

Time 471

Outside Of Time

Chapter 471: Deviant Ghost

The autumn rain contained coldness. When it landed on a person, it would silently seep into their body. It wasn't easy to disperse and finally, it would turn into bone-piercing cold.

The tune was like this.

Xu Qing shivered uncontrollably. He thought of the pair of women's boots he had seen walking over in the blood fog when he was at the scavenger campsite with Captain Lei in the jungle of the forbidden zone.

At that time, he, who was only a Qi Refinement rogue cultivator, had felt a similar coldness that froze his soul and sealed his body.

Now, his cultivation base was extraordinary but he still had the same feeling.

That long, ethereal and feminine singing voice seemed to have materialized and became a soul-stirring funeral tune, causing dozens of the thousand-odd cultivators in the surroundings to tilt and fall from their location.

They fell into the deep, dark pit as though they were devoured.

The remaining people's minds shook violently and horrified expressions appeared on their faces uncontrollably. This was because the singing voice quavered.

Every letter seemed to contain countless trembling voices, as though the person singing was also afraid.

It was as though they were putting on a show for the dead.

In the entire deep pit, only the sound of this performance echoed. Moreover, even if people blocked their hearing, it was useless. This sound would reverberate in their souls and transform into anomalous substances, breeding in everyone's minds.

In an instant, as the anomalous substances in the deep pit continued to thicken, the voice that was singing became weaker. In the end, it turned into a soft murmur that was only faintly discernible.

Everyone let out a breath of relief. However, another tune suddenly rang out.

"Previous life, you are not here; I am always in the afterlife. Who cut off lovesickness, who drew the mortal world..."

The song this time was different from before. It wasn't that soul-stirring or cold. It was clearly a different singer but it was even more sinister, causing one's mind to tremble. They all looked in the direction Xu Qing was in.

This was because this voice came from there!

Xu Qing abruptly turned his head and looked at the captain.

The captain's eyes also widened as he looked at Xu Qing.

In Xu Qing's pupils, he saw his figure and... the white-clothed figure floating behind it.

The person singing was none other than the figure who had appeared behind the captain at some point in time.

The captain narrowed his eyes and his expression was sinister. Another face appeared in his pupils and his entire body emitted a cold aura. He even widened his mouth, revealing his teeth. He suddenly turned his head and took a big bite behind him.

The sound of teeth colliding spread in all directions. One could see how ruthless this bite was.

However, the sound of singing was still there.

However, this time, the sound appeared behind another cultivator. The cultivator's body trembled and he felt a huge life-and-death crisis. Just as he was about to crush the teleportation jade slip in his hand, at the next instant... a look of confusion appeared in his eyes and he sang a tune. His expression also became sinister.

Immediately after, his body rumbled and the anomalous substances in him instantly erupted to the extreme. He directly mutated!

His back swelled with sarcomas, and his arms became several times thicker. Bone spikes pierced through his flesh and clothes.

His legs were equally thick and exploded at the thigh area. Seven to eight tentacles that were covered in blood-colored mucus grew out from both thighs. The greatest change was his head. His entire head... transformed into a huge blue eye.

His figure suddenly disappeared and when he reappeared, he was in front of a small sect cultivator. That cultivator wasn't ordinary either. He immediately performed a series of hand seals; flames appeared in the surroundings and enveloped the mutated cultivator.

However, it was useless. A tentacle stretched out from the flames and directly penetrated the cultivator's mouth.

The cultivator screamed. His body was lifted high and his stomach continued to expand until it exploded.

From the location of the explosion, the tentacle that stretched into his body swung out and continued to shake, causing flesh and blood to splatter everywhere.

This scene caused everyone to gasp.

The mutated cultivator's body swayed, displaying astonishing speed as he charged toward another person.

In an instant, screams and cries echoed endlessly.

A few breaths later, the mutated cultivator who had killed many people appeared beside Xu Qing.

The moment it appeared, it hugged Xu Qing. A ghastly mouth appeared on its stomach, wanting to devour him.

As the danger in the deep pit was revealed, the selfishness of human nature was also exposed. There were clearly more than a thousand people in the surroundings and there was not even a need for them to attack together. As long as seven to eight of them joined forces, no matter how fast this mutated cultivator was, it would be useless.

However, everyone had different thoughts. Many people took advantage of the moment when the mutated cultivator attacked others and headed straight into the depths of the deep pit, avoiding the danger here.

There were hundreds of such people. Some decisively crushed their jade talismans and chose to leave, unwilling to continue participating.

The scene was very chaotic.

Xu Qing didn't bother with these. The instant the mutated cultivator arrived, a cold glint flashed in his eyes. He didn't retreat but charged forward instead, instantly approaching the mutated cultivator. He then punched out.

The three Heavenly Palaces in his body and the Golden Crow erupted with strength.

The mutated cultivator let out a pained cry and retreated.

However, not long after it retreated, an ice-cold aura came from behind it. The captain silently appeared, and his eyes revealed a dark glint as he grabbed the body of the mutated cultivator. He then opened his mouth and bit down on the blue eye.

An even more loud scream rang out from the mouth on the mutated cultivator's stomach. Xu Qing arrived and punched again.

Finally, with a loud bang, the mutated cultivator's body exploded into pieces, scattering toward the deep pit below.

At that moment, there were only dozens of cultivators left. The others had either teleported away or had already moved down.

"Little Qing, let's split up. We have to hurry up." The captain spat to the side, looking like it didn't taste good.

Xu Qing nodded and the two of them immediately fell down.

They were very fast. As he sped, Xu Qing saw the disciples of the various forces who had left earlier.

These people were all fighting now. Some of their opponents were the white figures that had appeared earlier, while others were mutated cultivators who had been possessed by these figures.

There were many of them and most of them were fighting fiercely.

To dare to come to this trial, they naturally had some methods, and they were on the winning side.

However, due to having no time to teleport away, many disciples died.

This qualification test was indeed incomparably dangerous.

Xu Qing avoided these disputes. The deeper he went, the more intense the coldness. The feeling of oppression also became increasingly powerful and suffocating.

In the end, he could even hear his rumbling heartbeat. Moreover, his vision had become blurry and he couldn't see clearly.

It would take a while for him to get used to it. When he saw his surroundings clearly again, Xu Qing noticed that some cave forks would occasionally appear on the surrounding mud walls. Clearly, there wasn't only one path in this underground world.

However, the stench didn't decrease because of the forks. Instead, it became even stronger.

In addition, Xu Qing hadn't seen a single fragment needed to obtain the qualifications to participate in the Sword Holder's trial.

He understood that this was because too many people had left earlier. Naturally, all the fragments that could be easily found had been taken out.

Xu Qing looked around. With a sway of his body, he landed at the edge of a deep pit where the soil was protruding. He stood there and looked above.

The sounds of the battle above could be heard faintly. Occasionally, droplets of blood would fall. As for the cold air below, it was intense and the sound of singing was still faintly discernible.

The captain was no longer around. The two of them had agreed earlier that they would act separately. After all, they were searching for items, and the efficiency of splitting up would be higher.

"I won't go to other paths. I'll follow this place to its end."

Xu Qing leaped up, continuing to whistle down.

Gradually, he got deeper and deeper and the surroundings became darker. When the sense of enclosed space became even more obvious, Xu Qing suddenly paused. He took a few steps back and hung in the air, looking ahead.

There was a fork in the cave there.

A figure stood at the edge.

That figure was an old man wearing a black robe. He didn't emit any aura, as though he had fused with the surrounding darkness. It was very easy to ignore him.

His hands were hanging down. Upon closer inspection, Xu Qing noticed that all ten fingers of his hands had long black fingernails that were very sharp.

His back was facing Xu Qing and his face couldn't be seen.

He could only see that his body was slightly tilted, as though he was listening to the singing sounds coming from the bottom of the deep pit. He seemed to be listening very seriously.

However, in this ghost cave, the appearance of this figure would make anyone who saw him vigilant.

Xu Qing stared at the figure. His gaze first swept past this sinister figure before looking at the soil beside the other party. There were three fragments stabbed into the soil!

These three fragments were what Xu Qing needed.

Xu Qing fell silent. He didn't believe that no one had passed by this place but the fragments were still there. From this, he could determine that the other disciples who passed by this place were either dead or didn't dare to make a move and couldn't obtain the fragments.

Xu Qing thought about it and first checked his surroundings. After confirming that there were no ambushes here, he transmitted his divine sense to the shadow.

At the next instant, the shadow extended and quickly approached the old man who was listening to the song. It rolled up a fragment and was about to pull it back.

However, at this moment, the old man lifted his hand and pressed it on the fragment with such great force that the soil rumbled.

After that, he turned his head and an expressionless green face was reflected in Xu Qing's eyes.

It was like a zombie.

His empty eyes emitted waves of red light as he stared fixedly at Xu Qing. The corners of his mouth gradually split open, revealing sharp teeth.

At the next instant, a fiendish intent erupted as he rushed toward Xu Qing.

His fingernails seemed to have cut through the void, emitting a sharp sound of air being torn apart as he grabbed fiercely at Xu Qing.

Xu Qing's eyes narrowed. The instant the fishy smell hit his face, his upper body leaned back.

Seeing the zombie old man's pitch-black right hand whistling past in front of him, Xu Qing took advantage of the situation and fell. He twisted his body, with his head below and his right foot above, and all his cultivation base erupted. The power of his physical body gathered in his right foot and he kicked fiercely at the old man's chin!

Boom!

The zombie old man's head cracked and distorted irregularly. His body was even kicked back hundreds of feet by Xu Qing's kick.

At the same time, the shadow quickly swept up the three fragments and headed straight for Xu Qing.

However, at the next instant, the zombie old man's head suddenly swayed and he turned his head back. The red light in his eyes intensified and his hostility soared to the extreme. Raging anomalous substances rose from his entire body.

Waves of beast-like roars rang out from his mouth as his speed erupted, heading toward Xu Qing malevolently.

He instantly got close and bit Xu Qing's neck.

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Chapter 472: Ghost Face on joss papers

As the stench assaulted his face, a cold light appeared in Xu Qing's eyes. He quickly retreated. He didn't want to waste time entangled with this zombie old man.

Now that he had the fragments, he didn't want to stay any longer.

However, the zombie quickly chased after him. The baleful aura emitted by its body became increasingly dense. It was obvious that it wouldn't rest until it died.

Xu Qing observed the zombie old man closely with a sharp glint in his eyes.

The feeling the other party gave him was somewhat similar to the Sea Corpse Race. However, its joints weren't agile, but the hardness and recovery ability of its body were even more exaggerated.

It also possessed some undying characteristics.

"There's no heartbeat, no blood, and it lacks intelligence. It looks more like a mutated cultivator than a ferocious beast. Moreover, its body is filled with traces of time."

"It doesn't seem to have any spiritual energy, but its aura and the wind it stirs contain poison. This poison belongs to the category of corpse poison and mainly has the effect of rotting."

"Its body is powerful and its combat strength is at the four palaces. Coupled with its recovery power and undying characteristic, it's infinitely close to the five palaces."

Xu Qing's body swayed. When he dodged the zombie old man's pounce again, he had already analyzed the other party thoroughly.

"Its speed is slightly slower than mine. If I use the Poison Restriction, I can kill it. However, this is a little wasteful."

"Its poison isn't bad, and its fingernails look like very good refining materials."

"If I can find the source of its regeneration, its value will be even greater. My time won't be wasted in vain."

While Xu Qing was analyzing inwardly, the zombie old man was becoming irritable because it couldn't touch Xu Qing. It suddenly opened its mouth and spat at Xu Qing.

A black fog churned out of his mouth and rapidly enveloped Xu Qing.

"I'll suppress it first and take its parts out one by one." Xu Qing made a decision. Although his figure was drowned by the poison mist, at the next instant, the poison mist suddenly exploded in all directions.

A shocking aura erupted from within, causing the poison mist to seem to be swept away by a violent wind. As it rapidly spread out, an afterimage moved out of the poison mist.

