

Read Beyond the Timescape Chapter 971: Clean and Simple

Chapter 971: Clean and Simple

Omniscience was a concept unique to gods, who were, of course, mysterious and unfathomable.

Many cultivators thought of the word 'omniscience' to be extremely terrifying. Once one was laid bare to omniscience, everything about them, from past to future, and even their fate, could be controlled. There was no way to escape it or change it. To some extent, it was a word that described scope and limitation.

Before gaining enlightenment of the godly authority of sound, Xu Qing knew more about enlightenment than most cultivators. But compared to gods, he was like a young child who had only just started to learn things. As of this moment, though, when he truly gained enlightenment and could control that godly authority, things completely changed.

The godly authority of sound was an essential component of omniscience. Control of all sound. It was one of the keys to opening the great door of omniscience. In addition to gaining control of the godly authority, the process imparted valuable experience to him.

He had experienced a revelation unlike anything from the past. This was what godly authority was about.

Godly authority possessed life force. At the same time, it did not possess life force. It was something free and extraordinary. When he was seeking enlightenment, it possessed life force and the ability to fight back. It even tried to possess him. But when he didn't seek enlightenment, yet gained it, it didn't possess life force. It was a paradox.

Those who understood would understand. Those who didn't understand would never understand.

Along with the godly authority came drifting bits of information from within the freed god perception.[1]

The bits of information were deeply ancient. They all had different usages. Some were chaotic and paradoxical, and yet all of them plainly informed him of their usage upon entering him. Any person qualified to use this godly authority would also qualify to use the bits of information.

The bits of information weren't things that occurred naturally. They were like chaotic wills left behind in the godly authority by anyone who had previously qualified to use it. They came out automatically.

Understanding the bits of information, and being able to use them, involved a long process. Anyone who did so, and could control their substructure, would become the sole individual qualified to use that godly authority. All other gods would be stripped of their qualifications. That was what happened when gods improved their godly authority, and in some respects, was the most important pillar of the god system.

Godly entities are in the process of stockpiling godsource. When the godsource reaches the right level, godfire can be ignited, and the godly entity will become an actual god. At that point, they use all of their previous stockpiles and enlightenment, along with god perception, to seek enlightenment of a godly authority. They seek the qualifications to use it.

Controlling and understanding the substructure of a godly authority is a standard in the Godfire level. It's also a very dangerous process. But if you succeed... you become an Altar God.

The three gods of the Firemoons used a god domain to achieve their breakthrough to Flawless God. Now I can see that the key to the point of that breakthrough was to allow them to control and understand godly authority substructure.

Their path to Altar God is now open, which means that, in reality, they have already succeeded to a certain extent. For the most part, they have already gained understanding and control of their personal godly authorities.

Then there's the empress.... When at the peak of being a half-Imperial Sovereign, she used the destiny aura of humankind to become a first-stage Altar God. That means that she skipped the level of 'usage' and went right to control. Becoming a first-stage Altar God isn't an easy thing. Only someone with spectacular talent, and an Imperial Sovereign cultivation base, would be able to solidify the first step. Now I can see that the empress must have been studying godly authority from very early on.... And maybe that's what led to the Dawning Suns. That's why she was able to become a first-stage Altar God.

After Altar God is the level equivalent to the Summer Immortals. True God..... That involves gaining complete control over a godly authority. That's why the character 'true' is in the name.

This enlightenment came to Xu Qing from the bits of information in his god perception. However, there was also a possibility that he was wrong about some things. He would have to wait until later on to verify the truth. But there was one thing that was now much more clear to him than before.

Godly entities are like Smoldering God cultivators. And the different levels within Godfire are like the different stages of Imperial Sovereign cultivators. An Altar God could fight a Quasi-Immortal Grand Emperor. And a True God would be a match for a Summer Immortal.

Both True God and Summer Immortal pursue what comes next in their respective systems. Unfortunately... what comes next on the path after True God is called God Lord. But nobody knows what comes after Summer Immortal. People search blindly, and based on different essences, they pursue different paths. Years ago, the Summer Immortals disappeared, and I bet it's because they sought their own paths to ascension. That's why the starry sky belongs to the gods.

Xu Qing took a deep breath, opened his eyes, and looked at the black jade. It was now so cracked that it finally just quietly crumbled into ashes.

What a pity. The godly authority of sound in my god perception is actually possessed by many gods. Too many.... It's a very widespread type of godly authority. Because so many individuals can use it, its mightiness is actually scattered. That said, because it's so widespread, if someone came along who could wrest complete control of it, that type of god power would be completely terrifying.

Xu Qing closed his eyes again and focused fully on the fifth type of godly authority in his void soil.

The godsource within him became like a mallet to strike the void soil. A sound like a bell rang in Xu Qing's mind. In fact, the sound actually seeped out of him. There, it made something like imperceptible ripples. Xu Qing was in the middle of them as they spread out, leaving the dilapidated pagoda, entering the marine trench, and eventually spreading through the Forbidden Sea.

In the blink of an eye, they reached a distance of 50 kilometers. All sound within that 50 kilometer area was instantly within Xu Qing's god perception. He could hear the sound of water flowing, animals roaring, fish swishing their tails, sand rubbing against sand.... He even heard a sound like breathing from the Forbidden Sea itself.

It was gruish and lingering....

All of that appeared within Xu Qing's god perception. And he got the sense that, with a thought on his part, he could use all of that sound.

Everything in that 50-kilometer area suddenly went quiet. Xu Qing had taken away all sound with a single thought, and pushed it beyond the 50-kilometer area. By borrowing their sound, he sent the ripple farther.

250 kilometers. 500 kilometers....

It was an endless cycle.

Xu Qing was like a child who had just acquired a new toy, and wanted to play around with it to see how it worked, and what it was capable of.

In that manner, time passed. It was hard to say exactly how much went by from the moment Xu Qing started sending out the ripples. The range had long since surpassed anything Xu Qing was previously capable of sensing. He could now sense countless sea beasts, numerous godly entities hidden in the seafloor, and all sorts of ships on the surface of the water. Yet none of them could sense him. Xu Qing didn't do anything to them.

The process continued.

Xu Qing perceived numerous scenes with his god perception.

A great distance away from Xu Qing's location, in a spot near Forbidden by the Zombie, there was something like a vast plain on the seafloor.

In the middle of it, a huge spell formation had been set up. And at the center of the spell formation, two figures sat cross-legged. They wore silver robes and had dark skin reminiscent of an octopus. They had no hair, but facial features that resembled humans. Even seated, they were both more than 30 meters tall. Based on their cultivation base fluctuations, they were both at the peak of the two-world Smoldering God level.

Because of their special clothing and the nature of the spell formation, it was clear that these two were from one of the holy lands. As it turned out, they were from the same larger group that Feng Lintao and the others had come with.

On that occasion, a host of teams had come from the holy lands, which had then scattered into different parts of Revered Ancient.

These two had come to the Forbidden Sea. During that time, they gathered information and resources from throughout the Forbidden Sea before setting up the spell formation to send the homing signal to beyond the heavens.

Right now, they had unleashed their cultivation base fluctuations to strengthen the spell formation and call out to the holy land they called home. They had been lucky in their time in Revered Ancient, as everything had gone smoothly for them. They hadn't encountered any resistance, and though they had run into some powerful godly entities, by identifying them in advance, they were able to avoid them.

Now that their mission was wrapping up, both were feeling very relieved.

But then, a cracking sound rang out from one of them. Specifically, it came from a jade slip he had placed down in front of him. It was a dark jade slip covered with complicated magical symbols that had been painted on with a special ink. Its function was to vibrate in advance if something dangerous was nearby.

At the moment, the jade slip had started vibrating so intensely, and so suddenly, that it shattered.

The two holy lands cultivators opened their eyes and looked around suspiciously. The sound of the cracking jade slip hadn't disappeared, and in fact, was like a tempest sweeping the area.

As everything trembled, the two cultivators' expressions flickered. They quickly backed up a good distance and checked the surroundings. Then one of them performed a right-handed incantation gesture and pointed out.

Instantly, a swirling current appeared in the surrounding sea water, which he controlled, causing a lot of sand to float up, shaking many hidden rocks. He was looking for the source of the danger. No such efforts amounted to anything.

As their suspicions mounted, something incredibly shocking happened. All of the sound created by their actions suddenly went away. That included the echoing of the cracking of the jade slip. All of that sound turned into a gruish and dangerous power that slammed into them. Rumbling filled the area.

As the two cultivators' hearts pounded, one of them projected a message to the other.[2]

"A god must have noticed us!"

Even though it was only a projected message, at the same moment that the cultivator's teammate heard the message, it turned into a gruish attack that caused their heads to vibrate, their faces to drain of blood, and their hearts to race painfully. Terror filled them.

At the same moment, both of them realized that the sound in the area was being taken away by force. Neither of them dared to speak again. After exchanging a glance and realizing how terrified the other was, they unhesitatingly fled toward the surface.

However, the faster they fled, the more noise they made, and the more of a disturbance they caused. That sound then turned into an attack power that hit them again. The resulting rumbling booms only added to the deadly power.

Meanwhile, fish and sea beasts in the area, and even the sand and water itself, were all making various noises. Some were audible, others were not. But that didn't change the fact that they all existed. It was like a terrifying orchestra in the Forbidden Sea was playing a shocking song.

The deadly attack power rolled with mountain-toppling, sea-draining force directly toward the two fleeing cultivators. The rumbling grew more intense.

The two holy lands cultivators were trembling. They looked scared and were coughing up blood. Both had already unleashed their major worlds. They used both illusory and corporeal means to fight against the gruish attack. They even used magical treasures in an attempt to get rid of the sound in the area. The danger mounted to unprecedented levels as they sustained numerous attacks, causing their clothing to be ripped and torn, and lacerating their flesh.

Finally, they burst out of the water and into the open. And yet, they couldn't breathe sighs of relief.

There was even more noise above the surface. Sea birds cried out as they flew overhead. The waves crashed. There was sound everywhere. Sound roared in all directions.

And the two cultivators who had just burst up through the surface of the water found themselves right in the middle of it. From a distance, it was like there was a huge sphere of sound, rippling endlessly, filled with terrifying might.

A voice then rang out.

"What were you doing on the seafloor?"

Along with the voice came a figure in violet, almost like a god. The figure was outside of the sphere of sound, looking calmly at the two terrified cultivators.

His question obviously required an answer. And that was because the rumbling inside the sphere of sound was growing more intense.

The ears of the two holy lands cultivators could hardly hear what Xu Qing was saying. All they heard was a vague chanting. The chanting grew more intense, repeating itself over and over, like something from ancient times. A sensation of madness and greed filled them, inundating their minds and taking over their perceptions.

It was taking away their concept of sound. Their bodies, souls, and even their sense of self was being taken. The answer was naturally there.

Xu Qing dropped down to the seafloor. On the surface, a pop could be heard, and then blood flowed. The two holy lands cultivators had been killed in body and soul.

The sound sphere vanished, and all the sound therein returned to heaven and earth.


Clean and simple.


Xu Qing reached the spell formation on the seafloor. After studying it, he lifted his hand. One strike destroyed it.

Xu Qing shook his head. *Sadly, the signal already went out.*

After some thought, he took out a jade slip and sent messages to Sea-Sealing County, Huang Yan, and others, letting them know to get ready. Shortly after, he disappeared into the Forbidden Sea to continue seeking enlightenment of the sound authority, and to look for the bronze chariot.

A week later, seven shooting stars appeared in the sky over Revered Ancient, dazzlingly bright. One of them started falling toward the spot in the Forbidden Sea between Emperor-Receiving Prefecture and the continent of South Phoenix!

1. Incidentally, here's a quick reminder of what I mentioned in a footnote a few hundred chapters ago, that the "information" mentioned here has a meaning beyond the mundane definition of the word. Here's a link to the post from that real-life practitioner of Chinese magic that goes into a brief explanation (same image I included in the footnote back then). 

