

## Timescape 831

### Chapter 831: Whoops, Sorry To Disturb You

Heaven and earth were a dusky amalgamation of misfortune and amnesia. Mutagen flourished, causing the surroundings to blur. Anyone who saw it would wonder if they were seeing things, and would be struck to the core with shock. Howls of grief drifted about everywhere. Amnesia was like the wind, blowing here and there, dispersing the past yet not bringing the future.

This was Xu Qing's battlefield. D-132 had covered all 27 of the forbidden mountains, and as the godly authority and will domain spread, about sixty percent of the remaining several hundred cultivators perished immediately.

As they died, they appeared in the cells of D-132. They had clearly perished, yet they'd forgotten everything that happened, and were just confused. Now they were inmates of D-132, neither alive nor dead. The only thing they had to look forward to now was an eternal nightmare.

The roughly one hundred who were still airborne were still holding strong. But as they were increasingly tormented by amnesia, they had to keep shouting loudly just to keep themselves lucid.

At the same time, misfortune continued to swirl. Whether it was magical techniques or treasures, whenever they were unleashed, unexpected things would happen. The result was that for them to release even thirty or forty percent of their battle prowess would have been shocking. It was now possible to see exactly how terrifying D-132 was now that it was complete.

The cries from the stone lion, the head, and the others were gruishly fanatical as Xu Qing passed them with his black spear. It was time to quell the chaos. He appeared in front of a Whitemarsh cultivator, and without the slightest pause, slammed into him. Rumbling echoed out as the confused Whitemarsh instinctively unleashed some magical techniques and treasures to fight back. Unexpectedly, the techniques went wild, and the magical treasures exploded.

As amnesia and misfortune combined, Xu Qing swept past him. His body exploded. Blood splattered onto Xu Qing's silky hair. Bone fragments rained down. Xu Qing's expression was the same as ever as he continued to the next cultivator. Sweeping his spear through the air, he sent a head flying.

Booms rang out as some of the new prisoners tried to fight back. Others just shivered in terror, but in moments when the amnesia wore off, they tried to use various means to escape.

One of them teleported away, and it worked! Except that when he materialized, he was still in D-132, right in front of the finger. The finger was waiting with an open mouth to devour him in a single bite. Teleportations were allowed in D-132. But the destination would be affected by the misfortune.

Other cultivators used different trump cards to slam against the cell doors and walls. But given their battle prowess, there was no chance of them succeeding. D-132 was whole, and thus, breaking out of it would require destroying the entire thing.

As of now, they were part of D-132. It was an endless cycle.

Wherever Xu Qing went, screams rang out, blood rained down, and corpses fell. Heads tumbled through the air.

The Captain was fighting too, and was clearly identifying specific targets. He wasn't interested in the nonhumans in general, but rather, the Firemoon Darkheaven cultivators. As of now, there were only a few dozen of them left.

However, the Captain seemed excited. He obviously had a keen interest in Firemoon Darkheaven cultivators. His methods all revolved around fruits. It was as if he were storing up rations. He used different methods to different degrees, but the result was that, one after another, the Firemoon cultivators were transformed into apples, grapes, pears, and the like....

In the past, the Captain had sealed people with blue ice. This... was much more gruish. It was clear that as the Captain undid more seals within him, he was slowly inching back to the cultivation base he'd had in previous lives.

That sight, plus the strange circumstances in D-132, and Xu Qing's cold demeanor, created a huge impact on Master Gravesparrow. He had previously believed that he was adept at slaughter. But seeing Xu Qing and the Captain in action made him realize that everything from before was like child's play. Furthermore, his impression of humans had already changed completely.

Who said humans are weak...? Who said humans are inherently timid and unbecoming of Revered Ancient...? Who said humans are only good at crafty plots and machinations...? This is weak? This is timid?

Master Gravesparrow thought back to all the stories he'd grown up on, and it caused him to inhale sharply. People were dropping dead like flies in front of his own eyes in this huge cell block. Then he thought back to what the human called 'the Captain' had just said, and he suddenly started feeling a bit anxious. Without any hesitation, he flew out and joined in the slaughter. Of course, given how this slaughter was playing out, it couldn't possibly last for long.

Finally, the Captain slapped two fleeing Firemoon cultivators into tangerines, and D-132 went quiet. Blood continued to rain down onto the lands, only to be sucked back up into the air to fall again. Not one corpse or bit of flesh was visible on the ground.

All of the hundreds of cultivators were now in their cells looking confused.

The cheers of the head, Sir Inkwel, and the others echoed about.

Xu Qing took a deep breath and thought back to his experiences when he was younger. At the same time, he could sense that the addition of hundreds of cultivators made D-132 even more impressive than before. He looked down at the cell block.

D-132 now had over a thousand cells, and more than thirty percent were occupied.

"Whatcha thinking about?" the Captain asked, taking a bite from an apple. He tossed an apple to both Xu Qing and Master Gravesparrow.

Xu Qing caught the apple. "I'm just thinking about the day when this cell block... will have a god as an inmate!"

The Captain looked stunned, but then he started laughing.

Master Gravesparrow took the Captain's apple and hesitated. He looked at these two terrifying humans, then looked down at the cell block. Then he unhesitatingly took a bite. It was unexpectedly sweet.

Xu Qing put the apple away without taking a bite, then waved his hand, causing all of the new prisoners' forbidden mountains to fly over to him. Before long, they were orbiting over his head.

Master Gravesparrow couldn't help but look over, and his vision swam. Despite having been prepared for the sight, it was just too shocking. There were too many mountains! There were close to 300 of them, all connected by lightning as they slowly orbited and emanated astonishing pressure.

Things weren't over yet. Xu Qing's gaze swept over the 27 forbidden mountains in the area. When he reached out with a grasping motion, the ground shook as 26 of them flew over to him, pushing his total mountain count past 300.

There was one mountain left. Xu Qing looked at Master Gravesparrow.

"You can have it."

Master Gravesparrow felt immense gratitude. Normally speaking, he wouldn't have felt excited about getting one single mountain. But given the circumstances, things were different....

Having done all that, Xu Qing exercised a thought, and D-132 shivered and faded from view along with everyone in it. D-132 didn't take the blood with it when it went away. As a result, blood from hundreds of people splashed onto the ground below, filling the area with the stench of gore.

As Xu Qing hovered there in the forbidden region surrounded by blood, he looked up at the golden palace and bowed.

The Firemoon noble in the palace looked down at him with even more admiration than before.

In the Great Hunt Banquet to come, everybody's going to be talking about the fiendish killer that appeared in my forbidden region.

The noble smiled and said, "Human child, allow me to share some information with you. At the moment... there are a few dozen participants who have more forbidden mountains than you. Given your performance, I'm guessing you want to take first place in the first round. If so, you need to keep working hard."

Xu Qing's pupils constricted, but he nodded and bowed again. "Many thanks for your advice, Senior."

Laughter drifted out from the golden palace. Then the palace faded from view until it disappeared. The excitement was over, and thus, the Firemoon noble had chosen to leave.

Xu Qing watched the palace fade away. Then he turned to the Captain and prepared to leave. But then he and the Captain suddenly looked off into the distance.

A bright beam of light could be seen there, speeding into the forbidden region and racing aggressively toward them.

This person qualified to be aggressive. From a distance, it was possible to see eight forbidden mountains shrinking down above him. This newcomer was the true self of the Firemoon Darkheaven cultivator Xu Qing had taken his first forbidden mountain from. Xu Qing had killed his clone and prevented it from teleporting away, but he hadn't prevented it from transmitting information about itself. This cultivator received that information and was able to determine a general direction to travel in.

In the past, Master Gravesparrow would have taken this situation very seriously. But now... he just shook his head.

As he did, the arrogant and domineering figure in the beam of light seemed to notice them. He lurched to a halt in midair. The light around him trembled as if the cultivator were shaking. The mist in the area also moved in his direction, as if he had suddenly gasped.

Clearly... he had burst into this forbidden region feeling very lofty. But then he realized that the forbidden mountains were gone, and in their place was the strong aroma of blood.

Then he saw Xu Qing with over 300 forbidden mountains orbiting overhead.... He wasn't an idiot, so he quickly came to a conclusion about what was going on.

“He killed all of them? Th-that... that...”

As this realization struck the Firemoon cultivator, his heart started pounding uncontrollably in his chest. He shivered from head to toe a few times, and then, without the slightest hesitation, turned and fled.

He already felt regret.... When he thought about how aggressively he had rushed over here, only to slam head first into an iron slab, he couldn't help but tremble inwardly. And now he just wished he could move faster....

Xu Qing looked on indifferently while the Captain's eyes lit up. Grinning, the Captain said, “An old friend!”

Chapter 832: Grand Five Ox Merciless Dao

“This makes me think of an old saying. What is it?” The Captain licked his lips and grinned as he looked at the figure fleeing toward the horizon. “Oh right, it's *souls born leagues apart will inevitably connect*. Am I right, little Junior Brother? Well, this won't do. He made a big splash on his arrival, but there's no way he'll escape now.”

Xu Qing nodded and waved his hand, causing black fire to flow out. The black spear that he had just put away appeared again. The tip of the spear burned with fire that could consume everything around it, all while little black holes popped into being around it. It stirred the aura of blood, causing it to rise into the air. What was more, countless resentful souls appeared around the spear, screaming in defiance and rage. They had not entered the cycle of reincarnation, and it would be no easy task to escape. The horrifying sounds echoing out made the scene even more terrifying.

The spear in Xu Qing's hand was like a mountain peak from the netherworld, surrounded by ghostfire and black flame. It was so powerful it seemed about to turn the canopy of heaven into a sea of flames. At the same time, the ripples flowing out caused heaven and earth to turn gloomy.

When the fleeing Firemoon Darkheaven saw all of that, his scalp went numb, and his heart raced as his entire person was filled with sensations of deadly crisis and regret. Now he finally realized why his clone ended up dying.

He definitely died because of that spear! I was being too impulsive! I shouldn't even have come here!

Face ashen, he took a few deep breaths and then tried to flee even faster. He also activated some teleportation techniques, except that they needed time.

Meanwhile, Xu Qing's eyes glittered with cold light as he hurled the spear out in front of him. It was like a roaring dragon, flying with heaven-rending, earth-crushing force. Thunderous rumblings echoed out as it pierced through the air toward the fleeing Firemoon Darkheaven.

The air shattered. The sky blurred. Only the spear was clearly visible, creating a vibrant streak as it closed in on its target. It was locked onto him and about to pierce him through.

Meanwhile, D-132 suddenly appeared again, and the sight of all the inmates caused the fleeing cultivator's mind to tremble. As the cell block materialized, it was clearly about to seal him within it.

He could well imagine what would happen when the process was complete. Just like the old saying went, *if you're doomed, you're doomed*. He would be killed beyond the shadow of a doubt. And thus, in that moment of deadly crisis, the Firemoon Darkheaven cultivator did something audaciously daring. Without any hesitation, he struck himself hard on the top of his head. A boom rang out as a second version of himself appeared atop the original. He was attempting to flee in god soul form.

He left behind his fleshly body, for use as a tool to absorb the blow of the black spear.

The spear slammed into his body, ripping flesh to shreds along the way. However, the spear didn't totally destroy his fleshly body. In contrast, the body clamped down onto the spear, unleashing gruish power to lock it in place. Though the spear was already destroying the flesh around it, its momentum had been halted.

Next, the Firemoon cultivator made a second decision. He decisively abandoned his eight forbidden mountains. His god soul exhaled forcefully, and the resulting wind hit the mountains and sent them shooting toward the descending D-132. The eight mountains rapidly grew larger, pulsing with forbidden might as they flew forth. On the one hand, the cultivator was taking the initiative to hand over his mountains. But at the same time, he was hoping to use them to buy time when they slammed into D-132.

Rumbling booms rang out as D-132 slowed down briefly. However, after only a moment, it sped back up.

That moment was the only thing that turned things around for the Firemoon Darkheaven. The teleportation he had initiated moments ago completed, and he vanished into thin air. The flesh attached to the black spear lost any power to fight back and collapsed.

