

Timescape 691

Chapter 691: Guyue Ningyan

Rain fell. It was like tears or blood, except, it wasn't red. It was the color gold. Golden tears. Golden blood. It fell from the sky onto all of the Moonrite Region. Yet it wasn't real. The illusory rain seemed to be infected with the aura of the river of time. Though everyone could see it falling, it was actually falling in the ancient past, or perhaps in the future....

It was brought about by the unique characteristics of a god. Few people in the Revered Ancient mainland could explain what exactly gods were. They existed on a higher life level, and possessed indescribable features. Though the godchild failed to break through, for one brief instance, he did have some of the characteristics of a god. And thus, before hē died, it was only natural that the blood rain of a god would appear. There was also a will domain of utter sorrow that seeped into the hearts of all living things.

It became a fully articulated sentence: *“What’s more tragic, for me to be the only one sober while everyone else is drunk... or for me to be the only one drunk while everyone else is sober?”*

Xu Qing didn't say anything. Those words echoed in his mind. But they weren't the only ones. He was also thinking about the godchild's last words before he died.

“Could it be that my past is actually your future...?”

Those words were branded into Xu Qing's heart, and had seeped into his soul. After a long moment passed, he looked up at the distant red moon. From his vantage point, the red moon looked like a crimson asteroid, halfway into the sky, filling the world with the color red. It also brought an immense pressure that filled heaven and earth. And the illusory blood rain was starting to blur thanks to the arrival of the red moon.

All of a sudden, the dome of heaven seemed to cave in. The heavens had to retreat, and all natural and magical laws collapsed. They couldn't exist in the presence of the red moon.

It was the same on the lands below. The tides were at their strongest. Mountains collapsed. The ground cracked. Rivers flowed backwards. It was as if the end of days had come.

The Captain stood next to Xu Qing, looking off at the red moon. Licking his lips, he called the nine artificial suns back to him, then fiddled with them as he said, “It's going to be here sooner than expected. At the most, it'll be three days from now.

“About what he said to you before dying, little Junior Brother, I wouldn't pay much attention to it. As you know, people often like to be deliberately mystifying when they're about to die. They just want people to remember them.

“It's actually not a bad habit to get into. I'm planning to do the same thing. I've already thought of the exact lines. Just before I die in the future, I'm going to say...
'Next time the eyes of the broken face open, I'm going to return to see my little Junior Brother.'

“What do you think? Slick words, huh? They really embody our friendship. Hahaha! What’s more, whoever hears them will start coming up with all sorts of theories, and might even start to think that *I’m*

the god with the broken face.” The Captain looked at him and blinked a few times. “I’ve also come up with the perfect lines for you. Next time you bite the dust, remember to utter these words with your dying breath.... ‘*Eleven years after my Eldest Brother comes, I’ll also return.*’”

Xu Qing looked at the Captain. “Thank you so much, Eldest Brother.”

“Hahaha! You’re welcome! Who could be closer than us two, right?” The Captain’s eyebrows danced up and down as he laughed complacently.

“In that case, Eldest Brother,” Xu Qing continued, “what exactly happened when you fought the godchild just now?” At long last Xu Qing gave voice to the question he was wondering about.

In response, the Captain smiled, though his eyes somehow seemed to glitter in a very meaningful way. “Li Zihua extinguished his godfire before his fourth son’s third Nascent Soul tribulation.”

Xu Qing thought about it for a moment. “In other words, in the time period you went back to, Li Zihua was still a god!”

The Captain nodded. Xu Qing looked at him but didn’t ask anything further.

Now that the godchild was dead, the surrounding Moonrebel cultivators looked incredibly excited. Although the red moon was still on the way, the events of this day were unprecedented in the history of the Moonrite Region. The godchild of the Red Moon Cathedral had been destroyed! And the pontiff had been sealed. All of this represented one thing: hope!

In sharp contrast to the Moonrebel cultivators, the forces of the Red Moon Cathedral were panting for breath, and their hearts were pounding. The red moon was visible in the sky. But to them, all that meant was that death was on the way. They had lost their godchild and their pontiff. The red moon would arrive in three days. And the Heir Apparent and his siblings were now the top entities in the Moonrite Region. One word could determine those cultivators’ fates!

Up in the canopy of heaven, the Heir Apparent looked at the red moon with a very serious expression on his face. Princess Brightblossom and Fifth Sister were doing the same, as was Eighth Sib. Only Ninth Sib remained expressionless, his eyes cold with killing intent.

“We only have three days,” the Heir Apparent said. He looked away from the red moon to Xu Qing and the Captain. “The critical moment has arrived. Whether or not you two really have a Master planning all of this, I want to ask you a question. Do you really have a way to resurrect my father?”

He and his brothers and sisters all looked at Xu Qing and the Captain.

“Grandpas and grandmas, don’t worry at all,” the Captain said with *decisiveness that could sever nails and chop iron*. “I, Chen Erniu, have never been the kind of person who

brags about things. If I say I can resurrect something, then I can. That said, I'll need your cooperation. You know, to do some magic, give some blood, et cetera...."

After hearing that, the Heir Apparent and the others chose to look at Xu Qing instead. They were inherently distrustful of anything Chen Erniu said. However, they viewed Xu Qing much differently. He was almost an apprentice to them, and therefore, they took his words more seriously.

The Captain looked a bit embarrassed at that, and looked pleadingly at Xu Qing. As of that moment, he understood that if he wanted the cooperation of the Heir Apparent and his siblings, a hundred of his own words weren't worth a single word from Xu Qing.

Without the slightest hesitation, Xu Qing looked at the Heir Apparent and his siblings and respectfully said, "Seniors, if my Eldest Brother says he can do something, then I trust that he can!"

After a moment, the Heir Apparent nodded. "Three days from now, we'll do everything we can to help you. If it doesn't work, then... I'll personally take you out of the Moonrite Region, Xu Qing. You can always come back to handle matters here later on when you're able.

"As for you...." The Heir Apparent looked at the Captain. "You'll stay here."

The disparity in how they were being treated left the Captain feeling a bit helpless. That said, he knew that he came across as being incredibly sincere; when you acted like that, it often resulted in people believing that you weren't reliable.

Ai. It's not my fault I'm so sincere. It's one of my strong points!

The Captain still felt somewhat indignant, but still kept a fawning expression on his face as he continued, "Grandpa, I'd love to stick around here working with you. But the truth is that I really can resurrect the Imperial Sovereign. To do it, I'll need help from my little Junior Brother, plus I have to take advantage of every single asset I've prepared up to this point. I can't lack a single one. The requirement for the next step is one of my little Junior Brother's specialties!

"Little Junior Brother, I need your cursequelling lozenges. I want to cleanse all living beings in the Moonrite Region, and reduce the curse within them. At the very least, it needs to be a thirty percent reduction. What do you need to make that happen?"

Xu Qing thought about it for a moment.

"I need the red moon power inside them." He pointed at the cultivators from the Red Moon Cathedral.

The cathedral cultivators wilted.

"I need that red moon power to act as the medicinal primer. And I need the Moonrebel Congregation's spirit automaton to act as the pill furnace."

When Xu Qing was done speaking, the Captain looked at the Heir Apparent.

The Heir Apparent and his siblings didn't hesitate for a moment. They waved their hands downward. The might of five Smoldering Gods then swept over the cathedral cultivators. Rumbling echoed out and the ground trembled. Screams erupted from their mouths as they first spasmed, then

collapsed. It didn't matter what cultivation base they had, there was no way they could fight back against a Smoldering God.

Blood sprayed out of their shattered bodies, rising up into the air to form a blood sea that shot toward Xu Qing. The strongest of the cathedral cultivators, such as the blood guardians and the three blood generals, did little more than last a bit longer than the others. Not even they could escape catastrophe, and were ripped apart, whereupon their blood joined the sea above. The scene looked like hell on earth, and yet not one person felt any sympathy for them.

Xu Qing's expression was calm as he sensed the red moon power in the sea of blood. He waved his finger through the air, and the Mirror of Moonrebel appeared in front of him, glittering brightly. Then, the scene that had played out when he was being assessed by the spirit automaton occurred again, but this time in reality!

Xu Qing started concocting!

There was one big difference this time. Instead of concocting pills, he was concocting a rainstorm! By borrowing the power of the Mirror of Moonrebel, he was creating a cursequelling rain to enter the hearts of the people.

Before long, the blood around him was boiling. As Xu Qing concocted, the blood transformed. Eventually, he ordered the bloodbeasts to add their blood into the mix. And in the end, he added his red moon authority. Finally, he said, "Curse subduing!"

When Xu Qing spoke, his words were to be strictly enforced. The surrounding blood sea exploded and rushed into the Mirror of Moonrebel. After, a blood-colored tempest appeared within the hearts and minds of the surviving living beings in the Moonrite Region.

Instantly, they shivered, and regardless of what species they were or what cultivation base they possessed, they felt the curse within them reacting like ice to boiling water. It started melting!

"Next is step two," the Captain said. "Grandpa Heir Apparent, to awaken the Imperial Sovereign, I need the blood of you and your siblings as the instigator. By putting your Smoldering God blood into the statue, we can awaken the flesh and blood!"

The Heir Apparent exchanged a glance with his siblings. Then they all closed their eyes and opened their foreheads, causing blood droplets to fly out that contained their life force and cultivation base. The blood flowed into the statue.

"Next is the third step, in which the hope power from the purified people will converge in the statue of the Imperial Sovereign, and summon him into consciousness!"

The Captain floated up into the air, his hair whipping about him, his eyes shining with a crazy look. He let loose a shout, which entered the Mirror of Moonrebel and echoed into the minds of all living beings. In response, countless motes of light flew up into the air, pierced through the air, and appeared around the island. Then they raced to the statue and merged into it. Then, for the first time in countless years... the statue moved.

Innumerable dust particles rained down as the lands shook and mountains were rocked. However, nothing more happened after that. The statue shifted slightly, then went still. It didn't wake up.

The Heir Apparent and his siblings were still sending their blood into the statue. Seeing what was happening, they looked at the Captain.

The Captain didn't seem the least bit anxious. Instead, the crazy look in his eye got even crazier. Looking at the Mirror of Moonrebel, he shouted, "Little Ah Qing, help me get Ning Yan and Wu Jianwu over here!"

Xu Qing nodded and quickly performed an incantation gesture. The Mirror of Moonrebel glittered, and Ning Yan and Wu Jianwu, who were in the Green Spirit Pharmacy in the Bitter Life Mountains, were teleported away.

When they materialized, they looked around in confusion. After realizing what was going on around them, Ning Yan gasped and Wu Jianwu let loose an exclamation of shock.

"I knew not that grandpa was overhead; the shock hath nearly struck me dead!"

Eyes widening, the Captain shouted, "Wu Jianwu, call out those pets of yours. Their blood comes from a good friend of the Imperial Sovereign. Have them kowtow to aid the summoning!"

"Ning Yan, I know you're really from the Imperial Region. Your father is the reigning emperor, isn't he? That means your surname isn't Ning. It's Guyue! Kowtow to the statue! You're a descendant of an Ancient Emperor, so based on that status, kowtow and aid the summoning!" [1]

Wu Jianwu was so stunned he just stood there doing nothing. As for Ningyan, his expression flickered with surprise and uncertainty.

Xu Qing looked at them coldly. "Get to work!"

Ningyan ducked his head. He feared the Captain, but feared Xu Qing even more. Instinctively adopting a fawning expression, he nodded. "Understood. I'll just get on my knees then...."

Chapter 692: I Also Have Backup

In the Moonrite Region, the entire island that housed the Red Moon Cathedral's headquarters trembled as intense winds swept out in all directions. The source was none other than the statue of Imperial Sovereign Li Zihua. The statue, which had been forced to remain in a kneeling position, started shaking. Dust and rubble poured off of the statue as cracks spread out to cover its surface.

