Disbandment of the Tristar Sect

Fortunately, this was Jiang Chen. His power of perception was extremely strong. Adding that to the memories and knowledge he gained from his previous life, he faced no difficulties at all when trying to

understand the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect's formation techniques. After all, the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect was strong, but ultimately incomparable to the level in which Jiang Chen had been in in his previous life. The knowledge that Jiang Chen possessed from before still far surpassed that of the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect.

Therefore, Jiang Chen did not face any trouble when deciphering the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect's formations. Even if there were occasionally some difficulties, he did not need to meditate much on them. Some slight thinking was enough for him to master the formation entirely. This advantage allowed Jiang Chen to take to formations like a fish to water.

If it was any other youth in the Divine Abyss Continent, even if the strongest prodigy of the Upper Eight Regions entered this place, they would need at least one or two hundred years to completely master the inheritance left by the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect. Only Jiang Chen was qualified to complete everything in the span of three years. Because his knowledge reached far and wide, he stood on a platform above everyone else. To put it in perspective, this was akin to asking a Titled Great Emperor to decipher some sage realm techniques. There was naturally no difficulty. But if it was an origin realm cultivator was asked to solve a sage realm technique, the level of difficulty would naturally be enormous.

In this lifetime, Jiang Chen's cultivation resources could not compare to those top tier prodigies, and neither could his physical conditions and upbringing. But his memories of his previous life gave him a unique advantage that no prodigy could possibly match.

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The Myriad Domain had been rather chaotic recently, and the eye of the storm was the Tristar Sect.

Strange things had begun to happen repeatedly to the sect starting roughly three months ago. One day, a certain elder of the Tristar Sect, who had shut himself in secluded cultivation, was suddenly mysteriously struck by lightning. He was instantly killed, his body burnt into a crisp. A few days later, the gates of the Tristar Sect were shattered after being suddenly struck by numerous meteorites. The most exaggerated event was that several days after that, the high level experts of the sect were holding a conference in the main hall of the sect when countless blows of lightning struck the hall like torrential rain. A full third of the experts were killed by the lightning! If sect head, Zhu Changsheng, hadn't reacted quickly enough to pull another elder in front of him as a shield, he would have been killed on the spot as well.

After that, it seemed that various heavenly tribulations would fall on the Tristar Sect every few days. Their members were constantly killed. Even after they sealed off various areas of their sect, these areas and the restrictions on them were still destroyed.

The death counter of the Tristar Sect's high level experts and geniuses kept rising. The entire sect was enveloped in a sense of danger. They didn't know which deity they had offended to repeatedly incur this kind of heavenly judgment. Only those who had taken part in Mt. Rippling Mirage Pill Battles knew very clearly that the sect must have violated its heavenly oath, hence resulting in this heavenly tribulation.

The heart of every Tristar Sect member was gripped by various suspicions and terror. It was to the extent that some heavyweights of the sect could no longer endure this kind of atmosphere. They

secretly left behind the medallions signaling their sect membership, departed the mountain and bid farewell to the Tristar Sect.

“Sect Head, I’m already old and no longer useful to the sect. Please allow me to depart. Even if you refuse, I will leave quietly on my own.”

“Sect Head, just what kind of shady business is being conducted here? Our Tristar Sect is suddenly the recipient of this heavenly judgment without rhyme or reason? Did you all swear some kind of heavenly oath or make a promise on Mt. Rippling Mirage and break it?”

“That’s right, Sect Head, you must give us an explanation. Otherwise, we can only leave the Tristar Sect for other sects in order to preserve our lives.”

“Yes, who can endure this kind of thing every few days? How can we cultivate when we’re living in fear?! We could be struck dead by lightning at any moment!”

“Indeed, what’s the point of staying in the sect when suffering from this kind of fear? I might as well become a rogue cultivator.”

Various elders of the sect stepped forth one by one to discuss leaving the sect with Zhu Changsheng. He and Elder Tanlang were troubled, but could not speak their mind. They obviously knew where the problem lay but how could they say anything about it? Just as Zhu Changsheng was stammering, trying to think of a more glorious-sounding excuse to defuse the situation, a loud rumbling echoed from outside the gates.

The entire Tristar Sect shook heavily again. Rumble, rumble. *n0Ve/lb(1n*

The entire Tristar Sect tottered as though it would collapse at any instant. Someone hastily reported in a while later, “Sect Head, things are looking very bad! Mt. Brightmoon has been struck by lightning and many of the sect’s leading geniuses have perished.”

Mt. Brightmoon could be considered the Rosy Valley of the Regal Pill Palace. It was a place where only geniuses of origin realm and above could enter. These geniuses, including Zhu Feiyang, all temporarily lived atop Mt. Brightmoon. In this period of time, misfortune after misfortune had fallen upon the Tristar Sect. Zhu Changsheng had been praying all along that this heavenly judgment would pass quickly. But judging from the current situation, this retribution wouldn’t stop at all!

Previously, many had been injured and killed, but most of them had been the sect elders, some of whom did not care about sect matters at all. This kind of old fellow only enjoyed sect resources without contributing much. It was fine if they died. Truth be told, Zhu Changsheng didn’t feel very heartbroken at all. But the young geniuses represented the future of the sect. If too many of the geniuses on Mt. Brightmoon died, the Tristar Sect would really be done for.

Although they were no longer called the Tristar Sect, but rather the Tristar Division, the essence of the matter remained the same. How many people did Zhu Changsheng have under him, how many geniuses, how much resources—these were all cards that he could use to bargain with the Ninesuns Sky Sect. If the people he commanded perished, leaving only a leader behind, what use would he be to the Ninesuns Sky Sect then? In that case, what would he have to bargain with the Ninesuns Sky Sect?

At this moment, Zhu Changsheng was truly a little regretful. He really shouldn't have revealed the secret of the ancient herb garden. Although he had believed Weizi Kua of the Ninesuns Sky Sect, which was why he'd removed the name of the Tristar Sect and accepted the position of a division master to become the Tristar Division, this matter had not been publicly announced. Without a public announcement, this matter was only accepted internally and not by the world.

Zhu Changsheng had previously thought this would be enough to evade heavenly tribulation. Who would have thought that he was only deceiving himself in trying to deceive others? By now, he really felt that he had dug his own grave.

The most depressing thing was that by revealing the secret of the ancient herb garden, he had dropped a rock on his own foot. Not only had he not received any benefits from the Sky Sect, their one remaining sky rank herb had been extorted from them by Cao Jin, along with a few stalks of earth rank herbs. This situation really made Zhu Changsheng want to cry.

However, in the face of such mass unease, Zhu Changsheng knew that things would truly go sour if he did not put his foot down. He kept pressing his hands downwards as he called out, "Everyone, please calm down for a moment. I guarantee that I will give all of you answers in three days time. Please wait patiently for three days. If the sect has still not answered your questions then, you are free to do as you like without my obstruction."

Elder Tanlang also replied off on the side. "Everyone, please wait patiently for a bit. If we have still not defused the situation after three days, I, Tan Lang, will take my own life to take responsibility!"

Only when they agreed to this did the complaining elders slowly begin to calm down. Zhu Changsheng glanced meaningfully at Tan Lang before the two of them entered the interior side by side. Elder Tan Lang grumbled angrily the moment they entered one of the secret rooms. "Envoy Weizi, we cannot wait any longer. We need to announce the Tristar Sect's change in allegiance right now. If not, I'm afraid this heavenly tribulation will never cease!"

Weizi Kua replied coldly, "Announce it now? The Sky Sect has made our plans for such a long time. If you announce it now, wouldn't that be laying your cards on the table early? What would the Sky Sect do then?"

The veins on Elder Tan Lang's neck pulsed in his anxiety. "Since the Sky Sect has planned for so long, just when are you going to reveal your plans?! If you're not going to reveal it now, are you going to announce it all after the Tristar Sect has been exterminated? What would be the point of your plans then?"

Weizi Kua calmly replied, "Laying all our cards down is not possible. The only thing we can do now is to break up the sect until the day we reveal our plans..."

"Impossible! We can't possibly break up the sect. How would we be qualified to discuss things with your Sky Sect then?!" Elder Tan Lang began to rage.