The eight forbidden mountains were swept into the pressure of D-132, and were taken into the cell block.

Xu Qing looked at the spot where the cultivator had vanished. The cultivator had reacted with lightning speed. If had been even a bit slower, he would have been trapped in D-132, whereupon his teleportation ability would have been rendered meaningless. That said, Xu Qing wasn't too worried. As the Captain had just said, there was no way that he would actually escape. Based on what Xu Qing knew of the Captain, those words hadn't been spoken blithely.

Sure enough, after seeing the enemy teleport away, the Captain smiled proudly and looked at Xu Qing.

“I devoured some of these cultivators’ flesh just now, right? After studying it just now, I figured a few things out. It made me think about an amazing divine ability I learned in a past life that was designed to target Firemoon cultivators. It’s a very formidable divine ability that restricts teleportations. The general principle is about tracing essence back to its origin. It doesn’t matter where he went, I can bring him back.”

The Captain reached out and made a grasping gesture. Instantly, five bloody chunks of the enemy’s flesh rose up from the ground and flew toward the Captain. The Captain flicked his sleeve, sending the chunks into a roughly pentagonal shape.

“The prerequisite is to have five chunks of something equivalent to essence from the target. Flesh and bones are the best option.”

The Captain performed a double-handed incantation gesture and muttered some things. Ripples began to flow out from one of the chunks of flesh. Then from the second and third.... Then the ripples from all five grew more intense, connected with each other, and rose up into the air in the form of a black vortex.

The Captain looked at the vortex and shouted something in a voice that seemed incredibly ancient.

*“Souls in heaven and earth shall return to their origin!”*

The vortex spun more rapidly, and then the god soul of the Firemoon cultivator was drawn back and appeared in the vortex. At first, he looked blurry and distorted, but with every moment that passed, he became clearer. His expression was one of confusion, terror, and disbelief.

The Captain laughed viciously as he made a grasping motion in the direction of the vortex to extract the soul of the Firemoon cultivator.

“You—”

His god soul’s eyes were full of despair. He was about to say something in the hopes of staying alive, but the Captain ignored him and viciously clenched his right hand into a fist. A pop rang out as the god soul collapsed into an apple that fell to the ground.

Master Gravesparrow was quick to react to the development, and hurried over to grab the apple and respectfully present it to the Captain.

The Captain stuck his chin up and looked at Xu Qing. Noticing the surprise in Xu Qing’s eyes left him feeling very pleased with himself.

“What do you think, little Ah Qing? Is your Eldest Brother’s magical technique awesome, or is it awesome?”

Xu Qing nodded. Looking at the five chunks of flesh, he suddenly realized that they were pulsing with a somewhat familiar aura. “That technique—”

“I know what you’re going to ask, little Ah Qing,” the Captain interrupted with a wave of his hand. “You want to know the name of the divine ability. It’s actually got a great name. It’s called the Grand Five Ox Essence-Tracing Grand Merciless Dao.”

The Captain looked closely at Xu Qing to see how he would react.

Xu Qing plastered a look on his face that indicated the name was very awe-inspiring.

The Captain was very pleased. “Want to learn it? As your Eldest Brother, I can teach you. Once you master it, then you’ll have a way to deal with fleeing opponents.”

The Captain casually took out a jade slip and tossed it to Xu Qing.

Xu Qing accepted it. He figured it could possibly come in useful someday, so he nodded. “Many thanks, Eldest Brother.”

“Hahaha! You’re too polite. It was nothing!”

This was exactly the reaction the Captain had been hoping for. Seeing Xu Qing act in this way was incomparably pleasing to him.

Meanwhile, the eight masterless forbidden mountains floated over to orbit above Xu Qing.

Xu Qing looked up at them, all while analyzing the situation.

Based on what that Firemoon Senior in the golden palace said, if I want to take first place in this round, I probably need something like a thousand mountains. I really do have to keep working hard.

He looked at the Captain.

The Captain grinned. He could guess what Xu Qing was thinking, and thus, the two of them turned into two beams of light that shot off into the distance.

Master Gravesparrow struggled to control his breathing. From what he could tell, having encountered these two was some sort of destined opportunity, and he didn’t want to lose out. Therefore, he flew into the air and followed them.

And thus, three figures flew out of the forbidden region and continued on their way to the interior of Firemoon territory. After they left, the forbidden region calmed down. The mutant beasts gradually came back out into the open. The spots which had previously been occupied by the 27 forbidden mountains were already filling in with blood-red grass.

A few hours later, cultivators appeared in the air. They were the cultivators who had escaped earlier, and had now returned to check on the situation. There were some who had regretted being scared so easily and running away. But after returning and seeing the changes to the area, their expressions turned grave.

And when they saw that the spots previously occupied by the 27 mountains were filling in with crimson grass, and smelled strongly of blood, many of them inhaled sharply.

“This place....”

“How many people died to make this place smell so strongly of blood?”

“I didn’t notice anyone else escaping. Don’t tell me... that all the other cultivators here were killed?”

“That’s impossible!”

Gasps filled the forbidden region. Some people didn’t believe it could be true, and tried to use communication jade slips to send messages to cultivators they knew had been here earlier. None got any responses. Gradually, they left looking astonished.

Time passed. The survivors went their own way, taking with them the story about how a human cultivator had killed hundreds of Great Hunt participants. The story spread, from one cultivator to ten, and from ten to a hundred....

The news spread like wildfire among the Firemoon Darkheaven people.

Many people were now paying close attention. Many people didn’t believe the news at first. However, as people checked into the details, that changed.

The Whitemarshes were incensed. After all, more of their people died than any others, including one of their top chosen. That said, the Whitemarsh experts couldn’t do anything about it. Most of their forces were on the battlefield with the Nightshades, with only a small number left behind.

That was less relevant, however, than the general rules of the Great Hunt, which none of them dared to defy. Only participants could attack each other.

That said, it was virtually impossible to stop people from hatching devious plots. Therefore, storm clouds began to gather in the territory of the Firemoon Darkheaven people. A tempest was coming....

Chapter 833: I’ll Just Wait For Him to Pull my Cart

A few days later....

It was a scorching day in the Firemoon Darkheavens’ fifth region. Blinding light shone down on an endless desert. These vast, desolate lands were filled with dunes, which were like waves of sand that went over the horizon. They sometimes resembled the spines of sleeping dragons. Shimmering heat waves rose up everywhere in this climate that was so hot it felt suffocating.

Off in the distance, a sandstorm brewed, complete with screaming winds. There were also mirages everywhere that seemed to contain hidden hope. But what primarily prevailed was... deathly silence.

It was just like the deathly silent people moving within the sandstorm. There was an enormous, blood-red chariot screaming through the tempest, some 3,000 meters from front to back. The chariot itself looked like the head of an enormous dragon, with the spine drifting behind it. As a matter of fact, this chariot actually was crafted from the bones of a dragon. And every single bone was covered in sealing marks that pulsed with a terrifying aura.

Astonishingly, more than 300 forbidden mountains orbited above the dragon chariot. The interior of the skull was decorated lavishly, and someone was lounging inside. It was a young Firemoon Darkheaven cultivator.

He wore a white robe embroidered with golden thread that emanated boundless nobility. And yet, all of that was like a foil to the young man wearing the clothing. He had a beautiful face, eyes that



glittered like stars, and an aquiline nose. The aura that surrounded him made it obvious that this young man was very important.

Wherever he went, it wasn't just the subsidiary species who would prostrate to him. Most Firemoon Darkheaven cultivators would also bow their heads. He had such a high status that one word from him could result in an entire species being wiped out. At the moment, he seemed to be in a very good mood. He rested his head in one hand while fiddling with a jade slip in the other, all while smiling broadly.

After a while, he looked out in front of the chariot and said, "We're going too slow."

At the front of the dragon chariot were hundreds of black chains that burned with fire that could immolate souls and flesh. Each of the chains was stretched tight, and at their ends... were hundreds of human cultivators! Their clothes were in shambles, and they were wan and emaciated. Their eyes revealed the humiliation in their hearts, yet they had no choice but to drag the chariot behind them.

In the very front of all the humans was someone taller and burlier than the others. He once wore a yellow robe, but it had been ripped nearly to shreds. His lips were smeared with blood, but his eyes gleamed with determination. Gritting his teeth, he pulled his chain along with everyone else.

Thanks to their efforts, the dragon chariot sped through the sandstorm.

If the human emperor or any of his officials were here, they would be able to instantly identify the humans pulling the chariot. They were the members of the diplomatic mission that had been sent to talk to the Firemoon Darkheaven people.

The young man in the front... was none other than Grand Prince.

"We're still going a bit too slow, Guyue Zhonghui," said the young man lounging inside the dragon skull. He spoke neither quickly nor slowly, and yet his words were as cold as ice. "At this rate, how long is it going to take you to pull this cart of mine to God Mountain? I already told you that if you got me to God Mountain fast enough, I would help you out by asking my father the king to cast a vote in your direction. To speak up for you. But this speed is really not making me happy." [1]

The hundreds of humans pulling the chariot bowed their heads to suppress their humiliation and helplessness. Grand Prince didn't say anything.

After a few breaths of time, though, Grand Prince suddenly lurched forward. The chain stretching over his shoulder bit into his flesh, but the chariot sped up.

The other humans gritted their teeth and also pulled harder, causing the chariot to speed up even more. Unfortunately, the harder they pulled the chariot, the more torment they endured, and the greater the weight that pulled against them. Sadly, as cart-pullers, they had no options or rights.

As the dragon chariot zipped through the desert, the intense heat beat down on Grand Prince and the others, further burning away their dignity.

"That's better," the young man said with a chuckle. "You should know that from the moment you refused to forsake your status as a human, your mother's people gave up on you. Among all the Firemoon Darkheavens, only I took an interest in you, and

that's why you have this chance. Therefore, Guyue Zhonghui, you really need to do well."

The humans didn't say anything. Grand Prince didn't say anything.

Continuing to fiddle with the jade slip, the young man in the chariot said, "By the way, I heard that one of you humans killed a bunch of Great Hunt participants in our eighth region. And they were very ruthless. A few of the victims worked for me."

Grand Prince was visibly surprised, as were the other humans. This was their first time hearing about what happened.

The young man in the chariot smiled and waved his hand. Instantly, an additional several hundred chains appeared in front of the chariot, which began to sway back and forth like whips. Booms rang out as the chains struck the cart-pulling humans. Quite a few coughed up blood, although not Grand Prince.

"But that's fine. For every one he kills, I'll just whip you a thousand times! That will make things a lot more interesting, don't you think?"

The sounds of whipping continued as the dragon chariot moved onward. After leaving the desert, it reached a verdant stretch of land.

There were also cultivators visible in the distance. Whether those cultivators were Firemoons or other nonhumans, whenever they caught sight of the dragon chariot, they either dropped to their knees to kowtow or bowed deeply at the waist.

The young man continued to smile. As everyone bowed and cheered, he laughed and said, "Say, Guyue Zhonghui, when that human kid finds out you've become a cart-puller, do you think he'll come looking for you? If he joins my team of cart-pullers, I bet I could get to God Mountain in just a few more days."

Grand Prince's expression flickered, and the other humans struggled to breathe steadily. Because of the lack of detailed information, they had no idea who this human was, nor could they even begin to guess. However, there was no way they couldn't detect the malice in the young prince whose chariot they were pulling.

The young man's jade slip glittered again as he sent out the details of his travel itinerary. Then he stretched and went back to whipping the humans. Many Firemoon cultivators were able to see what was happening. What was more, the young man intentionally sent out messages explaining his position. Therefore, news quickly spread.

A few days later in the sixth region, Xu Qing walked out of a mountain range with his black spear in hand. The number of resentful souls attached to the spear was now greater than before. He was surrounded by the strong smell of gore.

The Captain was smiling broadly as he occasionally checked his bag of holding. He seemed pleased with his gains.

Meanwhile, Master Gravesparrow was following them, and he had long since turned completely numb. During the time spent traveling, he had learned a lot more about these two humans. The one

called 'the Captain' looked like an ordinary person but used a grisly magical technique to turn nonhumans into fruit that he would eat.