At the same time, the white motes that represented the hope power of all living beings continued to pour into the statue, awakening its flesh and blood. The trembling of the statue grew more intense.

The Heir Apparent and his siblings sat in cross-legged positions surrounding the statue. Their foreheads all split open, and drops of blood slowly emerged.

All of those drops of blood had the same origin, and as they entered the statue of their father, the signs of awakening grew more prominent. Clearly, waking up the Imperial Sovereign was no simple task.

In response to the words of Xu Qing and the Captain, a fawning expression appeared on Ningyan's face. Subconsciously, he was imitating his father's court eunuchs.

However, inside, he was incensed.

I'm a damn prince! These people are going way overboard! Big Bro Xu is a bit more tolerable. After all, he wasn't aware of my true identity. And he even saved my life before. He's always treated me fairly well. But not that infernal, goddamned Chen Erniu! He knew all along who I really am, yet he still dares to treat me like this? You just wait! Once I'm back in the Imperial Region, I'll definitely show you how awe-inspiring an imperial prince can be!

As Ningyan fumed inwardly, the Captain narrowed his eyes and smiled woodenly.

"What's going on, little Ningning?" he said coldly. "Why do I get the feeling you're cursing me inwardly?"

Ningyan shivered. Bowing obsequiously, he shook his head and said, "There's no way, Elder Brother Erniu! My debt to you is as weighty as a mountain. Forget about talk of kneeling. If you asked me to toss my head to you, I'd do it without even thinking about it. The highlight of my entire life has been getting involved with you, Elder Brother. Nothing has been more wonderful than the feeling of flying free."

Ningyan had never excelled at brown-nosing. But after coming to the Moonrite Region, things had changed....

Xu Qing glanced at Ningyan and thought back to the first time he'd laid eyes on him at the Supreme Beginning Netherflight Pillar, and how stubborn he had seemed. That stubbornness had long since disappeared.... [1]

Though Xu Qing hadn't been completely sure of his identity, he had known he had a special bloodline. Also, given how the Captain had dragged him along on so many important tasks, it was obvious there was something unique about him. Given all his previous speculations, Xu Qing wasn't surprised at all to hear the truth revealed by the Captain.

Ningyan didn't dare to dally. Hurrying up to the statue of Imperial Sovereign Li Zihua, he dropped to his knees and kowtowed. "Oh venerable Senior, I am a 3,915th generation descendant of Ancient Emperor Dark Serenity, Guyue Ningyan. I hereby kowtow to offer you never-ending peace!" [2]

The fawning expression had already left Ningyan's face, to be replaced with something far more solemn. His voice also seemed different from before, deeper and full of more dignity. As he knelt, he kept his back perfectly straight, and also circulated his cultivation base, making it just possible to hear a sound like the cry of a dragon.

Though he was still dressed like a shop worker, he now seemed fundamentally extraordinary. Eyes glimmering with determination, he reached out and sliced his forehead, drawing out a drop of blood. The air behind him churned as figures became visible there, every single one clad in imperial robes, with imperial crowns on their heads.

Xu Qing did a double take, and the Captain blinked a few times but said nothing.

Looking profoundly majestic, Ningyan looked at the statue of Li Zihua and said, "I have come to the Moonrite Region on the orders of the human emperor to assist you in waking up, Imperial Sovereign. Therefore, please... return to us!"

As Ningyan solemnly kowtowed, the drop of blood flew out, sucked in all of the projected images of the emperors, then shot up and fused into the forehead of the statue.

The statue trembled even more violently, and the sensation of awakening grew stronger. That drop of blood contained the power of the human emperor's bloodline, and was supreme among all humans.

Things weren't over yet, though. As the statue of Li Zihua trembled, Wu Jianwu refused to be outdone. With a flourish of outstretched arms, he said, *"Oh innumerable descendants of the son of heaven; return from all prefectures to your father's side!"*

As his words echoed out, bloodline fluctuations rolled out in all directions as a host of animals flew to Wu Jianwu's side. There were bears, tigers, turtles, dogs, and all sorts of other animals. Including a parrot. Ultimately, dozens of them gathered around, sending out powerful fluctuations as they looked at Wu Jianwu.

"I risk my life, the heavens to defy; children, venerate the Imperial Sovereign on high!"

Unfortunately, most of Wu Jianwu's animal children just looked back at him in confusion. Despite how long they had been following him around, few of them could actually understand what he said.

Eyes flickering with displeasure, Wu Jianwu looked at the parrot.

Standing with back ramrod straight, the parrot loudly squawked, "Kneel! And call out!"

The animals all dropped to their knees and howled as loud as they could. They were using their voices, and their bloodline status, to try to call out to Imperial Sovereign Li Zihua. More rumbling echoed out from the statue, and more cracks spread out over its surface. Rubble rained down, and the sensation of awakening grew stronger.

Wild colors flashed in heaven and earth, and the distant red moon seemed to shiver. And yet, the sensation of awakening was not complete, and was also unstable, shifting back and forth between strong and weak.

Seeing that, the Captain's eyes glittered.

"People of the Moonrebel Congregation, the time has come to accomplish your mission. The Moonrebel Congregation contains some of the Imperial Sovereign's divine will from before he died. That divine will became hundreds of thousands of temples. Now, let all of the statues... make their way back! Help me, little Ah Qing!"

They seized control of the Mirror of Moonrebel. Xu Qing didn't hesitate to join in. Both of them were required to fully operate the mirror; it wouldn't work with one of them missing.

As that power was released, the Mirror of Moonrebel shifted to face the statue of the Imperial Sovereign. The light of the mirror shone on the statue, and it transformed. It seemed to turn into a mountain covered with countless vortexes. Every single one of the vortexes contained the faint image of a temple.

The Moonrebel Congregation cultivators took deep breaths. Eyes shining with determination, they let themselves be filled with the willingness to wake up the Imperial Sovereign as they flew toward the vortexes.

This time, they weren't returning to the temples in the Moonrebel Congregation. Instead, they were returning to the temples in the vortexes surrounding Li Zihua.

In the blink of an eye, countless Moonrebel cultivators vanished, only to reappear inside Imperial Sovereign Li Zihua. As the statues materialized, they sat down cross-legged, circulated their cultivation bases, and sent power into the statue.

They were now the power source to fuel the awakening of the statue. As the power of the cultivation bases combined, the sensation of awakening grew stronger and more stable.

The momentum of awakening became a cycle. It was like a flame that was fully ignited. As long as it kept burning, it would scorch all of heaven and earth.

The Heir Apparent and his siblings all looked excited. They could see what was going on.

“Now all we need is the final link,” the Captain said, nearly out of breath as he looked at the red moon on the horizon. “In only two days, the red moon will appear in full. At that time, the red moon power being released will be at the peak.

“That peak level of red moon power, plus the aura of Crimson Mother, will be profoundly stimulating to the statue. When that time comes... the venerable Imperial Sovereign will erupt with the power of awakening, and will... return!

“What we need to do is keep calling out to him. Make sure the will of the Imperial Sovereign is constantly being woken up. Do not let the flames be extinguished!”

The Heir Apparent nodded, closed his eyes, and continued calling out in his heart.

Princess Brightblossom and the other siblings all did the same. The hundreds of thousands of Moonrebel cultivators also called out in their hearts. What was more, thanks to the Mirror of Moonrebel, the scene playing out was already visible to all living beings in the Moonrite Region.

The scattered cultivators from the Red Moon Cathedral were in a state of complete terror. But to the bitter survivors who still clung to life, all of it represented an unprecedented level of hope. And thus, throughout the Moonrite Region, it was possible to hear people calling out at the tops of their lungs.

“Return, Imperial Sovereign!”

“Return, Imperial Sovereign!!”

“Return, Imperial Sovereign!!!”

The voices swelled, growing louder and louder, filling heaven and earth in the Moonrite Region. Xu Qing’s heart pounded as he looked at the red moon on the horizon, and then the statue of Imperial Sovereign Li Zihua.

Turning to the Captain, he said, “Eldest Brother, do we have enough backup for when Crimson Mother comes? I still have one helper to call on....”

“You mean that slutty fox?” the Captain asked, looking around proudly at his handiwork. Then he turned to Xu Qing and blinked a few times.

Xu Qing shook his head. “Another one.”

Surprised, the Captain looked closely at Xu Qing for a time. Looking conflicted, he finally lowered his voice and said, “Little Junior Brother, the truth is that I don’t really know if we have enough backup. If you can get some more help, that would be great. I’m just worried that if we have too much backup, it will be difficult to split up the rewards later.”

Xu Qing shook his head. “The rewards aren’t important. What’s important is killing Crimson Mother! Besides... considering how many people are already around, my helper won’t push things too far. And if we don’t get help....” Xu Qing looked at the Captain.

The Captain licked his lips and said, “What are you waiting for, little Junior Brother? Make your request!”

Xu Qing nodded and took a jade slip out of his bag of holding. The jade slip almost seemed alive, and felt slick in his hand, almost as if it were made from flesh and blood. It emanated an ancient aura, as if it had the personhood of a god in it. Despite the chaotic fluctuations in the area, as soon as it was in the open, it pulsed with something very domineering.

The Captain looked at it, and then his eyebrows shot up and he laughed.

Without the slightest hesitation, Xu Qing crushed the jade slip. Mysterious light exploded out of it and covered Xu Qing.

Then he vanished.

Chapter 693: Crimson Mother Comes; Imperial Sovereign Awakens!

Somewhere in the depths of the Revered Ancient mainland was a secret location that wasn’t the Nine Serenities, yet was just as full of darkness and gloom. No one knew exactly where it was. In fact, not even the heavenly daos could find it.

That was because many years ago, after Emperor Ancient Spirit conquered Revered Ancient, the ancient heavenly daos cursed him. Afterward, he took his people into hiding.

The name of that location was Spirit Abyss. It was located atop the head of a gargantuan, rotting snake, which carried it along while traversing the void. Interred in that world of death were innumerable corpses, making the place like a Yellow Springs hell. It was full of deceased souls and zombies, and it had a dusky sky and dark lands. Sound had no meaning there. The entire world was like a painting.

Inside of that painting were numerous imperial palaces, within each of which were mountains of flesh and blood. And above each of those mountains floated a huge eye. They were closed tightly, as if nothing could possibly happen that would disturb their peaceful rest. However, they were surrounded by undulating golden dragons, which were magical symbols that formed dreams. If those eyes went undisturbed, then they would never awaken.

A vortex popped into being, and one of the eyes stirred. Then it seemed to sense something extremely detestable. The eye suddenly opened. A surge of divine will rippled out that was capable of encompassing the entire Ancient Spirit world. Spreading out from the eye, it locked onto the vortex.

Xu Qing materialized in the vortex. Stepping out, he looked around at the familiar world, and then the furious eye. Looking very calm, he clasped hands and bowed.

“Long time no see, Your Majesty.”

“It hasn’t been that long! I barely had time for a nap!”

A cold harrumph echoed from within the eye. The eye was very bloodshot as it stared at Xu Qing, surrounded by the sound of the rushing waters of the Yellow Springs. Emperor Ancient Spirit was salivating.

“I told you that the next time you came to visit you would have to pay interest in the form of a crippled god! If you don’t have one, then I’ll eat you instead!”

Inside of Xu Qing, the god’s finger shivered and pretended to be asleep....

Xu Qing wasn’t paying attention to the finger’s terror. Looking up at the eye, he made sure to seem very amiable as he said, “It’s a given that I remember that, Your Majesty. I actually came here to tell you something. There’s a huge feast coming up, and I thought you might be interested.”

The eye above the mountain of flesh focused more intently on Xu Qing.