2. It's noteworthy that the term I generally convey as "project" or "transmit" literally means "to transmit sound." Though the author usually uses it when cultivators mentally communicate with each other, he occasionally uses it when just meaning "to talk." The point is that it contains the character for "sound" in it. 

Deathblade's Thoughts

This chapter is about 1,000 characters longer than average.

Chapter 972: Vivifiend Holy Land

A shooting star fell from the sky, descending toward the Forbidden Sea. As its resplendent light shimmered out, people throughout the continent of South Phoenix and Emperor-Receiving Prefecture looked up in shock. In recent days, holy lands had been arriving one after another. But this was the first time that one had appeared in this area.

It caused widespread nervousness, especially since no one had any idea what was to come in regard to this holy land. Sects and organizations everywhere were on high alert. That was especially true given that the arrival of this holy land was accompanied by terrifying pressure, and winds that could shake the starry sky. Deafening rumbling sounds echoed out that shook the mind and heart of all.

The maritime space near Forbidden by the Zombie was affected the most dramatically. From afar, it was possible to see an area of the sea many thousands of kilometers wide sinking down as a vortex formed. Waves surged into a tsunami that spread out. Soon, the water level sank so much it was possible to make out the seafloor.

As for the tsunami, it was so huge that, as it spread out, it swept over many islands. Thankfully, it didn't last for long. What was more, the islands had been given advance notice to make preparations. Were it not for that, the event would have been a major catastrophe.

Regardless, it just went to show the terrifying force unleashed by this newly arrived holy land.

Countless sea beasts shivered instinctively and tried to flee the area. Eventually... as wild colors flashed in heaven and earth, the holy land began to slow down as it descended.

Astonishingly, the holy land floating above the Forbidden Sea was a massive blue ice mountain. It was so tall it seemed to vie with the dome of heaven for glory. And it was so wide at the bottom that it was almost as big as Emperor-Receiving Prefecture.

It didn't come to rest on the water itself. Instead, it floated in the air about 3,000 meters above it, making it look like a huge floating island.

Directly beneath it was the spell formation with the homing signal, created by the two Smoldering God cultivators Xu Qing had just killed. In other words, it was above Forbidden by the Zombie.

Forbidden by the Zombie was a forbidden ground located in-between Emperor-Receiving Prefecture and South Phoenix. It was normally hidden on the seafloor. Over the countless years that had passed, the lord of Forbidden by the Zombie had awoken on a few occasions, which caused a huge stir. But ordinarily speaking, the place was relatively peaceful and quiet. One exception was several years previously, when that huge, ancient door was revealed. On that occasion, the lord of Forbidden by the Zombie perished. As a result, the forbidden ground essentially lost its life force, and ever since, had been very quiet. Few people were aware of any of the behind-the-scenes details.

Obviously, there was some deep significance to the fact that this holy ground had come to this specific spot. Numerous streams of divine will had already arrived from Emperor-Receiving Prefecture and South Phoenix, as well as from locations in the Forbidden Sea. As they focused on the enormous blue ice mountain, the mountain... vibrated.

Cracking sounds rang out like heavenly thunder. Crevices opened up all over the surface of the mountain, spreading so rapidly that, after only an incense stick's worth of time, they had covered the entire thing. Then the ice started collapsing everywhere, revealing an interior mountain that was the color white. The blue ice landed in the ocean and quickly melted. However, it caused the temperature to drop so much that chunks of ice formed in the sea beneath the holy land.

As for the white mountain, it pulsed with intense life force. In fact, it was even possible to see swaying grass starting to grow on its surface, and even trees. Spirit energy

pulsed out of it, and auspicious beasts began to wake up and fly around. Immortal clouds even appeared in the area. It didn't take long for the holy land to reveal that it looked very much like an immortal mountain.

Then a figure some 300 meters tall strode out from the immortal mountain. Other than some specifics about the facial features, and a few other details, he looked very similar to the two Smoldering God cultivators Xu Qing had killed. It seemed likely that he was from the same species. He had human-like facial features, but no hair. His skin glistened like white jade, making him seem very holy. It was hard to determine his age, but there was something about him that seemed profoundly ancient. freewebnovel.com

Most terrifying were his cultivation base fluctuations. His cultivation base fluctuations surpassed the ability of most cultivators to even perceive. He was more terrifying than anything they had ever encountered. In fact, it was something that only the divine will of the most powerful experts could detect.

He was... an Imperial Sovereign! His presence caused huge waves to roll out over the sea, and provoked a joyful response from the natural and magical laws in the area. Even the heavenly daos were silent. The reason was that he was at the peak of Imperial Sovereign!

He did not need any blessing of destiny aura. He did not need any external power. He was fully at the peak of the immortal cultivator system of cultivation. He was truly a peak Imperial Sovereign, making him equivalent to a Flawless God!

After stepping out of the immortal mountain, he entered the Forbidden Sea and went to... Forbidden by the Zombie!

All of Forbidden by the Zombie was trembling. Countless cries of grief echoed out from within, and then black blood flowed out of it, becoming part of the surrounding sea water. That blood flowed for seven days. The howls of grief echoed for the same amount of time.

Everyone was still watching on the eighth day when... the Imperial Sovereign who looked like a cultivator made of white jade emerged from Forbidden by the Zombie. Astonishingly, he was shouldering an ancient bronze door! It was the very same door that had been opened inside Forbidden by the Zombie years ago. A mangled hand had reached out of the door, which resulted in Emperor Zombie perishing. As of now, this cultivator who looked like white jade was carrying the door back to the immortal mountain.[1]

After he returned, the cultivators of the holy land emerged cheering. This was a very strange holy land. The various members of the species who had made it didn't all look the same. Some looked like the two Xu Qing had killed. But some had bodies that were stitched together like puzzles. And the puzzle pieces included humanoid body parts,

animal body parts, and other fantastical parts. All of them proceeded into Forbidden by the Zombie.

This strange development caused numerous individuals in Emperor-Receiving Prefecture and South Phoenix to observe with even more rapt attention, and at the same time, confusion. All of them stayed on high alert. Armies were mustered in Sea-Sealing County, and Emperor-Receiving Prefecture activated military spell formations.

What was even stranger, though, was that in the month that followed, the immortal mountain didn't do anything else. Apparently, the cultivators from there were only interested in going to Forbidden by the Zombie. Inside, they searched for all sorts of resources. Seawater, mutagen, plants from Forbidden by the Zombie, strange grues and godly entities. All such things were among the items they targeted.

Xu Qing, who was still roving the Forbidden Sea working on his godly authority of sound, and also searching for the golden crow's dragon chariot, heard about the developments via messages sent to him from various parties.

A lot of the information came from Huang Yan, who was in close contact with human forces. What was more, he had access to ancient knowledge that provided a lot of insight.

Xu Qing nodded. Humankind was in an era of decline. However, though they were far from their glory days, they had many ancient records. Maybe their histories couldn't compare to those kept by the Summer Immortal Palace, but they were still superior to most other species.

As Xu Qing sped through the Forbidden Sea, Huang Yan's voice echoed in his mind via divine will, sent through the feather.

"Xu Qing, you humans have already dug through various ancient documents and found information about the holy land that dropped down at my front door. I have to say, you humans are very adept at keeping historical records."

"The species has a name. They're Vivifiends. Back in the time of Ancient Emperor Dark Serenity, they weren't exactly a major player. But partly because of their unusual and fiendish nature, and partly because their emperor acknowledged allegiance to Ancient Emperor Dark Serenity very early on, and performed some meritorious services, they went on to achieve a lot of glory."

"The fiendish nature of the species has to do with their innate ability. They're born extremely weak. And as they grow up, they have to steal the organs and even bodies of other species to replace their own. They're almost like hermit crabs, constantly shedding their shells to get new ones."

“That’s why members of this species usually look different from each other. Before acknowledging allegiance to Ancient Emperor Dark Serenity, they went around buying and selling bodies and organs all over Revered Ancient. If it weren’t for the fact that they eventually got enough power and influence, they would have been wiped out a long time ago.

“In terms of the category of their holy land, it’s terrestrial-level. Normally speaking, holy lands like that will have at least one or two cultivators in the Imperial Sovereign level. The one who went into Forbidden by the Zombie earlier is probably one of the lords of the place.

“Based on the information your empress was able to dig up, as well as news about various species who’ve made contact with other holy lands, plus some of my own back-channel information, I think I have an idea what’s going on. These holy lands from beyond the heavens, when the holy lands left, they didn’t have such a strict system of categorization. Basically, the Dark Serenity holy land was in charge, and everyone else was lower.

“But later on, unforeseen circumstances resulted in the different holy lands being categorized as either heavenly, earthly, celestial, or terrestrial.

“Terrestrial-level holy lands have either one or two Imperial Sovereigns. Above them are the celestial-level holy lands, none of which have arrived yet. Most likely, they will have Quasi-Immortal Grand Emperors.

“Then there are the earthly-level holy lands.... There’s no way they could have Summer Immortals, which leaves only one possibility. They must have multiple Quasi-Immortals! That’s how they can achieve the earthly level!

“Finally are the heavenly-level holy lands. Well, holy land. There’s only one.... I suspect there’s an eighty to ninety percent chance it has a Summer Immortal.

“Based on the empress’ analysis, the Dark Serenity holy land isn’t heavenly-level. And that means that the Summer Immortal from the only heavenly-level holy land is most likely... not Dark Serenity! It must be someone else!”

Xu Qing stopped in place in the middle of the Forbidden Sea. *Summer Immortal....*

His eyes shone brightly.

Huang Yan wasn’t done yet. *“From the moment they arrived until now, all of the holy lands have been focused on one thing. And that’s to collect resources! In any case, the fact remains that the holy lands are here. Xu Qing, don’t stay out in the Forbidden Sea for too long. Get back as soon as you can.”*

At that point, Huang Yan’s message was completed.

Xu Qing looked down toward the seafloor. The sea was calm, though there was a light breeze that caused some waves to roll over the surface of the water. The sky was getting dark. A storm was coming.

I'll search for two more months. If I haven't found the golden crow's dragon chariot by then, I'll leave the Forbidden Sea and go back to Sea-Sealing County.

With that, Xu Qing continued on his way. A month went by.

Three more holy lands arrived in the Revered Ancient mainland. As of now, a total of thirty-three holy lands had arrived.

Apparently, the forces of the Vivifiend holy land were nearing the completion of their excavation of Forbidden by the Zombie. Thus, they sent their people out to the surrounding islands. They didn't perpetrate any wicked acts. The cultivators they sent out all seemed kind and amiable. They politely asked for news about Revered Ancient, and even offered treatment to people suffering from severe mutagen invasions. Upon leaving, they would hand out medicinal pills from their holy land as gifts. Those pills worked wonders in purging mutagen.

Although the local species were initially nervous, they soon sensed that this holy land seemed to have good intentions. After getting all the information they sought, the holy land sent out three messages.

The first message went into Forbidden by the Phoenix in South Phoenix, to be delivered to Flame Phoenix. The second went to Seven Blood Eyes, to be delivered to Master Seventh. The third went to Emperor-Receiving Prefecture, to be delivered to the region lord of the Holytide Region.

The letters were worded differently, but all contained the same general message. They politely informed the three parties in question that the Vivifiend holy land did not come with any malicious intentions. They only wanted to collect resources, and didn't want to make any enemies. They hoped that they could get along well with the other three local powers.

Sea-Sealing County, South Phoenix, and Seven Blood Eyes conferred and chose to do the same as everyone else in Revered Ancient. They would just continue to keep an eye on this holy land. They wouldn't do anything rash, and would stay on guard.