The figure's speed exceeded the limit that could be seen by the naked eye and even surpassed the perception of the zombie old man. It only noticed that the poison mist had exploded. In the next breath, its body let out a boom and was suddenly blasted back by a huge force that came from its front.

It collided with the wall of the deep pit thousands of feet away.

The mud wall shook and the zombie old man's body caved in. Just as it was about to struggle, a black palm landed on its face and pressed down fiercely.

With another boom, its head was completely pressed against the wall. No matter how it struggled, it was useless.

It was also at this moment that the owner of the black palm appeared beside the zombie old man.

It was a pitch-black figure. Its clothes, skin, and everything else were black.

At that moment, the black color rapidly gathered between the figure's glabella and finally transformed into an eye, revealing the true appearance of the figure. It was none other than Xu Qing.

After fusing with the shadow, Xu Qing lost the ability to cast spells. However, in exchange, he gained extreme physical power. His physical combat strength surpassed the four Heavenly Palaces and reached the peak of the five palaces.

In his eyes, the speed of the zombie old man was extremely slow. He expressionlessly lifted his right hand and grabbed the zombie old man's fingers. With a cracking sound, he broke his ten pitch-black and sharp fingernails one by one.

After some thought, his right index finger landed on the zombie's neck and slowly slid down, as though he was searching. Finally, it stopped at the zombie's chest and suddenly penetrated it.

Very soon, he dug out a fist-sized black fog.

This ball of fog contained dense corpse poison.

After doing this, Xu Qing searched again, wanting to find the source of the zombie's regeneration.

However, at this moment, after losing the black fog, the trembling zombie suddenly paused and instantly rotted, turning into black blood that flowed down the sunken wall of the deep pit.

When Xu Qing saw this scene, the shadow eye on his glabella spread out and covered his entire body. After it covered him again, it transformed into the appearance of a coffin and Xu Qing's figure walked out.

"This black fog doesn't only contain poison but also the strange power that supports the existence of this zombie?" Xu Qing fell into deep thought. He kept the fingernails and the black fog and continued forward.

The surroundings became increasingly pitch-black, the stench grew increasingly strong, and the cold feeling grew even more intense. In the silence, only the faintly discernible sounds of singing continued to ring out.

It was filled with resentment, despair, etherealism, and mournfulness.

This sound continued to invade Xu Qing's entire body, causing him to feel increasingly uncomfortable. Moreover, he couldn't block out the sound.

He landed on a protruding rock wall and he lowered his head to look at the darkness below.

"How deep is this place?" Xu Qing mumbled and continued to fall. After more than an hour, his figure suddenly paused and his pupils contracted as he looked down.

Hundreds of feet below, Xu Qing saw dozens of corpses floating in the air.

One of them was a small sect cultivator who had reached 10,000 feet on the Absolute Beginning Separation Pillar.

However, it wasn't the youth who attacked Xu Qing but another youth.

As for the other corpses, Xu Qing saw cultivators of the Eight Sects Alliance and disciples of the Grand Affairs Immortal Sect among them.

These people had all died here. The strange thing was... their faces were covered in yellow joss papers.

The faces under the joss papers were green and filled with malevolence, as though they had experienced extreme pain before they died. There were even a few people who were holding teleportation jade slips in their hands. It was as though the accident happened too suddenly and they didn't have time to teleport.

On the mud walls around them, dozens of Absolute Beginning Separation Pillar fragments were shining. Xu Qing could even imagine that there were definitely other fragments in the storage bags of these people.

After all, these people were the first to leave after they entered the deep pit.

However, Xu Qing didn't act rashly. On one hand, everything looked like a trap. On the other hand, there were joss papers fluttering around these corpses.

They flew around like yellow paper butterflies, moving up and down with the air emitted by the deep pit below.

Just as Xu Qing was staring at it, these yellow joss papers suddenly stopped in the air and rose in unison. They were like ghost faces as they looked at the place Xu Qing was at.

Being watched by so many joss papers was enough to make one's hair stand on end.

A sharp glint flashed in Xu Qing's eyes. The joss papers whistled through the air in unison and headed straight for him. There were even waves of joyous sounds coming from the joss papers.

These laughter revealed bizarreness and even greed. It was as though they yearned for flesh and blood and souls. They were extremely fast and got close almost instantly.

The instant they got close, Xu Qing lifted his right hand and pressed down.

With this push, the power of his three Heavenly Palaces erupted. The Golden Crow manifested behind him and let out a hiss. It flapped its wings and stirred up flames that swept in all directions, wanting to burn these joss papers.

The joss papers were instantly thrown back and couldn't get close. However, not only did the strange laughter not disappear, but it also became clearer.

Immediately after, these joss papers actually gathered together and formed a huge paper cicada.

The wings were also formed from joss paper. The paper cicada spread its wings and fluttered rapidly, emitting a buzzing sound. The laughter from the joss papers also became a voice that echoed with the help of the flapping of its wings.

"You, are you hungry? Do you want to eat me?"

This sound was sinister and ear-piercing. When this sound wave reached Xu Qing, it actually caused the flames in Xu Qing's surroundings to tumble back.

This paper cicada took the opportunity to move toward Xu Qing. Countless ghost faces appeared on its body, all of them revealing greed and desire.

"Eat me, eat me, eat me..."

The sounds were densely packed and continued to echo, rushing into Xu Qing's mind like invisible spikes.

A cold glint appeared in Xu Qing's eyes. Just as he was about to attack, his expression suddenly darkened and he retreated abruptly.

Almost at the instant he retreated, the mud wall of the deep pit at the side suddenly blurred. A huge centipede that was 100 feet wide directly passed through the mud wall of the deep pit. Its target wasn't Xu Qing but... the paper cicada that was emitting the demonic sound.

This centipede looked sinister and emitted a strong stench of rotting. Its body was translucent and seemed illusory.

Its speed was so fast that in the blink of an eye, the huge centipede bit the paper cicada and arrived at the other end of the mud wall of the deep pit. Its body twisted as it lay there, biting and swallowing the cicada with all its might.

There was a figure sitting on the back of the centipede. It was a woman. Her lower body had fused into the centipede and seemed to have grown together.

Her exposed upper body was naked and her long black hair covered her body.

She was holding a comb. As she combed her hair, she burped and spat out a piece of joss papers that hadn't been digested. She turned her body and looked in Xu Qing's direction. She then lifted the joss papers and smiled.

"It's very delicious. Aren't you eating it?"

Xu Qing was vigilant. This scene was too bizarre. He had a faint feeling that the other party wasn't talking to him but was looking behind him.

Behind him, a black coffin rose, emitting waves of ominous aura.

That was the shadow appearing on its own after being stimulated. A large number of eyes appeared on it and stared fixedly at the joss papers in the woman's hand, blinking continuously.

"What do you mean by blinking? Are you looking at this?" The woman on the centipede looked at the joss papers in her hand.

However, at this moment, a strange thing happened. A ghost face suddenly appeared on the joss papers in the woman's hand and smiled at the woman.

"Are you full?"

As soon as it finished speaking, the centipede that the woman was in trembled. Countless joss papers could be seen with the naked eye. These joss papers filled the centipede's entire body, causing it to instantly lose its translucent state and turn into a paper centipede.

At that moment, ghost faces appeared on all the joss papers. They laughed one after another and said the same thing.

"Are you full?"

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Chapter 473: Fox Hearted

The woman on the centipede let out a shrill cry. With a sway of her body, the centipede's thousand feet instantly moved rapidly on the mud wall. It wanted to shake off the joss paper but it couldn't do so.

These joss papers formed inside its body and rapidly spread out through its entire body. It was even about to cover the woman's upper body.

Evil voices continued to ring out from the faces of those ghosts on the joss papers, spreading in all directions.

"Are you full?"

The sounds were densely packed, as though countless people were screaming.

A malevolent look appeared in the woman's eyes. After sensing that she couldn't suppress the joss papers, she controlled her body to burrow into the mud wall. As the mud scattered, her figure burrowed in and disappeared.

At this moment, the joss papers on the faces of the corpses below also flew up one by one and floated into the place where the centipede had gone.

The ghost faces on them laughed as they passed through the mud wall and chased after the centipede.

It seemed like this place was indeed a trap but the target wasn't Xu Qing but... that strange centipede.

Or rather, the centipede's appearance attracted the joss papers, causing it to change its target.

Xu Qing wasn't too sure about the truth and could only make guesses.

He looked at the place where the centipede had left and became even more vigilant of this place. This was because regardless of whether it was the joss papers or the centipede, they both gave him an extremely dangerous feeling.

This feeling had nothing to do with the cultivation base. It was as though these existences themselves possessed a mysterious power.

"It's a little similar to the red moon... Maybe my Poison Restriction Pill can destroy them, or the purple moon."

Xu Qing mumbled. However, he didn't want to expose himself here. While being on guard, he carefully approached the corpses below and kept the scattered fragments in the surroundings as well as the storage bags on those corpses.

As he continued to sink, he opened those storage bags. There were indeed some fragments in each of them, and altogether, there were about a hundred or so.

After putting them away, Xu Qing sank deeper and deeper while maintaining his vigilance.

At this depth, the stench was stronger, the sounds of singing became clearer, the coldness and anomalous substances also became heavier. However, some fragments appeared in the surroundings.

When Xu Qing saw them, he quickly grabbed them.

Just like that, a day passed.

During this time, Xu Qing saw some corpses. Their decay was very serious and he couldn't tell if they were people who had entered together with him.

Beside these corpses, there were often ghosts that were gnawing like wild dogs.

Moreover, these corpses didn't have storage bags.

This made Xu Qing even more cautious and his sinking speed slowed down a little.

At the same time, he also encountered many deviant ghosts. For example, there was a giant that was like a mountain of flesh with a huge hole in its stomach that was spitting out soil.

Another time, he saw plants that looked like eyes on the mud walls. They stared at Xu Qing with a sinister expression.

There were also some dancers in beautiful clothes who looked like fairies.

They floated out of the mud walls and danced as they passed through the mud wall at the other end. They looked beautiful but they had no face.

If it was a timid person, their legs would probably go limp from fear and they would want to leave this place.

After all, this place was pitch-black, narrow, and filled with stench. Regardless of whether it was the appearance of the deviant ghosts or the singing voice that was ever-present, it made one's soul instinctively tremble.

However, Xu Qing was still fine. He had seen too many miserable things in the human world. It wasn't like there weren't things more terrifying than this.

When the second day was about to pass, Xu Qing, who had already sunk to an extremely deep level, had already collected more than 200 fragments. This could already be considered the top ranking.

Just as he was considering whether he should continue to sink, the coffin formed by the shadow suddenly appeared on its own. All its eyes opened at the same time and looked at the wall on the other side.

At the same time, there were also intense clear fluctuations that transmitted to Xu Qing.

Xu Qing's mind stirred. When he lifted his head, the black iron stick flew out and headed straight for the mud wall, instantly blasting open a huge pit, revealing the dying centipede woman inside.

At that moment, her centipede body had completely turned into joss papers. It was shriveled up as though the inner substance had been devoured, leaving only a layer of paper skin.

It was the same for the human body from the eyes down. She lay there paralyzed with a hollow look in her eyes, as though she was waiting for her death.

Xu Qing took a look and retracted his gaze. Just as he was about to leave, a pleading fluctuation came from the shadow behind him.

"You want me to save it?" Xu Qing was surprised. This was the first time he felt such emotions from the shadow.

"Aura... familiar... want..."

Xu Qing fell silent. After a long time, he nodded.

"I can only try."

The coffin formed by the shadow instantly swayed. Xu Qing took a look and was already used to the other party being led astray by the Diamond Sect's ancestor.

He walked toward the large pit where the paper centipede was.

When he arrived, the hollowness in the eyes of the woman whose eyes had turned into joss paper rippled slightly, but she couldn't speak.