“Feast? What’s on the menu?”

“The sleeping Crimson Mother!”

In response to Xu Qing’s words the entire Ancient Spirit world trembled. All of the imperial palaces vibrated, and all of the eyes hovering above the mountains of flesh and blood opened and focused on Xu Qing.

“What did you just say??”

Years ago, Xu Qing wouldn’t have been able to withstand such a display of godly might. But his cultivation base was as different from then as the sky was from the land. Although he felt slightly uncomfortable, he definitely was not as weak as before.

Maintaining the same calm facial expression, he said, “I teleported here from the Moonrite Region, Senior. Over there, Imperial Sovereign Li Zihua is waking up. We also have two gods of the Firemoon Darkheaven people, as well as some Smoldering Gods.... Before coming here, I pointed out to everyone that Your Majesty should really join the big feast. Therefore, sir, they asked me to come here and ask... would you like to join?”

“You might be wondering if I’m telling the truth, Your Majesty. Given your mightiness, you can just check my aura for the details.”

As Xu Qing spoke, the huge eye blinked anxiously, and rumbling sounds filled the lands, like a thudding heartbeat.

Xu Qing’s words really were profoundly impactful to Emperor Ancient Spirit. Hē really could never have guessed that Xu Qing would pay his interest in such a dramatic way. After all, hē had previously just asked for a crippled god. Yet Xu Qing was offering him Crimson Mother.

Hē knew Crimson Mother, and knew the High Gods of the Firemoon Darkheaven people. And thus, hē had already confirmed from Xu Qing’s aura... that he was telling the truth. Yet at that moment, hē didn’t say anything in response.

Xu Qing didn't seem anxious. He just waited patiently.

In that manner, a day passed.

“Your Majesty, if you're not interested in an interest payment like this, then I'll take my leave. It's almost time to start eating.”

Xu Qing slowly backed away toward the vortex. But then the vortex suddenly locked in place. Xu Qing didn't get alarmed. He just looked at the eye representing Emperor Ancient Spirit.

“I'm the chef, so if I don't get back soon, they'll come looking for me.”

The eyes remained fixed on Xu Qing, as if measuring him up. A moment later, the vortex started spinning again.

Just as Xu Qing was about to step inside and disappear, a drop of black blood flew out from Emperor Ancient Spirit's eye toward Xu Qing. Along the way, it transformed into a black cloak that settled onto his shoulders. In the middle of the cloak was an extremely vicious-looking eye.

Next, Emperor Ancient Spirit's voice echoed in Xu Qing's mind.

“If this feast of yours is real, then I'll show up when it starts.”

Xu Qing nodded. “Your Majesty, after the feast is over, I need one of those Ancient Spirit destiny aura dragons.”

“Very well!”

Heaven and earth rippled. Rumbling sounds echoed out. And Xu Qing disappeared into the vortex to reappear in the Moonrite Region in front of the statue of Li Zihua. The moment he stepped out, the Captain looked over at him. The Heir Apparent and his siblings opened their eyes and did the same. All of them noticed the black cloak.

Emperor Ancient Spirit's eye was rapidly shrinking down.

The first thing hē saw was the statue of Li Zihua. Hē could sense the terrifying power in the statue, as well as the increasing sensation of awakening. Next, hē looked up into the dome of heaven at the red moon, which was growing increasingly larger, and was almost completely over the horizon. Hē trembled inwardly. Finally, hē looked at the Heir Apparent and his siblings. His gaze lingered on Ninth Sib.

Turning to the Heir Apparent, Xu Qing respectfully said, “Senior, this is my honored guest.”

The Heir Apparent simply nodded. During the day that had passed, the Captain had apparently explained the situation to them. Meanwhile, Ninth Sib looked at the black cloak and suddenly surged with a frigid will.

“This child has shown us great favor.”

Emperor Ancient Spirit's eye constricted. Hē could sense a consummate baleful aura coming from Ninth Sib. In fact, it was so strong that it probably ranked in the top three hē had encountered in his entire life.

What a chosen.... And his sword can threaten gods!

Emperor Ancient Spirit knew full well that the words just spoken by Ninth Sib were both a threat and a warning. In his prime, he could have looked down on such words. But things were different now. What was more, everything he was seeing conformed to what Xu Qing had said earlier. In terms of the High Gods, he could sense a very strong aura on the person standing next to Xu Qing.

That shifty fellow has a door that can lock onto the position of a god.

Feeling borderline flustered, Emperor Ancient Spirit spoke via divine will.

“He is a believer of mine, so of course I won’t harm him.”

Hearing that, Ninth Sib looked away. However, his baleful aura continued to pulse.

Emperor Ancient Spirit’s eye narrowed and looked over at the awakening Imperial Sovereign.

Xu Qing remained calm the entire time. He had not gone to invite Emperor Ancient Spirit to the feast without a backup plan ready to go. That included measures to ensure Emperor Ancient Spirit didn’t cause any trouble.

In that matter, time slipped by slowly but surely.

The living beings in the Moonrite Region continued to call out, and the red moon grew brighter on the horizon.

To Xu Qing, the red moon seemed huge, to the point where it seemed to occupy more than half the sky. The canopy of heaven was being overtaken by the moon, to the point where its craters and terrain features were visible to the naked eye. As the red moon’s aura covered the lands, rivers evaporated, mountains collapsed, and storm winds blew as the aura of a god filled everything.

Mutagen flourished. The world rippled and distorted. And it was all focused on the statue of Li Zihua.

The lake of blood filled in again. Everything was red as far as the eye could see, as if the entire world were being covered by the sea of blood. All living beings trembled as a feeling of uncontrollable despair filled them.

Li Zihua’s aura of awakening grew even more intense, causing heaven and earth to tremble, and filling the air with thunderous rumbling. However, it didn’t matter how loud those sounds were. They couldn’t do anything to stop the red moon from coming.

The red moon continued to fill the sky. It cast sinister shadows on the ground and sent mutagen levels soaring.

The Heir Apparent and his siblings had extremely grave expressions on their faces, and their eyes glimmered with hatred. The Captain looked nervous.

All of the preparations. All of the years of work. Everything was coming to a head!

Emperor Ancient Spirit’s eye on the cloak narrowed.

Xu Qing couldn’t help but feel a bit uneasy. The red moon authority within him was unprecedentedly active, as if it were being tugged at by the red moon.

Everyone was feeling different things, but everyone’s emotions were at their peak. And then, as heaven and earth wallowed in darkness, the immeasurably large red moon, pulsing with infinite

tideflow power and terrifying godly might... appeared in the sky directly above the statue of Li Zihua!

It was in the middle of the sky! Crimson Mother was coming!

The intense aura of a god spread out like ink from the sky.

The Heir Apparent and his siblings coughed up blood. As their bodies withered, black energy seeped out of them, the manifestation of the curse. The Captain couldn't stand up to the power without surrounding himself with the light of suns. Xu Qing had the cloak of Emperor Ancient Spirit, which allowed him to stand up to the powerful energy. And yet, it was clear that none of them could hold out for very long.

The Moonrite Region trembled. The earth quaked. All living beings cried out in anguish. Doomsday had arrived!

If the scene were a painting, then the Moonrite Region would be depicted in pure misery. The statue of Li Zihua knelt in penitence, just like the name of the surrounding plains, the Penitence Steppes. Going far into the past, every epoch was like this in the Moonrite Region.

However, this time... there was a difference!

As all living beings felt the weight of suffering, white flames suddenly erupted around the statue. They were the flames of awakening, and they had been stimulated by the spreading aura of Crimson Mother's godly might.

The flames grew stronger, rising high into the sky. And then, a pair of arms, which had been dead for aeons, suddenly reached up into the sky, accompanied by a deafening roar of defiance. Two enormous hands seemed to fill the sky as they reached up... and latched onto the red moon!

RUMBLE!

Imperial Sovereign Li Zihua was awake!

Chapter 694: Soil of the Red Moon

In that instant, heaven and earth filled with dramatic storm winds.

In that moment, all living beings trembled to the core of their being.

In that second, the hearts of all entities raced.

Rising above the Penitence Steppes was the statue of an Imperial Sovereign. From ancient times until modern, through many successive epochs, he knelt there unmoving, but now... he was moving!

His two arms were like pillars that could prop up heaven and earth. Moving with devastating momentum, they reached up, causing dramatic winds to spread out. The wind screamed and the air shattered. Natural and magical laws were reduced to ashes by the momentum of the arms.

They were not the arms of a cultivator. They were more like the arms of a god. And the two hands at their end made a sound that could shake ancient times as they slammed onto the surface of the red moon! They gripped down hard, forcing the red moon to stop in place in the sky.

Intense rumbling echoed out from the struggling moon. In all the countless years that had passed, this was its first time encountering resistance. The moon tried to keep moving, but the arms of Li Zihua were as solid as rocks! The two caused each other to shake violently.

As a result, more rumbling sounds swept out from the moon. Blood-colored light shone brightly. The statue of Li Zihua trembled, and more rubble fell from its surface.

Gradually, a thumping sound like a heartbeat erupted from inside the statue.

Thump-thump. Thump-thump. Thump-thump!

As the heartbeat grew louder and louder, the white flames grew more intense. Everything in the area started shaking.

From a distance, the statue of Li Zihua looked almost like an enormous human torch. Its dazzling light surpassed that of the moon. The fire spread out in all directions, covering the lands, filling them with fire. But it couldn't touch the sky....

The red moon in the dome of heaven was like a forbidden region that excluded the white fire! The crimson color and the white fire created a sharp contrast with each other.

Li Zihua was waking up. But he wasn't fully awake yet. What had awoken was his aura and his heartbeat. His eyes had not opened. Yet that alone was enough to shake the entire Moonrite Region, and to dispel much of the godly pressure that came with the red moon.

The Heir Apparent and his siblings were already recovering. Nine golden suns orbited around the Captain as he hovered in midair, his eyes filled with a crazy look as he stared at the red moon and drooled. As for Xu Qing, it turned out that Emperor Ancient Spirit was a reliable ally, as his cloak form blocked much of the pressure weighing down on Xu Qing.

"Let's go!" the Heir Apparent said, bursting into motion along the arm of his father's statue up toward the red moon. Princess Brightblossom flew by his side, followed by Fifth Sister and Eighth Sib. Ninth Sib was the fastest. With a single step, he overtook the Heir Apparent, becoming like the tip of a sword shooting toward the red moon.

The Captain and Xu Qing followed. Considering they were the ones that had brought about this entire war, it was only natural that they would follow along.

Anxiously speaking via divine will, the Captain said, *"It won't be long before the Imperial Sovereign is fully awake. In the meantime, we need to get into the Moon Palace. The moment we lay eyes on Crimson Mother will be the moment the Imperial Sovereign wakes up!"*

Xu Qing nodded, and the two of them raced closer and closer to the red moon.

A battle against a god... was about to begin!

However, getting onto the actual red moon wasn't a simple task. It didn't matter that the Imperial Sovereign had grabbed the moon and locked it in place, preventing it from moving. The closer one got to the red moon, the more terrifying the pressure it exuded. The tideflow power alone was enough to rip anything and everything to shreds.

The surrounding air shattered. Rifts spread out in all directions. Even the Heir Apparent and his siblings were having trouble as they made their approach. The Captain experienced difficulty as well. The only one who remained completely and utterly calm was Ninth Sib, who resolutely strode closer and closer.

Xu Qing had his black cloak, but even more relevant, the red moon authority within him. The pressure and resistance others were feeling actually seemed familiar to him, even friendly. And that sensation increased the closer he got. It almost felt like a warm embrace.

Upon realizing that, Xu Qing sent the red moon authority out and around him. As the red moon shone down, a red glow appeared around him, growing stronger by the moment.

My red moon authority is being augmented!