The Vivifiend holy land behaved just as they said they would in their messages. They seemed interested in maintaining peace. In the month that followed, there were no unexpected misunderstandings. They continued to widen the range in which they explored, and made contact with more islands. The entire time, they behaved politely, treated those who needed help, and gave out medicinal pills.

Seven Blood Eyes got some of the pills and studied them closely, as did Huang Yan. They didn't seem to contain any potential calamities. From the look of it, it was going to be possible to get along with this holy land.

However, it also seemed like a storm was building on the Forbidden Sea....

Xu Qing had been gone for the better part of a year. Using his godly authority of sound, he had explored much of the sea region between Emperor-Receiving Prefecture and South Phoenix. Though he had encountered some dangers, he didn't go too deep into the sea. The entire time, he kept looking for the golden crow's dragon chariot. His search bore no fruit.

It seems to me the dragon chariot and the giant must have gone to the outer sea.

At the moment, Xu Qing stood on the corpse of a 3,000-meter-long giantfang shark, which was riddled with wounds.[2]

The wind blew, stirring his violet hair. His expression was tranquil, and he was surrounded by motes of scintillating light, which were the bits of godliness emanating from the beast beneath his feet. As he absorbed them, he looked off into the distance toward the outer sea. After a moment, he shook his head. Now was not a suitable time to go to the outer sea.

Just as he was about to give up on his search of the Forbidden Sea and go back to Sea-Sealing County... his transmission jade slip vibrated. After scanning it with divine will, he heard Second Elder Sister's voice echoing in his mind.

"Little Junior Brother, there's a matter that needs your attention. Grand-Master Bloodsmelter is at Eastnether Isle. The venerable old man... sent a message asking for help. He asked for you specifically."[3]

Second Elder Sister sounded a bit exasperated. For a patriarch to ask a grand-apprentice to go save him was definitely somewhat comical. However... it made sense.

"He's getting old, and has been pretty quiet recently. For him to suddenly ask for you to go over there... well, it seems to me he wants to show off to Guru Eastnether. Why don't you just go for a quick visit?"[4]

Xu Qing was initially stunned. However, a moment later he somberly replied, "I'll head over there right now, Second Elder Sister."

1. The door opened in [chapter 385](#). 📖

2. Interestingly, Xu Qing first saw a giantfang shark when he originally encountered the dragon chariot in chapter 80. Later in chapter 140, he was pursuing the same kind of shark, only to have it stolen by none other than Wu Jianwu (although we didn't learn Wu Jianwu's name until a few chapters later.) ☹️

3. Sir Bloodsmelter appeared onscreen for the first time in chapter 116, and most recently in chapter 731. Eastnether Isle was first mentioned in chapter 119. ☹️

4. Guru Eastnether's last speaking role was in chapter 542.2, though she was mentioned a couple times after that and even appeared on screen though without any lines of dialogue. ☹️

Chapter 973: Musician of the Sun

Eastnether Isle had long been in an alliance with Seven Blood Eyes. Nowadays, that alliance was stronger than ever. After Seven Blood Eyes rose to prominence in Sea-Sealing County, and of course after everything that happened in the Holytide and Nightspirit Regions, Eastnether Isle became an even more domineering force on the Forbidden Sea.

Guru Eastnether, who was Yanyan's grandmother, was a good friend of Sir Bloodsmelter. In fact, in years past there were some Seven Blood Eyes disciples who audaciously claimed that their relationship went beyond the level of being fellow daoists. In recent years, Sir Bloodsmelter had been taking a lot of trips to Eastnether Isle, usually every few months, which only fueled such speculations....[1]

At the moment, all of the cultivators on Eastnether Isle were on guard and had very serious expressions on their faces.

Seated cross-legged on a high altar in the middle of the island was a young woman. Just looking at her, it was possible to see evidence of the passage of time. But that evidence was simply the fact that she had grown into a bewitchingly beautiful woman. She had pale skin and looked frail, but was very attractive. She wore a long black dress, and... was surrounded by numerous collections of beloved bladed weapons.

She was, of course, Yanyan. Her eyes were closed as if she were sleeping. But her eyelashes fluttered occasionally as her expression alternated between ferocity, terror, and pain. It was a very unusual sight.

Most unusual of all was her body. When Xu Qing first met her, he had noticed that she was different from other people. She had no mutagen in her. In reality, mutagen was a godly aura that existed everywhere in Revered Ancient. Only very high-level cultivators could completely purge themselves of it. But it was virtually impossible for low-level cultivators to be free of mutagen.

Xu Qing could do it with his violet crystal.

As for Yanyan, she had a very unique constitution. But now, her previously mutagen-free body had a black energy building up in it. It was mutagen.

Thankfully, even as the mutagen appeared, the spell formation around her lit up. Rumbling sounds could be heard as a majestic, cleansing power drove away all mutagen within the spell formation. It also drove away the sizzling black energy from within Yanyan. After the mutagen was gone, the pained expression disappeared from her face. Her breathing steadied, and she seemed to truly go to sleep.

Off to the side controlling the formation were Sir Bloodsmelter and Guru Eastnether. Both of them breathed sighs of relief.

After confirming that Yanyan was doing well, Sir Bloodsmelter cleared his throat and looked at Guru Eastnether. "Well, what do you think? All it took was a single message and I had this spell formation sent over from Sea-Sealing County. It really is an extraordinary formation. In the imperial capital, only heavenly marquises can get them. Don't worry, my clever grand-apprentice will be here soon. With his help, we can finish the job. It's no big deal, right? She got hit by the gaze of a godly entity, that's all. It won't be hard to deal with."

Sir Bloodsmelter was clearly trying to sound very nonchalant.

Guru Eastnether glanced at him and seemed about to say something snappy. Instead, she just nodded. "How long until he gets here?"

Seeing that Guru Eastnether was going along with his plan caused Sir Bloodsmelter's heart to race. "Don't worry. I already called for him, which means the hard work is already half over. As you know, my status nowadays is different from before. My apprentice is basically a Summer Immortal! I'm essentially the Master of a Summer Immortal. Get it?"

Sir Bloodsmelter proudly stroked his beard.

Guru Eastnether, who had spent nearly half her life bickering with Sir Bloodsmelter, finally couldn't take it anymore. "You're quite the expert in tooting your own horn."

Sir Bloodsmelter chuckled. "Horn? What horn? There's no horn! Look, I'm still Ol' Seventh's father-in-law. What, you want to be his mother-in-law? You have to admit, you have a rare opportunity on your hands."

Guru Eastnether was apparently struck speechless.

Sir Bloodsmelter looked more pleased than ever. "Even if you don't want to admit that I'm the Master of a Summer Immortal, you can't deny the truth about my two grand-apprentices. One of them is King Skycrusher, the region lord of two regions, the tutor of

the crown prince, and the future tutor of the emperor! The other is the daoist partner of Flame Phoenix!"

Guru Eastnether tartly responded, "Don't you have two other grand-apprentices?"

Sir Bloodsmelter waved his hand dismissively. "I can't really remember."

Guru Eastnether snorted coldly. "Wow. You're really the picture of an amazing Grand-Master."

Sir Bloodsmelter's eyebrows shot up, but before he could say anything else, the two of them turned to look toward the horizon.

There, they saw a mass of dramatic lightning. In the blink of an eye, the lightning was right over Eastnether Isle. However, there was no dramatic crack of thunder as would be expected.

The bizarre scene caused looks of astonishment to appear on the cultivators of Eastnether Isle. Even Sir Bloodsmelter and Guru Eastnether were shocked.

A figure stepped out of the noiseless lightning, and with one step, arrived at the formation altar. As soon as Xu Qing appeared, he clasped hands and bowed with sincere respect to Sir Bloodsmelter and Guru Eastnether.

"Greetings, Grand-Master. Well met, Senior Eastnether."

As soon as Xu Qing got Second Elder Sister's message, he raced to Eastnether Isle, using his godly authority of sound to ensure that the lightning didn't make any noise. In that way, he was able to make it across the Forbidden Sea in an instant.

Sir Bloodsmelter quickly suppressed his shock. Stroking his beard, he laughed heartily and said, "Well done, my grand-apprentice! It's been such a long time! Not bad. Not bad at all. Your temperament reminds me a lot of myself, back in the day."

Xu Qing's respectful behavior really pleased Sir Bloodsmelter. He couldn't help but think about the first time he'd laid eyes on Xu Qing. In the time since then, the young man had become true nobility.

Guru Eastnether was shocked to the core, but she took a deep breath and nodded to Xu Qing.

At that point, Xu Qing looked over at Yanyan on the altar. It wasn't difficult to guess what was going on. "Grand-Master, did you call me here because of Yanyan?"

"Yes," Sir Bloodsmelter said in a much more serious tone now that he was discussing an important matter. "A few months ago, in the middle of the night, some unknown godly

entity fixed its gaze on Yanyan. Because of that, it created a strange connection between the two, and it keeps trying to summon her to it. Just before you arrived, I used this mutagen-expelling formation to purify her. Now that you're here, you can handle the rest."

Of course, Xu Qing knew that Yanyan was Guru Eastnether's only blood relative, so he looked very serious as he replied, "Let me take a look."

He walked over to Yanyan on the altar. Inside, his god talismans glittered, giving him a much different view of her. There was a black energy surrounding her that looked like a host of netherworld souls and evil ghosts. Their howls were constantly assailing Yanyan's mind. There were so many of them that they seemed almost like a dense fog.

Visible to Xu Qing via his god perception was a hand inside the fog. It was the severed hand of a woman. In the palm was an eye, closed as if sleeping.

Xu Qing's eyes turned cold as he reached out with his right index finger to touch Yanyan's forehead.

At that moment, apparently because of being so familiar with Xu Qing's aura, Yanyan opened her eyes and looked at him.

"Big Bro Xu Qing..." she whispered. All of a sudden, her facial expression changed, becoming a mix of joy, infatuation, attachment, and charm.

What was even stranger to Guru Eastnether and Sir Bloodsmelter... was that Yanyan's eyes filled with anticipation, and as Xu Qing's finger neared, she opened her little mouth.

Xu Qing's finger stopped moving.

Upon noticing that Xu Qing wasn't saying anything, Yanyan's face fell slightly, almost like a flower that was about to start wilting and lose its will to live. The black energy surrounding her suddenly seemed much more ferocious.

Xu Qing sighed and put his finger in front of her mouth.

Yanyan instantly lit up. Leaning toward him slightly, she put her lips around his finger and licked it gently. The infatuated look on her face grew stronger.

Guru Eastnether stood there silently. Sir Bloodsmelter blinked a few times, looked at Guru Eastnether, and then similarly stood there silently.

Xu Qing let Yanyan do as she wished while he simultaneously sent his god perception over her. Because of their physical connection, combined with his senses, he could now

see that the black energy connected to Yanyan's fate actually stretched out into the Forbidden Sea. It went very, very deep.

He followed it for a long time to the inky seafloor, which was when he started hearing sounds of weeping and wailing. They came from evil ghosts. Not just one. Many.

His god perception was eventually able to make out a dilapidated palace in the sludge at the bottom of the sea. It looked like one small palace that had once been part of a larger palace complex.

Now it was just a crumbling ruin, fading away in time. There was a host of innumerable ghosts occupying the ruins. They looked vicious and sinister. Yet they didn't notice him. They just let loose ear-piercing screams as they roved about. It almost seemed like they were singing.

Xu Qing's heart skipped a beat. This was all very familiar. Years ago, he had encountered a host of evil ghosts on the Forbidden Sea. That phenomenon was called... 'countless ghosts haunting the night'!

"There is a fantastic symphony in the endless sea; mortals are unable to hear it; it accompanies Crimson Yang the golden crow; countless movements become a song; it is called Natural Sounds Welcome the Moon.

"The god loved it; the god's eyes gazed upon it; the endless sea became forbidden; countless movements became sinister."