Xu Qing calmly walked closer and took a look. The third Heavenly Palace in his body suddenly trembled and the power of poison spread out from Xu Qing's body, spreading toward the centipede woman.

The poison instantly invaded her.

The woman's eyes revealed horror. At the next instant, all the joss papers on her body turned into ghost faces in unison and stared fixedly at Xu Qing as they spoke in unison.

However, what came out wasn't a demonic cry but a shrill cry.

Xu Qing's poison rapidly permeated the joss papers. Wherever it passed, the joss papers would turn pitch-black and melt. Soon, all the joss papers turned into a black liquid that fused into the soil.

After losing the joss papers, the centipede's exposed body was also invaded by Xu Qing's poison.

The area below the woman's eyes was rotting. When her eyes became even more empty, the third Heavenly Palace in Xu Qing's body shook.

Immediately, all the poison that was spread out, including the poison in the centipede woman's body, rolled over and entered Xu Qing's Heavenly Palace.

After doing this, the centipede woman's body trembled and she weakly lifted her head. After taking a look at Xu Qing, she instantly left through the soil into the distance.

Xu Qing didn't care. He stood at the edge of the pit and pondered for a moment. In order to ensure that he could enter the top ten, he felt that it was better to collect more fragments.

Hence, his body leaped and continued to sink. Just like that, another half a day passed and the number of fragments Xu Qing collected reached 243.

There was only half a day left before the time limit for obtaining the qualifications. Xu Qing didn't plan to continue and prepared to leave.

However, just as he kept the last fragment, his pupils suddenly narrowed.

He saw a living person.

This was the first living person he saw here in this day and a half.

It was the Dao Child of the Grand Affairs Immortal Sect!

This person was further down the deep pit.

There were several caves in the surroundings of that area. At that moment, the Dao Child was constantly flying around the entrances of these caves and fighting against a deviant ghost.

Their speed was extremely fast. As they exchanged blows, low sounds would occasionally echo. However, because the surroundings were special, these sounds didn't spread too far.

As for the deviant ghost that was fighting against the Dao Child, it was extremely powerful and looked sinister.

It had a human shape but had no skin. Its entire body was dry and cracked, like a burned corpse.

However, its movements were extremely agile and fast, causing the Dao Child to be unable to escape.

Every time the burning corpse attacked, it would set off black fire that burned the surroundings. At the same time, the aura it emitted was also the strongest Xu Qing had sensed on his way.

It had reached the level of six palaces.

This was especially so for the black fire. What they emitted wasn't high temperature but coldness.

This was the underworld fire. It could burn the soul.

All of this caused the expression of the Dao Child to turn a little ugly. He had been targeted by this burning corpse for a long time. Although he had used a secret art to destroy it many times, the other

party would take shape again in the next instant. It was unscathed and was extremely difficult to deal with.

Even when he used some of his soul-destroying trump cards, it was useless. This burning corpse seemed to be undying and indestructible. And the strange power it erupted with every once in a while made him have lingering fear.

"Damn it, I was just a step away from reaching there. How did this five-element corpse escape? Was Grandmaster's calculations wrong and something happened below?"

The expression of the Dao Child was gloomy. In reality, the reason why he rejected the direct recruitment qualification given by his grandmaster was to enter this ghost cave.

He had long known that the location of the qualification trial this time was set at the ghost cave. His grandmaster had also emphasized that there were things he needed in the upper area of the ghost cave. Whether he could obtain them depended on luck.

In fact, some of the arrangements here were also made clear to him. Hence, after he entered this place, he headed straight here at full speed.

However, in the end, he was stopped by the burning corpse and couldn't go deeper. This burning corpse was persistent and he couldn't shake it off. If he forcefully rushed out, it would stimulate the corpse and cause it to reveal an even more astonishing method.

He was also very clear of the origins of this terrifying corpse in front of him and knew that it was anything but ordinary.

"This can't go on..." As he analyzed how to escape, he suddenly retreated and dodged the burning corpse in front of him. He watched as the burning corpse pounced over again.

A sharp glint flashed in his eyes. Just as he was about to attack, he saw Xu Qing who had just arrived.

There was a distance of more than 2,000 feet between the two of them.

Although the surroundings were dim, they could still see each other clearly. The instant their gazes met, Xu Qing raised his brows and looked at the abyss below. After that, he retreated.

He planned to leave this place and didn't want to participate.

"It's you!" However, the instant Xu Qing retreated, the expression of the Dao Child, who was 2,000 feet away, revealed a strange glint.

He didn't hesitate at all. Even though the burning corpse was rapidly pouncing over, he didn't care. Instead, he quickly performed a series of hand seals with both hands.

Immediately, the void outside his body distorted and spatial fluctuations appeared. After that, he lifted his right hand and slapped his forehead. In an instant, a crack appeared on his forehead. A palm-sized black ram actually stretched its head out from the crack between his brows and called out to Xu Qing.

Bahhh!

Xu Qing immediately felt uneasy as he retreated. However, he sensed cracking sounds from the void in his surroundings, as though countless pieces of space had shattered. Two of them were picked up and swapped places before reforming.

The world spun. When everything became clear, Xu Qing's expression was gloomy as he discovered that he was actually at the location of the Dao Child earlier.

As for the other party, he appeared at his previous location. They actually swapped space at this instant and forcefully swapped positions!

At the same time, the burning corpse suddenly got close and pounced toward Xu Qing!

The Dao Child stood at the spot where Xu Qing was previously and chuckled. He borrowed Xu Qing's help to attract the burning corpses and his speed erupted explosively, heading straight for the bottom of the deep pit and leaving.

Xu Qing glanced at the departing Dao Child with a cold gaze.

Outside Of Time

Chapter 474: Wandering in This Life, Buried for the Rest of My Life

The Dao Child's spell was mysterious. It was almost impossible to guard against such a position swap technique for the first time.

As for the other party's chuckle, Xu Qing heard it and remembered it.

However, now wasn't the time to think about these things. The burning corpse was rapidly pouncing over.

Xu Qing was very clear that there was naturally a reason why this burning corpse was entangled with the Dao Child.

As such, he didn't dare to be careless. He retreated and performed a series of hand seals with both hands, forming waves in the surroundings that whistled toward the burning corpse and blasted it away.

At the same time, the shadow instantly formed the coffin and fused into Xu Qing's body as he retreated.

A loud sound echoed in all directions, and the sea waves swept out, drowning the burning corpse.

At that moment, Xu Qing had also fused with the shadow. His entire body was black and a sharp glint appeared in his eyes. He didn't choose to rush over but retreated again.

His speed instantly soared, reaching the peak of the five Heavenly Palaces. He quickly punched.

Almost at the instant his fist landed, the waves in front of him collapsed from an internal eruption.

The seawater formed by the spell rumbled and shot in all directions as a burning figure rushed out.

That figure was too fast and Xu Qing couldn't see it clearly at all. He could only vaguely sense that the other party was stepping on the spreading waves and had arrived in front of him in the blink of an eye.

It was the burning corpse with a baleful glint in its eyes.

Amidst the deafening roar, the burning corpse punched Xu Qing's right fist.

Xu Qing felt an astonishing force erupting from the other party's fist, forming waves of impact that landed on his entire body. Even with his current physical strength, he couldn't resist it.

His body rumbled as he was sent back again, directly smashing on the mud wall, forming a deep crater.

"It's indeed the combat strength of six palaces!"

"However, it didn't chase after Zhang Siyun, which means that it lacks intelligence and only has instincts like a wild beast. However, as long as it has instincts, everything is fine!"

"It is only targeting me now. After I punched, it was clearly faster than me but it still punched my fist. This proves that the thinking of this corpse is simple."

Xu Qing's breathing hastened slightly as he quickly analyzed.

He could sense how terrifying this burning corpse was. Its spells were okay, but the most astonishing thing was its body.

This physical strength had already reached six palaces. Even though Xu Qing had fused with the shadow and possessed an extreme peak five palaces physical body, he still couldn't counterattack.

He couldn't even see the other party's movements clearly.

However, the environment here limited the burning corpse's movement range. The range of this deep pit wasn't very large. As long as he limited the range of possible attack direction to the front only, no matter how fast the burning corpse was, Xu Qing had a way to counter it.

As such, he didn't attempt to dodge. That would only cause him to be attacked from all directions.

He retreated rapidly and entered the mud wall. There was a mud wall behind him and there were mud walls on both sides. Only the space in front of him was empty.

At the same time, the Poison Restriction Pill in the Third Heavenly Palace in his body shook rapidly. Endless poison erupted from it and spread through Xu Qing's body, gathering in front of him.

The instant Xu Qing entered the mud wall, the burning corpse roared again. Red flames spread out from its entire body, transforming into a ghastly mouth formed by flames that fiercely pounced upon Xu Qing.

Xu Qing didn't dodge. He leaned against the mud wall and curled up into a ball, blocking with all his might like a hedgehog.

As the flames spread out, the aura of the burning corpse skyrocketed. An afterimage appeared as it arrived in front of the mud wall and punched Xu Qing.

Xu Qing's countenance turned pale. The mud wall behind him collapsed and his body was pushed in by the great force. However, the burning corpse also retreated. Other than madness, for the first time, it looked wary.

Its right arm was currently rotting!

There was also a bolt of red lightning that instantly arrived when it retreated and pierced through its body, causing the burning corpse to let out a roar. Red lightning bolts swam in its body and wherever they passed, its flesh and blood would turn into crystals that emitted extreme cold air.

After the red lightning completed this attack, it quickly returned to the location where the mud wall had collapsed, revealing the iron stick inside. It floated in front of Xu Qing.

Xu Qing spat out a mouthful of blood. The black color of his entire body was rapidly gathering at his glabella, transforming into the shadow's eyes.

The shadow stared fixedly at the corpse.

Under the shadow eye was Xu Qing's calm face. Fighting intent rose in his eyes as he stared at the burning corpse.

He knew that his physical strength was inferior to the other party's, his spells were inferior, and his speed was inferior. However, he didn't give up. He first used the mud wall to limit the range of the attacks.

This made it so that the other party's attack could only come from the front.

Of course, this was also because Xu Qing judged that this burning corpse didn't have the intelligence of a cultivator. That was why he used this battle method.

Also, his Poison Restriction Pill was a trump card that far surpassed his physical strength, and the poison was all gathered in front of him. As long as the other party attacked, it would be poisoned. What he needed to do was to endure the attacks and wait for the poison to corrode it.

The deep pit turned quiet. The burning corpse stared fixedly at Xu Qing with an irritated and wary expression. The rotting on its right hand was spreading.

In the end, its violence suppressed its fear. With a sway of its body, the combat strength of the six palaces erupted again, forming flames that drowned Xu Qing. It rushed out again and headed straight for the mud wall.

In an instant, a rumbling sound echoed out, mixed with roars.

A moment later, the burning corpse retreated at an astonishing speed and floated in the air.

At that moment, its right arm had completely melted and even its body was being corroded by the poison. Although its expression was crazy, it was obvious that it was even more wary. There was also a hint of horror.

As for the mud wall in front of it, Xu Qing's seven orifices were bleeding. The purple crystal in his body rapidly circulated to heal him, allowing him to last longer.

In front of him was a dense poison that corroded the surroundings and emitted anomalous substances.

Xu Qing didn't care about these. At that moment, he stared at the burning corpse with intense killing intent in his eyes.

However, he still didn't move. He lifted his right hand inside the mud wall and gestured at the burning corpse.

"Come, continue."

The burning corpse instantly became irritated and roared. However, the hesitation and wariness in its expression were still intense.

When Xu Qing saw this, he pressed his hands against the mud wall beside him. When he stood up, the power of the Poison Restriction suddenly spread out and he assumed an attacking posture.

He didn't know why Zhang Siyun, who clearly had the combat strength of six palaces, would be entangled with this burning corpse for so long. However, he understood wild beasts and knew that they were easily scared at this time.

This was especially so for wild beasts that relied on their instincts to move.