"Not possible?" Inspector Wei's tone grew icy. "Tan Lang, are you teaching me how to conduct my matters?"

Elder Tan Lang pushed on despite his difficulties.. “My Tristar Sect has suffered crisis after crisis up to today. Your Sky Sect must at least answer to that, right?”

“I have already told you what to do. Go gather the main members of your Tristar Sect and secretly inform them that you’re part of the Sky Sect from now on. Then, announce that you’re dissolving the sect. When our Sky Sect’s plans have been completed, you can remake the Tristar Division. You have no other choice apart from this.”

Zhu Changsheng’s mouth was filled with bitterness. He truly regretted what he did now. Not only did he regret revealing the secret of the ancient herb garden, he was even more remorseful—what had possessed him to accept the Ninesuns Sky Sect’s poison? To become a pawn of the Ninesuns Sky Sect? However, it was difficult to dismount from a tiger. The Tristar Sect could only allow the Ninesuns Sky Sect to manipulate them as the former pleased.

Weizi Kua was actually fully aware of the Tristar Sect’s sorrows. After all, the Tristar Sect had revealed the secret of the ancient herb garden, but in the end, their only sky rank herb had been snatched by Cao Jin. It was truly a little unjustified to force the Tristar Sect to bear the consequences of revealing their secret. However, Weizi Kua did not dare to meddle with Cao Jin’s actions. Cao Jin had happily returned to the Ninesuns Sky Sect after taking the sky rank herb.

On the other hand, he had to think of ways to appease the Tristar Sect. When he thought carefully about this, he also felt wronged by the situation.

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An explosive news rocked the entire Myriad Domain after three days.

The Tristar Sect announced that they were disbanding. From then onwards, the name of the Tristar Sect would be removed from the Myriad Domain! This shocking news seemed to spread like wildfire throughout the entire area in an instant. The other five great sects considered what misfortunes had previously fallen on the Tristar Sect, and added that to the news of their disbandment. On top of that, there was also the assault on the Regal Pill Palace as a result of the leak regarding the ancient herb garden. When all of these were put together, the other five great sects immediately understood that the traitor who revealed the secret of the ancient herb garden must have been the Tristar Sect.

With this, tumultuous waves began to ebb and flow within the Myriad Domain.

The Grand Cathedral immediately sent out messages to the other great sects, gathering them to massacre the Tristar Sect as punishment for their betrayal. But by the time they hurried to the sect, they discovered that the Tristar Sect had already become ruins. The members of the Tristar Sect had disappeared without a trace, and not even the hint of a shadow was in sight. It was as though the hundred thousand disciples of the Tristar Sect had suddenly evaporated from this world.

Chapter 616: Partitioning the Tristar Sect

The aggrieved Great Cathedral was patently furious that the Tristar Sect had revealed the secret. However, after searching through the wasteland where the sect had stood for a few days, they were unable to find any leads.

“This Tristar Sect must have been too afraid of facing the wrath of the Myriad Domain so they hid themselves,” Honored Master Tian Ming of the Dark North Sect sighed.

Palace Head Dan Chi looked upon the Tristar Sect’s ruins, a pensive look on his face. He had a nagging feeling that there was something amiss about this whole situation. Everything had been fine, so why had the Tristar Sect revealed the secret? This didn’t make common sense at all. However, every member of the Tristar Sect had vanished, so he wasn’t at liberty to say anything now. After all, his prime suspect previously had been the Sacred Sword Palace. From what happened now, it was the Tristar Sect who were the true traitors, and they had already incurred the wrath of the heavens.

Xiang Wentian of the Great Cathedral thundered, “The Tristar Sect must have disbanded in order to evade heavenly judgment!”

Everyone was well aware of this by now. But they were still completely helpless about the fact that the members of the Tristar Sect had made up their mind to disappear.

“I suggest that we discuss what to do with the Tristar Sect’s territory.” Wang Jianyu of the Sacred Sword Palace smiled faintly.

“Yes. Since the Tristar Sect has disbanded, their territory is now without an owner. Therefore, we should allow the civilians who were governed by the Tristar Sect to continue enjoying the protection from a large sect so that they can live on without fear.” These words sounded incredibly grandiose and dignified, but to put it plainly, they meant to partition the land and snatch up resources.

Xiang Wentian nodded. “It is imperative that we do not let that huge plot of land governed by the Tristar Sect become a plot of loose sand. It’s just... how should we divide the territory? Does anyone have any good suggestions?”

“Is there a need to ask? The five great sects should just divide this land equally,” Sect Head Wei Wuying of the Walkabout Sect spoke up. What he was most afraid of was that the Great Cathedral would once again be unreasonable and snatch half the land away. If it became like that, the other four sects could only share the remaining half.

“Indeed, splitting it evenly would be better,” Wang Jianyu laughed. Clearly, he didn’t wish for the Great Cathedral to be the sole benefactor either.

“My Dark North Sect has no objections with splitting evenly,” Honored Master Tian Ming replied.

Naturally, the remaining sect, the Regal Pill Palace, would not have any objections. Dan Chi wasn’t too concerned about the Tristar Sect’s territory. What he was more curious about was the Tristar Sect’s motive for revealing the secret. Astute as he was, he had a nagging sensation that something was wrong with the entire situation.

The Great Cathedral had initially intended to take half the territory and leave the remaining half for the other four sects to share. However, the other sects besides the Regal Pill Palace were all clearly determined to share the pie evenly. If the Great Cathedral exhibited extraordinarily bad table manners, they would enrage everyone here. The Myriad Domain was now officially in dangerous waters starting today. If there was internal strife, then the domain might collapse even without an enemy invasion.

The sects began to discuss how to split the territory immediately after that. Since they were each taking a fair share, the process was straightforward. The territory would be cut into fifths along with various spirit power resources and resources, with each sect taking their own share. After the partition, Xiang Wentian announced, "From today onwards, the Tristar Sect will no longer exist. The Myriad Domain will also not acknowledge the Tristar Sect. Even if they come back and seek to start over, they will still be considered the traitors of the Myriad Domain. They are the shame of our domain and we will tolerate them no longer!"

"That's right. Exposing the secrets of the Myriad Domain means that they have become the public enemy! The Tristar Sect is no longer worthy to be a part of the Myriad Domain!" Wei Wuying also agreed.

The opinions of the five sects regarding this matter were aligned. Since they had just partitioned up the Tristar Sect's land, they also had to find some dignified-sounding reason to do so in order to appease the people. By plastering the title of traitor on the Tristar Sect, the sects could divide up their territory and block their means of revival, all the while sounding completely justified and righteous.

Instead of nit-picking at the problem, Dan Chi replied, "Everyone, since the Tristar Sect has disbanded in an attempt to escape heavenly judgment, they must be plotting something. Has anyone considered this problem?"

"Dan Chi, what do you think?" Honored Master Tian Ming had always been on good terms with Dan Chi and knew that the palace head was a very resourceful person.

"Indeed, Dan Chi, you're smart and forward-looking, so share your thoughts with us. At any rate, the Tristar Sect has been expelled so no one will fault you for saying something wrong," Xiang Wentian also encouraged.

Wang Jianyu only smiled coldly without saying anything. He always felt that Dan Chi only pandered to the crowds and sought attention due to his enmity with Dan Chi. Wei Wuying also smiled slightly, but he wanted to hear any wise opinions Dan Chi might have.

"When my Regal Pill Palace was assaulted by the Ninesuns Sky Sect last time, our opponent demanded the locations of our sky rank herbs and Longevity Pill. Hence, I'm certain that the Tristar Sect must have leaked our secrets to the Ninesuns Sky Sect. The Ninesuns Sky Sect has always eyed the Myriad Domain like a tiger watching its prey. Everyone, think carefully, if the Tristar Sect wasn't in cahoots with the Ninesuns Sky Sect, what reason would they have to gamble on the future of their sect?" Dan Chi's speech caused the expressions of everyone present to take a drastic turn.

"Dan Chi, you're sure the person from last time was a member of the Ninesuns Sky Sect?" Xiang Wentian could not help but ask, obviously sensing how precarious matters were.