Xu Qing still remembered reading about the song in the sea annals in Seven Blood Eyes.[2] freewebnovel.com

Especially noteworthy was that, by means of his god perception, he could see that among the evils ghosts in the ruins was the godly entity that was causing trouble for Yanyan.

It was the severed hand of a woman! It was huge, being some 300 meters from end to end. The eye in the middle of the hand was closed, but the fingers were moving. And those fingers... were moving in time with the howling of the ghosts! It was as if the sound coming out of the ghosts was the music that she was playing!

Don't tell me this is the origin of the countless ghosts haunting the night?

All of a sudden, Xu Qing got the feeling that the golden crow's dragon chariot that he had been looking for to no avail... wasn't so out of reach after all! After mulling the matter over, he kept his god perception locked onto the severed hand, but spoke with his physical mouth back on the altar formation.

“Grand-Master, I’m not very familiar with all the legends surrounding the Forbidden Sea. You know a lot more than me, sir. Is there any chance you’ve heard a story about a hand? Something connected to the countless ghosts haunting the night? Maybe something about a hand that can control the sound emitted by the countless ghosts?”

Sir Bloodsmelter looked surprised and thoughtful, but it was Guru Eastnether who responded.

“I know even more than him about Forbidden Sea legends,” she said. “What you’re describing actually conforms perfectly to one particular story. Supposedly, the phenomenon of countless ghosts haunting the night originates with the golden crow sun.

“As the story goes, before perishing, the golden crow would ride a dragon chariot through the canopy of heaven, turning into a sun that shone down on Revered Ancient. When it was night again, the musicians in the sun’s palace would play a song called Natural Sounds Welcome the Moon, which would call out to the moon to rise.

“When the broken face came, the golden crow perished. The Endless Sea became the Forbidden Sea, and the countless movements in the symphony became sinister. The musicians who played that most beautiful of music... also died. All that survived of those musicians was a hand that fell into the Forbidden Sea. Xu Qing, did you... actually find the hand from that legend?”

1. Yanyan was last mentioned in [chapter 816](#), and last appeared onscreen in [chapter 726](#). 📖

2. Xu Qing recalled the description from the sea annals in [chapter 82](#) and [173](#). 📖

Chapter 974: Natural Sounds Welcome the Moon (1)

Guru Eastnether’s words drifted out over the formation.

To Xu Qing, the raspy sound of her voice seemed to carry with it the passage of ancient time. Her explanation of countless ghosts haunting the night was definitely more detailed than what he’d learned before. Combined with what he could observe with his god perception, Xu Qing was certain... that the delicate but rotting hand was most likely the hand of the musician who had played Natural Sounds Welcome the Moon in the golden crow’s palace. It was also critical to finding the dragon chariot.

But why is Yanyan tangled up with it...?

Xu Qing looked at Yanyan. Her special constitution ensured that her body was free from mutagen. However, Xu Qing couldn’t quite figure out what about her constitution produced that result.

I bet Master could. After he's out of seclusion, I'll ask him. Maybe he already knows why Yanyan's constitution is special.

After some thought, a look of determination settled on his face. Regardless of the reason, dealing with the hand would resolve the karma that had come to exist with it and Yanyan. That was the most important thing to deal with right now.

Therefore, he didn't hesitate about what to do next. All of a sudden, the ruins in that dark section of the sea floor with innumerable evil ghosts... suddenly went silent. It wasn't that the ghosts had ceased their howling. Instead, Xu Qing had taken away all the sound from that area!

It became his power, his killing intent, and his weapon! It turned into a gruish attack that he sent with crushing force toward the delicate hand. The noiseless seafloor went wild, as if it had been struck by a tempest. Terrifying mightiness surged from the seafloor to the surface, causing huge waves to break out.

And yet, there was no noise. There was a new master controlling all the sound in the area. The godly authority of sound was fully unleashed.

But as the strange scene developed, the eye on the hand snapped open. The pupil was crimson and radiated endless ferocity. At the same time, the fingers started moving even more frantically as if to pluck the strings of a musical instrument. Something similar to the godly authority of sound erupted from the hand.

This was different from any of the godly entities Xu Qing had encountered before. Normally speaking, godly entities had godliness and godsource, but no godly authority. In fact, of all the godly entities Xu Qing had killed recently in the Forbidden Sea, he hadn't seen any godly authority at all. But, contrary to expectation, this severed hand did have godly authority!

An instant later, the evil ghosts whose sound Xu Qing had taken all shivered. Then, they recovered from their previous state, and the quiet seafloor suddenly exploded with the sound of piercing, ghostly shrieks. And that turned into a power that slammed into the attack Xu Qing had just unleashed.

Explosive sound swept out across the seafloor, but then, only a moment later, everything went silent again. The sound went back and forth in that manner. Everything got loud, then everything went completely silent, as the hand and Xu Qing struggled back and forth.

It was the same with the evil ghosts. Their screaming came and went in jerks and fits.

This was a battle over godly authority!

Godly battles like this were rare, and when they did occur among gods, they usually ended only with the death of one party. When two gods encountered each other who had the same type of godly authority, then the result would be a struggle over that authority.

And in this case, that struggle was over the sound of the evil ghosts. As the fighting went back and forth, many of the evil ghosts couldn't sustain the force, and exploded.

Overall, the power of the sound seized by Xu Qing was increasing. His godly authority had been acquired in an orthodox way, partly by enlightenment and partly because of the vestige in his fleshly body's void soil. In terms of personhood, it was at the peak. As a result, he had the advantage in this struggle.

However, though Xu Qing had the upper hand, the delicate hand's eye, seeing that it was in a deadly situation, grew more vicious. Then veins snaked out from the blood-red pupil, filling the area around it until a blood-red tear formed.

When the tear appeared, the surrounding evil ghosts shivered, turned, and focused on Xu Qing. Then, without any pause, and without any concern that some of them instantly self-detonated as a result, they howled madly. But, just like that, the sound was taken away. freewebnovel.com

Yet again, noiselessness turned into noise, and a soundwave erupted from the blood-red tear. It turned into a blood-colored meteor that shot from the seafloor through the water, out of the surface, and toward Xu Qing in Eastnether Isle. The entire island started shaking as a result.

After having done that, the vicious eye seemed to weaken. Spinning, it swept up the thousands and thousands of surrounding ghosts and prepared to flee into the depths of the sea.

The cultivators on Eastnether Isle saw the blood-colored meteor rocketing toward them, and were rocked down to the level of their souls. Sir Bloodsmelter and Guru Eastnether had it a bit better off, but they were still shaken internally.

Xu Qing looked up at the meteor. This counter attack was by no means unexpected. Given what he knew about this severed hand, he had been prepared all along to deal with the authority of sound. After all, this hand once belonged to a musician of the sun. He had no idea why the hand of this musician survived the arrival of the broken face, nor who was controlling its will. Was it the will of the original musician, or was it some other discarnate will that had taken over?

Regardless, he had been waiting for the counterattack. He stepped up into the air, and an instant later was in front of the blood-colored meteor. There, he extended his right hand toward the night sky. There was no sun in that sky.

But that didn't mean there was no sun in existence. It just meant that the sun that covered this area wasn't around. In Revered Ancient, there was always a sun shining somewhere.

The Profound Sun Immortal Light Magic was capable of taking the light of more than just the sun above the head of the person using the technique. An instant later, drifting bits of dawn light floated through the night to gather around Xu Qing. The night turned bright.

Xu Qing was like an early morning sun, hovering between heaven and earth, casting light out into the cosmos. Extending his hand, he pushed toward the blood-colored meteor.

Blinding light ripped apart the night and the meteor. They were erased. Xu Qing devoured the darkness. He devoured the blood-colored light. Then, scintillating light surrounded him as he shot down into the Forbidden Sea.

The cultivators on Eastnether Isle who saw this happen were shaken to the core of their being. To them, it looked as if an actual sun had dropped into the sea. It was like a legend playing out in real life!

"The golden crow perished," Guru Eastnether said quietly, "and the countless movements became sinister. You and I both know that the legend is probably true. Given what we just saw... I'd say it's absolutely certain it did. And this Xu Qing... I just have to wonder how strong he'll get eventually."

Sir Bloodsmelter cleared his throat. "I'm not sure how strong he'll get. But what won't change throughout all the eons is that... he's my grand-apprentice!"

Guru Eastnether looked quietly at Yanyan, whose infatuated eyes were fixed on the spot where Xu Qing had just disappeared. Then she said, "You haven't visited with your grand-apprentice very often. Next time you're here, why not invite him back...?"

The sky over Eastnether Isle was once again dark, with only a bit of flickering moonlight illuminating the scene below. There was also a bit of shimmering light coming from the water below, although it soon faded away.

Xu Qing was in the form of a sun as he sped along the seafloor, casting light in all directions. He was pursuing the severed hand! Along the way, he converted all sound into speed. There was a moon just barely visible in the sky, and perhaps because of his influence, it was violet, causing violet moonlight to shine down into the water.

Numerous vicious sea beasts who were too slow to get out of the way exploded. Their blood also boosted his speed. Sadly, it was a day of misfortune for those beasts.

It was also a day of misfortune for the hand and the ghosts that Xu Qing pursued. However, what was misfortune for them was good fortune for Xu Qing. He continued to accelerate.

Enough time passed for an incense stick to burn. Then, in a location on the seafloor covered by black, encompassing seaweed, the fleeing hand experienced doomsday. Dazzling brightness filled the area. Rumbling sounds could be heard as immortal light spread everywhere, filled with good fortune and the effects of the blood.

Then Xu Qing stepped onto the scene, right into the path of the hand and the ghosts. The Undying Emperor's Fist gave rise to a tempest on the seafloor, bolstered by the same gruish attack as before. At the same time, the violet moonlight that reached the seafloor became like a sealing power.

However, the severed hand was extraordinary. In that moment of incredible danger, its eye turned ruthless and cold, and the fingers began to pluck invisible musical strings. Around it, the countless ghosts went mad and began devouring each other. In an instant, the thousands of evil ghosts ravenously reduced their own number down to... exactly one hundred![1]

The appearance of the one hundred ghosts also changed. They became more vicious as they arrayed themselves in an orderly fashion and began to howl in a way that was unlike what Xu Qing had heard before. It was the same sound from "countless ghosts haunting the night," but it was more complete!

The moment the sound spread out, the ocean turned cold and sinister. Xu Qing's violet moon godly authority shivered and began to move in that direction, as if the song had an indescribable power over the moon.

Then, gradually, an image appeared within the ghostly sound. A rotting moon began to rise up from the seafloor, upon which was visible a face....

1. When the "countless ghosts haunt the night" appeared about 900 chapters ago, this chapter was not written. And thus we have another wordplay that I was unaware of. Literally, the Chinese is "one hundred ghosts haunt the night." However, because the descriptions earlier in the story specifically said there were "countless" ghosts, I interpreted the "one hundred" character in that way. That character can indeed be interpreted to mean a large, unknown number. Even in the last chapter and this one, it uses the specific term for "innumerable, uncountable" to describe how many ghosts there are. It also uses the more specific term "thousands." Now we have this part, in which there is a play on words with "one hundred." If I had known about this back in the beginning of the story, I'm not sure what I would have done. That said, I'm going to keep it as is. Just know that there is some wordplay here between the "hundred" and "countless." 📧

Chapter 975: Play the Music

Dawn would soon come to the Forbidden Sea, but right now it was still night. Darkness covered everything, like a hidden god sending godly power out. The water was black, as was the sky. In the end, it was hard to tell if that god was overhead or under the surface of the water. Was the color of the sea invading the sky, or was the sky crushing down into the sea?

In the end, it didn't matter to the various species that inhabited the Forbidden Sea. Day and night were the same to them.

On the surface of the black water, boats could be seen bobbing up and down. In the sky, birds soared through the darkness hunting for food.