Therefore, rather than continuing to pester it, it was better to let the other party leave on its own.

Almost at the instant Xu Qing attacked and the power of the Poison Restriction spread out, the fear in the burning corpse's eyes grew even more intense and its body instinctively retreated.

Finally, it let out a few roars and rushed upward, choosing to leave.

Xu Qing spat blood and looked up. He then stared coldly at the bottom of the deep pit. The coldness in his eyes intensified.

He knew that the Dao Child was very strong and might even be related to the red moon, so he knew how dangerous it was.

However, Xu Qing was unwilling to leave just like that.

"This is the territory of the Absolute Beginning Separation Pillar, the Sword Holding Court. If the other party really has a bizarre entity and it appears here, someone will naturally deal with it. Although there's danger... if I don't even dare to take a look and search for an opportunity, I might as well return to the Nanhuang Continent!"

At that moment, the time limit for the end of the assessment was approaching. Determination appeared in Xu Qing's eyes. With a sway of his body, he headed straight for the bottom of the deep pit at full speed.

On the way, he spread out his Poison Restriction in all directions. This was to chase away the burning corpse that might follow him.

Just like that, as he continued deeper, he saw joss papers again!

Joss papers floated out of the deep pit and fluttered in the surroundings.

Xu Qing's eyes narrowed. He simply stuck close to the mud wall and cautiously crawled down.

Time flowed by and very soon, there was only an hour left until the end of the assessment. Most of the disciples chose to crush the jade talismans and leave.

There weren't many cultivators left in the deep pit, and there were even fewer at this depth. There were only Xu Qing and the Dao Child.

As they went deeper, there were more joss papers here and the stench became even stronger. The coldness and anomalous substances became denser and the sound of singing became clearer.

After the time it took for an incense stick to burn passed, Xu Qing, who was sinking continuously, suddenly stopped.

He didn't move at all and leaned against the mud wall. He narrowed his eyes and hid himself as he looked at the area thousands of feet below.

He saw a strange building.

It was a wooden hut.

It was a wooden hut that was filled with dilapidation, as though it had experienced countless years and was decaying.

The wooden hut was shaped like a pentagon.

There was a gray iron chain at each corner that was connected to the mud wall in the distance.

Under the hanging of the five iron chains, the wooden hut hung in the air.

A weak red light emitted from the oil lantern at the window of the hut.

Through the window and the decaying gaps above, one could see a figure of a woman in a red costume.

She sat by the window and stretched out her jade-like hand, scattering joss papers outside. The joss papers were then swept up by the cold air.

Xu Qing saw the joss papers, the hand, and the oil lantern that emitted a red glow.

The moment he saw the joss papers, he knew the origin of the joss papers he had seen on the way. The instant he saw that hand, his heart instinctively palpitated intensely.

However, the instant he saw the oil lantern, everything transformed into an intense shock in his mind.

This was because that oil lantern... was actually a life lantern!

At this moment, the sound of singing rose faintly from the wooden hut, echoing in the dark and narrow pit.

"Wandering in this life, buried for the rest of my life. Who is waiting in the cycle of reincarnation..."

Her voice was poignant, feminine, and cold.

He didn't know who she was singing for.

Maybe it was Xu Qing, maybe it was the Dao Child who was also here, or maybe it was an unknown existence in the depths of the deep pit.

* * *

Outside Of Time

Chapter 475: The Third God!

The sound of singing echoed faintly amidst the drifting joss papers.

The voice was cold and eerie just like this place.

Everything felt more like a ritual that had been going on for an unknown period of time.

In Xu Qing's eyes, the pentagon wooden hut seemed to be a different kind of altar.

This was because on the five corners of the wooden hut, where the chains were connected to, there were three terrifying corpses.

The first corpse was a corpse that was drenched from head to toe. It had rotted extremely severely and its appearance couldn't be seen clearly. Even its gender was unclear.

It knelt facing the wooden hut and wore a tattered black robe. It was as though it had experienced countless years and was riddled with holes.

However, the continuously falling corpse water seemed to have some unimaginable power that preserved the scene of its death in the past.

Even though time had passed until now, it was still the same.

It was a drowned corpse.

The second corpse was also wearing a tattered black robe. It was kneeling facing the wooden hut with its hands at its cut stomach.

Its stomach was revealed.

There were no internal organs inside. Clearly, they had been hollowed out. There seemed to be something else there, but it couldn't be seen clearly.

It was as though the pain it felt when it was alive forced it to lower its head and bend its back as though it was worshiping.

It was a dissected corpse.

The third corpse was slightly different from the previous two. There was a red vine wrapped around its neck, and those vines had sharp spikes that pierced deeply into its neck.

The vines wrapped tightly around its neck. As for the two ends of the vines, they were grabbed by the corpse's hands. It seemed to be pulling with all its might before it died, causing the ligature mark on its neck to be extremely deep.

This was a strangulated corpse.

Each of the three corpses exuded bizarreness. Hence, Xu Qing felt that this place was more like a ritual altar.

In addition, on the fourth corner of the five corners, although there were no corpses, there was a wordless tombstone.

Since there was a tombstone, there should be a grave.

Although there wasn't one here, the meaning of burial was very obvious.

Xu Qing suddenly looked at the dissected corpse and focused his attention on it.

Finally, he saw some soil and a small grave in the dissected corpse's stomach. In the grave, there was the corpse of a baby that hadn't been completely buried.

This might be the fourth corpse.

Xu Qing looked at all of this and noticed that on the last corner of the pentagon wooden hut, there were some traces of burning. It seemed that there had once been a corpse sitting there.

Xu Qing thought of the burning corpse earlier.

"Metal for dissecting, wood for hanging, water for drowning, fire for burning, and soil for burial."

Xu Qing didn't know what ritual this was but he was very clear that this wooden hut and the four corpses were extremely terrifying.

This was because he felt an intense pressure. What made his hair stand on end was the aura and anomalous substances emitted from the depths of the deep pit under the wooden hut.

This aura caused Xu Qing's mind to tremble. The last time he felt this was when the red moon breathed.

Xu Qing knew that there must be an unimaginable existence in the darkness below.

He also understood that the Dao Child definitely knew about these because the latter was here.

At that moment, the other party was on a mud wall thousands of feet away, cautiously crawling down.

It was as though he was afraid that if he moved too quickly, he would disturb the woman and the corpses in the wooden hut.

He was only a few hundred feet away from the iron chains.

Xu Qing looked at the Dao Child and a cold glint appeared in his eyes. He then lifted his right hand and took out a small mirror and a black wooden block. After that, he took out a storage bag that contained pills.

There were black pills in this storage bag. After self-destruction, they could absorb anomalous substances.

In this deep pit that was filled with cold air and anomalous substances, there were no pills more suitable for agitating this environment.

Xu Qing gently tilted the bag down toward the pentagon wooden hut that Dao Child Zhang Siyun wasn't willing to disturb.

Hundreds of black pills spilled out of the bag.

The Dao Child's expression suddenly changed. He abruptly lifted his head and saw Xu Qing as well as those pills.

He was shocked and was about to stop him when Xu Qing spoke softly.

"Burst!"

As soon as he finished speaking, the black pills exploded one after another. The sound wasn't very loud but the instant they exploded, a large number of anomalous substances rolled over from below and above.

The self-destruction of hundreds of black pills formed a huge suction force.

In the blink of an eye, it transformed into a tidal vortex, causing an earth-shattering whistling sound to ring out.

As for the surging anomalous substances, they were even more intense. If the anomalous substances were compared to seawater, then at this moment, they were surging like a tsunami.

Everything below became blurry and the surroundings distorted. The pentagon wooden hut shook and the singing paused.

The four corpses on the corners of the wooden hut opened their eyes at the same time, revealing madness and cruelty. They let out roars and looked at Zhang Siyun, who was the closest to them!

A monstrous fiendish aura erupted at this moment.

The expression of the Dao Child changed drastically and indescribable anger and horror rose in his heart.

He didn't expect Xu Qing to be able to escape the entanglement of the burning corpse. After all, even he couldn't do it.

However, not only did Xu Qing escape, but he even came to scheme against him.

All of this caused the Dao Child to be shocked and furious.

Not only was his plan destroyed, but he was also in great danger. His eyes instantly turned bloodshot as he performed a series of hand seals at Xu Qing, wanting to use the position swap technique again.

However, this time around, Xu Qing was prepared.

Xu Qing had experienced the other party's position swapping technique once. Since he had chosen to attack now, he naturally thought of a way to block it.

Hence, almost at the instant Zhang Siyun made his move, Xu Qing lifted the small mirror he had taken out earlier.

The flickering light of the mirror landed in Zhang Siyun's eyes.

Zhang Siyun's mind trembled. Under the effect of the mirror, his soul instantly froze and his casting was interrupted.

At the same time, Xu Qing activated the black wooden block as well.

At the next instant, the black wooden block transformed into the Mystic Spirit Perpetual Will Door and faced Zhang Siyun.

After it was opened, a rotting heart flew out.

As soon as the heart appeared, Zhang Siyun's body paused and confusion appeared in his eyes.

After two sacrificial refinements, the Mystic Spirit Perpetual Will Door could seal the level of life. At this moment... Zhang Siyun's life was frozen.

He couldn't continue casting his spell at all. Taking advantage of this opportunity, Xu Qing rapidly retreated and rose into the air.

However, this wasn't enough to vent the killing intent in his heart. Hence, as he rushed up, Xu Qing controlled the shadow to descend and spread toward Zhang Siyun.

Taking advantage of the fact that Zhang Siyun's life level had been sealed, the shadow slapped him hard. With a bang, Zhang Siyun's body was sent flying toward the raging corpses beside the pentagon wooden hut.

The rule was that killing other participants wasn't allowed, so Xu Qing naturally wouldn't break them. He felt that since the Sword Holding Court had reminded him of this many times, they might have a way to check the situation here.

For example, the teleportation talisman they had distributed.

However, using someone else to kill was clearly not within the rules.

After doing all this, the shadow quickly returned. Xu Qing's speed erupted and he instantly moved 10,000 feet away.

At this height, the scene at the bottom of the deep pit could no longer be seen. However, waves of roars and Zhang Siyun's mournful cries after he recovered echoed from below.

"And his life lantern!"

Xu Qing narrowed his eyes and stared below. He was prepared to wait for the other party to die and see if he had a chance to take his life lantern away.

However, the instant Xu Qing pondered over this, a sense of danger that caused his hair to stand on end suddenly erupted in his mind.

A shocking wave of emotions rose in his mind. All of this originated from a light that appeared at the bottom of the deep pit.

Xu Qing lowered his head and only took a glance before his mind rumbled intensely and the world spun.

It was as though the world was distorting and the surroundings were blurry. His soul and flesh seemed to be about to break into pieces at this moment.

This was because below him, not only did he see the wooden hut suspended in the air by the five chains, but he also saw that under the wooden hut, in the darkness of the endless pit, it had appeared...

One eye!

A gigantic golden eye!

This eye was too big, just like the deep pit.

It was as though an unimaginable existence was sleeping at the bottom of the deep pit. To it, the deep pit was just a hole above its eye.

At that moment, this existence woke up and opened its eye, looking at the hole.

The coldness in the eye was as though all lives were ants. The only way to coexist with it was to transform them from the source of life.

This was the suppression of life level!

With just a glance, Xu Qing's hair, eyes, fingers, and even his flesh and blood seemed to have an independent consciousness. They didn't belong to him and were about to split from his body.

The extremely dense anomalous substances erupted completely on his body. In fact, Xu Qing's body even began to undergo mutation. Indescribable pain and tearing spread throughout his entire body.

Xu Qing wanted to teleport, but it was difficult for him to crush the talisman at this moment. He could only rely on his will to forcefully keep himself together. The purple moon in his body shone and the Poison Restriction Pill erupted. As he suppressed and neutralized the anomalous substances, he forcefully rushed out and unleashed his full speed.

However, the aura from the golden eye was too terrifying. Even while Xu Qing struggled, his speed gradually slowed down.