Master Gravesparrow hadn't had any choice but to sample a few of the nonhumans, and found that the flavor... wasn't that bad. He had outright refused to eat members of his own species.

In a world inhabited by gods, it wasn't surprising that the Firemoon Darkheavens had similar techniques that he had seen before, so that wasn't what shocked him. Rather, it was the fact that this 'Captain' referred to the other human as 'little Ah Qing.' He had known people proficient in slaughter, himself included. But this 'little Ah Qing' carried out slaughters that shocked him to the core. Unless he encountered Whitemarshes, he rarely took the initiative to attack. In fact, he didn't even try to steal mountains from people he saw. There was no need.

The hundreds of mountains orbiting overhead were enough to strike fear into the hearts of most cultivators. There were always vicious cultivators who would use a variety of methods to try to kill him. But their fate was always to end up as corpses, and have their souls extracted and forbidden mountains taken. In fact, that was exactly what happened in the mountains they had just traversed.

Things like that happened constantly on their journey, and as a result, Xu Qing's forbidden mountain count increased constantly. It was as if there was a massive vortex building, with Xu Qing in the middle of it.

As Master Gravesparrow had come to find out, one reason for that vortex was that Xu Qing and the Captain were not very happy with the Whitemarshes. What was more, for humans to act like they were acting in Firemoon Darkheaven territory attracted a lot of attention.

The Captain didn't seem to care, and Xu Qing's facial expression never changed.

At first, Master Gravesparrow didn't understand their attitude. But after thinking about it, he came to a realization.

This guy wants to become a darkheaven general! If it works, he could resolve the situation with humans! No wonder he's killing so many Whitemarshes. I bet if some Saias show up, he'll cut them down just as quickly.

Upon thinking about all of that, Master Gravesparrow decided that, in order to prevent any misunderstandings, he should relay some newly acquired information to Xu Qing.

"Fellow Daoists, um... I just got some news that I thought the two of you might want to hear. It's about your Grand Prince."

Master Gravesparrow looked at Xu Qing.

Xu Qing put away his black spear, glanced at the hundreds of forbidden mountains overhead, then started walking. "Go ahead."

Lowering his voice, Master Gravesparrow said, "Grand Prince and his entire retinue were captured by the crown prince of King Brightsouth. Apparently they made some sort of deal that led to Grand Prince and his people pulling a dragon chariot by hand.... Firemoons everywhere are talking about it."

Xu Qing didn't react visibly, and the Captain didn't seem very surprised. Master Gravesparrow had mentioned this situation before. What was more, if some deal had been struck, then it had nothing to do with the two of them, and there was no need for them to take action.

Master Gravesparrow hesitated, then explained everything he knew. "Fellow Daoist, some of the cultivators you killed were subordinates of King Brightsouth's heir. So he made a public announcement that for every Firemoon cultivator you kill, he'll whip Grand Prince and the other humans a thousand times. In addition to that, he's publicly revealed his travel itinerary."

Xu Qing stopped walking. The Captain's eyebrows shot up. Now the matter did relate to them.

"He intentionally revealed his travel itinerary?" Xu Qing asked, looking at Master Gravesparrow over his shoulder.

Master Gravesparrow felt pressure just from Xu Qing's gaze. Taking a deep breath, he nodded. "It's definitely intentional. He's in the fourth region right now. Fellow Daoist, he obviously wants you to come to him. Crown Prince Brightsouth has a very high standing among us Firemoon Darkheavens. His father is King Brightsouth, who is the king legate to Steward Heavencloud of the Sunfire Temple. The steward values him a lot, and whether it's his cultivation base or his power and influence, they're all sky-high...."

"How many mountains does he have?" Xu Qing asked.

"Supposedly more than 400," Master Gravesparrow replied.

"Lead the way," Xu Qing said, his eyes glittering coldly.

Off to the side, the Captain grinned.

Master Gravesparrow shivered and considered trying to persuade Xu Qing to change his mind. But when he saw the coldness in Xu Qing's eyes, he just nodded.

Three beams of light shot off toward the fourth region.

Chapter 834: Thirty-Six Immortal Constellations

Time passed.

Half a month later, Xu Qing, the Captain, and Master Gravesparrow had crossed the fourth region in their search for Crown Prince Brightsouth. They were now in the third region.

The focal point of the first round of the Great Hunt was God Mountain, and they were now only two regions away from that.

The terrain of the third region was primarily volcanic in nature. Countless volcanoes there erupted year-round, making the environment thick with black smog. Meanwhile, the 'lands' were really just endless seas of lava. However, cold winds occasionally blew, which caused solid roads to form. They would only last for a short time before they melted back into lava. However, new roads would continuously appear based on the shifting of the wind.

Because of that general instability, mortals couldn't move freely through the region. It would be logical to assume that, with terrain like that, the region wasn't suitable for habitation. But it was actually very suitable as far as the Firemoon Darkheavens were concerned. They considered the harsh conditions to be the perfect way to temper their fleshly bodies on a constant basis. And only

tough surroundings like that could mold the hearts of truly powerful experts. That wasn't to mention that the very name of their species had the character 'fire' in it, which indicated their resilience when it came to fire.

In the middle of the third region, where the never-ending eruption of the volcanoes created a thick black cloud cover, the sound of whipping rang out as a bone dragon screamed along. It was moving at incredibly high speed!

Stretching out in front of the bone dragon were hundreds of chains being pulled by Grand Prince and his subordinates. Their clothing was dilapidated, their faces sallow, their bodies emaciated. In most cases, their eyes were full of despair. Any others simply gritted their teeth as they pulled the chariot with all the strength they could muster.

Inside the chariot, Crown Prince Brightsouth smiled and said, "How amusing. Maybe it's the whipping, or maybe the lot of you just came to your senses and want to reach our destination as quickly as possible.... Of course, there's another possible reason. Could it be you don't want that famous human companion of yours to catch up? Overall, you achieved an acceptably fast speed."

Suddenly, a grim expression replaced his smile, and his voice turned cold. "That said, your attitude isn't acceptable at all. Right now, I want you to go slow! But you... are going *too* fast!"

Countless illusory whips appeared in front of the dragon chariot and started lashing the humans.

Blood sprayed out of the mouths of some of them. There were a few who had suffered so greatly thanks to the fast pace and the whips that they breathed their last and collapsed into death.

Some of the corpses fell down into the lava and were swallowed up. Some landed on the solid road below, where they withered up into desiccated corpses. After a certain period of time, the road would disappear, and those corpses would sink into the lava.

The dragon bone chariot slowed down. Humiliation and fury rose up in the hearts of the humans pulling the chariot, and yet, they were helpless to do anything....

The strength of a species was the foundation of everything. The Firemoon Darkheavens were extremely strong, and thus, few other species could maintain any level of dignity in their presence. Falling behind in the race of species was the most fundamental of errors.

Meanwhile, Xu Qing, the Captain, and Master Gravesparrow were racing along beneath the same dark smog cover, some 5,000 kilometers away.

"Crown Prince Brightsouth is being very flashy," Master Gravesparrow said. "He's not hiding his tracks at all. Based on the latest news, he was seen recently traveling toward the second region. By now, we shouldn't be very far away from his dragon chariot."

The Captain licked his lips. Xu Qing nodded and looked at the clouds stretching off into the distant smog, then down at the lava-covered lands below. The atmosphere here in the third region was hot, making it seem like a steamer basket. Whether it was the fleshly body or the soul, that invasion of heat was incomparably intense.

"Fellow Daoist Xu, are you sure... you don't want to rethink this? Crown Prince Brightsouth has a shocking cultivation base. People say that he recently broke

through from third-stage Void Returning into the fourth stage. He already has an illusory world.

“Also... Firemoon Darkheavens have stronger fleshly bodies than most other species. It’s the same with magical techniques. Because of all that, plus the potential of our cultivation base, we’re virtually invincible to members of other species in the same cultivation level as us.”

Master Gravesparrow had been holding back from giving his opinion during most of the journey, but at this point, he couldn’t hold back.

“Furthermore, his father is King Brightsouth, an almighty expert at the peak of Smoldering God. Rumor has it he’s very close to the peak of the nine-world level. As a single child, Crown Prince Brightsouth was unusually talented and had great privilege growing up. Although he’s not considered the number-one chosen of this generation, he definitely deserves a place in the top ten.

“I’ve never personally seen him in a fight, but I hear stories about him all the time. For example, he’s really skilled in curse magic, forbidden magic, plus god magic. There’s even a rumor saying that he mastered a handful of our Firemoon imperial-class techniques, which are collectively referred to as the Thirty-Six Immortal Constellations!” [1]

“Normally speaking, mastering just one of them is equivalent to a peak imperial-class technique among other species. Therefore, Crown Prince Brightsouth is not only terrifyingly strong, he also has an astonishing background.... If you get in a fight with him, you’ll pay a heavy price whether you win or lose. It’s just not worth it....”

As Master Gravesparrow made his heartfelt plea, Xu Qing’s facial expression was the same as ever. Meanwhile, the Captain grinned and handed Master Gravesparrow an apple.

“You’re a good kid,” the Captain said, “very easy to get along with. That said, you’re only taking into consideration Crown Prince Brightsouth’s background. You don’t know about our background. Don’t worry, that so-called King Brightsouth won’t count for anything as long as little Ah Qing is willing to give up his primal yang to—”

Xu Qing turned and gave a look to the Captain.

The Captain chuckled and said nothing further.

Master Gravesparrow reacted with visible surprise. When it came to primal yang... it made him come up with quite a few theories. He glanced at Xu Qing, but didn’t dare to ask any further questions. As he continued to speculate inwardly, their group of three continued to speed through the sky.

Time passed.

Two hours later, they stopped in midair. A moment later, they disappeared, only to reappear on a small path in the lava below. The path had been formed by a cold wind that had recently shifted. The path was already starting to melt, and would soon be gone. There were some withered corpses on the path that were still mostly whole. They were human.

Xu Qing studied the corpses, and the Captain eyed them closely.

“I recognize him,” the Captain said. “He was one of Grand Prince’s personal guards. It looks like he suffered a lot before dying. See the whip marks? He must have been lashed thousands of times.... His flesh and blood, his cultivation base, and even his soul are all in a state of corrosion. He died after he was completely drained and had nothing left to keep him going.”

Master Gravesparrow didn’t dare to say anything.

Xu Qing studied the corpses for a few breaths of time, then collected them up. He turned to Master Gravesparrow.

“They should be close. You don’t need to come along for now. If you don’t mind, please check the area and collect any other human corpses you find.”

Master Gravesparrow immediately nodded.

Without another word, Xu Qing flew up into the air. Then rumbling sounds echoed out as he shot over the horizon at top speed. He moved much, much faster than he had up to this point. Clearly, he had a specific direction to go in and was not holding back.

Blue light flared around the Captain as he followed. Seeing Xu Qing pulsing with killing intent filled him with anticipation.

Little Ah Qing is a born killer. He’s been suppressing it in recent years. Except that’s not a good thing to do long-term. Unleash the killing! Don’t sit around thinking or suppressing. We cultivators need to have a psyche free from all shackles!

About an hour later, a bone dragon chariot became visible on the horizon, being dragged along by hundreds of humans. When Xu Qing saw it, he lowered his voice and said, “Eldest Brother, I want to handle this fight by myself. Let’s see how strong this Firemoon Darkheaven chosen actually is. If I’m not a match for him, then please step in and strip away his mountains.”

The Captain grinned and nodded.

Next, Xu Qing seemed to ignite like a shooting star. As he sped toward the chariot, deafening rumbling echoed out, and the stars seethed. The air shattered as he passed, and the lands shook violently. Millions of soul threads swept out of him. As he closed in, they converged into his first-level god state. His energy then rose to a level equivalent to first-stage Void Returning.

However, things weren’t over yet. The first-level god state was only the foundation; soul threads swept everywhere as the second-level god state started to form. His aura rose higher, until it was equivalent to second-stage Void Returning.