As his eyes shone with red light, blood spread out around him, creating a vortex that spun more and more rapidly. Thus, Xu Qing closed the distance with the Heir Apparent and his siblings.

The Captain was in the very back, all alone....

When Emperor Ancient Spirit saw what was happening, his eyes narrowed. *This kid has some major karma with Crimson Mother...*

Meanwhile, the Captain was starting to get nervous. *This won't do! It took a lot of hard work here in the Moonrite Region for me to establish my dignity as the Eldest Brother, and make sure little Ah Qing followed my lead. Now that the red moon is right in front of us, if I get left behind... it'll be far too humiliating!*

As the Captain stewed in anxiety, the Heir Apparent and his siblings exchanged determined glances, then performed incantation gestures. Opening their mouths, they exhaled sharply in the direction of the red moon.

In response, the statue of Li Zihua trembled even more dramatically, and despite his eyes staying closed, he opened his mouth in the same manner as his children, and exhaled in the direction of the red moon. The breath became white steam that raced toward the moon and slammed into it. As the loud echoing boom rang out, the pressure from the red moon suddenly decreased, albeit for only a moment.

However, they all took advantage of that brief lull to follow the Imperial Sovereign's arm even closer to the red moon.

Unfortunately, the red moon was extremely ancient. It was also the home of Crimson Mother's divine palace. Even though its pressure was reduced temporarily by the Imperial Sovereign, Crimson Mother's aura was like a thick fog that couldn't be penetrated.

Li Zihua's hands were actually pressing down onto that barrier, and it was so enormous that it couldn't easily be broken.

Seeing that, the Captain's eyes glittered and he prepared to unleash the power of his suns. Before he could, the Heir Apparent and the others extended their left index fingers and pointed toward the moon. Instantly, intense bloodline fluctuations rolled out from them.

Simultaneously, the statue of Li Zihua shivered, then erupted with boundless power. His left arm then shifted, pulling away from the moon. With it gone, the red moon rumbled to life, as if it might start moving again.

Xu Qing, the Heir Apparent, and the others, settled onto Li Zihua's left hand.

The left hand's index finger extended, then stabbed into the red moon! It moved with incredible speed, and was backed by a destructive force that could ravage the world. White flames also

covered it, protecting everyone beneath. A rumbling boom rang out as the finger pierced through the foggy barrier covering the red moon. The barrier shattered, and the finger continued through to smash into the soil of the red moon.

The entire moon shook violently.

Anyone standing on the surface of the red moon would be able to look up from that red soil and see the cloud cover overhead vanishing, especially around the huge hole above, through which poked a massive finger.

When the finger hit the ground, the ground shattered. Shockingly, within the white flames covering that finger were the Heir Apparent and the others. They had finally arrived on the actual soil of the red moon! The white flames were already flickering out, to be replaced by the crimson color cast by the moon.

Xu Qing's heart pounded as he stood on the Imperial Sovereign's finger and looked around. In the past, the red moon had been something he could observe or feel. It wasn't somewhere he could go. But now... he was actually on the moon.

The lands were red. The clouds were red. Everything was the same color. There were mountains and craters. There were rivers of blood. This red moon... was an entire world. Incredibly intense mutagen filled that world, becoming the only aura present. Looking off into the distance, everything seemed distorted.

Within those distortions were countless shadowy figures that constantly popped in and out of existence. Those figures included humans and nonhumans, and they seemed to exist in a state that was neither life nor death. They didn't seem intelligent. They were more like illusions. Some gathered in groups, others were alone, but as one, they knelt with their hands covering their eyes. Most gruish of all to Xu Qing was that every time he blinked, the figures would switch locations. And if he didn't blink, they remained in place, completely unmoving. They didn't seem to care at all about the arrival of the gigantic finger. They just continued to offer worship, chanting in low-pitched, sinister voices.

"The red moon, lady to me; Revered Ancient's true trustee; the living hosts suffer; they have a blissful guarantee."

"Offered freely, lady to me; no bitterness for me; from bitterness I'm free; undecayed for all to see."

"Crimson Mother, lady to me; Brilliant Heaven escapee; heavenly daos all asleep; the ancient path clear and free."

"Souls offered, lady to me; pāramitā an actuality; sing with joy when you see; the return to our world ends happily."

The lyrics of the song were clearer than they had been in the Red Moon Cathedral's church temple. And instead of being sung out loud, the words were sung from the soul, echoing out to infinitude.
Chapter 695: I am the New Moon; Call Me Violet Lord!

A red world. Gruish figures. Sinister chanting. Intense mutagen. Heaven and earth distorted. Unfamiliarity everywhere. That was how to describe the world of the red moon.

It was... Crimson Mother's godly habitat.

Any cultivators who came here would have a hard time resisting the mutagen invasion. Their souls would decay because of the song, and their minds would be affected, causing them to feel unending piety toward Crimson Mother. The cultivation base level was irrelevant.

The first to be affected was Fifth Sister. She shivered from head to toe as her garments turned crimson. Eighth Sib reacted similarly, and even the Heir Apparent and Princess Brightblossom were visibly affected. The Captain didn't have it any better off. As he breathed heavily, his eyes shone with a crazy look. Within them, faces within faces appeared, glowing with blue light.

Only Xu Qing... stood there looking the same as ever. The blessing of the red moon made this entire world seem unprecedentedly familiar to him. In fact, he got the feeling... that he could actually influence the world around him, to a degree.

Just when he was about to experiment in that regard, Ninth Sib strode forward and lifted his sword. Rumbling sounds echoed out as a beam of black sword light swept forth. The sword light shattered everything it touched, shredding countless of the shadowy figures into nothing. But a moment later... everything was the same as before.

The singing continued.

The invasion went on.

The Heir Apparent and the other siblings looked on with grim expressions. Ninth Sib's eyes glittered coldly as he prepared to attempt the same thing again.

"That won't do any good in a godly location like this," the Captain said. "Crimson Mother is still asleep, so her will can't affect much. Otherwise, all it would take would be a thought from her, and everything here would be buried. Back then, I managed to get a mysterious drop of blood that let me transform into a mosquito. That was how I got through this area. But that blood has long since been used up...."

"Little Ah Qing, you're the only one of us who hasn't been affected. Next, you need to use your authority to find the Moon Palace!"

"The Moon Palace is the oldest structure on this moon. And its location isn't fixed in one spot. It can show up anywhere, even on a grain of sand or in the void itself. And Crimson Mother... is sleeping in the depths of the Moon Palace! If we can find the Moon Palace, I'll be able to open it up. And then... we can get inside!"

Xu Qing looked at the Captain. This might be Xu Qing's first time here, and even the first time for the Heir Apparent and his siblings.

But the Captain... had been here before.

"Let me try," Xu Qing said with a nod. As the Heir Apparent and everyone else looked on, he started walking.

With each step forward, he released some of the power of his red moon authority. More blood spread out, making the vortex around him even larger. And more than ever, Xu Qing felt a sensation

of familiarity in his heart. At the same time, he felt the strong desire to... change the color of this moon!

He forced such wild thoughts away, though. Closing his eyes, he sent his authority out over the red moon to look for the Moon Palace. As time passed, the Heir Apparent and everyone else continued to succumb to the invasion. And Xu Qing found no trace of the Moon Palace. He frowned. All of a sudden, he felt a power of expulsion building in the red moon. The ground shook. Clearly, the Imperial Sovereign's strength wouldn't hold out forever. It was not an easy task to lock the red moon into place on its orbital track.

The Captain sighed and looked at the Heir Apparent. "We have no other option than to wake up the Imperial Sovereign early. Otherwise, we won't be able to find the Moon Palace. And if this deadlock continues, it won't work out well for us. Unfortunately, whether we wake up the Imperial Sovereign or try one of my other methods, it's going to be hard to avoid waking Crimson Mother from—"

"I can help you find it!" interrupted the voice of Emperor Ancient Spirit from Xu Qing's cloak. *"Once I make a move, it will also wake up Crimson Mother. Also, if it works, I want fifty percent of the spoils of war!"*

The Captain looked at Emperor Ancient Spirit. The Heir Apparent and his siblings all narrowed their eyes. Emperor Ancient Spirit didn't seem anxious. He just waited for a response from the group.

That was when Xu Qing finally spoke. "If finding the Moon Palace is going to result in Crimson Mother waking up no matter what, then... I have another method I can try!"

With that, he strode forward until he reached one of the shadowy figures. He looked up at the canopy of heaven, then at the surrounding lands. And finally he looked at the figure in front of him. As he heard the chanting of the song, he slowly released his hold on the impulse he had suppressed earlier.

"Red moon authority cannot have two masters!"

Eyes slowly turning red, Xu Qing released his hold on godliness, and fused with the red moon.

The Heir Apparent and his siblings looked on with serious expressions, while the Captain's eyes glittered.

Emperor Ancient Spirit was even more moved. *This kid has red moon authority! For him to come to the red moon has a completely different meaning than for everyone else! That's especially true... considering that Crimson Mother is still asleep!*

As everyone looked on with varying levels of surprise, Xu Qing closed his eyes. Blood-colored light flared everywhere, and his entire body blurred. At the same time, he seemed to become one with the crimson color around him, until he was hardly visible.

The entire red moon trembled. The chanting suddenly stopped, and countless shadowy figures looked up. Though their eyes were covered with their hands, they seemed to be attracted to Xu Qing's authority, and were 'looking' at him.

Shortly thereafter, Xu Qing opened his eyes and spoke in a low voice that echoed far and wide.

“I am the new moon, born in Revered Ancient. Let all living beings call me Violet Lord.”

The blood-colored light surrounding Xu Qing transformed, becoming violet. As the effect grew stronger, it turned into a violet moon!

And as Xu Qing rose up into the canopy of heaven, the violet moon... rose! Wild colors flashed in heaven and earth. Winds screamed. The red moon trembled and quaked, and the surrounding shadowy figures shivered. More intense red moon power erupted from the moon, becoming a violet-tinged tempest that swept across everything. All of the shadowy figures shook violently.

The Heir Apparent and his siblings were visibly moved. Even the normally taciturn Ninth Sib was looking at Xu Qing with a very serious expression on his face.

“He’s tampering with Crimson Mother’s lyrics!” the Heir Apparent said. “The red is turning into violet!”

Shocked, Emperor Ancient Spirit detached his cloak form from Xu Qing and backed away. “Amazing destined opportunity. Incredible good fortune!”

The Captain was smiling, his eyes shining with both joy and melancholy. *It’s been a really long time since I’ve seen that violet moon....*

As the violet moon rose, all of the lands and living beings that had been stained red now had a bit of violet in them. As the violet color spread, filling the dome of heaven, the shadowy figures in the area also began to change, slowly turning violet. At the same time, the words they sang changed.

“The new moon, lord to me; Revered Ancient’s true trustee; the living hosts suffer; they have a blissful guarantee.

“Offered freely, lord to me; no bitterness for me; from bitterness I’m free; undecayed for all to see.

“The new moon, lord; from the Revered Ancient community; all living beings far and near; as Violet Lord do address thee.

“Souls offered, lord to me; pāramitā an actuality; sing with joy when you see; the return to our world ends happily.”

The lyrics were different, and as the shadowy figures turned violet, so did the moon itself!

Not only did everyone on the moon see that, so did people in regions throughout the Revered Ancient mainland! The arrival of the red moon was an event closely observed by the areas surrounding the Moonrite Region.

In fact, in the Holytide Region, in the palace atop the white sand, Grand Duke Holytide, who had recently stepped from Void Returning into Smoldering God, opened his eyes from meditation. As he did, a pair of huge eyes formed in the canopy of heaven over the Holytide Region, and they looked in the direction of Moonrite.

Violet has appeared within the red moon! Crimson Mother’s authority is being transformed.... What... is going on over there?