Seeing this, Xu Qing was about to summon the shadow to cover his body.

At that moment, a centipede suddenly flew out from the mud wall at the side and instantly got close to Xu Qing.

The woman on the centipede grabbed Xu Qing's arm. With a sway of her body, the centipede rapidly sped toward the top of the deep pit, bringing Xu Qing along as it ran wildly.

Her cultivation base was inferior to Xu Qing's but her speed wasn't affected by the eye's gaze. At that moment, she moved for tens of thousands of feet. At the same time, the singing voice in the deep pit quavered and echoed again.

"The previous life is not here, but the afterlife is always here. I cut off the lovesickness and drew the mortal world..."

"Wandering in this life, buried for the rest of my life. Who is waiting in the cycle of reincarnation..."

The voice was poignant and continued to reverberate. The huge golden eye actually slowly closed again. It was as though this voice had a special meaning to it as it gradually fell asleep.

However, the anomalous substances here were already intense. A large number of deviant ghosts appeared in the surroundings and let out endless shrill and savage roars.

Xu Qing's mind shook. He looked down.

Everything in this ghost cave was filled with bizarreness.

From the looks of it, someone seemed to have specially arranged the wooden hut and ritual here to... make the existence in the deep pit fall into a deep sleep.

This centipede woman was also completely different from the bizarre entities Xu Qing had encountered.

She actually appeared at the critical moment and saved him. Although this was because Xu Qing had saved her before, Xu Qing had never seen such an act of repaying a debt of gratitude from a different species!

He looked at the centipede woman beside him with a complicated expression. The other party didn't look at him but ran at full speed. She only stopped when she sent Xu Qing another ten thousand feet away.

After nodding at Xu Qing, the centipede woman opened her mouth and spat out a large number of Absolute Beginning Separation Pillar fragments, about 170 to 180 of them.

After tossing them to Xu Qing, her body swayed and she directly burrowed into the soil, disappearing.

Xu Qing fell silent and looked at the deep pit that had become extremely dangerous and was filled with countless deviant ghosts. The teleportation talisman in his hand shone on its own at this moment.

The assessment was ending.

There was no need for Xu Qing to crush it. The teleportation power suddenly erupted.

Xu Qing hesitated for a moment but didn't throw away the teleportation talisman. He allowed the light to cover him and allowed the teleportation.

During the last moments before the teleportation, he glanced at the deep pit again.

"What secrets are contained here..."

"Who set up the altar?"

"Is the woman in the wooden hut dead or alive?"

"Why did her singing cause that god underground to fall into a deep sleep?"

This was the third god Xu Qing had come into contact with.

The first was the fragmented-face.

The second was the red moon.

Outside Of Time

Chapter 476: Sword Holder's Mandate

Outside the Absolute Beginning Separation Pillar.

The sky was still blue and the ground was still crystalline.

The cold wind continued to blow. Snowflakes drifted across the city and landed on the crowd around the Absolute Beginning Separation Pillar.

There were only a little over 2,000 cultivators here.

The vast majority of them had teleported back in advance. Even now, there was still lingering fear on their faces.

Clearly, everything that happened in the ghost cave was too shocking for them.

The danger this time was indeed as the middle-aged Sword Holder had said three days ago. There existed fatal danger.

Xu Qing stood in the crowd. He was among the last batch of people to return.

The instant he appeared, he immediately looked around and noticed that several others had returned at the same time as him.

The captain was among them. His body was covered in injuries but fortunately, his limbs were intact.

However, he had lost one eye and both his ears. There was also a wound on his stomach. At that moment, he was grinning while covering the wound.

He smiled at Xu Qing.

Even though he only had one eye, it still revealed a hint of smugness, as though he was very satisfied with his harvest this time around. There were many caves in the deep pit and Xu Qing even saw a god. Others might have encountered other supernatural phenomena in other caves.

Other than the captain, Xu Qing also saw Qing Qiu.

The other party also teleported at the same time as him. Clearly, she had persisted until the end.

The mask she wore was bloodied, and so was her body. The evil ghost in the scythe kept chewing, but it couldn't hide its dying state.

There was another one that Xu Qing didn't want to see.

That was the Grand Affairs' Dao Child, Zhang Siyun.

He clearly had life-saving methods, so he didn't die.

However, he was extremely weak and the anomalous substances in his body had clearly reached a certain level. At this moment, he was constantly eating medicinal pills in an attempt to dispel them.

There was also a huge scratch mark on his body that extended from his glabella to his chest. It was so deep that his bones could be seen. If it was a little deeper, it could completely cut him into several pieces.

Zhang Siyun also saw Xu Qing. His expression was gloomy and his eyes were cold.

Xu Qing expressionlessly retracted his gaze.

He was thinking about the god in the ghost cave. It was impossible for the Sword Holding Court not to know about it. In that case, from his judgment, perhaps the ritual of the pentagon wooden hut was set up by the Sword Holding Court.

It was to make the god continue sleeping.

Of course, this was only a guess. It was also possible that the wooden hut had existed before the Sword Holding Court. However, no matter what, this didn't affect his next inference.

It was impossible for the red life lantern in the wooden hut to be taken away.

If it was set up by the Sword Holding Court, they naturally wouldn't let others take it away.

If it already existed, since even the Sword Holding Court wasn't able to take it away, let alone them.

"Then what's Zhang Siyun's motive for going there?"

Xu Qing lacked information and couldn't guess the answer. At that moment, he recalled the woman's song and suddenly had a feeling.

It was as though from the start, the person who was singing had already told everyone about the story of the ghost cave in two lines.

Someone had buried them here for a long time, cutting their lovesickness into countless pieces. The pieces were as messy as the joss papers. As they fluttered, they looked like a scene of the mortal world.

Every paper contained longing, as though it had been waiting for someone to piece together those fragmented lovesickness in its previous life and this life.

He just didn't know if it was the woman in the wooden hut or the ghost cave god waiting.

Xu Qing fell silent.

In his eyes, this world was gradually becoming more and more mysterious.

He also saw a human cultivator who had teleported back at the same time as him. The other party's figure didn't appear. The instant he returned, his body trembled and he was instantly killed by the light emitted by the Absolute Beginning Separation Pillar.

This person's death caused Xu Qing to bury his thoughts about the ghost cave in the depths of his mind. When his eyes narrowed, an emotionless voice spread out from the Absolute Beginning Separation Pillar.

"Investigate. Those who killed fellow humans, erase them."

Xu Qing's mind shook. Previously, he had guessed that the teleportation talisman had a recording function to record if there were any violations. Now that he looked at it, it was indeed the case.

In addition, he also discovered that the fragments on his body were gone.

The instant he teleported back, those fragments seemed to be swept away by a vast force and fused into the Absolute Beginning Separation Pillar.

Clearly, the Sword Holding Court had its own method of recording.

At that moment, amidst the cold wind and everyone's waiting, the sky suddenly shone with a dazzling light. Figures descended one after another. All of these figures were wearing official robes and stood in the sky.

At first, there were dozens of them but very soon, as more light appeared, more and more figures descended, reaching hundreds.

The pressure from their bodies rumbled in all directions, causing the world to seem to dim at this moment. Moreover, there were still more descending.

This scene caused the minds of the cultivators below to tremble. The surrounding crowd and the Dao Protectors of the various forces also had solemn expressions.

A while later, thousands of figures stood in the sky.

Every one of them emitted extraordinary fluctuations. The weakest among them was in the Golden Core realm. There were Nascent Soul cultivators and Spirit Repositor as well.

Moreover, each of them carried a similar large sword on their backs.

This sword was green and engraved with a mark.

That mark looked like '元'.

The similar official robes made these people look extremely orderly. Moreover, their auras seemed to be connected, forming an aura that shook the heavens and the earth. It was as though it could suppress all ages and destroy all enemies!

It was like a powerful rainbow!

They were all the Sword Holders of the Yinghuang Province's Sword Holding Court.

At that moment, they arranged themselves in a two-winged formation in the air. They were like two huge wings that were spreading and soaring. While the pressure was intense, there was also a solemn feeling that rose in the world.

The entire Absolute Beginning Separation City was silent. Regardless of whether it was the surroundings of the Absolute Beginning Separation Pillar or the tents in the city, no one made a sound at this solemn moment.

Everyone held their breaths and stared at the sky.

This was because they knew what followed... would be a grand ceremony for the Sword Holders!

It was the same for the second stage of the Sword Holder assessment every time. The ritual was extremely important.

After all, this was the assessment of the human race's Upper Mystic Five Ministries and represented the reputation of the human race.

Just as everyone's expressions were solemn, a loud bang slowly rang out from the clouds in the sky.

The sound grew louder and louder. Finally, a rainbow vortex appeared in the sky.

Nine dazzling figures walked out of the vortex.

Every one of them had a Nihilism cultivation base. Any one of them could become an ancestor in the sect of the Yinghuang Province.

And they... were the nine Sword Holder Elders of the Yinghuang Province's Sword Holding Court.

Their expressions were all solemn. At this moment, they walked out and each of them floated on the wings. There was only one person in the center.

This person was the Great Elder of the Yinghuang Province's Sword Holding Court and also the highest rank in the Sword Holding Court.

When Xu Qing saw the other party, he was stunned.

This Great Elder was actually the old man who looked like Grandmaster Bai when he was explaining his attainments in alchemy!

Xu Qing knew that the other party must have an identity in the Sword Holding Court but he didn't expect his identity to be so high that he was in charge of an entire court!

Just as Xu Qing's mind was in turmoil, a middle-aged man walked out from in front of the left wing.

His expression was solemn as he cupped his fists and bowed deeply to the Great Elder in the center.

"There are a total of 4,311 Sword Holders in the Yinghuang Province's Sword Holding Court. There are 4,311 of them today and no one is absent. Great Elder, please check and approve."

The Great Elder nodded slightly.

"Read the list."

"I follow the Great Elder's decree!" The expression of the person who walked out from the left wing was incomparably solemn. He hurriedly turned around and looked at the ground. His voice was like a large bell.

"After the Sword Holding Court's inspection, we will report the results to the Sword Holding Palace. According to the number of fragments obtained, the top ten will obtain the qualifications of the Sword Holder and have an audience with the emperor!"

"The list is as follows."

"Xu Qing, Chen Erniu, Qing Qiu, Zhang Siyun, Ning Yan..."

The middle-aged man spoke one name after another.

Every time he said one, the breathing of the crowd below would quicken until the names of the ten people were finished.

"The ten of you, step forward!"

Xu Qing took a deep breath and walked out, standing in front.

The captain was the same. The other people whose names were called walked out one after another.

Very soon, the ten of them lined up together with a distance of 100 feet between them. They stood in front of the crowd and were the center of attention.

After Xu Qing and the others walked out, the middle-aged Sword Holder in the sky turned and bowed to the Great Elder before returning to his original position.

The Great Elder, who was standing in the middle of the sky, didn't look at Xu Qing and the others. Instead, he turned around and bowed deeply toward the sky and the rainbow vortex with a solemn expression.

An ancient and hoarse voice slowly rang out from his mouth in an extremely solemn tone.

"May the Essence-carrying Great Emperor of the Ultimate Immortal Radiance, the Sword Holder Heavenly Venerate descend upon my court."

As soon as he spoke, all the Sword Holders in the surroundings, including the other eight Sword Holder Elders, had solemn expressions. They cupped their fists and bowed deeply to the vortex in the sky before speaking in unison.

"May the Prime Great Emperor of the Ultimate Immortal Radiance, the Sword Holder Heavenly Venerate descend upon my court."

This ceremony was extremely formal, revealing the orthodoxy of the human race. Xu Qing couldn't help but have a solemn expression.

At that moment, as all the Sword Holders spoke, their voices rushed into the clouds and the vortex, causing the light in the rainbow vortex to instantly surge.

Multicolored light spread out one after another and illuminated the entire sky.