Then, the soul threads converged again as his third-level god state appeared! Battle prowess equivalent to third-stage Void Returning pulsed in all directions. From a distance, it was possible to

see a vicious, hulking figure with a blood-red cloak and bones of crystal, surrounded by innumerable blood threads. As of now, Xu Qing looked like a fiendish god.

An illusory violet moon hung behind him, with a sundial on its surface, slowly spinning. Without any hesitation, Xu Qing took out a piece of Crimson Mother's flesh and devoured it. Inside his body, the flesh exploded, and his god state erupted. Now, it looked somewhat like Crimson Mother, but if you looked closely, you would also sense Li Zihua.

His aura climbed again, reaching... fourth-stage Void Returning! This was Xu Qing's highest level of battle prowess!

The hundreds of humans pulling the chariot reacted with visible shock. Some of them could even recognize Xu Qing as he was in his god state, and that led to further astonishment. That was especially true of Grand Prince, who was shaken to the core when he laid eyes on Xu Qing. He had never had any dealings with Xu Qing, but had glimpsed him from a distance on a few occasions. It was only natural that he knew exactly who Xu Qing was and what his current mission was.

Therefore, it was a big surprise to see him here in the lands of the Firemoon Darkheaven people. He was actually somewhat worried, and was about to cry out a warning when countless whips appeared and wrapped around him.

His mouth was sealed tight, as was his divine will. In fact, every method of communication was locked down. Then, laughter rang out from within the chariot as Crown Prince Brightsouth disappeared from inside and materialized in midair. His eyes shone with enthusiasm as he looked at Xu Qing closing in on him.

"I'm surprised you actually showed up. And how unexpected to see you using a magic to transform your state. Very, very interesting.

"It's normally not worth it for me to pay attention to human chosen. But for someone to kill so many fellow members of my species, and to use divine abilities like that, well I'd say you're worthy to either pull my chariot or have your head mounted atop it as a prize."

Then Crown Prince Brightsouth moved directly toward the incoming Xu Qing. Things were really heating up!

#### Chapter 835: Peak-Level Confrontation

Xu Qing closed in. The oppressive clouds hung overhead like a gargantuan beast, imparting a sense of impending dread to anyone who could see them.

As Crown Prince Brightsouth strode forth, the clouds churned, like the ocean when huge waves rolled across its surface. Lightning bolts pierced through the sky like silver snakes, linking together to form ancient magical symbols. Intense rumbling sounds filled the sky, like the roars of an awakening beast!

A massive tempest sprang up, connecting earth to sky around Crown Prince Brightsouth. Wild gusts of wind sliced like blades through the sky, cutting apart the clouds and causing sprays of lava to fill the air. Even the dragon chariot was rocking back and forth because of the intense wind. The human cultivators, meanwhile, were like leaves tossed up and down in chaotic fashion.



Xu Qing was heading right toward that tempest, causing a disdainful grin to appear on the face of Crown Prince Brightsouth. Without hesitation, he sent the tempest right toward Xu Qing. Heaven and earth became like a fiendish devil that could crush anything in its path as it prepared to devour Xu Qing.

In his fourth-level god state, Xu Qing met the tempest head-on, slamming into it with such force that Grand Prince and his subordinates were all visibly astonished. They had fought Crown Prince Brightsouth, and knew how terrifying he was. And though Xu Qing's aura wasn't weak, he seemed very tiny as the tempest swept over him.

Within the tempest, rain fell in buckets, causing the world to turn into a blur. The wind was also so strong that the lands below were cleared, revealing nothing but a massive empty basin. Anyone caught within the area of this tempest would be completely insignificant.

With the exception of Xu Qing.

An instant later, a deafening boom rang out from the windstorm that was trying to devour him. Another mysterious power just as strong as the storm had erupted.

It was a saber as high as the sky itself. It was cold and white, which made a perfect contrast with the black color of the sky. It appeared within the tempest, then swept outward like a destructive wave.

RUUUUUUMMMBLE!

Blade light shone, illuminating heaven and earth as it sliced right through the tempest. There was a psychic element to it that could cut through all bonds, slash through all natural laws, and crush all fetters. The sky trembled as countless clouds were ripped apart, creating a huge, 500-kilometer mark. It looked extremely ghastly.

The tempest almost seemed to solidify before it shattered, sending both rain and fire showering down everywhere. The lands shook violently as a gully opened up. If a mortal had been able to stand at the edge and look down, they would see nothing but a bottomless pit.

Void Returning battle prowess... was fully on display.

As the tempest was destroyed by the heavenly saber, Xu Qing was revealed, like a fiendish god. He burst out from inside with astonishing momentum. In the blink of an eye, he was right in front of Crown Prince Brightsouth.

Crown Prince Brightsouth's eyes turned a shade more serious as he unleashed a fist strike. Thunderous booms rang out.

The two of them clashed, moving at such blinding speed that, in the shortest of moments, they exchanged thousands of blows. During that time, Crown Prince Brightsouth could be heard inhaling seventeen times. Each time he inhaled, he expanded. He was directly inhaling all of the surrounding energy of heaven and earth. As that happened, his fleshly body power visibly improved.

Xu Qing had seen other Firemoon Darkheavens do something like this before. Whether it was the Captain's explanation or things said by Master Gravesparrow about Crown Prince Brightsouth, Xu Qing knew exactly what it was.

This was the Firemoon Darkheavens' imperial-class technique, known as Thirty-Six Immortal Constellations. In reality, the name of the technique was supposed to convey the fact that it was a

combination of thirty-six imperial-class techniques, put together into the ultimate art. One of them was called Nine Breaths Submission. [1]

There wasn't actually a limit of nine breaths, though. Different cultivators would ultimately come to different understandings of how to use it. And thus, Crown Prince Brightsouth took seventeen breaths, each of which pushed his fleshly body battle prowess to a more terrifying level.

But Xu Qing still fought back with everything he had. The psychic power in the slashing heavenly blade grew more intense and clear. Every single clash between them grew more deafening, and because it was happening in such a short time, the sounds combined into something that could end the heavens and crush the earth.

The dragon chariot finally couldn't take any more, and was sent spinning off to the side. Countless craters opened up on the ground. The clouds in the sky continued to collapse, until they were driven away, revealing the full dome of heaven. It was night, and the stars twinkled. Also visible was the broken face of the god!

Beneath that broken face, Xu Qing and Crown Prince Brightsouth fought back and forth. Shockwaves spread out from them in concentric rings, each of which contained terrifying power.

The Captain and Grand Prince were both watching from a distance, and both were astonished.

That saber contains psychic power.... Little Ah Qing has finally formed an embryonic dao! It's a dao that can cut through all bonds, slash through all natural laws, crush all things, and smash all conventions!

The Captain's eyes shone brightly.

Grand Prince lacked the experience of the Captain, so he wasn't able to assess the situation with such finesse. But he was equally moved, if not shaken, by the psychic power in the blade. He couldn't express it with words, but was feeling the same thing as the Captain. It was as if he had actually longed for this type of dao. As a result, his scalp tingled, not because of fear, but because of understanding!

As the two of them felt shock deep within them, intense booms rang out in the canopy of heaven. Xu Qing and Crown Prince Brightsouth clashed again and again before backing away from each other by about 300 meters.

Xu Qing was in his god state, his gaze cold as he pulsed with boundless energy. However, if you looked closely, you would see that his god state's body was covered with innumerable wounds. Thankfully, soul threads wriggled within the wounds as they stitched together.

Crown Prince Brightsouth no longer looked casual and confident. His expression was serious, and that serious tone filled him from head to toe. He was also wounded, although the wounds were being healed by flickering white light.

"You stood up to my Nine Breaths Submission.... That god state magic of yours is very interesting, human. But the real question is whether or not you can stand up to my —"

Before he could finish speaking, his expression flickered, and he shot backward. The instant he did, the spot he had just occupied collapsed.

An iron skewer that glittered with gruish light shot through the shattered air, then curved around and returned to Xu Qing.

“You...” Crown Prince Brightsouth said, his face grimmer than ever.

“Pipe down,” Xu Qing said calmly. Then he shot forward like a lightning bolt, heading straight toward Crown Prince Brightsouth. Along the way, he waved his right hand in front of him, causing the cry of the golden crow to fill the sky.

Black flames erupted all around Xu Qing, becoming a golden crow behind him that inhaled and exhaled a sea of flames. The surface of the golden crow rapidly peeled away, revealing a black spear underneath. Xu Qing grabbed it, then hurled it viciously toward Crown Prince Brightsouth. Countless black lightning bolts surrounded the skewer as it also shot forward.

Killing intent flickered in Crown Prince Brightsouth’s eyes. He knew what his weakness was; as his father had often reminded him, he was too arrogant. Because of his status and the strength that came to members of his species, he might seem like the kind of person who had done a lot of fighting through the years. But the reality was that wherever he went, very few cultivators would ever dare to truly fight him with deadly force. He had lived a smooth life full of glory and honor, and yet, that also led to him having some big flaws. That was one reason why he had joined the Great Hunt. He knew that it would include tough training, which was just what he needed. Only by experiencing some truly life-threatening fights could he turn his advantages into a truly great dao.

Now, he was getting the feeling that the destined opportunity he had been waiting for was right in front of him. Thus, the grim look in his eye turned into surging killing intent. And as Xu Qing got close, he lifted his hand into the sky, opened the fingers wide, and then snapped them shut into a fist.

Any remaining clouds in the sky were swept clean away as if by a huge hand. And the incoming spear and skewer lurched to a halt as if they had run into an impassable barrier.

The starry sky was now clearly visible overhead. There, nine incomparably bright stars glittered prominently; given their visibility, it was clear that they formed the shape of a finger.

Crown Prince Brightsouth then dropped his hand. Ignoring the spear, he pointed at Xu Qing. The starlight from the nine glittering stars surpassed everything, turning into a finger that pointed to the east of Xu Qing.

*“The Big Dipper’s handle points east; all under heaven becomes spring.”*

The gigantic finger emanated profound majesty; to Xu Qing, it felt like he was facing the entire starry sky, with himself being miniscule in comparison. Power surrounded him, restraining him and slowing him down.

*“The Big Dipper’s handle points south; all under heaven becomes summer.”*

Shivering inwardly, Xu Qing tried to break free, but before he could, a second finger appeared, pointing south. The power of restraint then grew dramatically stronger! Next came the third finger!

*“The Big Dipper’s handle points west; all under heaven becomes autumn.”*

*“The Big Dipper’s handle points north; all under heaven becomes winter.”*

As Crown Prince Brightsouth's voice echoed out, a fourth finger appeared, pointing to the north of Xu Qing.

From a distance, it was possible to see four fingers, each as high as heaven itself, pulsing with terrifying might in all of the directions surrounding Xu Qing. This was the star displacement combat technique from the Thirty-Six Immortal Constellations imperial-class technique belonging to the Firemoon Darkheaven people. It was called Dao of the Nine Stars Killing Suppression.

*“East, south, west, and north; spring, summer, autumn, and winter; the Big Dipper handle points; no living being can possibly flee!”*

As the words echoed out, the four starry fingers dropped toward Xu Qing!

Chapter 836: Thank You

The finger pointing east commanded life! Therefore, to Xu Qing's east, the finger of starlight pulsed with an intense sensation of life force power. Furthermore, all things can be pushed beyond their limit, and bring about a sensation of nefariousness rather than righteousness. In this case, the life from the finger was pushed to the brink, making it seem demonic.

The finger pointing south commanded growth! It was similar here: fire rose high into the air, like the weapon of a god of fire that used flame to seal and destroy heaven and earth.

The finger pointing west commanded withering! There was no difference here, the sensation was that of defeat and error. It also contained the passage of time. And thus, it made it seem possible to see vicissitudes of time itself.

Finally, the finger pointing north commanded death! It was as if death had come from the netherworld itself.

As the four fingers pointed, they unleashed life, death, withering, and growth. When Grand Prince saw that from a distance, his face fell, and his heart filled with anxiety. That was because he... had already been defeated by the star displacement combat technique of Dao of the Nine Stars Killing Suppression. Put precisely, his bloodline had enabled him to make an opening in the star displacement combat technique. However, he had been defeated by the hidden killing move within it.