And on the seafloor... the severed hand was moving at top speed. Occasionally, it was clearly visible, and occasionally it would become a blur. Whenever that transition occurred, it was when the hand was teleporting a great distance. Any sea beasts it encountered would wither in an instant as their godliness and life force was absorbed like nutrients by the hand, lending it additional speed.

Additionally, everywhere it went, everything went silent. All sound was suppressed by its godly authority. It knew that though sound was its own weapon, it was also the weapon of its pursuer.

Unfortunately... no matter how much it accelerated, that gruish pursuer who could take away sound was always there. No efforts to shake him amounted to anything. And the distance between the two of them was decreasing. That was because Xu Qing wasn't just using the godly authority of sound to boost his speed.

Misfortune could aid him as well, plus the violet moon. In fact... the mutagen in the Forbidden Sea itself was an aid to Xu Qing, at least to a certain extent. His fleshly body was terrifyingly shocking.

Therefore... after another incense stick's worth of time passed, the sea water around the severed hand suddenly filled with vines made of water. The vines swept out noiselessly to block the hand's path forward, and its path of retreat. The hand turned to flee in a different direction, but the water vines shifted to block that route as well. In the blink of an eye, every path was obstructed. Endless vines made of water appeared, encircling the severed hand and fusing with each other.

The hand tried to break free, but there was no end to the vines, and eventually it had to stop moving. As a result, it was quickly surrounded by so many vines of water that it became like a cocoon on the seafloor.

A sealing.

That only lasted for a few breaths of time before the hand finally managed to break free. The vine cocoon collapsed, and a rumbling sound echoed out for the first time during the chase. The boom only lasted for a moment before the hand took the sound away. Unfortunately, it was too late.

Almost as soon as the rumbling occurred, Xu Qing stepped out of the sound in bizarre fashion to stand right in front of the severed hand.

The sageheaven god vine emerged from the vines of water, sending out emotional fluctuations to indicate that it had succeeded. Then it became another host of water vines that sealed the hand. Little Shadow wasn't willing to fall behind, so it spread out to cover the seafloor in all directions. The poison of Xu Qing's god curse then emerged, making the seawater even blacker than before.

Having accomplished these things, Xu Qing looked at the hand with gleaming eyes. This hand was critical to his goal of calling to the dragon chariot.

Stepping forward, he stomped his foot onto the hand. As he did, the hand's eye flashed with red light, and ghostly figures flew out into the open. Once again, the howl of evil ghosts echoed out. At any moment, deadly music would erupt.

"I'm the only one allowed to make any sound here," Xu Qing said calmly. The moment he spoke the words, the howling of the ghosts stopped. The sound had been taken away and crushed.

The severed hand shivered. Then its eye became even redder than before, and a teardrop of blood emerged from it. Terrifying might pulsed off it as it shot toward Xu Qing like an arrow. The teardrop caused the water to boil around it as it bore down on him with venom, madness, and boundless hatred.

Xu Qing shimmered with light and prepared to unleash immortal light. But then his eyes glittered. Dispelling the light, he advanced, allowing the red teardrop to slam into him. It made no sound.

Xu Qing shivered as a stabbing sensation filled him. But nothing else happened. Nothing short of an Imperial Sovereign could do anything to shake his fleshly body, or make him feel like his soul and body were being separated.

He lifted his foot and again stomped down onto the severed hand. He let the red light surge, and allowed the evil ghosts to appear around him. He even let the hand perform an incantation gesture with its fingers.

Clenching his right hand into a fist, he launched a fist strike. The fist seemed Undying, but the reality was that Xu Qing had altered it. By adding Within the Nine Springs, which Master Seventh had taught him, it made the blow even more of a combination of illusory and corporeal. As before, there was no sound.[1]

The hand tumbled backward. The reality was that its battle prowess wasn't on the same level as its sound-manipulation powers. Using *Natural Sounds Welcome the Moon* to summon the rotting moon was the most formidable thing it could do.

Maybe if Xu Qing didn't have the godly authority of sound, then facing this grisly severed hand would have been very challenging, and would have required much more brute force. But right now... the hand was like a toothless snake. It was being forced to use methods it wasn't skilled at to engage in combat.

It was easy to predict who would win and who would lose. After enough time passed for an incense stick to burn, Xu Qing's powerful fleshy body and sound-seizing abilities overwhelmed anything the severed hand could produce. He just kept advancing and launching blows.

The severed hand was being knocked back over and over again. Its evil ghosts were constantly being dispersed, its tears were being shattered, and everything it did failed. As it fell back, it got dimmer and dimmer, and the eye on the palm continuously seemed like it would collapse. Its aura was getting weak.

Eventually, Xu Qing's hand stopped only a few inches from the eye itself. He didn't complete the blow. He didn't want to wipe the severed hand out of existence. He wanted to control it. After damaging it severely enough, he sent his god perception out, surrounded it, and then suppressed it fully, from godsource to god perception to godly authority to personhood.

The hand shivered. Clearly, it had been fully suppressed. However, the blood-red eye in the palm was glaring at him madly. All of a sudden, fluctuations of self-detonation began to rise up in it.

That was not the result Xu Qing wanted.

The moment the hand revealed that it planned to self-detonate, Xu Qing sent out the sound of the golden crow. It was a crisp, clear sound that echoed in all directions. A black sea of flames sprang up with Xu Qing at the center.

Within that sea of fire was the golden crow, which circled about over Xu Qing's head. It had a black body surrounded by black fire, as well as countless feathers that were like fiery snowflakes. The black color it emanated was starkly beautiful. The severed hand trembled.

The golden crow circled one more time, then flew to Xu Qing and fused into him, becoming an imperial robe and crown. As of this moment, Xu Qing stood there looking very much like the young man who was the golden crow. He even had the same aura!

The severed hand's eye saw all of this and shook even harder. It was even possible to hear a piercing chant coming from it. This time, Xu Qing permitted the sound to come out.

Xu Qing didn't care exactly what it was trying to say. He just looked at the hand and calmly said, "Play the music."

He backed up the command with a blast of god perception. This time, the addition of the golden crow resulted in the hand's struggles growing weaker.

Next, Xu Qing completely enveloped the hand with god perception. The eye in the palm closed. Blood oozed out of the severed part of the hand, swirling around until it formed a shadowy figure.

It was a woman. She wore a white robe and had her head bowed so that her facial features weren't possible to make out. In her arms she held a zither with its strings severed. The only part that was crystal clear was the right hand, the fingers of which were moving rapidly over the formless zither.

Music drifted out. *Natural Sounds Welcome the Moon*. It was the real version of the song. Back when Xu Qing changed the howling into the real *Natural Sounds Welcome the Moon*, it was like this. But this version was different substructurally.

On the surface, dawn was coming, and the darkness of night was disappearing. Normally speaking, sunlight should have been spreading. But strangely, it was late.

Deep down on the seafloor, as the musician played her music, waves kicked up on the surface of the Forbidden Sea. It was almost as if something was about to emerge from the water. Search the NovelFull.net* website on Google to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Eventually, an illusory rotting moon appeared. Shē rose from the seafloor, broke the surface of the water, and in the moment that the sun should have risen, replaced the sun to shine down on all living things. It looked as if the face of the young woman would soon open her eyes.

Unfortunately, the moon that would normally have ascended into Revered Ancient's canopy of heaven upon the playing of *Natural Sounds Welcome the Moon* had long since perished. That moon only existed in times past, and the version here was just a projection. Shē could not truly rise into the sky. This moon would eventually disappear as surely as a popped bubble. The eyes that opened would eventually close.

Before it disappeared, though, a soft voice echoed out, speaking to the sun that was about to rise.

"Brother..."[2]

The voice echoed out of time and into the Forbidden Sea, and was carried by the sea breeze to the outer sea....

In the inky waters of the outer sea, where the seafloor was much more terrifying than the inner sea, there was a giant slowly walking forward. Its footsteps thumped loudly through the water. It had a corroded chain draped over its shoulder, on the other end of which... was a rundown bronze chariot.

The chariot suddenly trembled and stopped moving, and no matter how the giant pulled it, it wouldn't budge. Inside the chariot was carved the golden crow's magic, which currently glittered with shining light. The magical symbols rippled and flowed, eventually turning into a golden crow. The crow's eyes opened and shifted to look toward the inner sea. Eventually... the crow faded away.

As for the giant, it shifted directions. Instead of continuing into the depths of the outer sea to find a sleeping spot, it started dragging the bronze dragon chariot... toward the inner sea. As it moved, huge waves rolled out over the surface of the sea, carrying with them the sound of breathing.

The breathing echoed into the inner sea.

Xu Qing sat cross-legged on the seafloor, meditating. In front of him was the severed hand embodied as the musician, still playing *Natural Sounds Welcome the Moon*. The music was elegant and soul-stirring.

As Xu Qing listened, he could sense that his godly authority of sound was more dazzling than ever. At the same time, he felt a sensation of regret within the music as the rotting moon faded away.

Time passed. In the blink of an eye, more than half a month went by.

During those twenty days, Xu Qing remained in place on the seafloor. *Natural Sounds Welcome the Moon* didn't play continuously. Instead, the music drifted out every day when the sun set. It happened over and over again.

Eventually, Xu Qing could sense that the water was changing. It was colder than before, and the currents were stronger. It seemed like some colossal entity was approaching. When that happened, he knew that he had succeeded. The bronze dragon chariot was approaching from some unknown direction.

Xu Qing kept waiting patiently.

In contrast, Little Shadow was getting very anxious. When the god vine showed up, it sensed danger. When the broken hand showed up, that sensation grew more intense. Therefore, it took the initiative to emit some crunching sounds during the daytime whenever *Natural Sounds Welcome the Moon* wasn't playing.

Seven more days passed.

As the temperature dropped and the waves grew bigger, organizations that operated in the area could sense that something was happening. For safety's sake, most of them refrained from going out onto the open sea.

And yet... there are some types of danger that will come whether or not you try to avoid them....

There was a species called the Seaspirls who lived on a specific island in the Forbidden Sea. They had a population of only a few thousand, which meant that they had no other option than to be a subsidiary species to one of the larger species on one of the larger islands. At the moment, the fire of catastrophe was burning on their island.

The fire was red. Blood stained the ancestral land of their species. Corpses of their species were piled everywhere. They included men and women, old and young. There were even newborn infants among them. All were dead.

The son of Floating Fiend from the Vivifiend holy land sat on a stone hut, enjoying the scent of blood in the air.

"Smells lovely," he said.

His nine dao protectors were currently extracting the hearts from all the corpses. Seaspirl hearts came in the form of a type of crystal. The Vivifiends had marked that crystal as an excellent material, and a few thousand would be worth quite a hefty sum. Before long, the crystals had all been collected. Fire raged, and the entire area crumbled into ash. No evidence was left behind.

Floating Fiend's son stood, took out a map to check where the next set of materials could be obtained. That was when his palm suddenly flickered. He looked at it, and his eyes flashed aggressively, all while a smile broke out on his face.

"That fast? I already found the killer? Well, let's go take a look. I'm curious what he looks like."

Floating Fiend's son smiled, stood, and headed over the horizon. His nine dao protectors followed wordlessly.

The wind grew stronger.

1. Xu Qing got Within the Nine Springs in chapter 217. It was previously mentioned in chapter 809, but before then, it hadn't been used since chapter 417. 📖

2. The word spoken here is an imperial form of address, indicating that both the speaker and the person being spoken to, the brother, are members of the imperial family. He could be a prince or an actual emperor, that much is not clear just from the form of address. In the 'imperial capital' arc, the imperial family members would often address each other in this manner. 📖

Chapter 976: I Changed My Mind

The wind blew from the outer sea. The current came from the same direction, causing waves to roll to the inner sea.

A giant strode expressionlessly across the seafloor. Every step caused massive ripples to spread out in all directions. Even huge undersea mountains posed no obstacle. Wherever it went, everything was crushed. Behind it, the bronze dragon chariot was similarly unstoppable.