Finally, the rainbow vortex transformed into a huge statue that caused everyone's souls to tremble.

This statue towered into the sky and was extremely vast.

One could see that the statue depicted a middle-aged man with a dignified expression.

His eyes were filled with resplendent light and he wore the Nine Dragons Emperor Robe that fluttered in the wind.

He wore the crown of the Nine Heavens Dawn, shining with divine light.

Behind him was a large sword. This sword was green and engraved with the character '元'. It looked exactly the same as the swords of the Sword Holders.

The moment the statue appeared, the multicolored light caused intense waves in the sky.

The color of the sky changed and the wind and clouds churned intensely!

This scene caused the minds of all the humans below to tremble violently. The qi and blood in their bodies actually surged uncontrollably.

A feeling of bloodline connection rose intensely in the minds of every human.

That was the Human Emperor!

That was the founder of the Sword Holding Ministry!

Everyone involuntarily lowered their heads. Even Xue Lianzi and the ancestors of the other sects were the same.

They were sincerely and respectfully greeting the statue of the Human Emperor.

Xu Qing was the same. His emotions fluctuated endlessly.

He thought of the Ghost Emperor but clearly, compared to this Human Emperor, the Ghost Emperor was much inferior.

This emperor's appearance was 70% similar to the statue of the Ancient Sovereign Mystic Nether that Xu Qing had seen before.

As everyone greeted, the solemn voice of the Sword Holder Great Elder echoed through the world.

"Inheriting the eternal order of the sovereign and the Four Extreme Heavenly Dao, the Sword Palace holds the sword for the human race and kills the danger for the commoners, spreading the light in the world. The emperor's statue filled with multicolored light is the evidence."

This voice was like heavenly lightning that spread through the sky and echoed on the ground, spreading in the hearts of every Sword Holder and imprinting itself in the depths of the minds of all the humans below.

It directly exploded in the minds of Xu Qing and the others.

It was as though the world was ringing with a great bell, that could be heard by even the deaf!

This was because this was the mandate of the Sword Holders!

The light of heaven and earth erupted when they slayed the danger for the people!

They were... Sword Holders!

,"

[Outside Of Time](#)

Chapter 477: First Time in the Yinghuang Province

The ground was completely silent. Only the sound of breathing formed by the surging emotions could be heard.

Most of the people felt waves in their minds when they heard this.

All of them had their own stories and experiences.

Regardless of whether they were born high and mighty or in the mud, in reality, in this cruel world, in this tragic world, in this miserable world where humans ate humans, there wasn't much difference.

They all faced calamities and experienced bitterness.

As for the Sword Holder's mandate, it was like heavenly lightning. As it rumbled and exploded, it also allowed Xu Qing to truly understand the Sword Holders.

Regardless of whether the current Sword Holder could really accomplish the mandate, at least it had existed.

This was also an important aspect of the Sword Holder ritual.

The solemn atmosphere, solemn words, the holy light, and the deafening mandate. All of this was to continue the mission of the Sword Holder.

At that moment, just as the minds of all the humans were fluctuating, the multicolored light in the sky flickered again and flowed toward the ground. As it continued to spread out, it directly arrived under the feet of Xu Qing and the others.

In front of them, the resplendent light that represented the mission of the Sword Holders formed a long staircase that was tens of thousands of feet wide!

The staircase appeared in front of everyone in the city. Countless humans were paying attention to it but only 10 people could truly approach this vast staircase!

This was the path to heaven for the ten of them.

It appeared between heaven and earth and at the end of it was the Great Emperor's statue.

From afar, it was as though one could walk all the way to the Great Emperor by stepping on the steps in front of them.

That holy intent became even more intense at this moment.

This was especially so for the rainbow light on the staircase. Upon closer inspection, the staircase had a total of 9,999 steps.

Xu Qing stared at all of this. Just as his expression became increasingly solemn, he heard the solemn voice of the Sword Holder Great Elder.

"The Sword Holder Lineage founded the supreme glory of the human race and created prosperity and peace for all ages. Therefore, the staircase is 100,000 feet wide."

"Sovereigns who are represented by 10,000 are superior to monarchs, and thus there are 9,999 steps. Therefore, the 9,999th step represents my Sword Holder Ministry. We can kill anyone below the sovereign!"

His voice rang out in the world, and an intense glint appeared in Xu Qing's eyes. If what he said earlier was the soul of the Sword Holder's lineage, then these two sentences now were the bones of the Sword Holders!

The soul was the mandate, while the bones were the skeleton!

The Sword Holders could cut down anyone below the sovereign!

The captain's eyes gleamed with desire.

It was the same for Qing Qiu. Under the mask, her eyes gleamed brightly.

The Sword Holder Great Elder lifted his head and looked at the emperor's statue. He seemed to take a deep breath and had a solemn expression as he bowed deeply, and said in an even more solemn tone.

"Emperor, please grant me the Sword."

As soon as he spoke, all the Sword Holders lined up in the sky cupped their fists and bowed to the sky in unison.

With this bow, the light of the emperor's statue instantly spread out like a red sun rising from the sea, dispersing all the darkness in the world. As this light swept through the world, three rainbows flew out of the large sword on the emperor's statue.

It instantly landed at the top of the 100,000-foot-wide staircase, on the 9,999th step.

With a buzz, the three large swords pierced into it. There was a distance of 10,000 feet between them, and they emitted a green light that flowed like water on their sword bodies, emitting a heavy and profound sound.

Just a glance was enough to tell that they were not ordinary.

These three swords were both a sword and a command. They were the symbol of the Sword Holders and also the Sword Holder Command of the Sword Holders!

"The Sword Holder is also the bearer of the command. With the sword as the command, he protects the myriad beings."

At this moment, all the Sword Holders in the sky spoke in unison. Their voices were like a large bell, shaking the world, surpassing lightning and suppressing the ages.

"Out of the ten, the winners are the ones who obtain the swords. All of you, listen up!" As the lingering sounds of all the Sword Holders echoed, the ancient voice of the Sword Holder Great Elder suddenly rang out.

As soon as the voice rang out, everyone's hearts skipped a beat.

A sharp glint appeared in Xu Qing's eyes. He was determined to obtain this Sword Holder position.

The others were the same. Regardless of whether it was the captain, Qing Qiu, Zhang Siyun, the human youth who had offended Xu Qing before, or several others, their eyes were shining.

Just as the ten of them were fully focused, a solemn voice rang out from the sky.

"Qing Qiu, there are 40 battle marks in your body. Go up 400 steps!"

Qing Qiu's body trembled and she quickly climbed the stairs.

Under countless gazes, she reached the height of 400 steps and stood in the sky.

"Chen Erniu, there are 127 battle marks in your body. Go up to the 1,270th step!"

The captain rushed out in an instant and continued to climb until he reached the 1,270th step.

"Zhang Siyun, 63 battle marks, move 630 steps."

"Ning Yan..."

As the voice echoed, everyone climbed different steps according to the battle marks in their bodies.

Until it was Xu Qing's turn.

"Xu Qing, there are 279 battle marks in your body. Go up to the 2,790th step."

Even at this extremely solemn moment, the crowd below couldn't help but let out a commotion. Previously, the captain's battle marks had already shaken their hearts but they could still hold it in. However, Xu Qing's battle marks surpassed everyone's imagination and had already reached an unprecedented level.

Immediately, numerous gazes filled with disbelief gathered on Xu Qing from all directions.

Regardless of whether it was the cultivators in the city or Qing Qiu and the others who were standing at different heights, all of them were shocked.

Xu Qing lifted his head with a calm expression and walked forward.

Under the gazes of everyone, he walked toward the sky like a youth king, toward the emperor.

He surpassed the others, the human youth, Ning Yan, Qing Qiu, who had a complicated look in her eyes, the cold-looking Zhang Siyun, and the captain who had an incredulous expression.

After surpassing everyone, he walked for a very long time until he reached the 2,790th step, the peak of everyone.

He was far ahead!

At this moment, he was still 7,209 steps away from the emperor!

Behind him were the other nine people, and behind them were countless human cultivators.

Standing at this position, Xu Qing completely understood that after coming to the Absolute Beginning Separation Pillar, every place with bonus points was meaningful.

Their meaning might not be the same every time, but this time, it was here.

The assessment had actually been going on from the start.

This was because after he stood at this height, the ancient voice of the Sword Holder Great Elder rang out again with solemnity.

"Xu Qing, Chen Erniu, Zhang Siyun, the three of you are ranked first in the pillar. You reached 30,000 feet and can ascend 3,000 steps.

...

As the names were called out one by one, Xu Qing and the other ten continued to move forward. Xu Qing was still first place without anyone being able to shake his position.

He looked at the statue of the emperor at the top and the three dazzling swords under it. At that moment, he was still... 4,209 steps away from there!

The Great Elder's sound resounded again.

"Zhang Siyun, you have obtained 48 weapon essences from the ghost cave. Climb 480 steps!"

...

"Qing Qiu, you have obtained 213 weapon essences. Go up 2,130 steps!"

"Chen Erniu, you have obtained 301 weapon essences. Climb 3,010 steps!"

"Xu Qing, you have obtained 421 weapon essences. Climb 4,210 steps!"

Under this earth-shattering voice, the ten people on the stairs moved forward one after another. However, other than the captain, the others looked at Xu Qing's back view in front of them with extremely complicated gazes.

This was especially so for Zhang Siyun. His expression was gloomy and his killing intent toward Xu Qing was intense. This was because if Xu Qing hadn't interfered, it was impossible for him to only be ninth.

Previously, in order to escape, he had no choice but to use a secret art and sacrifice one of his bodies to escape. However, he also lost his storage bag and the fragments inside.

In addition, other than Xu Qing and Chen Erniu above him, there was also Qing Qiu. Moreover, the distance wasn't close.

Xu Qing wasn't interested in paying attention to Zhang Siyun's resentment. At that moment, he walked the stairs in front of him and walked toward the peak step by step.

There was no one beside him.

As he moved forward, all the human cultivators on the ground broke into an uproar. There was no one else in their eyes but Xu Qing.

This was because Xu Qing only had 4,209 steps left, which was less than the steps he had obtained!

At that moment, as Xu Qing moved forward, he reached the 8,000th step, the 9,000th step, the 9,900th step, and the last 9,999th step!

After stepping on it, he walked in front of the command sword in the middle.

Behind him, the person closest to him was the captain, who was at over 7,000 steps. Qing Qiu was at over 5,000 steps, and then Zhang Siyun was at over 3,000 steps.

At that moment, he had reached the peak but he still had one step left.

At that moment, not only did countless gazes gather on him from the ground, but even all the Sword Holders in the sky lowered their heads and looked at Xu Qing.

This kind of thing had happened before. However, the earliest time it happened was thousands of years ago, and it wasn't in Yinghuang Province.

This was the first time in the Yinghuang Province!

Hence, even the nine Sword Holder Elders' gazes landed on Xu Qing.

Xu Qing's expression was calm. He stood at the peak and there were no more steps in front of him. There was only the emperor's statue.

Hence, he transformed the last step into a bow.

Under the gazes of all the cultivators and Sword Holders, he cupped his fists and bowed deeply to the human emperor.

"Virtuous." In the sky, the Sword Holder Great Elder in the middle nodded slightly and issued a decree.

"Everyone, hold your swords!"

As soon as these words were spoken, everyone on the steps erupted with all their speed at this moment, unleashing their limits.

All kinds of secret arts appeared endlessly as they rushed toward the 9,999th step.

They were sprinting with their full strength.

Xu Qing stood at the highest point and pulled out the command sword in front of him. He then looked down at everyone below.

He stood there and the command sword in his hand shone with a resplendent light. At the same time, the statue of the emperor behind him was enveloped by multicolored light.

In an instant, in the eyes of everyone below, Xu Qing seemed to have overlapped with the emperor's statue.

His astonishing temperament and jade-like face looked like the return of an emperor!

Outside Of Time

Chapter 478: Consequences of Provoking Xu Qing (1)

The Sword Holder's trial was filled with holiness and solemnity.