In other words, Crown Prince Brightsouth is hiding a killing move on the inside....

Grand Prince wanted to offer a warning, but he couldn't. Both his mouth and his divine will had been sealed tightly by Crown Prince Brightsouth, making that impossible. All he could do was watch as the four fingers descended.

In contrast, the Captain just stood waiting. He had faith that Xu Qing wouldn't be killed so easily.

He was right. Just when the four fingers were about to hit, Xu Qing, whose body was immobilized, actually opened his eyes. Instantly, they turned pitch black!

Back in the Moonrite Region, he had gained enlightenment of how to put taboo poison into his gaze. Now, that ability was coming into play at a critical moment. Taboo poison... swept through his gaze like water gushing through a tunnel. He looked at the finger to the east, and the power of taboo poison erupted. The massive finger shivered... and a dark spot appeared on its surface, almost like a ringworm infection, which then rapidly spread over its surface. The finger abounded with life force,

yet it was like an ice cube, with the taboo poison being boiling oil. The life force melted very quickly.

Things weren't over yet. Xu Qing's gaze shifted to the northern finger that represented death. Taboo poison also represented death. In the blink of an eye, the northern finger shivered, and taboo poison swept through with the ease of a fish swimming through water.

With two fingers having been infected, Xu Qing's soul threads twitched and then broke through their fetters into freedom.

Without any hesitation, he lifted his right hand and pointed into the sky.

The Withering Flame Demon Magic True Self Dao rumbled into life. Three enormous mountains appeared overhead and dropped toward the finger representing withering. Then, by exercising a mere thought, he caused the black spear to swivel, then shoot toward the southern finger representing growth.

All of this takes a bit of time to describe, but it actually occurred in the time it takes a spark to fly off a piece of flint.

All at once, the taboo poison, the demon mountains, and the spear rumbled into action, creating a heaven-rending, earth-crushing rumbling sound that resembled heaven and earth howling into the void.

The eastern finger collapsed. The southern finger was shredded to bits. The western finger shattered. The northern finger crumbled into ash. The nine stars overhead dimmed. No longer were they prominent, and in fact, their light began to fade away amidst the light of all the other stars.

Xu Qing emerged from the rubble of the four fingers and shot directly toward Crown Prince Brightsouth.

However... though the divine ability had been destroyed, Crown Prince Brightsouth actually didn't seem surprised. Chuckling scornfully, he said, "Did you note that?"

His question wasn't directed at Xu Qing. And the response came from everywhere. The sky, the land, the air, the clouds. Countless voices all spoke at the same time.

"Noted."

The countless voices combined. They were voices of men and women, of the old and the young. Some were deep, some were piercing. There was crying and laughter, along with shouting and murmuring.... All of the voices said the same thing.

Ultimately, the nine fading stars in the sky shifted, creating a circle. As the starlight connected, it formed something like a black hole, out of which spread terrifying power. It was not cultivator power. Instead, it was rife with the aura of a god. It contained boundless mutagen, the likes of which surpassed any forbidden region or even forbidden ground....

It locked onto Xu Qing. He stopped in place. He suddenly sensed that he couldn't continue forward, prompting him to look up at the black hole of nine stars. He had sensed an aura like this before.

It was... a god domain!

At the same moment that Xu Qing realized that, something emerged from the black hole of nine stars.

It was a piece of yellow paper. It was money for the dead. The yellow paper drifted down, growing larger as it did. It seemed to move slowly, but in reality, was descending with incredible speed. Even more gruish, there was a face taking shape on the yellow paper.

That face... was none other than the face of Xu Qing.

When Grand Prince saw this happening, he got even more anxious. This was the point at which he had been defeated. Only later did he come to realize that the yellow paper was a gift to Crown Prince Brightsouth from his father. It wasn't from Revered Ancient, but instead, was from a god domain rife with gruishness and death.

The star displacement combat technique of Dao of the Nine Stars Killing Suppression was only a facade. The deadly aspects of the technique actually weren't the point. The real objective was to use those killing aspects to make a copy of the enemy's god soul. It was all made possible by the combination of the yellow paper and the gruish voices. It would enable the god domain to remember Xu Qing's appearance. And then... his soul could be sealed and immolated.

He wanted to force himself into lucidity, but couldn't. As the yellow paper descended, it started burning. In just the way that living people will make sacrifices to the souls of the deceased, the paper burned like an offering.

At the same time, an intense force emerged from the black hole, wrapped around Xu Qing, and latched onto his god soul. Xu Qing lost all sensation of his fleshly body. At the same time, his god soul emerged, like an afterimage, and began to float upward. Numerous illusory chains dropped down from the black hole, which encircled his god soul, further trapping it. His god soul struggled, but more chains just kept appearing, until there were hundreds of them, all pulling his god soul out of his fleshly body.

"That's all," said Crown Prince Brightsouth as he hovered in midair. "This fight has taught me something important. And that is... don't give your opponent any chances to make a comeback. Therefore, despite the fact that your god soul has no way of turning things around, I'm not going to even give you a chance to try. By the way... you're not the only one with taboo weapons!"

Crown Prince Brightsouth's eyes gleamed with bizarre light as he inhaled deeply, bit the tip of his tongue, and spat out a mouthful of blood. Then his right hand shot into the haze of blood and performed an incantation gesture.

The blood mist expanded as images appeared within them. They were almost like a sea of blood, filled with thirty-six huge vortexes. Upon looking closely, it was possible to see thirty-six weapons within those thirty-six vortexes. Every single one emanated the same type of taboo aura as the black spear. These were the taboo weapons that were sealed inside of the Thirty-Six Immortal Constellations imperial-class technique!

Thanks to the incantation gesture performed by Crown Prince Brightsouth, three of the thirty-six taboo weapons rose up and emerged from their sealed state. One of them was a trident that emanated a raging godly might. The next was a black saber with a cold, killing glow that would

shock any onlookers. The third was a blood-red battle-ax, around which circled countless horrendous souls of the deceased.

In order to kill Xu Qing, Crown Prince Brightsouth was willing to push any divine ability to its limit. And these three taboo weapons were no exception. He yanked his right hand back, and the three taboo weapons emerged from the illusory image. As they flew out, they materialized, causing taboo power to spread out everywhere.

Normally speaking, the heavenly daos would have interfered. Unfortunately... this was Firemoon Darkheaven territory, and the Firemoons had the ability to suppress heavenly daos.

The distant sound of rumbling thunder could be heard, but no lightning fell.

As killing intent surged in the eyes of Crown Prince Brightsouth, the three terrifying taboo weapons swiveled to Xu Qing, whose god soul was half emerged from his fleshly body. The weapons then shot toward him. There was nothing to block their path or resist them. There was only a seven-colored light that flickered briefly a few times inside Xu Qing.

Then the trident stabbed into his god soul, the black saber slashed into his neck, and the blood-red battle-ax chopped into his chest. His god soul shattered into motes of light that fell to the ground. His head flew off and tumbled down into the lava. His fleshly body shattered into countless chunks of gore that rained down.

Off in the distance, Grand Prince's facial expression was warped with grief. His eyes were completely bloodshot, and he was trembling from head to toe.

The Captain stood there with his eyes wide.

Up in the air, Crown Prince Brightsouth breathed a sigh of relief, though he was actually not completely pleased.

"It's honestly a surprise that, other than those handful of people, nobody in my generation can stand up to this move of mine. So boring."

He waved his hand, and nine stars faded away. Everything went back to normal. Reaching out with his right hand, he made a grasping gesture toward the spot where Xu Qing had fallen.

But then, his expression flickered as he suddenly sensed an astonishing time power erupting from Xu Qing's mangled flesh and shattered god soul. Before the crown prince could figure out what was happening, a huge sundial appeared overhead, rumbling loudly as its gnomon spun.

Time... was reversing! The chunks of fallen flesh and the remnants of the god soul all swept together. They came from the land, from the lava, from the air, and they converged in the blink of an eye.

What formed was Xu Qing's god state fleshly body and his god soul. Red soul threads waved back and forth. Crystal bones glittered. The vicious body complete with its beautiful good looks. Xu Qing stood there looking like a divine likeness. Glittering light shone everywhere. He was completely unharmed.

Off in the distance, Grand Prince stared in shock.

The Captain's expression was the same as ever as he smiled.

Crown Prince Brightsouth backed up a few steps. Glaring at Xu Qing, he said, “Natural laws of time!”

Xu Qing’s eyes opened and they erupted with seven-colored light. Looking calmly at Crown Prince Brightsouth, he said, “This hasn’t been easy, but I should definitely say thank you.”

Xu Qing reached out and closed his right hand into a fist. What instantly appeared was a shocking black saber, a terrifying trident, a blood-red ax filled with a sensation of slaughter, and a black spear that could conquer every obstacle.... Four taboo weapons all appeared around Xu Qing!

Chapter 837: Reverse the Sky, Restore the Sun

Grand Prince and the other humans were reeling mentally, and their eyes shone with utter disbelief. Xu Qing’s fighting methods really surpassed anything they could have predicted.

To see the natural laws of time reversing death was shocking enough, let alone the fact that Xu Qing returned and immediately took control of four taboo weapons. Three of them were obviously the same weapons Crown Prince Brightsouth had used. Hardly any time had passed, yet now Xu Qing was using them. Every single observer was basically thinking the same thing.

Freakish hellion!

Only a freakish hellion could have terrifying powers of understanding like that! After all, according to common belief, not even daybreak light could reach such a terrifying level. It was all thanks to Xu Qing’s personal godly qualities, plus his deep level of enlightenment regarding himself. All of that led to his current unbelievable level of mastery. Back in Moonrite, even the Heir Apparent and his sister had been shocked by what he accomplished, let alone other people.

As of this moment, Crown Prince Brightsouth felt like he was being struck by countless lightning bolts. Struggling to control his breathing and remain calm, he staggered backward, looking incredulously at the taboo weapons surrounding Xu Qing.

“You—” He didn’t have a chance to finish speaking.

And that was because Xu Qing did something that was thoroughly and completely astonishing to everyone present. He pointed up into the sky, resulting in a heaven-rending, earth-crushing sound ringing out. It was like the howl of a god, echoing through the world, reaching out into the starry sky, and causing everything to dim.

The only exception were nine stars. Starlight spilled down as four majestic fingers formed in the sky, surrounding Crown Prince Brightsouth from every direction.

It was... Crown Prince Brightsouth’s very own star displacement combat technique from Thirty-Six Immortal Constellations. It was the Dao of the Nine Stars Killing Suppression!

“Impossible!” Crown Prince Brightsouth blurted, his face falling. “Without having a dao seed, there’s no way you can master an imperial-class technique!”

Xu Qing’s expression was the same as ever as he took a deep breath.

Rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth as boundless power swept into Xu Qing’s mouth. In fact, a massive vortex sprang into being around him, which exerted a powerful gravitational force. Power flowed from all directions into Xu Qing, boosting his fleshly body dramatically.



It happened seventeen times in a row! Boost after boost occurred, until finally, he pulsed with such might that anyone who saw him would tremble inwardly.

Crown Prince Brightsouth's expression turned grim as he looked at Xu Qing.

"That's not the real imperial-class technique. It's an imitation. It's just the shape of it, not the quintessence! In any case, this fight is meaningless now."

Without any hesitation, Crown Prince Brightsouth turned and fled. He wasn't interested in combat now. Although he had other techniques to employ, including trump cards, he already had the feeling that nothing he could use would result in killing his opponent. He even had methods of turning death into life, but he didn't want to use them in a fight with Xu Qing. It was a disgusting feeling. And thus, he sped toward the horizon as fast as he could.

Xu Qing looked at him, lifted his right hand, and waved it through the air. "In a life-or-death battle, you think you can just fight or flee whenever you wish?"

The four majestic fingers fell toward Crown Prince Brightsouth. East, west, south and north. Spring, summer, autumn, and winter. They all descended.

"Be sealed!"

His soul had been targeted, so fleeing or even teleporting away wasn't a possibility! Next, four beams of light that represented death itself screamed forth from Xu Qing, piercing through the air as they headed right toward the crown prince.