The giant was getting closer and closer to Xu Qing. It emanated terrifying pressure and a shocking aura, except it wasn't detectable by just anyone. Only someone connected to it by karma would be able to.

Little Shadow trembled, but the god vine didn't look any different compared to usual. search the novel(F~)ire.net website on Google to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Xu Qing opened his eyes and turned to look off into the distance. He had sensed the aura of the dragon chariot. He already had some ideas of how to get onto the chariot and have it fly along the same route that the golden crow had once taken through the sky. He had analyzed each possibility thoroughly, and was ready to adjust his actions in an instant to improve his chances of success.

At this point, he felt that his chances of success were at about seventy percent or higher. However... this was the golden crow's dragon chariot, plus, the giant pulling it was extremely terrifying, as he had personally experienced. Granted, his fleshly body was very powerful now, but he still wasn't going to take the giant lightly.

For the better part of the month that had passed, he had been making preparations on the seafloor. Now all he needed to do was wait for the giant to appear.

That said, to ensure everything goes smoothly, I should get rid of any prying eyes before the chariot arrives.

Looking away from the direction of the chariot, he lifted his right hand and pointed out with his finger. The water about 3,000 meters away suddenly exploded with sound.

At the same time, a powerful backlash attack built up in the same area. A tempest erupted, causing huge waves to break out on the surface. A domineering aura rose up, filled with disdain as it rushed toward Xu Qing. Water raged everywhere, along with a deafening roar as a furious sea dragon appeared. In the blink of an eye, it was about to slam into Xu Qing.

Xu Qing's expression was the same as ever, and in fact, he didn't even look at the sea dragon. He just flicked his finger.

"Screw off!" he said. A majestic might filled the area for 3,000 meters around him. It became a mountain-toppling, sea-draining force, accompanied by countless evil ghosts, all of them releasing ear-piercing howls.

An explosion of sound swept out in all directions. The sea dragon was hit first, and it exploded, revealing four individuals within. A few hundred meters behind Xu Qing, the water seethed as an additional three figures were forced out into the open. To his left, about 1,500 meters away, the water shattered, and two attackers were revealed.

A total of nine figures were now out in the open, all of them glaring at Xu Qing as they pulsed with Smoldering God cultivation base power. Their eyes were cold, but after their gazes locked onto him, odd expressions overtook their faces. Then they exchanged glances as they apparently realized who Xu Qing was.

That was when the sound of clapping could be heard from off in the distance.

"Excellent! So you really were able to kill our scouts? Your setup here is very interesting, as is that severed hand. Could it be that you're on a fishing expedition? You know, you look somewhat familiar. I feel like I've seen you in the jade slips back home."

Another person appeared some 3,000 meters away. He was none other than the son of Floating Fiend. Instead of personally approaching, he had sent his dao protectors to get close. Now, he was looking at Xu Qing with a curious look in his eyes.

Xu Qing took it all in without the tiniest change to his facial expression. He actually wasn't surprised at all. He just looked coldly at the young man off in the distance. He knew immediately that these were cultivators from the Vivifiend holy land.

He didn't have a good impression of their holy land, but given that there was tenuous peace with them, he simply said, "You have three breaths of time to leave this place!"

"Three breaths of time?" Floating Fiend's son looked at him with glittering eyes. He really did recognize Xu Qing. If he was dealing with any other human, he wouldn't have

hesitated. He would have killed them immediately. But because of who Xu Qing was... he did hesitate.

It was the same with the nine dao protectors. They all had read reports with descriptions of Xu Qing, and thus, they didn't make any moves. If they did make a move, it would be a big deal, and it would be a violation of the orders governing their species.

The young man studied Xu Qing for a moment, then turned to leave. He was a silkpants, but he also knew that there were some things that even he would be punished for doing. However, just before leaving, he seemed to notice something. His gaze shifted from Xu Qing's face to his fleshly body. Then his nose twitched and his eyes widened. He even started breathing a bit more heavily.

"Smells lovely.... That body of yours...." The young man looked visibly moved.

It wasn't just him. The cultivators Xu Qing had forced out into the open were also looking at him with surprised facial expressions. Some of them even licked their lips greedily.

"That's the aroma of immortal mercury!"

"And it's mixed with... the flesh of a god!!"

"What level of god though...?"

"Hold on, there are also cultivator lineaments in addition to the godly aura!"

The young man's heart was racing. As a Vivifiend, he had been stealing the organs and fleshly bodies from other species to graft onto himself since he was very young. That practice affected the Vivifiend life force, substructure, and cultivation base. That was the foundation of their entire species.

And Xu Qing's body was something he had never seen the likes of before. In fact, their entire species had never seen anything like it, whether in the holy lands or Revered Ancient, not even in historical records. It surpassed anything imaginable.

At the same time, the young man felt an instinct from his innate ability, filling him with intense longing. That longing was like an unstoppable hunger that overtook his mind and told him that he absolutely had to have that body!

The nine dao protectors were experiencing a similar reaction. They literally couldn't stop from breathing heavily and staring fixedly at Xu Qing as if they wanted to eat him alive.

But then Floating Fiend's son narrowed his eyes and managed to suppress his greed. He smiled.

“I didn’t realize it was *you* here, Region Lord Xu. Sorry to bother you. We’ll leave now.”

Licking his lips, he shot a glance at his dao protectors, then backed away. Their real plan was to search the surroundings to confirm that Xu Qing was actually alone, then send a message back to their holy land to ask for further instructions.

Unfortunately for them, Xu Qing was no fool, and could tell what was on their mind.

Today was going to involve some killing.

Eyes turning cold, he said, “I changed my mind.”

And then sound exploded!

Chapter 977: 500 Kilometers of Hell

Xu Qing’s voice swept out across the seafloor. The noise of the sea current echoed in all directions. There was also the sound of fish swimming nearby, and the cry of the sea beasts in the depths.... The heartbeats of Floating Fiend’s son and his nine dao protectors, as well as the sound of the blood pumping through their veins, all mixed together.

Combined with *Natural Sounds Welcome the Moon* being played by the severed hand, it created an astonishing tune that surged everywhere.

Where it went, it killed in grisly fashion. Terrifying power caused the water to seethe violently. Mountain-toppling, sea-draining force crushed down on everything.

Floating Fiend’s son and his dao protectors were astonished, and immediately tapped into their divine abilities. In an instant, their flesh expanded, and they grew larger. That was their innate ability, in which they could take the flesh and blood of all the other species they had stolen in their lives and unleash it at the same time. It was like something that a freakish monster would do, and indeed, they looked like freakish monsters. That was how they attempted to fight back against the tempest created by Xu Qing’s godly authority of sound.

Intense rumbling could be heard as the power of sound crushed everything in its path. The Vivifiends were sent tumbling as a huge vortex formed. It was a 500-kilometer vortex that sealed and cut off the outside. From a distance, it was like a gigantic orb of sound.

The sound outside of that area was being sucked in, causing the tempest inside to grow more intense. search the NouvelFirė.net website on Google to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

When Xu Qing chose to kill, it happened, no matter what.

As the astonished Vivifiend cultivators fought back, Xu Qing stood, his face completely expressionless. His eyes were cold, though. Within that 500-kilometer area, the Vivifiend cultivators were being assailed by the sound tempest, and they were completely visible to Xu Qing via his god perception. This was *his* battleground. He had prepared this to use on the giant, but the giant had not yet arrived, so the Vivifiends got to experience it first.

Xu Qing hadn't planned to do any killing. But the Vivifiends clearly had malicious intentions, and therefore, according to the principles Xu Qing lived by, they had to die. As the sound authority raged, Xu Qing walked forward. He stepped into the sound, disappeared, and then reappeared... within the sound, right in front of one of the dao protectors.

This individual didn't look like a human at all. He was several dozen meters tall, with four arms. He was extremely skinny with a very small head. What was really bizarre was that the skin on his chest was wriggling. He looked very monstrous. As he performed an incantation gesture, he pulsed with intense energy and blood, which caused his chest to wriggle even more violently. Unexpectedly, as he backed up, he sucked in the sound around him.

This Vivifiend was extraordinary. Although, to be more precise, it was his heart that was extraordinary, as it could devour sound.

The moment Xu Qing appeared in front of him, he realized it. Looking up, he lunged at Xu Qing with all four of his arms.

The only thing waiting for him was a cold snort. The sound of it exploded in all directions, becoming the power of sound authority. It surrounded the cultivator, making a smaller sound orb within the huge 500-kilometer sound orb. Within it, wild fluctuations erupted as sounds clashed with each other, creating a resonance that caused the Vivifiend's face to fall.

When the critical moment arrived, he didn't say a word. Three major worlds appeared around him. At the same time, his chest split open to reveal a pure white heart! The heart was covered with ancient symbols, and as soon as it was in the open, it turned into a vortex that violently sucked in all of the nearby sound. At the same time, a devilish will swept out.

It was an extraordinary heart called the Nine Wills Devil Heart, which came from a very mysterious species that lived out in the starry sky. Members of the species were born as Nascent Soul cultivators, and when they grew up, they reached the peak of Smoldering God. Years ago, this Vivifiend cultivator expended immense effort to get this heart. As a result, he was able to quickly rise to prominence in the Vivifiend holy land. He had started out as a commoner, but now here he was, dao protector to Floating Fiend's son.

Knowing it was a life-or-death moment, he wasn't holding anything back, and was tapping into the power of the heart to try to turn things around.

However... despite the heart being extraordinary, he was facing Xu Qing, who was even more extraordinary.

That was especially true considering that this battlefield had been specially prepared by Xu Qing to deal with the giant and the dragon chariot. He had hidden a lot of sound in the area, and now he was using it to terrifying and deadly effect. And more sound was being added into the mix every moment.

The extraordinary heart only lasted an instant before it couldn't sustain so much sound. After trembling in resonance with the sound orb, it shattered. A scream rang out, the sound of which became a sound that slashed through the Vivifiend cultivator. Blood sprayed as he was killed in body and soul.

Xu Qing, in the form of the golden crow, flew out of the crumbling sound orb. The golden crow shimmered and turned into a black spear, which then shot toward the next Vivifiend cultivator. It was a movement that couldn't truly be described in terms of 'speed.' Wherever sound was, he could appear. Something like that was perfectly suited to slaughter. The spear pierced through the air to appear in front of the second Vivifiend and stab viciously toward him.

Strength of cultivation base was only a foundational requirement to be a dao protector of the son of Floating Fiend. More importantly was potential. These so-called dao protectors were expected to do more than just keep Floating Fiend's son safe. Their mission was to grow along with him. According to the ranking system in their species, after Floating Fiend became an Imperial Sovereign, his son would become a junior chief. The dao protectors were supposed to accompany him on his path to becoming the actual chief. In other words, he was to eventually be the leader of the whole species.

That was why, though the first dao protector only had three worlds, to Xu Qing, he felt more like someone at the peak of four worlds.

In many respects, their status and position was vastly higher than the two scouts from their species that Xu Qing had killed earlier. The scouts sent to Revered Ancient by the holy lands could vary greatly in strength depending on the holy land they came from.

This dao protector was clearly no simpleton. As the spear approached, his eyes shone brightly. Ignoring the injuries being inflicted to him by the deadly sound around him, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture.

In the blink of an eye, he vanished. He had merged with the surrounding water!

The fleshly body he was using came from a species in the starry sky that lived mostly in the water. He hadn't merged with the water before because he wanted to keep that

ability as a trump card to use in a critical moment. Seeing that Xu Qing was trying to kill him, he didn't hesitate to use that ability. The sea around him suddenly surged with a tideflow power that knocked the spear down. Then, what remained of the power formed restraints that bound it in place.

Next, he cast his senses out to notify the other dao protectors via divine will.