A similar commotion was playing out in the Nightshade Region.

When the Imperial Region unleashed Dawning Sun, it resulted in severe casualties among the Nightshades, and locked down both of the regions they controlled. Since then, the Nightshades had been constantly carrying out ceremonies and sacrifices hoping to attract the attention of their god. They never got any response. As of right now, the Nightshade priests and priestesses felt alarmed in an unprecedented way. Every single one of them saw the same thing in their mind. It was a vision of the red moon being changed.

They weren't the only ones affected in that way. Another region that bordered Moonrite was the one controlled by the Firemoon Darkheavens. The cultivators there could sense the red light in the Moonrite Region, and noticed when streaks of violet appeared within it.

If those were the reactions in bordering regions, there was little need to mention what was happening within Moonrite itself. People throughout the region were trembling in apprehension. Shaken, they watched as heaven and earth slowly changed color.

The red moon in the canopy of heaven was slowly turning into a violet moon. If that process continued, and Xu Qing completely replaced the red moon, turning it into a violet moon, then he... would become a new god.

Of course, that couldn't actually happen as long as Crimson Mother was still alive. Crimson Mother had not woken up even when the Nightshade species suffered a grievous defeat. Shē had not awoken to stop the destruction of the Red Moon Cathedral. In fact, shē didn't even stir when Li Zihua woke up and grabbed the red moon with both hands, then poked a finger through its defenses to touch the moon's soil. Clearly, devouring Flawless Hell, Lord of the Nine Serenities, was not as easy of a task as it seemed for Crimson Mother.

However, now that the red moon was changing colors, shē had no choice but to interfere. A terrifying aura exploded onto the red moon, filling it entirely. At the same time, a blood-colored palace materialized overhead.

It was... the Moon Palace!

The extremely ancient palace was crafted from stone. It was pure crimson and radiated profound godly might. On the closed door of the palace was a huge totem. It depicted a vicious face. That face was not that of Crimson Mother. Instead, it was a face with six eyes, all of which were opened, and were staring down at the people below, particularly Xu Qing.

"All who blaspheme against our god will experience the tribulation of ten thousand deaths!"

The Heir Apparent's eyes glittered; clearly, he recognized this six-eyed individual. "It's You Dingmu, the patriarch of the Gloomites!"

He wasn't the only one. All it took was a single glance for his brothers and sisters to reach the same conclusion.

The Captain's eyes narrowed, and he grinned slightly. Obviously, he was also aware of the identity of this totem. After all... he had been here in his past life.

Xu Qing's gaze hardened as he thought about the story the Heir Apparent had told him as they traversed the northern ice plains and encountered the Gloomites. Patriarch Gloomite had been a subordinate of Imperial Sovereign Li Zihua, but had turned traitor and joined Crimson Mother. Later, the Imperial Sovereign slaughtered him in the northern ice plains, and crushed his major world. Xu Qing had acquired a fragment of that very same major world, which had once belonged to the face in this totem. [1]

That slaughtered subordinate of an Imperial Sovereign was now visible on the main door of the Moon Palace. Hē was a door god now, obviously having been resurrected somehow by Crimson Mother.

And thus, Eldest Brother went to the ice plains to get a copy of that fingerprint...

Xu Qing looked at the Captain.

Raising his voice, he said, "Seniors, there's a process involved in Crimson Mother awakening. And we need to get to her resting place before she's fully conscious! As for this door god, if you just help me buy some time, I have a way to crush it!"

Xu Qing looked at the Captain; it seemed as if he wanted to say something, but in the end, decided not to.

Meanwhile, the arrival of the Moon Palace caused the lands to shake and rise up, all while the canopy of heaven tilted down, as if they were being pulled by some invisible force. From a distance, it was possible to see the ancient stone Moon Palace covered with complex designs that only emphasized its general feeling of luxury and extravagance. It had vermilion walls and crimson roof tiles. The structures were all richly ornamented, and the decorative eaves featured extremely lifelike depictions of scenery and animals. As it hovered in the blood-colored fog, its silhouette seemed unusually silent and solemn. It was the core of this entire world, and everything around it was drawn toward it, whether that be heaven or earth... or anything else.

The sky rippled and the lands distorted. The entire world trembled loudly. The Moon Palace was the center of all attention, and the blood-colored light it emanated spread out to fill the red moon. In fact, the red moon seemed to be offering worship to it. The shadowy figures that Xu Qing had altered went back to being fully crimson, and they started chanting the old version of the lyrics.

As the crimson light became more prominent, the face in the totem snarled angrily at Xu Qing. Its gaze was somber and desolate, and its growl was like heavenly thunder that crashed in all directions. Crimson snowflakes spread out in all directions, converging into the shape of armored skeletons that rushed toward Xu Qing and the others.

Seeing all that, the Heir Apparent snorted coldly and took a step forward. As his foot fell, the power of a Smoldering God swept out, becoming a gigantic hand that reached out and closed into a fist.

The air rippled and the armored skeletons shivered and exploded. Yet an instant later, they formed together again, this time into beasts that were nothing more than crimson bones. They were apparently eternal entities; no matter how you destroyed them, they would always come back, and when they did, they were stronger than before.

The Heir Apparent and his siblings obviously weren't weaklings, especially when they worked together. Therefore, Princess Brightblossom performed an incantation gesture, causing a river of time to spring forth. Eighth Sib let loose a roar that tapped into all of the seven emotions and six sensory pleasures. In fact, that power could give emotions to those who didn't have emotions. As a result, the beasts immediately began to fidget in fear. Before they could get control of their emotions, the river of time arrived and swept them away.

The Captain wasn't sitting on his laurels. Taking out a patch of skin from his bag of holding, he shouted at Xu Qing to help him. Each of them grabbed one side of the patch of skin and then stretched it out between them.

In the blink of an eye, the patch of skin was opened up to reveal a huge fingerprint. It was a strange fingerprint, the mere sight of which would induce hair-raising terror. That fingerprint belonged to the Imperial Sovereign, and was left behind when he crushed Patriarch Gloomite.

"Little Ah Qing, send your taboo poison inside!" the Captain called. Then he spat out a mouthful of blood onto the patch of skin. Instantly, the fingerprint started glowing and emitted a terrifying pressure.

Xu Qing's eye turned pitch black as he sent out the power of his taboo poison into the fingerprint. Off to the side, the Captain kept spitting out one mouthful of blood after another. The pressure emanating from the fingerprint grew stronger.

When Xu Qing saw the Captain spitting up so much blood, he felt like saying something. But considering how excited the Captain was, in the end, he decided it was better to bite his tongue.

The Heir Apparent and his siblings weren't finished. After dealing with the blood-bone beasts, they rose into the air toward the Moon Palace.

However, the totem guarding the door leading to Crimson Mother wasn't just going to let them inside. Its six eyes glittered, causing six beams of crimson light to shoot out, which turned into six streams of red muddy clay that shot toward the siblings. It was no ordinary clay. It contained the will of a god. Moving with blinding speed, the clay swept out to cover the five siblings, leaving an extra stream to shoot toward Xu Qing.

However, before that sixth stream could reach him, a black sword appeared in front of him to block its path. Ninth Sib had planted himself in front of Xu Qing, and was thus covered with two streams of muddy clay from Patriarch Gloomite.

"Hurry it up!" Ninth Sib said grimly, his back to Xu Qing and the Captain as the blood-colored clay covered him.

The Captain nodded. "Seven breaths of time at the most!"

More blood sprayed out of his mouth. At the same time, Xu Qing kept his taboo poison rushing forth. As the process continued, the two of them floated up into the air. Thanks to the blood and the poison, the patch of skin rapidly got larger. With the two of them pulling it, it reached a size of 9 meters. Then 30 meters. Then 120 meters....

The fingerprint became clearer and clearer, and the energy it emanated was increasingly terrifying.

The face in the totem saw that, and its six eyes snapped shut. As that happened, six soul shadows popped into being. Looking at them closely, those six soul shadows actually represented the Heir Apparent and his siblings, with Ninth Sib being represented twice. When they appeared, the blood-colored clay caking the five siblings exploded, spinning off to the side where it clumped back into a group of clay people that looked exactly like the Heir Apparent and his siblings.

They had broad, gruish smiles, and their cultivation bases pulsed with the power of Smoldering Gods. Without any hesitation, they launched themselves toward the siblings.

Meanwhile, the totem's forehead split open, revealing a seventh eye that focused on Xu Qing, the Captain, and the patch of skin with the fingerprint. The seventh eye narrowed, and the totem rippled, peeling off of the door to appear in the world as a gigantic face of clay. It took the form of a conglomeration of blood-colored clay, which rushed toward Xu Qing and the Captain with its mouth opened wider and wider.

However, just when the face of blood-colored clay appeared, and before it had a chance to devour Xu Qing and the Captain, a stream of black light appeared. The black light had been very craftily hidden, and it chose just the right moment to sneakily appear. It was as if it had been waiting all along for the face to remove itself from the door.

It closed in, pulsing with uncontrollable greed and hunger. It was surrounded by the water of the Yellow Springs, which was actually... Emperor Ancient Spirit's saliva. That black light was the cloak form of the Ancient Spirit. In the blink of an eye, the cloak shot toward the gaping maw of the totem's face.

Filled with countless years of hunger, Emperor Ancient Spirit ravenously started gobbling up the face.

Miserable screams erupted from the face of blood-colored clay. Its eyes filled with terror as it abandoned all thoughts of devouring Xu Qing. Instead, it tried to flee back to the door. Sadly for it, Emperor Ancient Spirit had been waiting in hiding this entire time all for the purpose of having a meal. Therefore, there was no way some delectable food was going to be allowed to flee. Bite after bite was followed by horrendous chewing sounds. Saliva flowed, becoming a river accompanied by the muffled rumbling caused by intense hunger.

Stunned, the Captain checked on his own incredible counter measure, then looked at the face of blood-colored clay. He seemed depressed.

As the Captain wallowed in sadness, Patriarch Gloomite screamed miserably. Finally, he exploded, sending chunks of blood-red clay in all directions. It quickly flew back together. Unfortunately... the blood-colored clay was only about forty percent of its original volume. The other sixty percent were now a host of eyes that pulsed with avarice.

Those eyes belonged to Emperor Ancient Spirit now.

The terrified Patriarch Gloomite tried to rush back to the Moon Palace with the forty percent of himself that remained. However, the Captain was there to take advantage of the moment.

Releasing the patch of skin, he shouted, “Be sealed!”

Xu Qing also released his grip. The fingerprint on the patch of skin erupted as if with natural and magical laws. Heaven-shaking, earth-shattering fluctuations rolled out as the fingerprint shot directly toward Patriarch Gloomite. If that fingerprint had belonged to anyone else, it might not have been very effective. But the owner of that fingerprint had previously crushed Patriarch Gloomite to death. As a result, it contained a lot of karma, and therefore, Patriarch Gloomite started shaking violently.

Then the patch of skin arrived, wrapping up the patriarch. It rolled itself up like a scroll painting and shot back to the Captain.

Chapter 697: Long Time No See, Xu Qing!

The Captain snatched the scroll painting out of the air, laughed heartily, and tossed it to Xu Qing.

“Suppress him in the world fragment, little Junior Brother. This counts as our first battle trophy!”

Xu Qing immediately suppressed Patriarch Gloomite in the world fragment. Because of being connected to the fingerprint by karma, the Captain’s patch of skin and the world fragment were more than enough.

Everything came down to karma. And a sealing method like that would be very stable. That was especially true considering that Patriarch Gloomite had already been seriously injured, and had lost sixty percent of himself. Suppressing that remaining forty percent didn’t cause any big waves.

One thing had to be said: the Captain had obviously prepared very thoroughly for this mission to deal with Crimson Mother.