"As certain as I can be. After the assault, I inquired after the state of the Upper Eight Regions through my contacts. The enemy who attacked our Regal Pill Palace was one of the ten great disciples of the Ninesuns Sky Sect, Cao Jin, a cultivator at peak sage realm!" Dan Chi still thought about the battle that day with traces of lingering fear in his heart.

In the face of the overwhelming power a first-rate sect exuded, the sects of the Myriad Domain were as insignificant as ever. The unification of the Myriad Domain truly seemed an extraordinarily insurmountable task.

“Ten great disciples? Peak sage realm?” Everyone present sucked in a breath of cold air. This Ninesuns Sky Sect was truly willing to go all out for their aims!

Honored Master Tian Ming muttered to himself and sighed, “Just what does the Ninesuns Sky Sect see in our Myriad Domain? If we’re talking about things of value that we have, the Great Crimson Region looted everything in the great destruction of the Myriad Empire six or seven hundred years ago. Just what is the Ninesuns Sky Sect planning that they have set their sights on us for so long?”

Wei Wuying laughed coldly, “Who the hell knows what they’re planning? They wouldn’t even spare a tiny place like the sixteen kingdom alliance. I really doubt that there’s even anything that good in our Myriad Domain? How could they set their sights on even a wasteland like the sixteen kingdoms?”

With that being said, the sect who found the Ninesuns Sect most repulsive wasn’t the Regal Pill Palace, nor was it the other sects. Instead, it was the Great Cathedral because they were the greatest amongst the sects in the Myriad Domain. Since they were the greatest, they naturally didn’t wish for a greater power to appear. In their own territory, they naturally hoped that they could be the tiger of the land. They didn’t want some passing dragon to eye their territory.

Wang Jianyu suddenly snorted derisively. “Actually, in my opinion, isn’t a certain someone exaggerating matters?”

“Old Wang, who’re you speaking of?” Wei Wuying clearly knew that Wang Jianyu was referring to Palace Head Dan Chi, but didn’t want to intentionally fan the flames of discourse.

“Who else could it be? Even my Sacred Sword Palace admits that we would not be able to defend against one of the ten great disciples of the Ninesuns Sky Sect, a peak sage realm cultivator. Since when has the Regal Pill Palace become so strong? Not only are they safe and sound, they even managed to drive off one of the Ninesuns Sky Sect’s ten great disciples?” Wang Jianyu found this very peculiar, and a bewildered smile made its way to his face.

The others all looked towards Palace Dan Chi with curiosity etched on their faces, clearly somewhat doubtful of this matter. Palace Head Dan Chi maintained his calm expression and did not explain anything. “I have only spoken the truth. Believe it or not, that’s up to you.”

Dan Chi had no intention of explaining anything. It would be an arduous and thankless task. Honored Master Tian Ming nodded in support, “I believe that old friend Dan Chi would not speak nonsense.”

Xiang Wentian also more or less understood Dan Chi’s character. When he saw Dan Chi act this way, he was also more inclined to believe Dan Chi. However, instead of complicating this problem any further, he asked, “Old brother Dan Chi, why don’t you tell us first how the Tristar Sect and Ninesuns Sky Sect are related?”

Dan Chi nodded. “I am ninety percent certain that the reason why the Tristar Sect exposed our secret must have something to do with the Ninesuns Sky Sect. Only, the question that remains is, was the Tristar Sect coerced into it by the Ninesuns Sky Sect? Or were they in cahoots from the very beginning?”

These were the only two possibilities.

Xiang Wentian thought for a long time before sighing, "This matter can only be resolved if we find the remnants of the Tristar Sect. If they were coerced into it, they might be just the first of many. The next target might be each of us."

"Yes. In my opinion, they colluded with the Ninesuns Sky Sect from long ago. The Tristar Sect was originally only a fifth rank sect and only rose abruptly in power a few hundred years ago. Their rise was abnormally fast. Isn't this a bit ridiculous?" Wei Wuying questioned.

Unusually, Dan Chi actually agreed with Wei Wuying's perspective. "I've considered things carefully, and combined things with what I know what happened when my Regal Pill Palace allied ourselves with the Precious Tree Sect. Judging from Tristar Sect's Zhu Changsheng's behavior that day, both his words and actions indicated that he intentionally set up my Regal Pill Palace to tussle with the inspector from the Ninesuns Sky Sect. Now that I think about it, it's very possible that the Tristar Sect has been colluding with the Ninesuns Sky Sect all this time."

Xiang Wentian's expression was grave as he nodded and replied, "If the Tristar Sect has long since colluded with the Ninesuns Sky Sect, that proves that the Ninesuns Sky Sect has set their sights on the Myriad Domain for a long time now." When he spoke of this, Xiang Wentian's tone grew even more contemplative as he wondered to himself, "Just what is this Ninesuns Sky Sect planning? Why does this old man feel as though there's an enormous conspiracy behind all this?"

It was obvious that the Sky Sect coveted the area, but the sect heads present had no reason why and what for. This kind of unknown paranoia caused the Myriad Domain's future to be clouded. The Myriad Domain was truly too weak compared to the Ninesuns Sky Sect, so weak that they could not withstand even one of the Ninesuns Sky Sect's fingers crushing down on them.

To put things bluntly, the Ninesuns Sky Sect only needed to mobilize youths like the ten great disciples to completely level the Myriad Domain without needing to call upon their senior executives. Although they had just divided the Tristar Sect's territory, an enormous pressure weighed down on their hearts the moment each sect thought about the Ninesuns Sky Sect. All of them were fourth rank sects whose words were taken as law in their own territory. Moreover, each of them harbored dreams of domination. None of them wished to be ruled by the Ninesuns Sky Sect, much less than be a couple of pawns on the Ninesuns Sky Sect's chessboard! Hence, the five fourth rank sects of the Myriad Domain faced the Ninesuns Sky Sect with deeply conflicted feelings.

Surprisingly, the members of the Tristar Sect seemed to really have disappeared completely in the next half year. Their territory and resources have been completely taken and divided up, but not a single member stood out to protest. It was as though they had completely perished from the heavenly judgment.

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The remaining powers of the Tristar Sect had concealed themselves in a certain hidden area of the Myriad Domain.

The ones who remained were those who had resolved themselves to follow the Ninesuns Sky Sect. As for those who did not wish to surrender and pay allegiance to the Sky Sect, or those who would rather become rogue cultivators, they no longer existed on this earth.

Chapter 617: Ninth Level Origin Realm

“Envoy Weizi, as of today, our Tristar Sect no longer exists, our territory is divided and our resources raided. It can be said that we possess nothing. Just... just when will this set up of yours be complete?” Zhu Changsheng grumbled like a nagging wife. He’d recently been living a rat’s life, hiding hither and thither everyday. It was really difficult for him to continue remaining calm.

Weizi Kua smiled faintly, “It should be finished soon. How long until the Myriad Grand Ceremony?”

“Myriad Grand Ceremony? There should be about nine months left. Could it be, the Sky Sect’s plans are... are to suppress the five great sects during the Myriad Grand Ceremony?” Zhu Changsheng’s face was filled with doubt.

Weizi Kua shook his head casually. “It would be too boring if the plan was that simple. Sigh, the Ninesuns Sky Sect had originally raised your Tristar Sect with plans of obtaining insider cooperation from you. Who’d have thought... that our plans would lag behind present circumstances. But that’s fine. When the time comes, you’ll still be able to stand out and represent the Myriad Domain. Division Master Zhu, relax, your sacrifice has been noted by the Sky Sect. When the time comes, your reward will definitely be greater than your present loss!”

Zhu Changsheng’s mood turned despondent instead. “Envoy Weizi, there’s only you and me here. Can’t you give me even a little hint? Moreover, in my opinion, if you’re just seeking to suppress the five great sects, why do it at the Myriad Grand Ceremony? I keep thinking that if that was your Sky Sect’s plan, the plan would be far too simple. Moreover, you wouldn’t need to wait that long.”

Weizi Kua’s tone turned grave. “Do you think so little of the Sky Sect’s intellect? Whatever ideas you have, do you think the Sky Sect hasn’t thought of them?”

“Then... then just what kind of plan is it?” Zhu Changsheng decided to smash everything and ask until the matter was clear.