There was more to Xu Qing's counter attack, though. The sky blurred as a massive, 500-kilometer cell block appeared overhead. It immediately dropped downward.

Within the cell block were numerous jail cells, many of which were filled with inmates. Some looked around blankly, some laughed foolishly, some howled in grief, and some wailed in sorrow. The head and the others from the original group of inmates let loose bizarre cries, all while the god's finger thrashed.

The sealing power of D-132 erupted. Were it not for the sealing power of the four fingers of the east, south, west, and north, Crown Prince Brightsouth probably would have been able to escape. After all, D-132 needed time to use, which was a weakness.

But Crown Prince Brightsouth couldn't escape. The sealing of the four fingers wasn't impossible for him to overcome, but it provided enough of a delay.

D-132 had fully entered the mortal world.

**RUMBLE!**

It covered a 500-kilometer area. It covered all directions. And it covered Crown Prince Brightsouth!

Next, misfortune expanded and amnesia proliferated. The four taboo weapons closed in, and Crown Prince Brightsouth gasped for breath. As he felt the terror of the cell block, his hands flashed in an incantation gesture, giving him a boost of speed. But then the four weapons closed in with destructive force. Rumbling booms echoed out everywhere.

Next, the sound of voices could be heard from the cell block, and they included the piercing sound of the head.

“It’s a prison break! A fugitive is trying to destroy the unity of the cell block!”

The cell doors opened, and a host of figures blurred toward Crown Prince Brightsouth, pulsing with malice and greed. Most shocking of all was that D-132 began to shrink down, adding even more pressure to Crown Prince Brightsouth and making it even more difficult for him to move. The misfortune was fully unleashed. The amnesia was intense.

At the same time, Xu Qing appeared in D-132, right in front of Crown Prince Brightsouth. Extremely disturbing fleshly body power surged as he launched a palm strike.

A boom rang out, and the crown prince coughed up a mouthful of blood. But that didn’t stop him from unleashing a divine ability counter attack against the four incoming taboo weapons.

Then the unexpected occurred. Though he successfully released the divine ability, it suddenly stopped in place briefly. Though it continued almost immediately, in such a critical moment, that made it too slow. The black spear moved faster than lightning to stab right into his back with explosive power.

Crown Prince Brightsouth grunted, and a vicious expression appeared on his face. Then black light erupted from him, forming a formation with an inner circle and an outer triangle that rotated in a prescribed fashion to block the other three taboo weapons.

However, it couldn’t do anything about Xu Qing’s incoming fist.

The black light shattered, and blood sprayed out of Crown Prince Brightsouth’s mouth again. He wanted to perform an incantation gesture, except that blankness had filled his eyes. It was amnesia.

The trident screamed through the air and stabbed right into the crown prince’s abdomen. The black saber slashed through the air, blade light flickering as it slashed into his waist. Even as he was sliced in half, the blood-red battle-ax chopped down viciously.

Intense pain filled him, along with a sensation of deadly crisis, that suddenly brought Crown Prince Brightsouth back to his senses. As a result, he managed to dodge to the side, preventing the battle-ax from hitting him in the face. Instead, it chopped into his shoulder.

A rumbling boom rang out as the top half of his body separated from the bottom half. Blood erupted everywhere, accompanied by a howl of grief from the crown prince’s mouth. He again tried to perform an incantation gesture, only to have Patriarch Golden Vajra Warrior swoop in and stab into his forehead. The force of the blow sent him spinning backward.

Next, Xu Qing appeared behind him, eyes flashing with killing intent. A dagger appeared in Xu Qing’s hand, which he viciously slashed through the crown prince’s throat.

A head flew through the air!

The attack had been carried out as smoothly as flowing water, without even the slightest delay. Xu Qing struck as fast as lightning, with ruthless cruelty. He directly beheaded him!

As was Xu Qing’s custom, he then waved his hand and sent out the power of taboo poison to cover the crown prince’s corpse and start corroding it. D-132 stopped shrinking down. At the same time, the inmates began to cackle madly.

And yet, that was when Xu Qing’s expression darkened. Crown Prince Brightsouth’s soul hadn’t appeared in any of the cells in D-132! That meant... he hadn’t actually died!

As coldness rose in Xu Qing's eyes, wisps of green smoke suddenly appeared in the spot where the crown prince had been killed. As it converged, Crown Prince Brightsouth appeared again, accompanied by a loud voice.

“Reverse the Sky, Restore the Sun!”

Majestic power rose up from Crown Prince Brightsouth. It had nothing to do with time itself, but rather, seemed like some sort of blessing.

Xu Qing's gaze hardened as he studied the situation closely. The blessing power of D-132 trembled, and Crown Prince Brightsouth opened his eyes. At the same time, his expression turned grim, and he looked at Xu Qing with pure killing intent.

“I've also mastered the dao of reversing life and death. I just didn't want to keep fighting you, but as it turns out, you have a death wish.... Did you really think I had no way of dealing with you?”

Crown Prince Brightsouth lifted his right hand to reveal a black coin. Stooping over, he shoved the coin downward. The ground in D-132 trembled as a green spell formation appeared around the crown prince. It spread outward, a circle on the inside, and a triangle on the outside. As it rotated, it looked like some type of geomantic compass. It had countless magical symbols in it, all of which glittered with golden light, causing six magical symbols to rise up into the air and grow larger and larger.

They all looked different, and with close examination, it was clear they represented the fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth of the heavenly stems, specifically, Wu, Ji, Geng, Xin, Ren, and Gui. As they appeared in formation, the air behind them rippled as black stone gates appeared. Each gate emanated something profoundly ancient, as well as a sinister wind filled with death.[1]

There were six magical symbols representing the heavenly stems, and there were seven gates. The last gate appeared behind Crown Prince Brightsouth. And unlike the other gates, it didn't emit death, but rather, life.

“Since you're looking to get killed, human, let's see if your natural laws of time can prevent you from being killed by my forbidden magic, the Six-Stems Seven-Gates Hex!”

His voice merged with the sinister wind as the six heavenly stems started moving. The gates behind them opened, and voices drifted out as if from the netherworld. They were calling out. To Xu Qing!

At the same time, images of Xu Qing appeared in front of the six gates, blurry, as if the gates were devouring them. The faster the six heavenly stems moved, the more quickly the devouring played out. A tremor passed through Xu Qing. Cracking sounds rang out. Six marks appeared on him, piercing all the way into his soul.

Xu Qing's eyes narrowed. Sitting down cross-legged, he placed his index finger three inches in front of his forehead. Black marks spread out from there, like blood vessels that soon formed a vicious ghost face. The moment the ghost face appeared, it lit up like a lamp in the sinister wind.

This was none other than the Seven Lamps Underworld Fire Curse! It was a curse magic that could suppress forbidden magic! It was now time to see who would die first! Or perhaps it was a test of who could hold out the longest!

#### Chapter 838: Curse Magic, Forbidden Magic, God Magic

It went without saying that Crown Prince Brightsouth, who was chosen among the Firemoon Darkheavens, had shocking battle prowess. Just about anyone else in the same generation as him would die trying to fight him. After all, his biggest superiority was his fleshly body.

What was more, his magical techniques were both gruish and incisive. That was especially true of his blessing of Reverse the Sky, Restore the Sun. The result was the same as Xu Qing's time magic, and in some ways could be considered an undying magic. Opponents like that weren't easy to kill.

At the same time, he had stoked Xu Qing's battle spirit. Xu Qing currently sat cross-legged, and even from a distance, it was possible to see the shocking ghost lamp on his forehead.

Next, Xu Qing's finger moved to his left shoulder. A second ghost lamp appeared. The fire of the underworld flickered as Xu Qing's finger then shifted to his right shoulder, his dantian region, his two legs, and finally, the spot above his heart. In an instant, seven ghost lamps ignited.

As soon as they did, the image of Crown Prince Brightsouth appeared within them. The sensation of a curse grew strong. Crown Prince Brightsouth scowled deeply as he realized how difficult Xu Qing was to deal with. It was something he couldn't have predicted when the fight started.

Most unexpected of all was that, similar to himself, Xu Qing not only had amazing recovery abilities, but he also had very gruish magics.

What was very concerning was that Xu Qing could apparently copy his techniques. That meant that the longer the fight went on, the more he would be at a disadvantage. That was why he'd been inclined to stop fighting.

But *if you ride a tiger, it's hard to get off*, and thus, he had no choice other than to fight. He gritted his teeth. Clearly, this human wanted to see which of the two of them could hold out the longest. Put more precisely, it was going to come down to who could recover the most times. Either that or... who would be first to vanquish the recovery powers of the opponent!

Crown Prince Brightsouth was ready to throw caution to the wind. Eyes bloodshot, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture, which caused life force to pour out of the gate of life behind him. As it entered him, the geomantic compass beneath him rotated rapidly.

The six heavenly stems in the air did the same, and the images of Xu Qing on the death gates blurred even further. Xu Qing felt pain filling him, a deathly sensation like that of being ripped apart. Yet Xu Qing was ruthless, and he had been from a very young age. Staring coldly at the crown prince, he extinguished the first of the seven lamps.

Blood sprayed from the crown prince's mouth. Gritting his teeth, he sped up his own efforts.

Xu Qing shivered as he extinguished the second, third, and fourth of the lamps.

The crown prince shivered as his body decayed. But the killing intent in his eyes only grew stronger.

Of the blurry images of Xu Qing in front of the six gates, three disappeared. Cracking sounds echoed out from within Xu Qing as he began to split apart physically.

That didn't affect the extinguishing of the ghost lamps. In the blink of an eye, the fifth, sixth, and seventh of the lamps... were extinguished. It happened at the same time as the blurry figures completely disappeared from in front of the six gates.

A boom echoed out as Xu Qing crumbled to pieces, including his fleshly body and his soul.

The same thing happened to Crown Prince Brightsouth. Thanks to the curse of the seven lamps, not even the gate of life behind him could send enough life force to sustain him. His body withered, his hair fell out, his life force was destroyed, and his fleshly body melted. He was killed in body and soul!

Next, the power of blessing exploded within D-132, as well as a sundial with spinning gnomon.

Crown Prince Brightsouth formed anew.

Xu Qing's shattered fleshly body and soul swept back together. He was now unharmed.

The two of them looked at each other.

"Dammit!" Crown Prince Brightsouth growled. Raising his right hand, he then shoved it back down toward the coin on the ground.

However, that was when a black shadow rose up next to him. Just as his hand fell, the shadow swept over the coin. Next, a howl echoed out as the shadow vanished along with the coin.

When the coin reappeared, it was in Xu Qing's hand. The moment it made contact, it burst into flames, causing Xu Qing's hand to start melting. Clearly, it wasn't possible to use it for the moment. Xu Qing threw it back to Little Shadow. The shadow had been sleeping, but Xu Qing had forced it awake. Taking advantage of the time the crown prince needed to recover, he sent the shadow close to grab the coin in a critical moment. Unfortunately, a heavy price had already been paid to use the coin, and it was now dim.

"That's not something you can use!" the crown prince said, glaring.

In response, Xu Qing raised his right hand and replied, "I also have a forbidden magic of death."

He pointed his hand up to the sky above D-132. It changed color.

The heavenly dao bluegreen dragon roared into being, spreading out in the sky to form a massive heavenly saber blade. Taboo poison, the curse of a god, spread out along that blade, forming its edge. Daybreak light glittered in all directions as the blade light. The moment the saber was out in the open, D-132 shivered and changed shape. It became a very long and narrow blade trough.

Crown Prince Brightsouth's pupils constricted as he sensed the terrifying aura of the blade, as well as the ancient time within it. Most importantly, he could sense that this saber had actually beheaded gods. His facial expression flickered dramatically.

"Is that...?"

A sensation of crisis filled every fiber of his being. Without a moment of hesitation, he placed one finger at his forehead and one over his heart, then inhaled deeply. His body withered dramatically, making it obvious... that whatever magic he was using was actually harmful to himself as well.

“Curse magic! Seven Impaling Arrows!”