That said, considering Emperor Ancient Spirit was present... what he had just done was *snatching food from the tiger’s mouth!*

And that was why Emperor Ancient Spirit didn’t look very happy; hē wasn’t full. Of course, hē knew that this was just a little appetizer. Snorting coldly, hē looked over at the Heir Apparent and his siblings fighting the clay figures. Now that Patriarch Gloomite had been sealed, the clay figures’ minds went blank. They turned back into ordinary muddy clay, then collapsed into ashes.

Next, everyone turned to look at the door of the Moon Palace. As of now, there was no totem there. Of course, everyone present was fully aware that just because the door lacked a door god, it didn’t mean that it was going to be easy to open.

Laughing heartily, the Captain walked up to the door, his head high and his chest out.

“Ladies and gentlemen of the Senior generation, please, give me some room. And also, provide backup. Of everyone here, I’m the most experienced at opening doors. Little Junior Brother, you don’t need to do anything right now. I’ll bust open this thing!”

The Captain extended his hand, and the nine artificial suns flew out.

The suns were wreathed in golden flames, and emanated a godly aura. As for the fire... it was the absorbed godfire of the godchild, and with its augmentation, the nine artificial suns were like mini Dawning Suns!

Although the Heir Apparent and his siblings were unfamiliar with the Dawning Suns, they could sense the terrifying nature of these nine suns. In fact, they had been paying attention to them all along. As a result, they backed up. Emperor Ancient Spirit took a close look, then went back into hiding.

Seeing all of that made the Captain feel more pleased with himself than ever. With a flourish, he loudly said, "Little Roundy! Open up the shrew's door for me!"

One of the burning artificial suns flew out, pulsing with a terrifying aura. It left a streak of gold behind it as it shot directly toward the door of the Moon Palace.

"Cover me!" Acting very much like a child who had just lit some firecrackers, the Captain raced madly back toward Xu Qing. He knew full well that the safest spot possible would be right next to Xu Qing. The Heir Apparent and the others might not protect the Captain, but they would definitely keep Xu Qing safe. He was absolutely correct. Ninth Sib flew over to stand protectively in front of Xu Qing, his sword raised. The Heir Apparent and the rest of the siblings also flew over.

The moment they arrived, the sun slammed into the door. A deafening boom rang out, causing the entire red moon to tremble. The air in the area rippled. Through the distortions, it was possible to see that the artificial sun had smashed into the door and turned into waves of golden fire that spread out over the Moon Palace to vie with the crimson color.

The aura being released was so horrendously powerful that even the Heir Apparent and the siblings felt threatened. That was especially true considering that the power of godfire was on display. The Moon Palace trembled as tempestuous fluctuations spread out over the red moon.

Though the Heir Apparent and the siblings were able to block the fluctuations, they continued to spread around them in a semi-circular shape. The effects quickly spread out to the Moonrite Region as a whole.

It took a very long moment before the tempest died down. Xu Qing looked up. The Moon Palace rose up in front of him just like before. The golden fire covering it was receding in the face of the growing crimson color. And the door... though damaged, was not open.

Looking a bit anxious, the Captain rose up with a crazy look in his eyes and shouted, "Medium Roundy!"

In the blink of an eye, an artificial sun that was far larger than the first one flew forth, similarly leaving behind a streak of golden flames. It was clearly a lot more majestic than Little Roundy. It screamed through the air toward the door, then slammed into it with a deafening boom that seemed to surpass all sounds in the world. The red moon shook again, and the entire Moonrite Region trembled. In fact, even people in surrounding regions heard the heaven-rending, earth-crushing sound.

The eruption of godfire stained the entire red moon the color of gold. And even though the Moon Palace's door contained godfire, it still succumbed to the terrifying blow, and opened by a crack.

The Captain looked very excited, and Xu Qing was watching the door closely. But then, a cold harrumph echoed out, and the voice was very familiar.

At the same time, the godfire covering the door winked out. The same thing happened to the godfire covering the rest of the Moon Palace, as well as the flames that had spread across the entirety of the red moon. That one cold harrumph extinguished all of it.

The Heir Apparent's expression flickered as he backed up. Princess Brightblossom, Fifth Sister, and Eighth Sib all reacted with surprise. In fact, Fifth Sister and Eighth Sib both coughed up huge mouthfuls of blood.

The only one who reacted differently was Ninth Sib, whose baleful aura flared as he slashed his sword out in front of him. The piercing sound of an explosion rang out as the sword slashed through the air and shredded the invisible pressure. However, as the sword descended, the sword itself wasn't able to stand up to the force, and shattered. Ninth Sib's face was completely expressionless as he made a grasping gesture. A second sword appeared in his hand as he looked up at the Moon Palace's door.

The Captain's eyes glittered with blue light as he ignited the remaining artificial suns. He recognized the identity of the person who had let loose the cold harrumph.

So did Xu Qing. As he remained in place silently, the previously unopened door slowly swung open. It made no sound. And it didn't open just a bit. It opened wide, almost as if to invite everyone inside.

Past the door was the interior of the Moon Palace. It didn't look like a palace hall. Instead, it was a massive sea of blood. It seemed to go on forever, with its blood-red glow illuminating the canopy of heaven.

Within that red glow, standing tall above the sea, were numerous hulking figures. One looked vaguely humanoid, except with three heads and six arms. One very bizarre one was made completely of bones, and was unnaturally tall. Another had a body shaped like a slab of meat, which was covered with tentacles. Yet another was a conglomeration of mist filled with innumerable tiny fingers.

These strange figures looked completely different from the species which inhabited Revered Ancient. And every single one emanated terrifying godly auras that filled the blood sea. Even just one of these figures could bring about a bloody reign of terror if it were released onto the mainland.

Because all of thēm... were gods!

There were 37 of them in total!

Xu Qing even spotted the god from Forbidden by the Immortal! It looked like a fish, just as he remembered.

Based on the auras Xu Qing could sense, there were at least a dozen or so gods who surpassed the fish god. And based on what Xu Qing could tell, two of them... were roughly on the same level as Crimson Mother, with godly might that could shatter the mind of a mortal who simply looked at them.

They weren't corporeal, but rather, were projections. This place was a hell for gods.

"This is a bit different from the last time I was in the Moon Palace," the Captain said in a low voice. "The Moonlight Sea should be deeper inside. But now it's right here.... The Moonlight Sea is full of projections of the various gods Crimson Mother has devoured!"

Xu Qing's pupils constricted as he looked into the depths of the sea. There... he saw a huge flower that the 37 gods were arrayed around.

It was an extremely beautiful flower, and yet, that beauty was filled with a sensation of death. Bright red, with numerous swaying stamens and oddly bent leaves, it drifted back and forth as if dancing to music. The flower was blooming. The petals slowly opened. This entire world seemed filled with the cloying reek of blood and gore.

From a distance, the lily flower rose up from the blood hell like the vicious clawed hand of a ghost, attempting to snatch any and all living things.

A figure sat cross-legged on the flower. The figure was male, and was covering his eyes with both hands. Unmoving, he almost seemed asleep. Long red hair drifted about, covering the flower itself. The hairs connected to the stamens, making it hard to distinguish the difference between the person and the flower. And the flower was more beautiful as a result.

The male figure wore a red robe, which was the same color as the pāramitā lily, and made it seem... as if the two of them were one. [1]

He was extremely good-looking, but at the same time, seemed empty. If Xu Qing didn't recognize this person, he would have had a hard time determining if he was male or female. It was a fatal type of beauty, or perhaps, a deathly beauty that living beings couldn't possess. Just like the flower.

Atop this person's blood-colored hair was a crown of thorns, the thorns of which pierced the skin, but at the same time, added to the beauty of the image. A host of tormented faces were weaved into the crown of thorns, and they constantly shifted into the form of different faces. At the same time, they all emitted noiseless howls of grief. Those howls of grief echoed out to become the music the flower swayed to.

"Zhang Siyun..." murmured Xu Qing.

This person was indeed none other than Zhang Siyun!

Xu Qing wasn't surprised to see him here. Although he never got to know Zhang Siyun very well, he had dealt with him on multiple occasions. He had personally witnessed Zhang Siyun be possessed by Crimson Mother, devour the god from Forbidden by the Immortal, and then vanish back to the red moon. [2]

The moment Xu Qing's gaze fell on Zhang Siyun, Zhang Siyun's eyelashes fluttered, and he... opened his eyes. They were as red as blood and as cold as ice. They were Crimson Mother's eyes but they also looked like Zhang Siyun's eyes.

"Long time no see, Xu Qing."

Chapter 698: God Magic; Destiny Manipulation!

The red moon trembled through and through.

As Zhang Siyun's voice echoed out, it became innumerable bits of sound that echoed like thunderclaps. It sounded like the chanting of all living beings, which pierced into Xu Qing's mind, and left the Captain, the Heir Apparent, and all the siblings visibly surprised. What was more, the fact that Zhang Siyun spoke Xu Qing's name went to show that, though hē was Crimson Mother's doppelgänger, hē also retained his old memories. The two had been combined.

"Crimson Mother didn't devour his mind," the Captain said in a serious tone. "She left him behind as an independent person. He's Zhang Siyun, but at the same time, is also Crimson Mother! What's more, he's even stronger in this form!"

The Heir Apparent and his siblings looked on with coldly flickering eyes. Meanwhile, Ninth Sib took action. He became a stream of scintillating sword light that shot toward the door, shattering the air along the way. The Heir Apparent and Princess Brightblossom also went on the offensive, followed by Fifth Sister and Eighth Sib. Xu Qing and the Captain came last.

The door of the Moon Palace had opened of its own accord. Though there was still a lot of danger to be aware of, there was no way that everyone would just give up because Zhang Siyun showed hīs face.

In the blink of an eye, they were all closing in on the door. At that point, red-robed Zhang Siyun looked calmly at them from hīs position on the pāramitā lily. Moonlight rippled out, causing hīs beautiful features to seem nobler as hē slowly raised hīs right hand. Hīs skin was as fair as white jade, and contained no palm print. Palm prints were an aspect of destiny, and when it came to gods and destiny, well, thēy existed outside of destiny.

"God magic..." Zhang Siyun said quietly, then tapped hīs thumb on the first digit of hīs forefinger.

The moment they made contact, a noise echoed out like the splash of a water drop. The sound then became two words that resounded in the minds of Xu Qing and everyone else.

A faint wind blew, stirring the Moonlight Sea and eventually touching the Heir Apparent and everyone else that was entering the door of the Moon Palace. It caused their clothing to sway, and also caused their destiny to ripple.

Ninth Sib was in the lead position. A tremor passed through him as he stopped in place and found himself unable to move forward. Then something extremely shocking happened. Countless projections appeared, superimposed over him. They were images from his past, including those from when he had been suppressed and tormented. They also contained beautiful memories from before his father had perished. Nothing from his past was hidden. Everything appeared around him as images, superimposed over his body. This was his past destiny.

It wasn't just happening with Ninth Sib. Images of the past appeared around the Heir Apparent, Princess Brightblossom, Fifth Sister, and Eighth Sib. Countless such images formed, becoming like individual pages that made a book!

Xu Qing and the Captain were not exempt.

The Captain shivered as images appeared that went all the way back to the moment of his birth. However, they didn't include images from his past lives, only his present life.

Likewise, images of Xu Qing appeared, starting from when he was very small. Joys and sorrows appeared. All the vicissitudes of life. However, the broken face of the god was not visible, nor were any images of his older brother! Xu Qing didn't have the mental bandwidth to consider what that meant. Seeing the countless images of his past caused a host of emotions to fill him. What was happening now wasn't the work of a cultivator, but rather, the power of a god.