Weizi Kua sighed, “Division Master Zhu, it wasn’t time to tell you yet, but since you’ve asked, I’ll reveal a little bit. This is only between you and me. The other members of the Tristar Sect have no need to know. Too many chefs spoil the broth, if our secret is revealed, neither you nor I can bear the burden of the consequences.”

Zhu Changsheng responded gravely. “Don’t worry, Envoy Weizi. Am I, Zhu Changsheng, the kind of person who cannot recognize the weight of a matter?”

“Alright. The Sky Sect has settled on the day of the Myriad Grand Ceremony. The reason for that is because that ceremony holds special meaning for the Myriad Domain. Even until today, every sect in the Myriad Domain has remained unresigned to the reality that their domain has declined. In their hearts, their dreams of rebuilding of the glorious Myriad Empire have never been shattered. Does Division Master Zhu agree with me on this?”

Zhu Changsheng nodded. "It's true. Although no sect has said it, I reckon that ambitions of rebuilding their glorious era are all on their minds."

"In order to rebuild the glories of yesteryear, what do you think the Myriad Domain lacks the most?" Weizi Kua smiled as he asked.

"Lacks the most?" Zhu Changsheng laughed ruefully. "To tell the truth, too many things are lacking. Firstly, heavyweights who can shoulder the area. Without some emperor realm heavyweights, rebuilding the glorious era is naught but a dream. Actually, after the Great Scarlet Mid Region's assault a few hundred years ago more or less pillaged every valuable resource of the Myriad Empire. Hence, as of now, the Myriad Domain is at the very bottom in terms of resources amongst the Lower Regions. Another thing would be our number of young geniuses waiting in the wings. Although each sect is doing their best to nurture geniuses, their numbers and aptitude is a far cry from what they had been at the peak of our glory..."

In the end, they lacked heavyweights, resources and talent.

Weizi Kua replied with a smile, "Everything you said can be detected by a discerning eye. But you've missed the most important point."

"Oh? Then, please educate me." Zhu Changsheng was rather curious since he'd thought that he presented a well-rounded argument.

"To return the Myriad Domain to its former glory, the most important is to re-establish the empire, re-establish a royal family. Let me ask you, in the current Myriad Domain, which sect fits the bill the most and possesses the most resources?" Weizi Kua returned his question.

"In terms of power, the Great Cathedral is top. But they're only stronger by a hair. They don't have the absolute power to rule." Zhu Changsheng said subconsciously.

"That's right. Then what the Myriad Domain lacks now are talents and qualifications. There is no one who possesses more qualifications than the others."

Zhu Changsheng nodded. It was true that none of the various sects of the Myriad Domain possessed absolute power to make their words the law. As of now, if one sect spoke of re-establishing an imperial regime, it would be simply impossible to persuade the other sects to follow.

"We definitely lack qualifications. But, how is this related to your plan?" Zhu Changsheng asked.

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"I'll tell you all of this slowly. Since you lack qualifications, then we will provide this qualification. I heard that when Myriad Domain was destroyed by the Great Scarlet Mid Region, the two most important tokens, the Imperial Jade Seal and the Dragon Seal were lost without a trace. The Great Scarlet Mid Region searched everywhere but could not recover them. There is such a thing, no?" Weizi Kua was completely at ease.

Zhu Changsheng nodded. "Yes, there is."

“Then, if these two things showed up during the Myriad Grand Ceremony, will the people of the Great Scarlet Mid Region possibly just sit back and watch?” There was something sinister lurking in Weizi Kua’s words.

“The Great Scarlet Mid Region has seemed to stop interfering with the Myriad Domain’s matters in recent centuries,” Zhu Changsheng replied.

“The reason they haven’t interfered is because they feel that the Myriad Domain will never rise again. The domain never be a threat to their power again. If the Imperial Jade Seal and Dragon Seal show up again, someone will certainly talk about rebuilding the Myriad Empire. If that happens, will the Great Scarlet Mid Region still ignore the Myriad Domain then?”

Zhu Changsheng was left speechless. The Great Scarlet Mid Region wasn’t afraid of the Myriad Domain but they didn’t want their enemy to rise from the ashes again. The best way was to sever every possibility of revenge at its roots. Zhu Changsheng could vaguely guess at the Ninesuns Sky Sect’s plans. To put it plainly, they were planning to incite the Great Scarlet mid Region into once again butting heads with the Myriad Domain, after which they would step in and collect their profits.

In that case, not only could they berate the Great Scarlet Mid Region in the name of justice, they could also establish a presence in the Myriad Domain under the righteous flag of assistance.

Zhu Changsheng laughed ruefully, “Such a painstakingly-crafted plan could have been put into action a few hundred years ago when the Great Scarlet Mid Region first ransacked the Myriad Empire.”

“Wrong! That event happened too fast. The Sky Sect didn’t have time to respond. In addition, the Sky Sect was entangled with several other powers and could not spare any remaining energy to interfere. And the Great Scarlet Mid Region destroyed the Myriad Empire in the name of revenge. Their cause was justified so the Sky Sect could not blame anyone. But if the Great Scarlet Mid Region invaded again several hundred years later for no proper reason, that would be encroachment. This nature would be different. There would sufficient reason for the Sky Sect to interfere then.”

Zhu Changsheng had been spontaneously enlightened as he suddenly understood the details of the plan. To put it plainly, in this plan, not only the Tristar Sect, but also the various sects of the Myriad Domain and even the Great Scarlet Mid Region had become the Ninesuns Sky Sect’s pawns. The Sky Sect had woven a marvelous web using the threads of malice between the Great Scarlet Mid Region and the Myriad Domain.

It had to be said that this plan was not only subtle but also guaranteed to work.

The Great Scarlet Mid Region didn’t need any preparations because the moment they knew of the reappearance of the Imperial Jade Seal and Dragon Seal in the Myriad Domain, they would definitely involve themselves. They would not allow the Myriad Domain to rise and start again.

The Sky Sect had chosen the Myriad Grand Ceremony as the core of this plan. The grandiose Myriad Grand Ceremony commemorated the Myriad Empire and reminisced its glorious age. It paid homage to the Myriad Empire and relived its wondrous history. This was a provocation for the Great Scarlet Mid Region. If the Great Scarlet Mid Region had not looked down on the sects of the Myriad Domain, they would have invaded long ago.

Once the Great Scarlet Mid Region discovered the reappearance of the Imperial Jade Seal and Dragon Seal, wouldn't they be bound to suspect that Myriad Domain harbored goals of revival? In that case, it'd be a wonder if they didn't come interfere in the Myriad Domain then.

Although Zhu Changsheng understood the overall plan, there was still a point of confusion for him. "Envoy Weizi, the so-called Imperial Jade Seal and Dragon Seal, have they already fallen into the Sky Sect's hands?"

Weizi Kua laughed raucously before he shook his head. "How could it have fallen into the Sky Sect's hands?"

"But... but then, aren't these two items the heart of the plan? When the Myriad Grand Ceremony comes, aren't these two items going to resurface?"

"Objects are inanimate, but humans are not. Those two things might have long since disappeared from this world. Since the original objects haven't been seen for hundreds of years, it's not difficult to create two identical copies. What these two objects represent is far more important than their actual use. To put it plainly, we want to use the meaning behind these two objects. As for whether they are real or fake, that's secondary."

Zhu Changsheng was dumbfounded. He finally understood why the Ninesuns Sky Sect was this calm. Wasn't it quite easy to create two duplicates?

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Another half year has passed within the sacred grounds of the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect.

Jiang Chen had gained so much from his daily cultivation that he felt completely immersed in his training. Although he'd been trapped here for over a year, Jiang Chen seemed to forget about his surroundings the moment he entered a cultivation mindset. He might desire to leave this place with all his heart, but cultivating in this place made Jiang Chen feel like a fish in water.

In another half a year, his power had once again surged through another break through.

Ninth level origin realm!

Two months ago, Jiang Chen had once again transcended the natural order to step into the ninth level origin realm. In the two months since he'd broken through, Jiang Chen had been working his hardest to join the ranks of peak ninth level origin realm. As of today, he had already caught up to Shen Qinghong in terms of pure martial ability, a mere half step away from sage realm.