The crown prince spat up seven mouthfuls of black blood, each of which caused him to wither even more, until he looked like little more than a skeleton. The seven mouthfuls of blood became seven blood arrows, each of which contained deathly curse power. Pulsing with a terrifying aura, they began to move toward Xu Qing.

To play things as safe as possible, Crown Prince Brightsouth coughed up more blood to further bolster the seven arrows.

Meanwhile, Xu Qing’s face was expressionless as he coldly said, “Let the golden crow be the connection. Let the violet moon be the seal!”

The golden crow danced in the air. The violet moon sent out rippling fluctuations. The god trope combined everything into one.

“Let the timescape be the container...”

“Let the sundial life lamps be the catalyst....”

Five sundials formed behind Xu Qing. Life lamp fire rose into the sky as the gnomons spun and the aura of ancient time spread out. Next, they all stopped at noon!

“When the sundials hit noon, heaven and earth will be severed together!”

Xu Qing’s eyes shone brightly as he looked at Crown Prince Brightsouth and sent the saber slashing down. The heavenly saber descended from above, like a massive waterfall or a mountain, filling the sky and shaking the lands below.

At the same time, the crown prince howled at the top of his lungs, sending further bolstering to the seven arrows. They expanded, growing incredibly large as they shot toward the heavenly saber.

Next, the god-decapitating saber made contact with the seven arrows.

Rumbling sounds rose up as a tempest appeared in D-132. The seven arrows erupted with force as they fought back, but it didn’t do any good. One by one, they started exploding. The unending godly might of the guillotine blade sliced through the air until it struck the crown prince’s head.

RUMBLE!

A huge gorge appeared in the lands, and a strong wind blew a baleful aura out on either side.

Next, Xu Qing performed a double-handed incantation gesture, causing the misfortune of D-132 to erupt, interfering with the blessing power. Amnesia spread, causing the blessing to be forgotten. Taboo poison descended, decaying everything. And sundials appeared, locking down the area and further impeding the blessing of recovery. It worked.

Crown Prince Brightsouth’s recovery technique didn’t work immediately. It took roughly ten breaths of time before it became effective. As his fleshly body formed anew, the heavenly saber fell again. A boom rang out as Crown Prince Brightsouth was once again killed in body and soul.

Xu Qing hovered in the air, eyes cold as he performed another double-handed incantation gesture. Divine abilities descended. A hundred breaths of time passed, and the blessing powers appeared again. The crown prince again recovered.

Everything from before played out again. The crown prince was overwhelmed. The blade fell yet again.

“Let’s see how long you can keep this up,” Xu Qing said, waving his arms out in front of him. D-132’s godly might spread out, bolstering the sealing effect and overwhelming Crown Prince Brightsouth with a fatal blow.

The four fingers of east, west, south, and north appeared again. Four taboo weapons formed. Patriarch Golden Vajra Warrior prepared another mortal attack.

In that manner, two hours passed.

Crown Prince Brightsouth recovered thirteen times. Every time it happened, Xu Qing unleashed everything in response. The crown prince used a variety of methods to try to fight back, but none of them worked quickly enough. And every time, he had to wait longer before recovering.

All of the onlookers were astonished to the point of being numb. They could sense how valiant Crown Prince Brightsouth was, and how difficult he was to kill. But at the same time... that only highlighted how terrifying and ruthless Xu Qing was. That was especially true when they thought back to the course of the fighting, and how it seemed... that Xu Qing had been in control every step of the way.

Whether it was the way he initially felt out his opponent to determine his strengths, or the adjustments he made after identifying his undying properties. Xu Qing seemed to have been guiding everything. Every attack he made had a purpose.

The curse magic was a way to test the undying abilities, and look for a hole in them. The deadly saber was used to create opportunities. And then, as everyone reeled, the blessing power once again appeared in D-132. As Xu Qing unleashed a host of attacks, an urgent stream of divine will emerged from the blessing and shot high into the sky.

“God magic! Sunfire’s Sun!!”

Crown Prince Brightsouth, who had been forced into a passive position and had died over ten times, could tell that death was around the corner, and had decided to go for broke. It seemed like a one-time eruption of blessing.

As his voice echoed out, the blessing power surged out of D-132 and rose into the canopy of heaven. Ripples spread out through the sky of the third region.

Then a massive rift opened up, out of which shone golden light. It was a huge eye! It wasn’t that of the broken face, but rather... from High God Sunfire!

Chapter 839: Dignity Can’t Be Exchanged for Peace

“So that’s what’s going on here!”

Xu Qing's eyes glowed with mysterious light. During the numerous times he had attacked Crown Prince Brightsouth, only to have his opponent be resurrected over and over again, he couldn't help but think of the head and the stone lion.

He had put on a lot of pressure with the specific purpose of putting the crown prince in a very tight spot, thus forcing him to go all out. And that was because... the blessing of a god was what enabled the crown prince to repeatedly die and be resurrected. It was similar to the inmates in D-132, who were eternally indestructible thanks to the influence of a god.

To truly kill Crown Prince Brightsouth, it was necessary to break that blessing.

“High God Sunfire.”

Outside of D-132, all of the humans, including Grand Prince, were visibly stunned, and were breathing heavily.

A look of revulsion and displeasure flashed across the Captain's face, and he narrowed his eyes as he looked at the huge eye in the sky. Golden light spilled out of the rift in the sky, sending out beams that touched the land everywhere. The clouds didn't even dare to form. The lava on the ground ceased churning and became solid. All of the natural laws were wiped away and all the magical laws became nothing. In the presence of a god, there were no such laws.

As the rift opened, golden light shone from an eye that couldn't be looked at directly. It contained no emotional fluctuations, but rather, was supremely tranquil. It was as if everything else was dust when that eye looked at it.

The power of mutagen spread through heaven and earth. Time and space intersected. Life force formed and was then extinguished. It was as if everything that formed could be instantly wiped away.

No beginning. No end. No rise. No fall.

Because of the gaze... a forbidden region was forming. Burning crimson vines stretched out from the solidified lava, and as they whipped back and forth, faces appeared on them, wailing in agony. Mountains and rivers rose up. To a certain extent, this was very similar to what the broken face would do. However, the broken face would form a forbidden region from the briefest glance, and it was something that couldn't be reversed.

Right now, High God Sunfire was creating an embryonic forbidden region. And because it had no foundation, once the gaze vanished, so would the forbidden region. Regardless, the gaze shook everyone and influenced everything.

Grand Prince and everyone else started to show signs of mutation, causing looks of pain and disbelief to show on their faces.

The Captain seemed to be working hard to restrain himself, and just allowed his body to start melting.

Xu Qing was also affected. The gaze of the god caused him to blur, and made every inch of his flesh and blood feel like it wanted to rip off of him and be independent. Tendrils of flesh began to grow off his god state fleshly body.



The gaze also caused the crimson vines to wrap around D-132. The god's finger trembled as the cell block blurred. Crown Prince Brightsouth was inside, and all of the magical techniques Xu Qing had been using on him went still. As of this moment, he was actually forming anew.

However, though his situation seemed normal, the reality was that he had already lost his undying characteristics. There was nothing extraordinary about him now. His expression was vicious and distorted, and his eyes gleamed with the light of one who had barely survived a deadly ordeal. Heart filling with madness, he stared at Xu Qing, who was already showing the signs of mutation.

"I have a blessing from High God Sunfire, human! Underneath the gaze of a god... you're nothing more than a bug!"

Xu Qing ignored the crown prince. He also ignored the flesh tendrils growing off of him, and the sensation of his flesh and blood trying to rip free and be independent. This wasn't the first time he had experienced something like that. Although it wasn't possible to say he was used to it, at the very least, he knew that once the source was gone, all that would ultimately happen would be the loss of a bit of life force.

He looked up at the giant eye. Gods weren't to be looked at directly, but with Xu Qing's eyes pitch black from taboo poison, he could look very briefly.

Xu Qing took a deep breath and then dispelled his god state. Millions of soul threads unwound rapidly, then converged into the shape of a new body.

That body was that of a clay fox! It was tall, impressive, and very lifelike. It was none other than High God Starfire.

The moment it formed, Xu Qing lifted his right hand and produced the identity medallion the clay fox had given him. He held it high. The medallion vibrated underneath the gaze of High God Sunfire. Then, boundless starlight spread out all around Xu Qing. It was like a river of stars, filled with twinkling light that became pink fire.

The fire of stars abounded. Heaven and earth trembled. The crimson vines stopped moving, and the spreading mutagen was sucked into the starfire power. Thunderous rumbling erupted in the sky.

Crown Prince Brightsouth's face fell. "Starfire's... godherald??"

As the power of Starfire surrounded Xu Qing, he really did become a godherald. And the highest-ranking type possible. As he stood there, the starlight really did become a blessing, spreading out, moving, until it was a massive vortex.

Xu Qing was gambling. He was betting that the eye of an actual god wouldn't really open for a mere Void Returning cultivator. This eye had been opened to signify the power of blessing, nothing more. When it came to the giving of blessings, gods wouldn't view Void Returning cultivators as any different than mortals.

To a certain extent, it wasn't a complete gamble. Xu Qing understood gods more than members of most species. He was fully aware that, given the circumstances, using his soul threads to form a clay fox, and then use the identity medallion, would be an effective line of defense. It shouldn't matter if the god's eye was real or not.

Xu Qing's gamble... paid off!

The cold gaze of the golden eye landed on Xu Qing, and noted the identity medallion. Then... the eye slowly closed. The rift in the sky faded away into nothing. The eye was gone.

If it came down to Xu Qing, who had an extremely high status as an actual godherald, compared to an unimportant servant, well, it was only natural that the latter could be discarded.

The development caused Crown Prince Brightsouth's face to drain of blood. He looked at the eye disappear, then at Xu Qing. He felt defiance, grief, indignation, and a host of other emotions. His biggest secret weapon had turned out to be useless against this opponent.

As of now, his special background seemed completely meaningless. It was an outcome he could never have predicted at the outset, no matter what powers of foresight he used. Xu Qing... was actually a godherald of Starfire.

"This..." Crown Prince Brightsouth murmured, glaring venomously at Grand Prince and the other humans. Apparently, he believed that they knew all along about this, but had been pretending not to, thus leading to his mistake....

It was too late now. He had lost his undying blessing. He had lost his secret weapon. And then he thought about how ruthless and vicious Xu Qing had been up to this point, and his heart started pounding. Without any hesitation, he turned, burning his energy and blood in a desperate attempt to escape. He wanted to take advantage of the moment the cell block was weakened to get away. In fact, he immediately resorted to a teleportation technique.

Of course, there was no way Xu Qing was going to let him get away that easily. Xu Qing's eyes glittered with killing intent.

"Eldest Brother," he said, waving his hand to send four taboo weapons flying out.

Patriarch Golden Vajra Warrior emerged from hiding, chuckling viciously, either to bolster himself or to frighten the crown prince, it was hard to tell.

The four majestic fingers formed and crushed down toward the crown prince.

And the Captain laughed as blue light flared all around him, spreading through the sky to form a host of sinister mouths, like those of heavenly dogs. They shot directly toward Crown Prince Brightsouth. As the blue light spread, Crown Prince Brightsouth's teleportation activated. But then Xu Qing's divine abilities and taboo weapons arrived.

Xu Qing came along. Together with the Captain, he closed in on the crown prince. One of them attacked viciously with a dagger. The other took a huge bite with his mouth. They didn't need to speak at all to coordinate their movements. It all came naturally.

Crown Prince Brightsouth fought back with everything he had. But no matter how he tried to defend himself, it didn't do any good.

Ultimately, he screamed as the four taboo weapons pierced through his body and blue light corroded his flesh. Then, a long red streak appeared on his throat.

A head flew through the air.

Patriarch Golden Vajra Warrior stabbed him through the forehead.

Destruction!

But there was no doubt that Crown Prince Brightsouth was an amazing individual. Extermination like this could destroy his fleshly body, but his soul still managed to slip out into the open. As it tumbled to the side, the power of teleport surged, and it disappeared.