Zhang Siyun's expression was the same as ever as hē looked at everyone present. Next, hīs thumb moved from the first digit of his index finger to tap on the second, whereupon another sound rang out like the splashing of a water drop.

The wind picked up. Destiny stirred again. It was impossible to fight against or avoid. In the hands of a god, destiny was like a plaything that could be manipulated or adjusted. And now... as hīs thumb moved down hīs finger, and as the sound of water echoed out... Everyone felt their minds spinning, as if they were being struck by 10,000,000 lightning bolts. The images of the past went wild. It was as if they were being inspected. The aura of a god grew stronger, filling the entire world around them.

The Heir Apparent's eyes were bright red as he stood there trembling and trying to fight back. His siblings were all in similar situations. Yet nothing did any good. They couldn't stop their past destiny from being rifled through.

The only exception was Ninth Sib, whose aura seethed as the flipping of pages slowed. Unfortunately, he wasn't able to stop it entirely.

The Captain and Xu Qing didn't have the sufficient cultivation base to provide any resistance.

As the memories were flipped through, images began to pop out one after another. Once in the open, they flew toward Zhang Siyun. Each and every one of those images, without any exception, came from a moment of extreme pain and torment.

For the Heir Apparent and his siblings, they were memories of being forced to devour the flesh and blood of their brothers and sisters. They were images of them being suppressed and tormented, as well as other instances of extreme grief and anguish.

The Captain shivered. The images of his past related to moments of incredible hunger when he released seals within himself. Of course, there were also scenes that, up to this point, had been secret. In one of them, the Captain walked through gloom and darkness, heartbroken and weeping loudly.

Xu Qing's face was distorted, blue veins bulged out on his forehead, and he was breathing heavily. However, the pain of having memories torn out of him couldn't compare to the torment of one particular scene.

In that scene, he was in a forested area while rain fell down from above. He knelt on the ground, filled with pain, anguish, despair, and madness. Lying on the ground in front of him was a skewer of blood-colored candied fruit. It was a memory that Xu Qing didn't even want. It was the moment when his older brother appeared in Emperor-Receiving Prefecture and told him the truth about everything. It was one of the worst moments in Xu Qing's entire life up to this point. Compared to

that, all the bitterness he had endured as a youngster didn't count for much. The memory was ripped out of him, becoming an image that shot toward Zhang Siyun.[1]

Before long, such memories of pain and torment were proliferating in front of Zhang Siyun, where they became images that circulated around him.

“Living beings only experience pain because of the contrast it forms with beauty...” Zhang Siyun said softly. As he did, he tapped his thumb on the first digit of his middle finger.

A crisp sound rang out into the minds of everyone present, a ripple that turned into a tempest. An intense rumbling sound exploded out as the memory images around them began to collapse! They shattered!

All the beauty. All the happiness. All the cherished moments. All the love.... All of the past crumbled. Rumbling sounds filled the minds of everyone present. As the images collapsed, they turned into illusory blood that prompted uncontrollable shrieks of mourning to fill heaven and earth.

That was when the resistance began.

The Heir Apparent's hair flowed around him like innumerable snakes. They pierced into the memories of the past, using his perception-altering powers to bolster the images. A river of time flowed around Princess Brightblossom, strengthening the images of the past around her. Eighth Sib used emotions to make happiness and joy a constant that spread out in all directions. Ninth Sib's method was the simplest. Swords emerged from his memories, which slashed out in all directions. Swords collapsed constantly, but new swords always appeared to replace them....

As the Captain's facial expression distorted, frigid energy exploded out of him to lock down the past. And Xu Qing's sundials activated. His will domain of amnesia stirred, and his authority exploded out. That was when he came to realize why those images didn't contain the broken face or the Crown Prince of Violet and Cyan.

It was because, for some unknown reason, when Zhang Siyun used his god magic of Destiny Manipulation, the images of those two beings appeared inside of Xu Qing's violet crystal!

When the images became clear, Xu Qing's mind filled with an explosive rumbling that far surpassed the sound of beautiful memories shattering.

The first image was in the ruins of the slums. He was looking up into the sky as the broken face's eyes opened and looked down in his direction....

The second image was from Peerless City.... A blood rain fell as a younger version of himself sat on the ground, hugging his knees and weeping. From what Xu Qing remembered, he had wept for a long time before ultimately leaving the vanishing city.

And yet, the image within the violet crystal showed something different!! In that image, a familiar person floated down from midair to stand in front of the weeping Xu Qing. That person reached out and put his hand on Xu Qing's head.

The moment those words echoed out in the image, Xu Qing's head exploded, and his body turned into a mass of gore that splashed into the ground.

He was dead.

Xu Qing shivered as waves of shock swept through him. All of the ‘pages’ of memories outside of him crumbled, leaving behind... a book completely empty of pages. Everyone fought back, but it couldn’t stop the same thing from happening to them.

“Without beauty, there can be no contrast, and thus... there is no purpose in grief.” Zhang Siyun’s expression was tranquil in the moonlight. Hē did not emanate even the slightest emotional fluctuation. Hīs beautiful face seemed like a statue as hē stared at everyone and moved hīs thumb to the second digit of hīs middle finger and tapped it there.

Instantly, the images of pain and torment stopped rotating around him and began to vibrate. At the same time, it seemed as if they were being copied, as countless versions of the same images started to appear.

Seeing that, Zhang Siyun smiled faintly. Then hē tapped hīs thumb on the first digit of hīs ring finger. When hē did... the images suddenly flew back toward where they came from. They shot back into the empty books and began to fill them in. However... those pasts now contained no beauty. They were filled only with pain and suffering.

All the good memories were collapsing.

This was the power of a god. This was a god magic.

Chapter 699: Destiny, Detonate!

In the past, there had been many cultivators from a variety of species who were willing to fight back against the gods. But now... such people were *as rare as phoenix feathers or qilin horns*.

The reason was that the people who fought back were all dead now. In the vast majority of instances, only gods could rival other gods.

Over the countless years that had passed, the only instance in which a cultivator slaughtered gods was in the epoch when Ancient Emperor Dark Serenity waged war before ultimately departing. After that... it never happened again. Gods were paramount above all else, not to be blasphemed and not even to be looked at directly.

Gradually, the concept of slaughtering gods came to be viewed as impossible to members of all species. In fact, even just imagining something like that was fear-inspiring. Gods were more terrifying and powerful than cultivators could even comprehend. Gods also surpassed the scope of the divine abilities cultivators could use, and even existed outside of their perceptions.

The two... almost didn’t exist in the same dimension.

To the vast majority of cultivators, any given god was beyond understanding. Gods were omniscient and omnipotent, and mysterious and gruish to a degree that defied comprehension.

Meanwhile, in the eyes of the gods, all living beings were excessively simplistic. A single glance could reveal their past and future. And even the many potentialities in their futures could be seen through. That was just a manifestation of a higher level of personhood. Only cultivators who

reached the absolute pinnacle of cultivation could possess similar personhood, and thus be taken somewhat seriously by gods. Unfortunately... very, very few cultivators ever reached that pinnacle.

When it came to gods, there were both postheaven gods and natural-born gods. Therefore, when cultivators relied on magical techniques as their trump cards, and used things like wind, rain, thunder, lightning, metal, wood, water, or fire, they were essentially meaningless to gods.

Gods acted similar to the way Zhang Siyun had just acted. The mere raising of hīs hand allowed hīm to calculate and manipulate the destiny of all living beings.

To gods, there was little difference between cultivators and mortals. The slightest tap of a finger could alter destiny. Power like that could drive people to despair.

Right now, everyone from the Heir Apparent and Princess Brightblossom to the Captain and Xu Qing lacked any memories of the past. In fact, they didn't even seem capable of perceiving each other.

The only things that existed for them were unending torment and pain. There was no beauty to create a contrast with it. There was only suffering. In fact, from a certain perspective, it almost didn't make sense to call it suffering. That wasn't accurate. The torment brought by such memories seemed never-ending. It was indescribable and impossible to endure.

For example, Xu Qing... who was immersed in his earliest memories of everything collapsing. He wanted to free himself, but the images in his memories created a cycle of past and future from which there was no escape....

Everyone was currently standing just outside of the Moon Palace on the red moon. None of them had stepped inside. It was as if their previous thoughts of slaughtering a god were nothing more than a joke.

“Mortals slaughter a god?” Zhang Siyun shook hīs head, then lifted hīs thumb and tapped it onto the second digit of hīs ring finger. A sound like a breaking bottle echoed out, crisp and clear.

“Destiny: Detonate.”

Hīs voice echoed out with a level of command that had to be obeyed.

The Captain shivered as cracks spread out over him. Not even the blue light that emanated out of him, forming a sealing ice, could stop it from happening. He eventually collapsed, turning into a mass of blood and gore that splashed onto the ground.

Xu Qing shivered, his heart and mind blank thanks to the second image that had appeared in the violet crystal. He had sunk into a world of endless darkness in which nothing else existed. It was just like what happened in the image after the Crown Prince of Violet and Cyan lowered his hand.

Next was Eighth Sib, who trembled from head to toe as the seven emotions and six sensory pleasures that came close to being the power of a god were actually wiped away. With nothing to hold him up, Eighth Sib fell onto the ground.

The Heir Apparent and Princess Brightblossom were both Smoldering Gods, but even their major worlds were full of grief, pain, and bitterness. Even their life force was turning dim.

Ninth Sib struggled to hold strong. Slowly looking up, he summoned a sword into his right hand. It was his final life force sword. It was also his strongest sword, the ultimate sword that Emperor Ancient Spirit had glimpsed earlier. Yet what Emperor Ancient Spirit didn't realize was that Ninth Sib's final sword wasn't a sword of killing, but one of defense.

Up ahead, the door of the Moon Palace slowly closed. From atop the pāramitā lily, Zhang Siyun shook his head and closed his eyes. He seemed disinterested in what was happening, and settled down as still as an emotionless statue.

Everything was over.

Ninth Sib didn't speak. Behind him, Fifth Sister had her eyes closed. Her age-wracked face was pale and ashen, and she pulsed with a strong aura of death. Without Ninth Sib there protecting her, she would already have perished. Then she opened her eyes and looked at her older brother. Then she looked at everyone else in the throes of death. Her eyes closed.

Gradually, a florescent light began to seep out of her, where it took the form of a flower. The flower had numerous stamens that seemed to burst with life and beauty. The moment the flower appeared, the closing door of the Moon Palace stopped moving.

Zhang Siyun's eyes snapped open.

The new flower was also a pāramitā lily! It looked just like the one Zhang Siyun was seated upon. The difference was that this one was the color white.

As the flower bloomed, Fifth Sister withered. She was burning herself, just like she had when she was born, when she had used her own life force to save her brother. Throughout her life, she had burned away her life force to save others. Even in ancient times, while all her brothers and sisters looked young, she looked old and full of decay.

As she knew, that was her mission. As she knew, that was her purpose. In the past, she had hated that truth. But in the end... she chose to have no regrets.

As the flower was set free, and its fragrance spread, the Heir Apparent's body stitched back together. It was the same with Princess Brightblossom, Eighth Sib, the Captain, and Xu Qing. Everyone was restored. Their bodies formed again, and their energy erupted. Their emotions stabilized. Most strange of all was that all of the memories that had been destroyed by the god magic were returned.

It was not a reversal of time. When dealing with the god magic of a god, only someone with corresponding personhood could do that.

Fifth Sister's pāramitā lily was a blessing! Similar to godly curses, godly blessings were an extreme rarity.

Zhang Siyun was visibly moved. Looking at Fifth Sister, he said, "Very impressive of Li Zihua to do something like this. He sealed a god in your future body! In the future, you'll have a god inside of you, and gods cannot be defied. It's like karma. That's why, until you actually have that god sealed inside of you, you won't die!