However, although they were both at the peak of ninth level sage realm, Jiang Chen was far superior to Shen Qinghong in terms of both combat ability and knowledge of the dao. Through this roughly two years of cultivation in the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect, Jiang Chen had experienced an explosive growth in his combat ability.

His arts had been reinforced in every way. The treasures he'd received had also continuously opened up new avenues of power. As of today, Jiang Chen could face even Ding Tong head on without fear if the latter was still alive, to speak nothing of first level sage realm cultivators like Wang Han.

Even if he couldn't triumph in victory, he certainly wouldn't be defeated. His chances of victory should be fifty-fifty. Even if Jiang Chen might not be a match for sky sage realm experts, he could definitely cut a graceful escape path.

"I still have nine months to break through to sage realm, receive the inheritance and master the key of the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect's overall formation. Then, I can leave this place and return to the Regal Pill Palace... I must, must make it in time for the Myriad Grand Ceremony." Jiang Chen had been working hard towards this goal for two years. He had a nagging premonition that something enormous would happen at this time's Myriad Grand Ceremony!

Chapter 618: Breaking Through All Three Outer Formations

Jiang Chen grew ever closer to his goal of the tower of inheritance as he set foot into ninth level origin realm. He'd been studying the three formations over the past two months as he'd be able to face the tower directly as long as he broke through the third formation. This last formation was called the "Great Dream of Spring and Autumn Formation".

There were three formations to the tower of inheritance, the first of the "Minor Artifice Formation", one of illusion; the second "Ancient Slaughter Formation of Seven" was one that sought to kill; and the third "Great Dream of Spring and Autumn Formation" was one of death.

A formation of death didn't mean that it was an unattended formation with no one in charge, but that there were nine paths that led to death within, and one to life.

If one didn't find the only way out of the formation after entering it, one would be forever trapped within until death of old age. The "Great Dream of Spring and Autumn Formation" was like its name, a formation that made challengers feel like they had dreamed a great dream. When one finally awoke, they would discover that countless springs and autumns had come and gone, and they were doddering, old wrecks.

The Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect had used this formation in ancient times to take down countless experts. Of course, the version in front of the tower of inheritance wasn't one at peak condition. It was meant to test heirs to the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect, so it was set for geniuses in the sage realm. Although Jiang Chen had yet to enter this realm, he felt that his current level was absolutely not less than any sage realm genius. He might even have his own advantages as well.

Jiang Chen took a deep breath in as he stood outside the formation and leapt in with gusto. The scenery in front of him immediately changed as he did so. There were ten enormous pillars reaching for the sky in front of him, with many ancient glyphs and characters carved on them. There was a faint golden gaze shimmering over each of them, giving one an exceedingly historic and simple feeling.

He observed all of them through the God's Eye and discovered that all the carvings on them were different! "Mm? These are cultivation methods?"

There was a method carved on each pillar, and the level of each pillar was quite high. The ten pillars formed a perfect circle, and Jiang Chen stood in the midst of the circle. There were also ten passageways between the ten pillars.

“It looks like the ten pillars correspond to the nine possibilities of death and only one of life in the formation. This means that there’s only one of these passageways that I can take, and all the others lead to certain death?”

Jiang Chen didn’t make any careless moves in the heat of the moment. He believed that since this was a test, there would be hints as well. The formation wasn’t set up for enemies, in which no clues would be left at all. Its purpose wasn’t to kill, but to test those who were here. Therefore, it was up to how observant Jiang Chen was.

His mind settled as his thoughts traveled here, and he sat down cross-legged, examining each pillar with the God’s Eye. At first glance, the methods on the pillars all seemed to have their unique points, and they seemed to be on similar levels. The differences between them didn’t seem that great.

“If there are hints in this formation, then they must lay within the methods. But where is the crux of the problem?” Jiang Chen was in no hurry as he began a careful study. Since he couldn’t identify the issue with human eyes, he decided to try each of the methods.

A month later...

A ripple of disturbance suddenly travelled through Jiang Chen’s consciousness, as if a needle had slightly pricked him. He knew that this wasn’t an external stimulus, but an innate sense of rejection from his consciousness.

“What’s going on?” Jiang Chen suddenly came to himself as he broke out into a cold sweat. His expression changed even more as he slightly perused what had happened before.

“Frightening, too frightening! I actually lost myself unknowingly in the formation! These methods have the ability to lure one in. It was a good thing that a sliver of rejection formed in my consciousness. If I’d really sunk and lost myself in the cultivation, not knowing the passing of the seasons outside, then it would truly be like a great dream, and I’d be a doddering old wreck at the end of my lifespan when I finally awoke.”

Jiang Chen suddenly realized that this method was all smoke and mirrors. Although there was an exceedingly high temptation in training it, one was destined to not actually achieve anything with it. There wasn’t anything tangible from this technique at all apart from losing oneself in it.

Even cultivating with it for a hundred years would cause one to wake up with a handful of dross. There would be nothing at all when one woke up apart from an aged body and halted training.

Sweat poured out over Jiang Chen’s body when his thoughts travelled here. He had already been quite careful and tried each method one by one, wanting to find the clues, but he’d still nearly lost himself! If it wasn’t for his training in Psychic’s Head and the enormous strength of his consciousness, he likely would’ve lost himself within and been unable to wake.

He might’ve woken up three or five hundred years later, halted in the origin realm and past the prime period for cultivation. He would be unable to raise his strength any more and would slowly live out his days until they were no more. His heart palpitating with fright, Jiang Chen immediately summoned the Goldbiter Rat King. “Ole Gold, keep an eye out for me. Wake up me if I don’t come to within three days.”

Since Jiang Chen knew that there was something amiss with the pillars, he had a strategy to deal with them in turn. The Goldbiter Rats had seen their strength increase markedly since their baptism in the wood spirit spring. Their power in their lineage had continuously awoken and their strength increase in leaps and bounds. They were now the equivalent of a human first level sage realm, and listened to everything Jiang Chen said these days.

Progress was swift since Jiang Chen had a plan of attack, and he made a play on all of the pillars. He finally discovered on the seventh pillar that the method on this pillar wasn't illusion, that it was completely real. However, he didn't lose his composure in his delight. He carefully tried all of the remaining pillars before finally confirming his findings.

Since he had located the difference, this meant that he had found the clue. He entered the passageway next to the seventh pillar and used the method on the pillar to easily find the exit to the formation. The "Great Dream of Spring and Autumn Formation", success!

Jiang Chen found it a bit hard to believe when he walked out of the formation. There hadn't been any blood or gore involved breaking through this formation, but it was far more frightening than the Ancient Slaughter Formation of Seven!

Although danger had lurked in every corner of that formation, Jiang Chen had had a proper plan to deal with it all. In the Great Dream of Spring and Autumn Formation however, he had unwittingly fallen into its trap. If it wasn't for his own power awakening to the fact that something was amiss, he might not have been able to extricate himself.

There was no formation disk to this particular formation, nor were there any other presents. Yet, Jiang Chen wasn't depressed as the tower of inheritance was right in front of him now!

The tower didn't look that eye-catching as it was only three stories high. However, Jiang Chen wasn't of the mind to go charging right into it. The three formations outside had just been small tests. Jiang Chen believed that even greater tests lay within if he wanted to obtain the tower's inheritance.

The owner of this place had said that one had to be at least sage realm to try, so Jiang Chen didn't want to do things haphazardly. The formations on the outside had been fine, but since the tower had to do with the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect legacy, it would not be as gentle as the three formations on the outside. Fatal danger might very well lurk behind every corner of the tower!

Thus, Jiang Chen decided to enter the tower of inheritance only after his power had broken through to the sage realm.

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The outskirts of some forbidden area in the Ninesuns Sky Sect.

Cao Jin had been standing outside of a residence for a while and finally seemed to make up his mind on a difficult decision. He raised his hand and threw a message glyph into the residence.

A slight crack formed in the restrictions outside the residence after a short while as a short, bald-headed young man walked it, wreathed with insincere smiles. "Oh my, look what the wind's blown in today? Senior brother Cao? To think that I, Wu Heng, would have such an honor as a visit from a great disciple?"

The fatty voiced pretty words, but he didn't set foot outside his residence, an obvious display of wariness against Cao Jin.