Xu Qing wasn't worried. He performed an incantation gesture and pointed out, whereupon the four taboo weapons vanished, as if they had already locked onto their target.

The Captain grinned as he waved his hand. Five chunks of flesh appeared around him as he unleashed a magical technique. An instant later, the soul of Crown Prince Brightsouth appeared back in the very vortex he had just disappeared into. His expression was one of disbelief and despair as he opened his mouth to cry out. He wasn't fast enough.

Four taboo weapons appeared around his soul. The saber slashed. The battle-ax ravaged. The trident exterminated. And the spear immolated.

A scream rang out, but then faded away just as quickly.

Total extermination!

The Captain emerged from within the blue light, licking his lips. Turning to Grand Prince and the others, he smiled.

Xu Qing then shot over to where Crown Prince Brightsouth had just died. Reaching out with a grasping gesture, he caused a host of forbidden mountains to converge overhead. They were Crown Prince Brightsouth's forbidden mountains, and there were nearly 400 of them. When added to the over 300 Xu Qing already had from before, he now had more than 700.

This was *crushing all obstacles like chaff*. This was *a spirit that could conquer mountains and rivers*. It was shocking and ghastly to say the least.

The human cultivators were shocked to the core, and couldn't hold back from turning to Xu Qing and bowing. And yet, some of them also looked at the spot where Crown Prince Brightsouth had died, and they looked anxious.

Though none were saying anything out loud, they were all thinking the same thing. Crown Prince Brightsouth's father was extremely powerful and influential. And it seemed highly likely that he would be furious with humankind for killing his son.

Xu Qing was aware of that possibility as well. He looked at Grand Prince.

Grand Prince didn't say anything for a few breaths of time. Then he looked at the whip marks on his subordinates, and thought back to the humiliation they had all suffered. His gaze softened, and he lowered his voice.

"This was my mistake. I exchanged dignity for disgrace. And that's not peace."

The Captain's eyes glittered. "There's no type of peace that comes without shedding blood. It doesn't matter whether you're talking about an enemy or yourself. After enough blood has been shed, peace will come on its own."

Chapter 840: Champion Struggles

The dome of heaven was peaceful. The lands below were calm. After the dramatic battle, the cloud cover was in complete disarray. Starlight trickled down chaotically from the starry sky, a dappled

veil that made everything even more mysterious. The lava was covered with craters and gullies, but they were already filling in. The temperature was rising again. The dramatic battle was over, and things were going back to normal.

The only sound was the lingering echo of the words the Captain had just spoken. It was rare for him to speak in such a proper and formal way. After he was done talking, he stood with his hands clasped behind his back as he stared off into the distance.

The wind drifted down, stirring the Captain's hair and clothing. Through the gaps in his flowing hair, it was possible to see a trace of reminiscence and melancholy in his eyes. It was as if he had experienced things that most ordinary people had not. As he stood there, he seemed like a lone commander standing in the middle of a battlefield. All the humans who could see him were moved.

There were some people present who had heard of someone named Erniu. After all, though Xu Qing got a 30,000-meter light during the assessment of the heart, the Captain got only one meter. Truth be told, the Captain's achievement was without parallel in history and would likely never be repeated. It was obvious he must have done something very meaningful to lead to that.

But now, as his words echoed out, the humans who heard them suddenly viewed this Erniu in a very different way.

Grand Prince looked at him deeply, and after achieving a certain level of understanding in his heart, clasped hands and bowed.

Though the Captain's eyebrows moved up fractionally, his facial expression remained the same as before.

Few people would notice that, but all it took was one glance for Xu Qing to realize that the Captain was striking a pose. Xu Qing did nothing to ruin the moment. Waving his hand, he sent one of the forbidden mountains to Grand Prince. It was the mountain which had previously been set aside for Grand Prince.

"See you at God Mountain," Xu Qing said calmly.

He hadn't interacted with Grand Prince previously, but was obviously aware that he was participating in the Great Hunt. And according to the rules, there was no need to try to take first place by getting the most forbidden mountains. Only one was required to meet the qualifications for the round. As for whether or not Grand Prince would be able to keep that mountain long enough, there was really no way for Xu Qing to make a prediction.

After handing over the forbidden mountain, Xu Qing headed off into the distance. Continuing to sigh emotionally, the Captain went with him. The two of them were soon about to disappear over the horizon.

As the humans watched them go, Grand Prince suddenly said, "Region Lord Xu." He clasped hands and bowed at the waist! "I wish you success in your endeavors!"

He could already tell that Xu Qing's goal was to become a darkheaven general. If that wasn't his goal, there was no need for him to have so many forbidden mountains. The other humans bowed their heads and bowed sincerely in Xu Qing's direction.

Xu Qing stopped and turned. A moment passed, and then he returned their salute. Then he and the Captain disappeared over the horizon. He took the dragon chariot with him.

Afterward, Grand Prince and the human cultivators exchanged glances. Finally, all gazes came to focus on Grand Prince.

As he looked in the direction where Xu Qing had disappeared, he said, "Our new goal isn't to try to achieve peace. We need to focus on gathering intelligence for Region Lord Xu. Let's do whatever we can to make sure he has everything necessary to become a darkheaven general!"

With that, Grand Prince made some new arrangements. Afterward, the humans scattered in different directions to start putting together the intelligence reports Grand Prince had mentioned.

Time slipped by slowly but surely.

News of Crown Prince Brightsouth's death wasn't possible to keep a secret, and within three days, everyone was talking about it.

At first it was just a rumor that most people didn't believe. Some people even scoffed at the news, thinking that it was nothing but nonsense. Based on their understanding, given Crown Prince Brightsouth's background and battle prowess, there were few people who had the skill and courage to try to kill him. After all, he was the only son of King Brightsouth.

But as the news continued to spread, suspicions began to die down, and were eventually replaced by astonishment. That was especially true when people started to realize that Crown Prince Brightsouth hadn't been seen in public since the news started to spread. Before long, virtually all Firemoon Darkheavens were paying attention to what was now the hottest topic in their lands.

Crown Prince Brightsouth was a very influential figure among the Firemoon Darkheaven people. Whatever he did, people paid attention. For him to suddenly disappear... was very telling in and of itself. Eventually, cultivators arrived at the spot where the crown prince had fought Xu Qing. As they scoured the area, they eventually turned up clues that proved the rumors true. With the truth confirmed, the news spread with even greater intensity.

"Crown Prince Brightsouth... could actually be dead!"

"Crown Prince Brightsouth's killer is a human cultivator!"

"Someone already figured out who the human cultivator is. His name... is Xu Qing!"

In a very short period of time, a host of rumors raged. And before long, people unearthed details of Xu Qing's past. The more they learned and understood... the bigger the commotion became. Even to the Firemoon Darkheaven people, Xu Qing's past was absolutely astonishing.

"He's in charge of the humans' Sea-Sealing County!"

"In the Moonrite Region, he participated in the killing of a god!"

"In the Nightspirit Region, they actually think of him as a god!"

"He killed Seventh Prince in the imperial capital of humankind! He was given a sword by their Grand Emperor!"

"One word from him can determine the glory or decline of an entire region!"

“People are saying that he has a demigod magic, a shocking poison, and violet moon authority!”

“He doesn’t just have a Smoldering God as a dao protector, he also has the blessing of a real god!”

“What’s more... Xu Qing is a godherald of Starfire Temple!”

Each new rumor that spread caused a huge stir. In a very short time, Xu Qing was becoming quite famous among the Firemoon Darkheavens. When you added in the slaughter he had carried out as part of the Great Hunt, it ensured that there wasn’t a single other participant who didn’t hear about him. Before he even reached God Mountain, he was well-known by everyone.

There was one other important point that came to light, and that was regarding Xu Qing’s forbidden mountains. As he got closer and closer to God Mountain, more and more people were paying attention to his progress. He really did have a huge amount of forbidden mountains. That, combined with his reputation and the strength that had enabled him to kill Crown Prince Brightsouth, made him the complete center of attention.

There were some people who seemed indifferent, some who seemed antagonistic, some who seemed defiant, and some who were indignant. After all... from the perspective of the Firemoon Darkheavens, for a human cultivator to get so many forbidden mountains during their holy Great Hunt was the source of immense and even uncomfortable pressure. No one in their species would consider a lone valiant threat to be very noteworthy considering how weak humankind was in general. But in the hearts of the Firemoons, the pressure they were feeling became outright humiliation.

Antagonism grew more intense. More and more people were paying very close attention to the situation. Soon, news started spreading about Xu Qing’s whereabouts and activities.

“Xu Qing is traveling straight across the third region!”

“Some Whitemarshes tried to stop him, but they all got killed! He has almost 800 forbidden mountains!”

“Xu Qing just entered the second region!”

“He killed more participants! His mountain count just went past 800.”

“He’s very close to the first region!”

“900 forbidden mountains!”

“He... is slaughtering his way across the first region. He’s only five days away from God Mountain!”

“There are people who saw him from a distance and said that he has a very alarming baleful aura!”

The more news spread, the more people started watching Xu Qing’s every move. And quite a few Firemoon cultivators, upon seeing how quickly Xu Qing was rising to prominence, started looking

in the direction of King Brightsouth. When all was said and done, his son had died, and that had the potential to be a major catastrophe. But strangely... King Brightsouth didn't do a single thing.

However, as news spread of Xu Qing's progress toward God Mountain, there were Firemoon Darkheaven chosen who started getting very interested in him. People knew that Crown Prince Brightsouth was strong. But he wasn't the best of the best in his generation in the Firemoon Darkheavens. After all, there were more than a dozen cultivators in their echelon besides him.

The true Firemoon chosen had a variety of personalities. Some were indifferent to fame and fortune. Some were arrogant and showy. Some kept a low profile. Some were coarse and wild. Some cared deeply about their reputation, and would maintain it at any cost. Some were quite the opposite, and cared only about getting stronger. Because of the variety of dispositions among the chosen, there were a variety of opinions about Xu Qing.

\*\*\*

About half a day's journey from God Mountain in the first region, a Firemoon cultivator strode across the lands clad in a rough hemp robe.[1]

He was a lot taller than the average Firemoon cultivator. He was nearly 15 meters tall, which made him look almost like a giant. He was extremely muscular, with surging energy and blood. Walking along, he seemed like a small mountain, and imparted the sensation of being impossible to resist.

Every step he took caused the ground to shake. What was more, he walked with earth-contracting manipulation, giving him shocking speed.[2]

What was most shocking of all was that he had over 900 forbidden mountains orbiting overhead. The combination of all those things ensured that any who saw him felt shocked to the core, and instinctively bowed their heads.

One reason for that was his identity. The other was because of his reputation.

This person was none other than one of the top five consummate chosen among the Firemoon Darkheaven people. His name was Tuo Shishan! [3]

Most of the other chosen cultivators participating in the Great Hunt didn't care very much about becoming the champion of the first round. But he was different. His main goal was to become the darkheaven general.

The reason was that he was from the Darkheaven Clan. And his clan had produced six darkheaven generals in the past!

As he strode forth in his majesty, he eventually reached a mountain range. Standing atop one of the tallest mountains, he looked off toward the horizon, where he could see a golden glow. It wasn't possible to see any details of what was in that golden light. But that was the location of the Firemoons' God Mountain, which was the ultimate destination in the first round of the Great Hunt.

"I'm finally here," he murmured, smiling.

Moments later, the air around him rippled as nine figures stepped out and bowed. "We offer respectful greetings, Young Lord."

Tuo Shishan nodded and looked away from the horizon. "How far away is Xu Qing? And how many forbidden mountains does he have now?"

One of the nine figures replied, “He’s about six hours away. As for the forbidden mountains... he has a few more than you, Your Majesty.”

Tuo Shishan licked his lips, and his eyes glittered with interest. Instead of continuing onward, he sat down on a nearby boulder to wait. Producing an earthen jar of alcohol, he took a long drink.

“Very good. The fact that he killed Crown Prince Brightsouth shows that he’s worth his salt. I never liked that prissy crown prince. I’m glad he’s dead. That said, there’s only going to be one champion in round one, and it’s going to be me.”