This ritual of the human race orthodoxy wasn't something any sect could compare to. The difference in foundation naturally caused the specifications of the ritual to be different.

Rituals were even more important in this chaotic world.

The darker the night, the colder the winter, the more flames had to form. This fire... was the inheritance of the human race's fire. It was the fire of the human race's bloodline and represented the spirit of the human race.

The function of the ritual was to pass on this spirit.

The more formal and holy it was, the more memorable this inheritance would be until it was imprinted in one's soul and never dissipated.

This was the ritual of the Sword Holder and one of the human race's rituals.

At that moment, in the sky, the Sword Holders stood solemnly in a wing formation. The shape of the wings also had a special meaning to the Sword Holder. It meant guarding.

They used their wings to protect the human race and were even willing to become the wings of the human race to take it high above!

The nine Sword Holder Elders had solemn expressions, as they witnessed the ritual. This was also a part of the ritual. Four elders were at each side and one was in the middle. They stood at different heights, and they became mountain peaks and swords.

They represented the sharpness of the Sword Holders as well as the command sword of the Sword Holders.

Behind them was the multicolored light that filled the sky and the statue of the emperor that seemed to be able to support the world. He looked down at the ground and guarded the inheritance for the human race.

Under the statue was Xu Qing, who was standing 100,000 feet in the sky with the command sword in his hand.

His clothes and hair fluttered in the wind. However, his body stood there motionlessly. At this moment, his aura was formed just by his gaze and the height he was at.

This was because Xu Qing was the only one on the highest step.

However, at the same time, the origin of this aura was profound!

What was profound was the overlapping with the emperor's statue, and also the mission of the Sword Holders.

Originally, the Sword Holder ritual shouldn't produce such an aura and profundity on a person's body. After all, this was only an initiation ritual for the Sword Holders. It would only be like this when there were other higher-level occasions and advancements.

However, this time around, Xu Qing appeared.

During the assessment, he reached a height that had never been seen in the history of the Yinghuang Province. While others were still trying to fight for the Sword Holder spot, he was already standing on the highest step.

What he needed to do was simply to pick up the command sword.

The moment he held the command sword, he seemed to have gone from a participant to a witness.

It was a testament to the figures rushing over from the steps below.

There were only two swords left. Only two people could succeed.

With Xu Qing's personality, he would seek revenge for the smallest grievance. He didn't want Zhang Siyun to succeed and the rules didn't say that he couldn't interfere. Clearly, as long as it wasn't too much, there was a high chance that it would work.

"Everyone, be careful of Zhang Siyun. He has a position-swap technique that can only be used when he looks at you. In the ghost cave, this person used this technique on me. It's extremely sinister."

Xu Qing stood at the peak and calmly spoke.

As soon as he finished speaking, everyone's expressions changed.

The captain didn't hesitate at all. His entire body flickered with blue light and his body became blurry, causing others to be unable to see his figure clearly. His speed also rapidly erupted and he instantly leaped by 10,000 feet. He didn't stop at all and rushed forward again.

His target was the command sword that was 10,000 feet away on Xu Qing's left.

Zhang Siyun was expressionless. Due to the losses in the ghost cave, he was too far behind and his injuries were very serious. Hence, he indeed planned to use this technique. His target was Chen Erniu or Qing Qiu.

He couldn't swap with Xu Qing, after all he had broken the precedent in the Yinghuang Province. Even the Great Elder had said 'virtuous'. Now that he was already a Sword Holder with the command sword in his hand, there was extreme danger in swapping places with Xu Qing.

However, Xu Qing warned the others too quickly. He hadn't even finished using the spell. However, there were no fluctuations in his mind as he continued to cast. His target was Qing Qiu.

The captain withstood the pressure formed by the steps during the sprint and arrived rapidly. He picked up the command sword and looked at Xu Qing excitedly.

Xu Qing also looked at the captain.

After the two of them looked at each other and smiled, Xu Qing discovered that the Sword Holders in the sky didn't stop him from speaking. Hence, he spoke again.

"Zhang Siyun, you coveted the pentagon wooden hut in the ghost cave and wanted to destroy it. Moreover, you know everything about the ghost cave like the back of your hand. If you said that you didn't know about this in advance and didn't come here with a motive, no one would believe you."

"You're so scheming. Your actions and thoughts are all suspicious!"

"Sword Holder Xu Qing implores the elders of the Sword Holding Court to inspect Zhang Siyun!"

Zhang Siyun had already crossed 7,000 steps and was casting a spell to mark the target to Qing Qiu, who was almost at the 9,000th step. When he heard Xu Qing's words, his mind finally stirred. He couldn't care less about a will seed technique like Li Ziliang's because it was all groundless. He just needed to be firm to resist the technique.

However... not only did Xu Qing's words reveal his true secret, but he also implored the elders to examine him. This matter was no longer a seed planting. He was directly punishing him!

"Nonsense!"

Zhang Siyun knew that this matter couldn't be explained easily, and it wasn't appropriate for him to explain at this moment. However, he couldn't remain silent. Hence, he pretended to be calm and continued casting. However, the waves in his mind still affected the spell a little.

The instant he activated position-swap, Qing Qiu's eyes flashed and she suddenly retreated rapidly.

There was pressure here, so her speed was naturally not fast. However, it was extremely easy for her to take advantage of the momentum and retreat. It was as though she had been enhanced and her speed was fully unleashed. Hence, Qing Qiu's body instantly fell back to just over 3,000th step.

Outside Of Time

Chapter 479: Consequences of Provoking Xu Qing (2)

Position swap!

Zhang Siyun succeeded in his spell. However, he moved from over 7,000th step to over 3,000th step. As for Qing Qiu, she reached over 7,000th step.

Before they changed positions, there was a difference of 2,000 steps between them. After they changed positions, there was a difference of 4,000 steps.

The instant the swap was successful, a huge evil ghost appeared on Qing Qiu's body. It had long been accumulating strength. At this moment, it opened its mouth wide and made a devouring sign toward Zhang Siyun.

Zhang Siyun's body trembled and the backlash caused him to involuntarily stop in his tracks. He was even more anxious and furious. Qing Qiu's method was very simple, but the simpler it was, the more unexpected it was.

Qing Qiu took advantage of this pause. Her entire body flickered with red light as she spared no expense to activate her secret art. Many phantoms appeared on her body and she coughed out seven mouthfuls of blood in exchange for extreme speed.

In the end, she rushed to the peak and grabbed the third command sword.

The moment she held the sword in her hand, Qing Qiu spat out another large mouthful of blood. There were even pieces of internal organs inside. Clearly, the backlash from this secret art was extremely great for her.

At that moment, her entire person was dispirited, as though she couldn't stand steadily. She could only prop the evil ghost scythe against the ground and barely stand there. She was extremely weakened but her eyes were resolute.

This gaze made Xu Qing feel that he had seen it before for some reason.

Just as Xu Qing was searching his memories and the source of this familiarity, Zhang Siyun saw that he had failed and the anger in his heart soared to the sky. He stared fixedly at Xu Qing. He looked at the Sword Holders in the sky and spoke loudly.

"Xu Qing slandered me and interfered with my trial. This matter..."

"I'll give you an explanation on behalf of my junior brother. Zhang Siyun, sorry, it was a misunderstanding. You're a good person." The captain blinked and continued Zhang Siyun's words with a serious expression. After he finished speaking, he even spoke to Qing Qiu, who was panting.

"Fellow Daoist Qing Qiu, what do you think?"

Qing Qiu hated Mad Dog and Ghost Hand, but she knew that this matter concerned her ranking, so she spoke coldly.

"I also think it's a misunderstanding. Zhang Siyun, truly sorry, you're a good person."

They had clearly said that they were sorry, but the anger in Zhang Siyun's heart didn't dissipate at all. Instead, it turned into a deep grievance and he was about to speak.

However, from the left wing of the wing formation in the sky, the middle-aged man who had read the name list earlier walked out.

He bowed to the Sword Holder Great Elder. After noticing that the Great Elder didn't say anything about what happened below, as someone who had followed the Great Elder for a long time, he naturally understood the Great Elder's thoughts. He was the person who had checked Xu Qing's identity in front of the Great Elder's Dao altar back then. At this moment, he also thought of the way the Great Elder looked at Xu Qing back then.

Hence, he turned and looked at the stairs. A solemn voice rang out from his mouth, echoing through the world.

"The Sword Holder assessment is over."

As soon as his voice rang out, other than Xu Qing and the other two, the figures of the others on the stairs instantly disappeared. They were teleported out of the stairs by a vast force and appeared on the ground.

Zhang Siyun was the same.

He clenched his fists fiercely. His eyes were bloodshot and his heart was filled with intense resentment. Beside him was the youth from the small sect, Ning Yan, who had attacked Xu Qing at the Absolute Beginning Separation Pillar. His face was pale and his expression was filled with bitterness. However, there was still a hint of desire in the depths of his eyes.

The others were the same. There was desire amidst their bitterness because they still had a chance!

However, no matter how unwilling these people were and how their emotions fluctuated, no one cared about them at this moment. All their gazes landed on the stairs.

There were only Xu Qing, the captain, and Qing Qiu there.

"For this Sword Holder assessment, three people have been chosen. They are Xu Qing, Chen Erniu, and Qing Qiu. Congratulations."

After the middle-aged man finished speaking, he looked at Xu Qing and the other two. His gaze lingered on Xu Qing the most. After that, he cupped his fists and bowed to the three of them.

After that, all the Sword Holders in the surroundings bowed in unison.

This was a greeting to the Dao. There was no distinction between seniority and inferiority. It was the respect every Sword Holder enjoyed when they joined them.

Xu Qing and the other two solemnly returned the greeting to the Sword Holders in the sky.

"From today onwards, the three of you are official Sword Holders." The middle-aged man calmly spoke.

"According to the Sword Holding Court's decision, an exception will be made for the human disciple, Ning Yan, and made into a Quasi-Sword Holder. He will be allowed to go to the Sword Holding Palace in the upper county to undergo training. If he succeeds, he will be able to obtain a command sword and become an official Sword Holder."

"According to the orders of the Sword Holding Palace, the human disciple, Zhang Siyun, is exempted from the test to become a Sword Holder. However, there are only three swords in the Yinghuang Province. You need to go to the Sword Holding Palace in Fenghai County and request for the command sword."

"Now, the two of you, step forward."

As soon as he finished speaking, Ning Yan's figure rapidly leaped toward the staircase in front of him. As he ran, his eyes revealed an intense light. His breathing was hurried and his body was trembling.

Everyone's minds stirred. As for the other participants, they sighed helplessly.

What they were waiting for was this opportunity of an exception. Every time the Sword Holder assessment was held, there would be such an exception.

Although not all Quasi Sword Holders could successfully be conferred the title of official, this was at least an opportunity.

Only Zhang Siyun's heart was still filled with resentment. At that moment, he took a step forward and stepped onto the stairs. He and Ning Yan reached the peak one after another, but in terms of standing, he was at the edge.

Xu Qing calmly turned his head and glanced at Ning Yan.

Under his gaze, Ning Yan's head shrank and his mind shook. The ecstasy from before seemed to have been doused by a basin of cold water at this moment, and he did not dare to look into Xu Qing's eyes.

Xu Qing retracted his gaze and looked at Zhang Siyun. What he saw was the coldness in the depths of Zhang Siyun's eyes.

Xu Qing was expressionless and there were no fluctuations in his eyes. He retracted his gaze and calmly looked at the sky, waiting for this ritual to end.

"Now, the five of you will walk to the emperor's statue under the witness of all the Sword Holders and take the Sword Holder's Heart Inquisition Oath to obtain the emperor's blessing." The middle-aged man's voice slowly rang out, and the solemnity became even more intense at this moment.

It was as though this segment was extremely important to the Sword Holders.

"This is the last and necessary part of becoming a Sword Holder. You need to be completely focused. Follow your heart and answer the emperor's questions in your mind."