Cao Jin smiled remotely. "Don't be such a coward, Wu Heng. You have nothing that I'd use any method possible to obtain. There's no need to be so afraid."

Cao Jin was quite observant and had naturally identified a few problems. Wu Heng had yet to set foot outside his residence, obviously afraid that Cao Jin would do something against him. What a minor character!

Wu Heng chuckled and rubbed his head, but didn't deny anything. He leered strangely, "Can't blame me senior brother Cao! The environment of our Sky Sect is harsh and ruthless. I might have died a hundred times over if I hadn't been more careful. And, I'm not a narcissistic person. What might one of the great disciples want with a fatty like me?"

Cao Jin burst out laughing. "Why can't it be something good?"

Wu Heng cackled. "This fatty doesn't believe that senior brother Cao would think of a small character like me if there was anything good. All the true disciples have lofty visions, not to mention of the ten great disciples like senior brother Cao."

"Alright." Cao Jin spread out his hands. "Cut the chatter. Apart from a body full of fat, what about you would tempt anyone? I'm here this time to talk about working together."

"Working together?" The fatty was a suspicious person by nature, and his first thought upon hearing that one of the ten great disciples wanted to work with him was, is this a trap?

"Senior brother Cao, do you swear you're not trying to trap me somehow?" Fatty Wu stared carefully at Cao Jin, trying to figure out what this fellow was up to.

"Paranoid guy." Cao Jin furrowed his brows. "I'll be frank, I'm looking at your talents in formation. We don't have many geniuses in this area. You count amongst the top three in the younger generation."

Fatty Wu smirked. "Even if I'm in the top three, there are still ones who are stronger than me in front!"

Cao Jin responded faintly, "Those who are stronger than you are all true disciples who rank higher than me. What's the point of going to them?"

Fatty Wu kept smirking as he knew that Cao Jin spoke the truth. Fatty Wu wasn't the top in the younger generation when it came to martial or pill dao, but he was absolutely in the top three when it came to formations. In fact, he even thought that he was the strongest formation master in the younger generation. It was just that he was very adept at hiding his strength. He was deathly afraid of having too strong a reputation and eliciting displeasure from the two great disciples. This was why he was happy with the title of "third best in the younger generation". Honestly speaking, Wu Heng felt confident he wouldn't lose to those two, and might even be better than them!

Chapter 619: An Unrepentant Cao Jin

The fatty was cautious by nature because this was his way of survival. Thus, even though Cao Jin had said thus, the fatty still didn't express anything and had his trademark superficial clinging to his face, appearing completely harmless to the world. Cao Jin knew that Wu Heng was the sort who wouldn't

make a move unless it was one that was completely assured, just like a hunter wouldn't loose a falcon until he spotted the hare. Cao Jin smiled faintly and said nothing more, making an earth rank spirit herb appear in his hand with a flip.

"Fatty Wu, I've never liked to waste words. I want to go to someplace, but I need to borrow your skills in formations. This is the deposit, take it." Cao Jin threw the earth rank spirit herb down at the fatty's feet.

Fatty Wu chuckled but didn't reach out to take it. He flicked a glance at the herb at his feet, finally picking it up after careful consideration and elimination of danger. A slight smile appeared on his face as a sliver of greed flashed through his almost imperceptible eyes. Although he was quite shocked at how generous Cao Jin had been, he didn't display it outwardly.

The fatty smiled mischievously as he tossed the earth rank spirit herb up and down in his hand. "Senior brother Cao, why do I feel like there's to be a heavy price for this earth rank spirit herb?"

Cao Jin smiled indifferently and replied, "You can reject it if you think the price is too high. There aren't too many formation geniuses in the sect, but there are still some. I'll even take another step back and say that it's fine even if I can't find a formation genius from the sect to help me. The only reason I came to you was because we're from the same sect. It's not like I don't have backups to choose from."

It would be false to say that Wu Heng was not moved in the face of this earth rank spirit herb. Moreover, Cao Jin had said this was just a deposit. In other words, there would be more remuneration later on. To add on to that, he was a cautious person at heart. Wu Heng didn't want to offend Cao Jin, one of the sect's ten great disciples.

"Senior brother Cao, since you think so highly of this fatty, then let's discuss this in detail in my residence," The fatty entered his residence with a flash of his body.

Cao Jin was skilled in arts and hence fearless as he followed the fatty in. Entering the cave also removed the possibility that others might hear them.

"Senior brother Cao, can you tell me the details now?" Wu Heng chuckled.

"I've found an interesting place when visiting the Myriad Domain this time. But that place is protected by a formation and is usually very difficult to enter. I have some understanding of formations, but while I was there, I couldn't find any ways to break it. Junior brother Wu, you're a great master at formations. Consider this stalk of earth rank herb as payment for asking you to accompany me to that place. If we enter that place, then I'll take sixty percent of our gains and you'll take twenty."

"What about the remaining twenty?" Fatty Wu's round eyes spun.

"The remaining twenty percent will be left for junior brother Shi Zhen."

"Oh? Junior brother Shi Zhen, he's a second rank pill king. I've heard he's going to try for the examination to be certified to be a third rank pill king soon." Wu Heng was a little surprised.

"That's right. Only with my martial prowess, your talent in formations and junior brother Shi Zhen's aptitude for pill dao, there will be hope," Cao Jin smiled faintly.

"Since we'll be working together, why should senior brother Cao receive sixty percent?" Wu Heng's signature smile still hung on his face even as he asked that question.

“Does this even need to be asked?” Cao Jin’s brow furrowed.

“Eh...” Fatty Wu opened and closed his mouth but didn’t continue asking. Instead he changed the question, “It sounds like a good prospect but how do I know if that place is worth going? Are there any dangers?”

“I’ll paying you a stalk of earth rank spirit herb as deposit. You tell me if it’s worth it.” Cao Jin asked indifferently.

“The earth rank spirit herb is good, but I need to be alive to enjoy it.” Fatty Wu smiled selfishly. “Senior brother Cao knows what a death-fearing coward this fatty is. I will not take such dangerous risk regarding without a sufficient payoff.”

Cao Jin nodded slightly. He stared at Fatty Wu for a few seconds before suddenly extending his hand. “Since it’s like that, give that earth rank spirit herb back to me. Pretend that I’ve never come to you.”

Cao Jin abruptly stood up. This seemed to affect Fatty Wu instead as he hurriedly laughed in reply, “Senior brother Cao, let’s talk over this nicely alright? Since you want your junior brother to put in effort, you’ve got to give me some hints.”

“I won’t say anything else. I’ll just tell you that sky rank spirit herbs appeared in that place not long ago.”

“What?” Fatty Wu suddenly leapt to his feet. “Sky rank spirit herbs?”

There wasn’t a trace of emotion on Cao Jin’s face as he nodded remotely.

“This... Fine, I’ll go. But if there’s really any profit, senior brother Cao will take half. I’ll split the remaining half with senior brother Shi Zhen.”

In the end, it was still a problem with the split of the profits. Wu Heng wasn’t a person who’d wake up early for nothing. Cao Jin thought for a brief moment before nodding. “I can do that.”

“Wonderful. Such decisive thinking, as expected of one of the ten great disciples.” Fatty Wu laughed raucously and wrapped in a fawning note in things as well.

“When should we set off?” Wu Heng had become extremely motivated in a flash. He could not helped but be moved by sky rank spirit herbs. He was only a sage realm expert who usually used true saint rank spirit herbs. Only emperor realm experts were qualified to dip into earth rank spirit herbs, and what more of sky rank spirit herbs?

“The sooner the better. What preparations do you need to make?” Cao Jin asked.

Wu Heng thought for a instant before replying, “Give me three days to prepare. I need three days to get some things ready to break through the formation.”

Cao Jin nodded then stared meaningfully at Wu Heng, “Junior brother Wu, I trust that I don’t have to remind you what you need to be careful of during our cooperation?”

Wu Heng smiled. “If Senior brother Cao cannot trust me, then we can swear heavenly oaths before we set off. We can work together sincerely with these oaths.”

Cao Jin might have been the one warning Wu Heng, but in reality, wasn't it Wu Heng who was also afraid that Cao Jin would betray them after he got what he wanted? After all, working together with a top tier genius like Cao Jin was akin to scheming with a tiger. There was always the possibility that Cao Jin would burn the bridge after crossing the river. Hence, Wu Heng still felt that swearing a heavenly oath would be the safest option.