“Lord of a region? So what!”

At the same time, the other Vivifiend cultivators were taking actions to fight back against the sound and hopefully free themselves. Though their attempts were extraordinary, they were all injured in various ways.

However... the son of Floating Fiend was the child of a quasi-Imperial Sovereign, and thus, his methods were different from all the others. At a critical moment, he unleashed... the Grand Emperor treasure in his right palm that could stitch karma. It turned into a blood-red streak that zipped around him.

It could stitch karma, amend fate, and determine the movement of the sound authority. It could cause magical laws to appear and bring natural laws. At the same time... combined with the signal being sent out by the dao protector who had merged with the sea, it could point right toward Xu Qing!

If sound were likened to ice, then this needle was like lava. Where it went, the sound authority had to retreat.

“Follow the needle to Xu Qing and kill him!”

As his orders echoed out, the needle glowed red and shot toward Xu Qing's location. The Vivifiends who had previously scattered all sensed it, and followed the path of the needle to also get close to Xu Qing.

However, even as they were following that track, the dao protector who had merged with the water was stunned to find that although his tideflow power had locked down the black spear, that spear... disappeared. Then Xu Qing appeared as if nothing had ever happened.

The tideflow seemed like nothing more than a gentle breeze that stirred his hair a bit. It didn't do anything to his fleshly body. He was unable to do anything to stop Xu Qing from walking right up to where he was merged with the water. And before he could retreat, Xu Qing's sound authority erupted.

A boom echoed out as the water in that spot was wiped out of existence. He had fused and would never unfuse. He was dead, interred in the water, and to some extent, that was like a return.

A boom echoed out as Xu Qing moved on.

At that same moment, misfortune... spread into the 500-kilometer area, combining with the sound authority to produce grisly results.

When the other dao protectors sensed what had happened, they were shocked.

The slaughter continued. The death of the second dao protector bolstered the sound authority. A few dozen kilometers away was the third dao protector. Even as he heard what happened, a host of innumerable soul threads appeared to him. They formed into a major world that rumbled right toward him.

Though astonished, he didn't hesitate to act. A host of bumps appeared all over him, and then started exploding, releasing numerous black beetles. Astonishingly, his body was made of them! All of them scattered and headed in different directions.

Seeing that, Xu Qing's eyes gleamed quizzically. He was really learning a lot about Vivifiend cultivators thanks to this encounter. They were really a strange species.

Xu Qing's major world trembled, then collapsed, turning into 50,000,000 soul threads that spread rapidly. Sound authority was the guide. Misfortune was the lock. And the soul threads gave chase to deliver the mortal blow. The result was foreordained, and thus, Xu Qing turned to look in a different direction.

For the most part, the surviving dao protectors had met up with their lord. There was only one who was alone, and Xu Qing was looking in his direction. It seemed like he was on his own intentionally.

Eyes narrowing, Xu Qing took a step forward and vanished. When he reappeared, he could see the lone dao protector.

The dao protector apparently noticed, and turned to face him. As he did so... he transformed. In an instant, he came to look exactly like Xu Qing. It wasn't just his physical appearance. His aura, his karma, his fate, and everything else about him changed.

"I've been waiting for you for a long time now," the dao protector said coldly. "Your fate and your karma are now connected to me. Going forward, whatever injuries I sustain, you sustain. If I die, you die."

Xu Qing didn't say a word in response. He just shook his head. He stepped forward and launched a fist strike that combined the Undying Emperor's Fist and Within the Nine Springs. A boom rang out.

The dao protector didn't try to avoid the blow. He let it hit him, and then stumbled backward with blood spraying out of his mouth. His expression was cold as he looked at Xu Qing. This move of his had never failed in all the many years he used it.

And yet, Xu Qing launched a second blow. The water raged.

More blood sprayed dramatically out of the dao protector's mouth, and he tumbled backward completely out of control. And Xu Qing was striding toward him like a war god, seemingly unfazed in any way. Finally, his face fell. He now realized that this terrifying enemy's blows were indeed hitting both of them. And yet... although his organs were in great pain, his opponent hardly seemed affected at all.

"You—" Nothing like this had ever happened. The previously supremely confident dao protector now backed up in shock. Sadly for him, it was too late.

Xu Qing appeared in front of him and launched another punch. Then another and another. In a very short period of time, he launched nine fist strikes.

Being struck by the nine blows caused the dao protector's body to simply explode. With a boom, he was destroyed in body and soul. An instant later, his body formed anew, a result of the years of unleashing karmic links.

But... then the golden crow ate him. Very neat and tidy.

Xu Qing stood there.

"You can't handle my karma," he said coolly. Meanwhile, shrill screams echoed out in the sound orb. The screams came from the countless beetles from the third dao protector. They had been unable to evade the innumerable soul threads. The soul threads devoured them. Very neat and tidy.

"Only a few more," Xu Qing murmured, his eyes cold as he took a step forward.

The violet moon rose within the 500-kilometer sound orb. Violet moonlight carried killing intent as it shone down. Everything started to get colder. Taboo poison spread, forming something like a huge eye. The eye opened. It was Hellfei's eye, and it was looking out at the hell that was the 500-kilometer area on the seafloor.

Chapter 978: Like a God Descending into Mortal Dust

Xu Qing had led a life in which he was no stranger to slaughter. In fact, it had been an instinct from childhood on. He lived in a world in which the weak were the prey of the strong, and he had encountered many, many instances of evil and brutality. If he wanted to keep on living....

Then he had to resort to slaughter. Wipe out the evildoer, and the result was safety for oneself.

The slums. The scavenger basecamp. Seven Blood Eyes. Emperor-Receiving Prefecture. Sea-Sealing County. Moonrite Region. The imperial capital of humankind. Firemoon territory.... That was the path he had walked. He wasn't even sure of how many people he had killed. And he had long since stopped using that bamboo slip.

Perhaps it was only the cold wind formed by the bodies of the dead that remembered how many had fallen to him. And that wind was now blowing across the sea where Xu Qing was.

The wind was a dark current moving along the seafloor. It contained no sound, only death. For example, as the violet moon rose, its moonlight became a host of sharp blades that, by the time anyone noticed them, would have their weaknesses exposed to them. And then that person would die.

The six surviving dao protectors clustered around the son of Floating Fiend were yet again shaken to the core. Moonlight shimmered around them, shattering the sea water, slicing the void, and bringing raging coldness.

At the same time, taboo poison swelled, filling the water with mutagen and turning into an ambassador of death that could wipe out all life. All living beings were cursed as 500 kilometers of seafloor turned into hell itself.

And thus....

The moon sought. The poison invaded.

All of the dao protectors could sense the moonlight rumbling within them, like sharp blades. It was a tempest to assail the soul, something that could strip away their memories and raze their life away.

One of the dao protectors, a tall, burly man, suddenly screamed in agony as secrets he would never tell to anyone were illuminated by the moonlight and became his greatest weakness. His world became violet. And then the poison answered the call of the moon and exploded within him. In the blink of an eye, the screaming burly man's body melted into a bloody sludge.

The other Vivifiend cultivators' faces fell as intense sensations of deadly crisis filled them. What was especially noteworthy was that the entire region had been sealed, cutting them off from the outside and making any calls for help useless. Add in the fact that four of them were already dead, and it was no surprise the survivors were in a daze.

When they first spotted Xu Qing earlier, they had believed that they could definitely kill him. But now... things had changed. However, they were all chosen cultivators, so despite the danger, their shock was only temporary, and was not very severe.

That was especially true of Floating Fiend's son. He was a silkpants, but he always behaved in a way that was befitting of his status. Despite facing death and having already lost four dao protectors, the killing intent still boiled within him, and he was still thinking perfectly clearly.

"This part of the sea is obviously home turf for him," he said, speaking out loud and not via projection. "Let's get out of here. Once we're free, we can report the matter to the holy land. At that point it wouldn't matter if he had an even higher status than he does. He made the first move, so killing him won't count as our holy land violating the agreement."

He knew that Xu Qing could hear him speak, and in fact, wanted him to hear. Along with his dao protectors, he began falling back at top speed. As he fled, he sent his Grand Emperor's needle out, not off into the distance, but rather, to stitch the local karma together in a way to shatter the moonlight and destroy the taboo poison. What was more, if Xu Qing showed up, he would know immediately.

The five dao protectors also unleashed various trump cards, activating precious organs and body parts, which they sent to converge around the needle. They were preparing a very comprehensive attack.

In that manner, time passed. After the time it takes an incense stick to burn, they had fled a few hundred kilometers. That was when the needle suddenly vibrated, then rotated to the right and shot off through the sea water.

"Attack!" shouted Floating Fiend's son. He performed an incantation gesture and pointed out, whereupon the third eye in his forehead opened. A red beam of light shot out, piercing through the water to follow the needle.

Meanwhile, the five dao protectors all unhesitatingly unleashed attacks.

Taking in the scene as a whole, the five dao protectors' energy surged, creating a destructive tempest around them. Within that tempest, it was possible to see a huge salamander as well as a gigantic hand shaped like a body. Another was even more grisly, as it was a bloody spear made of flesh. They all looked different, but all were terrifyingly deadly.[1]

The combined attack made the target area explode, destroying the water and leaving behind nothing but a void. Penetrating fluctuations rolled out in all directions. The shock waves created by the divine abilities obscured the area, making it impossible to see what happened. But the Grand Emperor's needle was returning. On its tip was a drop of blood.

When Floating Fiend's son saw the blood, his eyes glittered. After scanning it to make sure it was safe, he tossed it to one of his dao protectors.

"Use that blood for the curse!"

The dao protector didn't hesitate to take the blood and perform a one-handed incantation gesture. Several major worlds then appeared behind him, within which, all of the living beings responded to the will of the world's lord. Dropping to their knees, they kowtowed, sending out their wills to form a curse!

"I curse your body, severing life force!"

"I curse your soul, shattering your spirit!"

"I curse your essence, destroying you in body and soul!"

Countless voices echoed back and forth, whereupon the drop of blood started vibrating. It turned black, as if it was being cursed, and at the same time, was affecting the flesh and blood that was its origin.

But then, the dao protector casting the curse suddenly twitched. His face distorted, and his eyes went wide with unprecedented terror and astonishment. His eyes exploded. A shrill scream echoed out, and then he shouted out in a trembling voice full of abject terror.

"This blood's origin.... it's—"

Before he could finish speaking, his shivering body turned pitch black as if he was being invaded by mutagen, or perhaps had observed something he shouldn't have seen, or perhaps had cursed the origin of his own curse. His body went limp, and he exploded.

His life force had been severed. His soul had shattered. *He* had been destroyed in body and soul! It was clearly a backlash, and it struck fear into the hearts of the others. Even the most unshakable will was now trembling. The things that had happened one after another left the survivors with the grisly sensation that they were facing a god. All of that raged out of control after the cultivator who had been cursing Xu Qing suddenly died.

Simultaneously, seven lamps lit up in the dark water. It was the Seven Lamps Underworld Fire Curse! They were like the eyes of underworld deities, glaring at the Vivifiends.

The seven lamps flickered, then... went out one by one.

The four dao protectors had it better off. Their minds reeled, nothing more. But Floating Fiend's son reacted with visible surprise. A sensation of impending death swept through

him like a furious wave. In that critical moment, he didn't hesitate at all to spit up a huge mouthful of blood and then unleash the Grand Emperor's needle. In doing so, he linked his karma and fate with the dao protector next to him.

Instantly, the sensation of impending death vanished from within him. As for the dao protector, he lunged to the side as the curse of the seven lamps exploded within him. His major world was forced open, and moonlight entered his heart, searching for the weaknesses in his soul. Then taboo poison went wild. He died in agony.