"We don't know your answer. Only you and the emperor know. The Great Emperor's statue will also emit light according to your answer."

"The height of the light represents the emperor's recognition of your answer. Since ancient times, the Sword Holder with the least light in our Yinghuang Province has obtained 600 feet of light. The most powerful one crossed 10,000 feet."

As the middle-aged cultivator's voice spread out, the captain winked at Xu Qing. In this solemn occasion, he was still very bold as he transmitted his voice to Xu Qing.

"Little Qing, I know about this stage. Although it's called a blessing, it's actually all a confusion tactic."

"Let me tell you, there are two goals for this round. One is to check if you're really a human. The other is to swear an oath. When the emperor's statue asks us a question, we can just brag."

"This result won't affect our status as Sword Holders. There's no reward either. At most, it'll be reputation."

"However, you have to think about how to brag. After all, although it won't affect us, I heard that it will be recorded in our identities and resumes. It will be of some use when we are promoted in the future."

"So you have to think about it carefully. But I'm different."

"I've prepared for this for a very, very long time. After I arrived at the Yinghuang Province, I spent a lot of money to buy all the questions the emperor had asked for thousands of years. I even got the questions from other provinces. There are a total of 1,789 questions that are commonly seen."

"At that time, I, your Eldest Senior Brother, had already started to think of the answers. I already memorized all the answers and every one of them is perfect!"

"Hmph, you won earlier but this time, I can announce in advance that I will definitely have the highest light."

The captain was smug and raised his brows at Xu Qing, looking incomparably wise and farsighted.

Xu Qing ignored him.

He didn't care about the height of the light. Since it didn't affect his identity as a Sword Holder and there were no rewards, if it was just an empty title, he would answer everything according to his heart.

While Xu Qing was thinking this, a solemn voice rang out from the sky.

"All of you, step forward a thousand feet!"

Xu Qing lifted his head and walked forward. The others were the same. They stepped forward a thousand feet and got even closer to the emperor's statue.

Outside Of Time

Chapter 480: God's Body

This heart inquisition was indeed as the captain had said. It was another way for the Sword Holder to make an oath.

In front of the emperor, they would answer the questions asked by the emperor's statue. This process was to verify their race as well as to test their temperament.

It wasn't important because even if they didn't pass, it wouldn't affect them from becoming a Sword Holder.

However, it was important because the light from the heart inquisition was the hidden condition for all the future advancements and selections, especially anything that concerned the core of the human race.

It wasn't that this process couldn't be faked, but first, you had to have the ability to deceive the emperor's statue.

Although the statue of the emperor wasn't the true emperor who had already died, the main body of the statue in the Grand Imperial Capital Region was formed by a wisp of the emperor's soul. After being worshiped by the human race for countless years, it already possessed astonishing abilities.

That was why he was a divine being among the human race and became a witness for the Sword Holder.

At that moment, after Xu Qing and the others stepped forward a thousand feet, as the pressure of the emperor's statue descended, the heart inquisition began.

The first person to be questioned wasn't Xu Qing but Qing Qiu.

One could see a rainbow light emitting from the glabella of the statue, enveloping Qing Qiu.

This process attracted the attention of thousands of people below. At the same time, all the Sword Holders in the sky also looked over to witness it.

Qing Qiu's body trembled. The evil ghost on the scythe shivered. It closed its eyes tightly, not daring to open them or act rashly.

It sensed a vast divine sense landing on its body. After a sweep, the gaze focused on Qing Qiu.

This divine sense was too majestic and outsiders couldn't sense it, but it could clearly sense it.

At that moment, a vast starry sky appeared in front of Qing Qiu. The first thing she saw was a sea of resplendent light above.

That sea of light attracted all her attention, causing her to not immediately look below the starry sky.

Instead, she looked at the light above. She could vaguely see a holy figure in the light.

In front of this figure, she felt incomparably insignificant. Everything in front of her caused her eyes to be a little dazed. However, very soon, her determination made her eyes reveal clarity.

At this moment, a gentle voice slowly rang out in her ears.

"Little girl, don't be nervous. Tell me, what do you think is a god?"

Qing Qiu was stunned. The gentleness of this voice was beyond her expectations.

She originally thought that with the dignity of the emperor's statue, the voice would be high and mighty. She didn't expect the voice to be so intimate.

Qing Qiu hesitated for a moment. At this moment, her mind slowly became ethereal and some scenes appeared faintly.

Looking at those scenes, her eyes revealed confusion. She vaguely felt an answer rising in her heart, wanting to say it out loud.

It wasn't that she couldn't stop it, but that gentle voice made her feel that it was fine even if she said it out loud. Hence, she spoke softly.

"I don't know what a god is but it doesn't matter. If there's a chance, I'll take him down with me!"

As soon as these words were spoken, she seemed to hear a laugh filled with kindness.

"Your courage is commendable."

As the laughter echoed, the starry sky in front of her dissipated. When she felt that she had returned to reality again, she, who was standing in front of the emperor's statue, saw that the statue in front of her emitted a dazzling light at this moment.

This light instantly reached more than 5,000 feet in length but it didn't stop. Instead, it rose all the way to 10,000 feet and finally stopped at 11,000 feet.

The 11,000-foot-long light illuminated the sky.

The Sword Holders in the sky all glanced over. Even the middle-aged man who announced everything revealed admiration in his eyes. In fact, the nine Sword Holder Elders were all staring at Qing Qiu.

As the first person to be questioned, Qing Qiu directly reached 11,000 feet. Although she didn't break the Yinghuang Province's record, it was rare to see a 11,000-foot-long light. It was enough to show that she answered sincerely.

"This girl isn't bad!"

"She's a good seedling. We can use the resources of our Yinghuang Province to nurture her. With such a length of light, there's a high chance that she will be valued by the county in the future."

Xu Qing also took a few more glances at Qing Qiu. As for the captain at the side, he was first shocked. After that, he thought of the answers and preparations he had done and calmed down again.

After that, the second questioning started. The rainbow light from the glabella of the emperor's statue moved away from Qing Qiu and enveloped the youth, Ning Yan.

Clearly, there was no order to who was questioned. It all depended on the will of the Great Emperor's statue.

Very soon, the same starry sky appeared in front of Ning Yan. Although he was nervous, he was still filled with anticipation. At that moment, he instinctively lifted his head and looked up with a fanatical expression.

"Little guy, tell me, what is a god?"

A gentle voice echoed in Ning Yan's ears.

Unlike Qing Qiu's contemplation, Ning Yan didn't think at all. Amidst the fanaticism in his eyes and the piety on his face, he spoke loudly.

"God is the great enemy of our human race. He is hated by all races and makes all living beings miserable. He is the source of resentment for all lives..."

He didn't say much but what he said was mostly what he had accepted in the sect since he was young. It couldn't be said that it was a bad answer, but it couldn't be said to be good either. It was mediocre and showed that he didn't have his own thoughts.

Hence, after he finished speaking, when he returned to reality, he saw 600-foot-long light emitted by the Great Emperor's statue.

This light couldn't be compared to Qing Qiu at all.

Ning Yan was stunned. He didn't know what was wrong with his answer.

He felt that he was right, but the difference in light was extremely great. This puzzled him and he couldn't help but look at Qing Qiu. He really wanted to know the other party's answer.

The expressions of the Sword Holders in the sky were mostly normal. In reality, the light of 600 feet was the norm. This meant a pass.

However, the captain sneered inwardly. He thought to himself that it was only 600 feet long. He would definitely cross tens of thousands of feet. With this thought in mind, he looked at the emperor statue with desire.

At the next instant, the rainbow light descended on the captain.

The captain's body trembled and excitement appeared in his eyes. His expression was smug. However, the process was extremely short. In just two breaths of time, the rainbow light on his body dissipated.

As for the emperor statue standing in front of him, it was motionless and didn't emit any light.

The captain was stunned.

Xu Qing blinked and looked at the captain in surprise.

Qing Qiu also revealed a look of suspicion. Ning Yan was also stunned.

Not only them, but all the Sword Holders in the sky also revealed strange expressions. The gazes of the nine Sword Holder Elders instantly turned sharp.

"If there's no light, it means that he's not a human." The Sword Holder Great Elder in the middle looked down and calmly spoke.

As soon as he finished speaking, killing intent erupted in the surroundings but it didn't descend.

This was because such a situation had happened before. Every time there was no light at all, it meant that the other party wasn't a human. However, they were puzzled because in the past, such a situation would result in the person being erased.

But now, Chen Erniu was still standing there safely.

This was also the reason why killing intent erupted but it didn't descend.

"No, I'm a human. My answer is also very good. Moreover, the emperor likes me very much. In the beginning, he even affectionately called me brat." The captain was a little nervous for once as he looked at the emperor statue.

Xu Qing also became nervous.

Finally, when the atmosphere here became increasingly solemn, the Great Emperor's statue slowly emitted a ten-foot-long light.

Ten feet...

The captain was stunned.

Xu Qing also felt disbelief. He vaguely felt that even the ten feet light seemed to have been released unwillingly. It was as though it was only a symbolic point to prove that the captain was a human.

The killing intent in the sky dissipated, but all the Sword Holders had strange expressions. It was the same for the nine Sword Holder Elders. They had never seen a ten-foot-long light.

"What answer did this kid give?"

"If this matter gets out, it'll be too embarrassing. Our Yinghuang Province actually produced someone who got ten feet light in heart inquisition."

"How about we find a reason to disqualify him..."

The captain looked at the ten-foot-long beam of light and felt extremely aggrieved. At the same time, he heaved a sigh of relief. That instant of killing intent from the sky just now almost made him feel that he was about to be killed.

However, very soon, he felt that it was unfair. Just as he was filled with grief and indignation, the rainbow light landed on Zhang Siyun. This lasted for dozens of breaths of time before the emperor's statue emitted a light of 5,000 feet length.

This length was good, but compared to Qing Qiu, it was much inferior.

However, no one noticed that while Zhang Siyun was in the midst of the heart inquisition, the Sword Holder Great Elder in the sky seemed to have received the divine sense from the emperor. His eyes suddenly narrowed and revealed a cold glint. He glanced at Zhang Siyun meaningfully before calmly retracting the cold glint in his eyes.

Zhang Siyun, who was on the stairs, didn't notice this. He coldly looked at Xu Qing.

At that moment, among the five of them, Xu Qing was the only one who wasn't questioned.

Xu Qing took a deep breath with a calm expression and retracted his gaze from the captain. When he lifted his head and looked at the emperor's statue, rainbow light enveloped his body.

A starry sky appeared in front of Xu Qing.

He stood in the starry sky and sensed the resplendent sea of light above him. However, he didn't lift his head immediately. Instead, he lowered his head and looked at his feet.

This was his habit. He liked to observe where he was first.

With just a glance, his eyes narrowed.

He saw a vast continent.

This continent was too large, as though it occupied half of the starry sky. On the continent, he saw the fragmented-face of the god.

Its hair fluttered and hung down, permeating half of the continent. At the same time, behind this fragmented-face was a golden spine.

This spine was very long. It circled the outside of the continent and enveloped it in circles. At the same time, it seemed to be slowly shrinking...

It had no arms, no body, and no legs. There was only this golden spine formed by countless bones.

Every bone inside was as large as a region and emitted an incomparable divine might.

With half of its head, it transformed into the god's fragmented-face that was supreme in terms of life level.

Xu Qing only took a glance and his entire body was on the verge of collapsing. His mind trembled violently, stirring up huge waves.

However, he could sense that he was in a protected state and there was a high chance that what he saw was an illusion. Otherwise, he would probably not be able to withstand this glance and his body and soul would be destroyed.

At the same time, a gentle voice echoed in his ears.

"You're the only one among the few people who didn't lift his head to look at me but lowered his head to stare at the place where he stood after coming here."

"I think you want to see this world, so I let you see this scene but they didn't."

"Now, let me ask you a question."

"What is a god?"