"We don't have to wait until we set off. Let's swear it now." Cao Jin usually did things very thoroughly. He certainly didn't want Wu Heng to reveal this secret the moment he walked away. The two of them swore their oaths on the spot and agreed to depart three days later.

After three days, second rank pill king Shi Zhen met up with Cao Jin and the two of them came to Wu Heng's cave together. Before the three of them set off, they swore another round of heavenly oaths.

"Senior brother Cao, can you stop keeping us in suspense now?" The scholarly second rank pill king, Shi Zhen, spoke up before Wu Heng had the chance to speak.

Cao Jin smiled leisurely. "It's not that I want to keep you in suspense, but that this matter is related to many things. Everyone has heard of Mt. Rippling Mirage in the Myriad Domain, no?"

Wu Heng and Shi Zhen glanced at each other before shaking their heads. Clearly, as disciples of a first rate sect in the Upper Eight Regions, they weren't too interested in the lower regions. Although the Ninesuns Sky Sect's plans involved the Myriad Domain, these plans weren't relevant to most people. They naturally wouldn't care for matters irrelevant to them.

Cao Jin wasn't surprised to see the two shake their heads. He explained, "On my trip to the Myriad Domain, I happened to see the various sects emerge from Mt. Rippling Mirage. Every sect that had entered had received sky rank spirit herbs!"

"Every sect?" Shi Zhen could not help but ask hoarsely as he sucked in a breath of cold air. As a second rank pill king, he was naturally more aware of the value of the sky rank spirit herbs. Even in the Upper Eight Regions, sky rank spirit herbs more or less didn't exist outside of a few special areas. Areas able to produce sky rank spirit grass were all remote, ancient places that were incredibly difficult to find, or even ruins left behind from ancient times.

"That Mt. Rippling Mirage, could it be an ancient ruin? Shi Zhen was moved.

"I don't know if it's an ancient ruin. Anyways, according to the report I received, the sects extracted a total of twelve stalks of sky rank spirit herbs from the mountain!"

"What?" Shi Zhen was even more startled. "They harvested twelve stalks of sky rank spirit herbs all at once? How... how is this possible?"

Even in the Upper Eight Regions, this was something difficult to see even once a century. It was very rare to find a cluster of sky rank spirit herbs. At least, in the recent century, no one in the Upper Eight Regions had heard of such a thing. Of course, the Upper Eight Regions were vast and unbounded. Maybe such a thing had happened, but news of it had been suppressed by various higher powers. Nevertheless, one thing was certain, there definitely had not been a case in which twelve stalks of sky rank spirit herbs had appeared at one time in the recent history of the Ninesuns Sky Sect.

“Senior brother Cao, can it be that your information is wrong?” Fatty Wu could not help but ask. He found this matter too hard to believe.

“My report is one hundred percent accurate. It’s definitely not false,” Cao Jin’s tone was assured. Please, the Tristar Sect had nearly been destroyed for the sake of this information, so how could their information be false? Moreover, he had extorted the Tristar Sect’s sky rank spirit herb from the grasp of their sect head as well. With that genuine sky rank spirit herb, Cao Jin would naturally not suspect their information as false.

“But if that place really has sky rank spirit herbs, those sects have already swept the whole place clean. There shouldn’t be any left, right?” Fatty Wu raised another doubt.

“That Mt. Rippling Mirage also contains an enormous ancient herb garden. They might not have cleared the area in such a short amount of time. Moreover, places able to produce sky rank spirit herbs might contain fortuitous chances for us. Perhaps if we’re lucky, we might discover an ancient ruin and receive some inheritance that could even surpass the value of sky rank spirit herbs?”

However, Fatty Wu replied, “These are just guesses. So many people have entered that place. I think they must have more or less taken everything good in there. Why spend so much effort breaking into that restricted area when we can just take them from the Myriad Domain?”

His idea was coincidentally the same as Cao Jin’s initial idea.

Only, Cao Jin had extinguished this line of thought after his suffering at the Regal Pill Palace. Once they exposed their identities, they’d derail the Ninesuns Sky Sect’s plans, to say nothing of whether or not they were able to seize the herbs. Even if they held high positions in the sect, they definitely wouldn’t escape punishment. Thus, after careful consideration, Cao Jin decided that entering the restricted area of Mt. Rippling Mirage was the more attractive option.

Shi Zhen also supported Fatty Wu’s idea. “That’s right, Senior Brother Cao, I think it’ll be better if we demand for the herbs from the Myriad Domain’s sects directly.”

Cao Jin smiled coldly. “If things were so simple, why the hell do you two think I sought the two of you out? The Sky Sect’s plans involve the Myriad Domain. If we rob them in broad daylight, we’ll be directly disrupting the sect’s plans. Do you two think you have the capacity to challenge the sect’s plans?”

The two fell silent. They didn’t have that kind of courage at all.

Chapter 620: A Storm Brews Again Over Mt. Rippling Mirage

Cao Jin wasn’t surprised when he saw that the two lacked fighting spirit. Instead, he chuckled softly and tossed out another piece of important news. “Even if the two of you didn’t gain anything from Mt. Rippling Mirage, there’s one more thing that we can be absolutely certain about.”

“What?”

Cao Jin smiled triumphantly, “There is another person in Mt. Rippling Mirage who possesses five stalks of sky rank herbs, more than a hundred earth rank herbs and even a few thousand stalks of Sage Fledgling Grass.”

When Zhu Changsheng had initially revealed the secret of the ancient herb garden, he'd emphasized Jiang Chen, especially how the disciple had extorted half of each sect's spirit herbs by taking advantage of the Miasma antidote. In addition, the way Elder Tan Lang had exaggerated Jiang Chen's feats had left a very deep impression on Cao Jin. What was more, Zhu Changsheng had reminded him that Jiang Chen had been the one who had beheaded the owner of the azure phoenix constitution, Long Juxue. That had caused the third ranked of the ten great disciples, Yong Xingyun, to lose his cultivation furnace and had affected him to the point where he still had not progressed in his Dragon Phoenix Sword. Moreover, the second rate genius Ding Tong, that the Sky Sect had sent to the Myriad Domain, had likely died at Jiang Chen's hands. Since so much had happened, it was impossible for Cao Jin to forget who Jiang Chen was.

Cao Jin had also reflected on those events carefully after he'd lost at the Regal Pill Palace. He was a little regretful that he'd been so rash. He suspected that Jiang Chen had not emerged from Mt. Rippling Mirage not because he couldn't, but rather because he didn't want to. After all, if he emerged, he would have to split his sky and earth rank herbs with his sect. Cao Jin judged people using himself as a barometer. He thought that Jiang Chen chose to remain on Mt. Rippling Mirage as a form of insurance because that way, he would not have to share his sky and earth rank herbs with his sect.

In all fairness, Cao Jin felt that his deductions were fairly reasonable because he was speculating about Jiang Chen with the mindset of a petty, vile character. And if his deductions proved correct, Jiang Chen had to have at least five sky rank herbs and a hundred earth rank herbs on him. In addition, the members of the Sacred Sword Palace had also verified Jiang Chen to be in possession of several thousand stalks of Sage Fledgling Grass! Besides these, this Jiang Chen had also refined the Longevity Pill. In other words, the Longevity Pill recipe was in his head.

A person so laden with treasure had remained in Mt. Rippling Mirage! Even if Cao Jin made no other gains during this trip into the mountain, just capturing Jiang Chen alone would net him an enormous profit. He hadn't been planning to speak of Jiang Chen, but when he saw that these two had no motivation to fight, he could only reveal this matter to light a fire in them.

Second rank pill king Shi Zhen muttered, "Senior brother Cao, you're not just making things up to persuade us to go, are you? A single person has pocketed five stalks of sky rank herbs? Aren't there only a total of twelve stalks?"

"That's right. Who could have so much face as to take almost half of that?" Fatty Wu was also doubtful.

"I'm a hundred percent sure of this. I swear on my character that I'm not lying to you. This person also knows how to refine pills. He's already refined a Longevity Pill that extended the life of a sage realm elder by five hundred years."