"Therefore, you can use a mortal body to unleash unlimited god magics. It's a curse for you, but a blessing to others.... You even kept me in the dark. However, though

you won't die, you will grow old.... And when you grow old enough, your body will become a mindless shell. Very interesting. Now I'm curious what god this body of yours was prepared for."

Zhang Siyun had openly described Fifth Sister's secret! As his voice echoed out, the Heir Apparent and everyone else outside the Moon Palace looked over at Fifth Sister.

Her aura was extremely weak. She seemed profoundly old, and was full of an aura of death. Blood sprayed out of her mouth.

However, she was smiling. Voice hoarse, she said, "This is the purpose of my existence."

When those words reached the ears of everyone present, Xu Qing shivered, and his eyes went wide. It was as if everything from before had just been a bad dream.

The Captain opened his eyes and exhaled. His expression was grim, and in very rare fashion, he pulsed with a baleful aura. At the critical moment, he had called out to a High God for help, only to be refused.

I should have killed this indecisive crippled god sooner!

Heart pulsing with fury, he looked at Zhang Siyun on the Moonlight Sea, and his eyes became as cold as ice.

It was the same with the Heir Apparent and the other siblings. Their gazes shifted from Fifth Sister to Zhang Siyun.

And then the Heir Apparent took action. He raised his right hand, within which appeared a black nail. It was none other than Imperial Sovereign Li Zihua's nail! The moment it appeared, the Heir Apparent spat out a mouthful of blood. Within it appeared the image of a world that entered the nail. It was his major world, and he was using it to augment the nail!

Princess Brightblossom and Eighth Sib tapped deeply into their cultivation bases before spitting out their own mouthfuls of blood to augment the nail. And thus, in the shortest of times, that nail gained the projections of four worlds!

The black outer layers of the nail began to peel off, revealing a white nail underneath. Off to the side, Ninth Sib's eyes gleamed with aggressive light as he reached out, grabbed the nail, then stabbed his own palm with it. Blood poured out.

In short order, a fifth and sixth world appeared in the nail.

With the addition of those worlds, the black surface of the nail completely fell off, revealing its pure white interior. It was as if a seal was being undone, revealing the true might of the Imperial Sovereign's nail.

Prismatic energy surged. Wild colors flashed in heaven and earth. The red moon trembled. A terrifying aura exploded out. Then Ninth Sib let loose a shout and waved his blood-slicked right hand through the air. A thunderous boom rang out as the air shattered and the nail turned into a white streak of light that shot toward the door!

The Heir Apparent and the other siblings began to speak in low voices.

"Use the power of perception to ensure the nail hits the target!"

“Use the magic of time to pierce through both past and future!”

“Use the energy of longing to allow human nature to resist a god!”

“Use the dao of slaughter to guarantee bloodshed!”

The white nail pierced through time and hit the door with mountain-toppling, sea-draining force. Then it shot across the Moonlight Sea. The sea churned. The air shattered. The nail crushed everything in its path as it headed right toward Zhang Siyun atop the pāramitā lily!

Chapter 700: A Stubborn Sense of Existence

The Moonlight Sea shattered. The blood-water swept to either side, freezing into two cliffs. In the middle of them was a huge trough so deep the bottom wasn't visible!

The white nail, within which flickered six major worlds, shot forth, seemingly heedless of the fact that the surrounding god projections were racing to intercept it. It crushed everything in its path. Thunderous booms rang out as three god projections shattered.

Then the nail was right in front of Zhang Siyun, emanating terrifying pressure as it headed toward hīs forehead. It seemed just about to hit the target. However, Zhang Siyun was a doppelg?nger of Crimson Mother, with a life force that existed on an unfathomable level. Reaching out with hīs right hand, hē put a finger on either side of the nail and then squeezed down.

Hīs fingers didn't move after that. Nor did hīs arm or his body. But hīs clothes began flapping as if being blown by storm winds. Hīs red hair also whipped around behind hīm as the air shattered and rifts spread out in all directions.

“Excellent,” Zhang Siyun said calmly. Then hē prepared to wave hīs arm and send the nail flying back to where it came from.

Except... that was when something unexpected happened!

Although the white nail had been grabbed, the reality was that its function wasn't to stab. Instead, it began to change color, turning from white to green. At the same time, it melted, turning into numerous green threads. There were over ten thousand of them, and they quickly wrapped around Zhang Siyun's fingers, then swept with rapid speed toward hīs face.

Even just one of those threads could be considered a magical treasure. They pulsed with a terrifying aura, and were unimaginably sharp. In the shortest of moments, they reached Zhang Siyun's face and were about to stab into hīm.

Frowning, Zhang Siyun exhaled. Hīs breath was the color of blood, and hit the threads like a cloud. Most of the threads from the nail collapsed. However, four of them didn't.

Hidden among all the other threads, they pierced through the blood mist and landed on Zhang Siyun's face! Zhang Siyun tried to dodge out of the way, but the four threads were blessed by the Heir Apparent and his siblings, and they were impossible to evade.

In the blink of an eye, they stabbed into Zhang Siyun's face. No blood flowed out. However, the four threads burrowed into hīs flesh like bugs, then started boring through his body. During the process, the Heir Apparent and his siblings unleashed divine abilities to wreak withering and destruction.

Zhang Siyun was a doppelgänger of Crimson Mother, but he still had the body of a mortal. It had been altered, but on a substructural level, it was still mortal. A moment later, Zhang Siyun's body rippled as though it might collapse. However, his eyes remained calm, and he didn't seem to be reacting at all to the pain. What he did do was stand and back up. As he did, he ripped open his throat and stuck two fingers inside to try to grab the threads and extract them. At the same time, he used his other hand to wave at the Moonlight Sea.

The surviving god projections there opened their eyes and looked in the direction of the door. 34 gods emanated powerful fluctuations, filling the Moonlight Sea with such destructive fluctuations that any living being present would be killed in body and soul.

Yet that didn't stop the Heir Apparent and his siblings from stepping through the door and into the Moon Palace, where they unleashed attacks on the intercepting god projections.

The Heir Apparent was visible in his true form, and his major world was out in the form of a huge eye that looked at Zhang Siyun. It wasn't the eye of a god. But it was similar. The spot where it looked rippled and distorted, and perceptions there changed according to his thoughts. That even affected the projections of gods. After all, they were already dead, and existed only as projections.

Princess Brightblossom was equally terrifying. A long spear appeared in her hands, and a suit of armor rippled out to cover her. Time flowed beneath her feet, and killing intent surged within her.

Eighth Sib roared, his voice booming like a drum to create something like a fiendish devil. As it dug into the god projections, it became human nature which drove away the godliness. Ninth Sib strode forward quietly, his sword gleaming with cold light as he slashed it out.

Unfortunately, there were just too many god projections. And thanks to Zhang Siyun's quick actions, he had already extracted one of the threads and was looking for the second. It wouldn't be long before he got all four of them out.

Seeing that, Xu Qing and the Captain, who were just about to walk through the door, stopped in place. It wasn't that they didn't want to enter. Rather, the terrifying power sweeping about therein was too much for their cultivation bases to handle.

The Captain looked embarrassed. "Little Ah Qing, are you getting the sensation that this whole thing... basically has nothing to do with us? Our presence doesn't seem to have any effect at all!"

Xu Qing nodded silently.

"That said, we're the ones who made everything happen. We're the instigators. And I have everything under control! Without us, none of them would even be here. Things can't continue as they are!" The Captain gritted his teeth. The fact that he had been refused by that High God was very embarrassing, and thus, he snorted coldly and prepared to do something to prove his worth.

He took out two of his Dawning Suns. He gave one of them to Xu Qing.

Hefting the other one, he projected a message to Xu Qing. "*You throw one of them too. Let's make our existence known!*"

With that, the Captain threw his sun, then turned and ducked away from the door to hide.

The light of dawn shot forth, and even as the Captain howled and leaped away from the door, it exploded, creating a terrifying shockwave along with blinding light. Because of that light, the god projections blurred briefly, but that was it. They returned to normal a moment later.

When nothing much resulted, the Captain's eyebrows shot up and he was about to shout to Xu Qing to throw his sun out. However, Xu Qing was currently looking at the projected figures that had blurred and were now turning clear again. The figures were pitch black, and because of that, Xu Qing hadn't paid much attention to them before. But after the light of the Dawning Sun shone, it got Xu Qing thinking.

"Hold on a moment, Eldest Brother."

All of a sudden, blood began to rise up around him. Although he had no way of entering the Moon Palace, his authority could. Taking control of the blood, he sent it forward into the Moonlight Sea. Waves rose up on that small portion of the water, which spread out, though it didn't affect the fighting in any way.

That said, Xu Qing's goal wasn't to directly attack anything. Under his control, the blood spread with his authority, spreading out in the Moonlight Sea. It got thinner and thinner, but he was going all out. And therefore, he managed to spread that blood over about half of the surface of the water. "Eldest Brother, take three Dawning Suns out, but don't detonate them. Let their light shine. Fill this place with sunlight!"

Xu Qing wouldn't hesitate if the Captain asked him to do something. Neither did the Captain hesitate now. He immediately took out three of his Dawning Suns and threw them through the door.

Instantly, the blinding light of three Dawning Suns shone onto the Moonlight Sea. As the light spread, the Moonlight Sea brightened. At the same time, the god projections blurred. It was as if they couldn't maintain their forms with the bright light shining on them. Ordinary projections couldn't survive this. But these weren't ordinary projections. Apparently, they were existences... that were similar to Xu Qing's shadow.

Meanwhile, veins bulged on Xu Qing's forehead as, using his blood as the medium, he used the Mirror of Moonrebel... to enter the blood on the surface of the Moonlight Sea!

The mirror used Xu Qing's blood to pass through the door, and thus, the gigantic mirror appeared above the sea. The moment the mirror appeared, the world became one of even more dramatic brightness. The mirror shone down with dramatic effect, covering everything with light.

The only thing left behind was light. Thanks to that light, the god projections shrank away and began to hide.

Yet not even that was enough to fundamentally change the entire situation. The light only lasted for so long, and then it began to fade. When that happened, the god projections returned.

However, to the Heir Apparent and the other siblings, the brief disappearance of the god projections bought them precious time. As the light shone, they accelerated rapidly toward Zhang Siyun.

For the second time, Zhang Siyun frowned. Of the four threads that had entered him, he had already extracted three. But the last one was deeply buried, and he needed more time to find it.

“Even bugs can do a thing or two,” hē said coolly. Then, instead of backing up further, hē stretched hīs left hand out, palm open, and pushed down toward the Moonlight Sea.

“Red moon.”

Rumbling sounds filled the sea, and huge waves started rolling out across its surface. They grew taller and taller, until they were higher than Zhang Siyun hīmself! Endless amounts of seawater rolled up into the air to form the shape of a hand! The blood-colored hand was supremely shocking. It went as high as was possible and as low as was possible, and did not have any palm print on it. It was both Zhang Siyun’s hand, and also, the hand of a god.

Then, mountain-toppling, sea-draining force swept toward the incoming siblings. Nothing could stand up to it. Thanks to the pressure of a god that it exuded, the Mirror of Moonrebel started to crack.

The Heir Apparent and his siblings reacted with surprise, and quickly fell back. At that point, the Captain inhaled sharply. Blue light shone in his eyes as he shouted, “Moonfire! If you don’t get the eff out here right now, your food’s going to be gone!!”

Xu Qing’s expression was very serious as he backed away further. Taking a deep breath, he focused on the violet crystal.

Although Zhang Siyun’s god magic of Destiny Manipulation had been negated, and Xu Qing’s memories had been restored, those two specific images were still there in the violet crystal. And he had the feeling that he... could take those two images of the past and release them....

If I do release them, what will happen?

Xu Qing stood there thoughtfully.