With this, Shi Zhen lost his cool, "Extended by five hundred years? Longevity Pill? Senior brother Cao, forgive my bluntness but this... this is..."

If the members of the Tristar Sect had not vowed so solemnly, Cao Jin would not have believed it either. But the Tristar Sect definitely wouldn't have risked the destruction of their sect on a lie. Hence, Cao Jin strongly believed that their information couldn't be false. The senses of an expert were also telling him that this matter was likely to be true.

“Junior brother Shi Zhen, I’ve already said what I can. Make your decision. At worst, I’ll invite another genius,” Cao Jin sounded somewhat displeased. He’d already gone against his usual code of conduct by explaining so much to these two disciples who were completely inferior to him, yet these two were still jabbering nonstop. He was naturally rather upset with this situation.

Shi Zhen spoke up without hesitation, “I’ll go.”

It was clear that the description of the Longevity Pill had turned this second rank pill king a little crazy.

Cao Jin nodded at Shi Zhen’s reply. “Junior brother Shi Zhen, the existence of the Longevity Pill is absolutely true. The one who received the pill was the Sect Head of the Great Cathedral, Xiang Wentian. That old man had apparently less than five hundred years to live and his cultivation was about to scatter to the winds. But after he took the Longevity Pill, the effects were nearly instantaneous. Time itself seemed reversed—he looked several hundred years younger. This was something that the Tristar Sect saw with their own eyes. There’s no possibility for it to be fake.”

Shi Zhen’s lips trembled slightly. His eyes glowed as he breathed, “Senior brother Cao, promise me. If we get our hands on this Longevity Pill recipe, I must receive a copy.”

Cao Jin smiled calmly, “Naturally.”

Wu Heng replied hastily, “My martial prowess is average, but still, this Longevity Pill should be split by the rules. I won’t ask for much, just that I receive twenty-five percent of the benefits from this Longevity Pill.”

Cao Jin glanced at Wu Heng before he said, “Twenty percent for you. Forty percent each for junior brother Shi Zhen and myself.”

Wu Heng opened and closed his mouth, but did not argue further. After the three had settled the matter, they didn’t dally, choosing to set off immediately.

The three maintained a low profile along the way, only entering the Myriad Domain after a month’s journey. They played by the rules and their plan, arriving at the outskirts of Mt. Rippling Mirage without alerting anyone.

Mt. Rippling Mirage had been the imperial medicine garden left behind by Myriad Empire. Therefore, it was remote but not difficult to find. The three people entered the main hall of the mountain before examining their surroundings.

“Judging from this place, no one has come here for nearly two years,” Fatty Wu said after he completed his survey.

Cao Jin nodded, “The people of the Myriad Domain all believe that the outskirts of Mt. Rippling Mirage are closed off to all, with the restrictions lifting only once every thirty years. It’s impossible to lift them before that cycle is up. I guess the next time someone comes will be the next Pill Battles.”

Fatty Wu nodded in agreement as he walked out of the main hall, arriving at the exterior of the restricted area. Cao Jin and Shi Zhen stood behind the fatty without a word. In terms of formation techniques, Wu Heng held the greatest right to speak, so they naturally would not want to disrupt his line of thought.

Fatty Wu finally lowered his gaze after looking around for half an hour.

“How is it?” Cao Jin hurriedly asked.

“This formation is far from simple.” As a genius on formations in a first rate sect, Wu Heng had seen various kinds of intricate formations. “If I’m guessing correctly, this should be an ancient formation,” Fatty Wu muttered.

Cao Jin was delighted. “Then, you’re saying that this place is really an ancient ruin?”

Wu Heng’s tone was grave. “I can sense from its presence that it’s definitely ancient. The formation is extremely complicated and protects a large area. There are almost no flaws. I wonder what kind of genius its creator was for this ancient formation to have lasted until today while still retaining such strong defensive abilities?”

“Junior brother Wu, you’ve spoken so much but you’ve veered off topic. Can you break this formation or not?” Shi Zhen asked with displeasure.

Wu Heng murmured, “There’s no possibility that I can break the formation. However, I do have a formation shattering technique that gives me a twenty to thirty percent chance of penetrating this formation. That would allow me to enter the interior of the mountain.”

“Formation shattering technique?” Cao Jin perked up as he heard this.

“Yes, the formation shattering technique is a remarkable ancient art, and I’ve only scratched the surface with my cultivation. It’s said that formation experts in the past could refine treasures that could directly penetrate all restrictions and formations, but these kinds of treasures are beyond rare. There are also some experts who research formation shattering techniques. These techniques rely on finding the weakest link in the formation, tearing a gap there, and passing through.”

“Then, junior brother Wu can open a crack through this formation?”

Wu Heng didn’t give his word. “I only have a twenty to thirty percent chance, and that only because this formation has weathered countless eons since the ancient era. Otherwise, even the heavyweight formation masters of the sect could not possibly break this formation, much less me.”

“It’s that powerful?” Cao Jin was moved.

“Which ancient formation isn’t powerful? If it wasn’t powerful, how could it have persisted for so long without collapsing?”

Cao Jin and Shi Zhen both nodded in turn.

Shi Zhen hurriedly replied, “Since it’s like that, then let’s see junior brother Wu display his might.”

Wu Heng didn’t protest. Since everyone was cooperating, he’d be looked down on if he refused to show a few cards. He would also lose any right to speak from then on.

He circled the outside of the formation before choosing a position and making some preparations. He turned his head to Cao Jin and Shi Zhen. “Senior brothers, there’s only a twenty to thirty percent chance of success. If this fails, you can’t blame me. But if it succeeds, we have at most the span of a few breaths.

The moment you see me rush in, you must follow on my heels. Once time is up, the formation will naturally recover.”

Cao Jin and Shi Zhen both nodded again.

Wu Heng crushed a talisman in one hand, shattering it. He made a string of rapid hand seals before his hand slashed downwards sharply with a battle axe.

Boom!

The exterior of the formation rippled rapidly like illusionary water. Faint cracks appeared on its surface. However, the cracks only stayed for an instant before the surface swiftly returned to its formerly pristine state.

Wu Heng’s face fell. He shook his head with a rueful smile. “Just one move away, just a little bit more. I cracked the surface, but the cracks weren’t enough to let us through. My battle axe doesn’t seem to possess the necessary quality.”

Cao Jin furrowed his brows. “You’re saying that the problem wasn’t with your technique, but that your battle axe itself wasn’t strong enough?”

“The technique was flawless,” Wu Heng sighed. “If the final cut had been two or three times stronger, I’d definitely have broken through.”

Cao Jin nodded before he took out an object—the Moonshatter Awl he’d initially used against the Regal Pill Palace.

“Fatty, this Moonshatter Awl is an emperor rank treasure that specializes in breaking formations. How does it compare to your battle axe?”

Fatty Wu’s face was instantly flushed with wild glee at the sight of the Moonshatter Awl. “The Moonshatter Awl? Senior brother Cao, you’re seriously pampered! This Moonshatter Awl is a godly formation breaking treasure. Why didn’t you say anything earlier? With this Moonshatter Awl, I have at least an eighty percent chance of breaking through!”

“Then do it.” Cao Jin didn’t like to waste words.

Wu Heng nodded and began to build up momentum without further ado. He shattered another talisman in his hand, the light rays travelling towards the formation.

His figure shot outwards in a beautiful arc, the Moonshatter Awl carving a stunning line through the air.

Pffft—

A huge hole was torn in the void of the formation.

“Go!”

Three shadows seemed to react simultaneously as they raced into the formation. The moment the three shadows entered, the illusion-like restrictive formation wavered slightly as it once again regained its original form.

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Within the sacred grounds of the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect, Jiang Chen sat cross-legged on the floor. Inner energy circulated rapidly within his body, suffusing it with resplendent light. He had reached the crucial step in assailing the sage realm. Once he crossed this step, he would be completely free of the shackles of the origin realm and have successfully stepped into the sage realm.

He'd spent nearly two entire years in the sacred grounds of the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect in preparation for this moment. In these two years, he had only one goal in mind—reach the sage realm, receive the inheritance and leave this place! And today, after enduring so much pain and struggle, he'd finally reached the most important step!