His death caused the bell of terror to toll. As a result, Floating Fiend's son and the remaining three dao protectors lost their will to fight. They were afraid. They had faced many powerful enemies throughout their lives, whether it was in other holy lands, or among the species to be found in the starry sky. They were no strangers to slaughter.

But this was their first time encountering the grisly type of slaughter they were seeing play out in front of them. Killing with sound was inherently terrifying. Then came killing with moonlight, killing with taboo poison, killing with a curse backlash, and then killing with underworld fire.

From beginning to end, they had only seen Xu Qing in their initial encounter. After that, they hadn't laid eyes on him even once....

Just like that, six of their number perished.

In the blink of an eye, they all unleashed every scrap of speed they could muster to flee.

But then, the water behind them flickered as the seven underworld lamps appeared again. The lamps immediately started going out.

Floating Fiend's son gritted his teeth, lifted his right hand, and threw out a hand sign. The hand sign had no power. Instead, it was some sort of command. Vivifiend dao protectors had to swear a will oath that they wouldn't hesitate to substitute their own life to perish instead of the one they protected.

The order Floating Fiend's son had just given activated that oath. search the novelF~ire.net website on Google to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

The three dao protectors grimly halted in place. Eyes flashing with determination, they spun in place and raced backward toward the seven lamps.

Floating Fiend's son felt pain in his heart. Those nine dao protectors were from his own bloodline, and had accompanied him for many years. But now... six had been cut down by Xu Qing. And the other three seemed to be about to suffer the same fate.

"Xu Qing! I'm going to make you pay for this 10,000 times over!"

Floating Fiend's son felt regret rage, which ultimately caused him to scream inside. Behind him, seven lamps were extinguished and a dao protector perished. Next came draconic roaring as Ninedawns appeared. The antemage body formed, combining with taboo poison and moonlight. Xu Qing burst into motion, and another cultivator fell.

Half an incense stick of time passed.

Floating Fiend's son was approaching the border of the 500-kilometer hell. His eyes were crimson, and he was completely bedraggled. As he sent his needle out to combat the moonlight and the taboo poison, he frantically fled.

The border got closer and closer. His hope grew stronger and stronger. He was confident that once he got past that border, he would be able to use his needle to break through the seal and escape.

Once in the outside world, he would send a message to the holy land, whereupon his father or the other patriarch would arrive in an instant. He pushed himself to go even faster. However, when he was only about 3,000 meters from the border, a voice echoed into his ears.

"You're all that's left now."

Along with the voice appeared a figure in a violet robe, with long violet hair. He was as beautiful as an immortal, but cold and grim. He carried a severed head in his hand as he strode into the field of view of Floating Fiend's son. The currents swept up around him, carrying with them the power over death. It made this newcomer seem like an actual god of death.

Floating Fiend's son was struck deeply in his heart and mind. He stopped in place.

1. Specifically, this seems to be describing a Chinese giant salamander, although the 'giant' part is not a perfect reflection of the Chinese characters in the name of the species. More properly, they are "big salamanders" when translated directly. But the author adds the actual Chinese character for "giant," and thus this would actually be a "gigantic Chinese giant salamander." Or something like that. 🐸

Read Beyond the Timescape Chapter 979: A Sword Falls, Crushing Soul and Dispersing Body!

Chapter 979: A Sword Falls, Crushing Soul and Dispersing Body!

Xu Qing stood there as if personally demarcating the border between life and death. He was positioned between Floating Fiend's son and death itself, becoming his whole world, and blocking him off from any hope.

Floating Fiend's son felt his heart pounding in his chest. It was as if a boulder had fallen from heaven into the sea of his heart, sending out massive waves. That was especially true considering that the severed head Xu Qing held had not closed its eyes in death. They pulsed with a deathly aura as they stared out, as if to gaze upon death itself.

Even more terrifying was the god vine that swirled around Xu Qing. The vine pulsed with starlight, which combined with the violet glow of Xu Qing to make something even more godly.

Then there was the shadow that seemed to merge with the water itself. As it gathered behind Xu Qing, it eventually 'stood up' to form a blurry tree. Upon the tree hung a coffin, which swayed back and forth. And there were also numerous eyes that stared with bloodthirsty gluttony at the son of Floating Fiend.

All of that made the seafloor gruish to the extreme.

Then there was the godly authority flickering everywhere. Sound was under his control. The moon was his servant. The poison had him as its source. And misfortune affected everything except Xu Qing himself. It made Xu Qing seem like a god descending into mortal dust.

Razor-sharp moonlight swept toward Floating Fiend's son from all directions. It was accompanied by the invasive taboo poison, like marrow filling bones. It was the same with the sound. The god vine behind Xu Qing swirled toward Floating Fiend's son at top speed. Little Shadow, unwilling to be outdone or left behind, spread out dramatically. Everything there on the seafloor converged on the enemy.

In front of Xu Qing, the seven underworld lamps flickered on the verge of going out.

Floating Fiend's son felt overwhelmed with bitterness. In the end, he didn't speak. And that was because the sound of his own voice could be used as a weapon by his enemy. Besides, nothing he said at this point would make any difference.

Threats weren't going to do anything. Pleas for mercy would be ineffective. All of this had been foreordained the moment this person said that he had changed his mind. Or perhaps it was more accurate to say that all of the karma that was created from the moment he made a mistake in judging his opponents battle prowess made this result unavoidable.

As his heart sank, his eyes filled with intense battle spirit, and his heart burned with the desire to live. Fighting was his only chance to live. Going all out was his only hope.

Therefore, rumbling sounds rose up as he unhesitatingly ignited his soul, his cultivation base, and his fleshy body. He even started burning his essence and bloodline!

As a member of the Vivifiend nobility, his bloodline was far purer than ordinary members of his species. At the same time, he had a very extraordinary fleshly body. His father had paid an enormous price to make sure he had it.

Now, all that was becoming kindling. Silver fire broke out all over him, incinerating the surrounding water and incinerating his madness.

At the same time, his battle prowess spiked! Previously, he was a two-world Smoldering God who could unleash four-world battle prowess. But this burning process caused his battle prowess to leap to a much higher level, and break past his personal limit. A terrifying aura erupted within him, mixing with the silver-colored fire to create a pressure that instantly weighed down on the heart and mind. Search the NôveFire.net website on Google to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

It was the power of a five-world Smoldering God! The difference between four worlds and five might seem like a minor jump in levels. But the reality was that it was massive in terms of substructure. Five worlds was actually the first major threshold of Smoldering Gods.

Before five worlds, what was 'smoldering' was a will of gestation. After reaching five worlds, what was 'smoldering' was a will of growth.

What gestated and then grew for these 'gods' was not something related to actual gods. Instead, it was one's soul, which was being elevated to become a nascent divinity! When the nascent divinity emerged, it primarily governed natural and magical laws.[1]

Within that 500-kilometer area at the seafloor, a terrifying aura was building up on Floating Fiend's son. His fleshly body was withering dramatically, and on top of it was a semitransparent nascent divinity body. The nascent divinity's eyes were glittering and bright, and its body was magnificent. To a certain degree, it looked even more impressive than Xu Qing.

The god vine, which had been wrapping around Floating Fiend's son, had no choice but to back away. Even Little Shadow fell back.

The needle glittered brightly as it circled in the area, blocking the godly authority. At the same time, Floating Fiend's son extended the arm of his nascent divinity and pointed at Xu Qing. That gesture sucked in numerous natural and magical laws, making them like threads that shot toward Xu Qing to wrap him up, seal him, and lock him down. It was as if the finger could treat all daos as enemies, all immortals as adversaries, and all cultivators as rebels! In an instant, five-world Smoldering God battle prowess surged with mountain-toppling, sea-draining force toward Xu Qing.

What met it head on was the Seven Lamps Underworld Fire Curse. In the blink of an eye, the flames were extinguished. But they didn't bring death. Instead, they just

collapsed. They couldn't block the natural and magical laws from that finger. Thus, the laws became a tempest that instantly swept over Xu Qing, covering him.

Rumbling sounds echoed out. There was no longer a lack of sound. At last, a cold voice spoke out, like sounds of nature, surpassing all other living things.

“Backtracing.”

As the word echoed out, an enormous sundial appeared within the tempest of laws. As it hung in midair, it let the threads of law pass by it, and seemed completely unaffected. The gnomon on the sundial was spinning backward. It started out slow, but after only a few breaths of time, it sped up. Astonishingly, time in the area was now moving backward. The water flowed backward. The tempest retreated.

Floating Fiend's son shook from head to toe as the natural and magical laws from his nascent divinity faded away, and his nascent divinity body collapsed. In the briefest of moments, it disappeared without a trace. At the same time, the withered flesh of his body started recovering. Everything was going back to the moment before he ignited himself! That was when he was a four-world Smoldering God, not a five-world one.

Floating Fiend's son was flabbergasted by what he was seeing. His face fell, and immediately prepared to ignite himself again. Except then...

Xu Qing appeared on the sundial, radiating boundless light. It was as if it had turned into a sun, illuminating everything in the area. And all of that light turned into a binding force.

It shot toward Floating Fiend's son. Wherever it went, it destroyed darkness, smashed the air, and devastated everything. It was Xu Qing's profound sun immortal light. It was as domineering as a sun and brought a tribulation of immortal might.

It reached Floating Fiend's son in an instant. He couldn't stop himself from screaming out in terror, despair, and pain. His fleshly body was instantly mangled so badly it was hardly recognizable, and was clearly on the verge of being completely wiped out by the immortal light. At that critical moment, Floating Fiend's son felt a madness that turned into howl that hardly sounded like it came from the mouth of a sentient being.

“Come to me, immortal skill!”

Immortal skills were a creation from Ancient Emperor Dark Serenity's time, and were also considered forbidden magics. In Revered Ancient, they were largely lost, and those that did survive were fragmented. But clearly, the holy lands had a lot of immortal skills.

As Floating Fiend's son howled, the Grand Emperor's needle shone with dazzling light and began spinning around him rapidly, leaving a red thread behind it that created various shadowy forms. They looked like souls. In fact, they were the nine dao protectors that Xu Qing had cut down earlier.

Specifically, they weren't actually souls, but rather, they were karma. The needle was stitching together the karma of the nine deceased individuals, then linking them together. After it was done, the needle shot into the forehead of Floating Fiend's son. In an instant, the wounds covering Floating Fiend's son ceased to worsen. And yet again, silver flames covered him.

He began burning again. He was fighting back against Xu Qing's immortal light. Next, his nascent divinity appeared again, and the immortal light began to dim.

Floating Fiend's son had survived a moment of near death, and was now powering up again. With a vicious facial expression, he looked at Xu Qing.

"My Smoldering God cultivation base has been permanently weakened to use this magic. I refuse to believe... that it won't affect you!"

The light of his nascent divinity erupted, reaching a height of some 3,000 meters, and sending waves out over the Forbidden Sea that were even more majestic than before. Then, he once again took a hand that could control natural and magical laws... and thrust it toward Xu Qing.

The dazzling power of that strike surpassed anything from before. Great vibrations filled the seafloor.

This time, he wasn't just burning his bloodline. He was adding in the karma of the nine dao protectors, as well as their fate. To a certain extent, he was burning their future. In that manner, he was able to temporarily gain power equivalent to a five-world Smoldering God. Thanks to the stability provided by the Grand Emperor's needle, it would be very difficult to reverse time on him now. This was his final move.

Howling, he sent the huge hand shooting toward Xu Qing. At the same time, the air around him seemed to fill with sealing power, making it impossible for him to flee.

Xu Qing looked as calm as ever as he looked at the forehead of Floating Fiend's son, where the needle had entered. "That's a very interesting needle."

Then, he didn't do anything to dodge or evade, and just let the nascent divinity's hand hit his head. A huge boom rang out, but Xu Qing stood there unmoving.

Floating Fiend's son stood agape, his mind spinning, his heart filled with incredulity.

"Th-that... that..."

Yet again he unleashed the power of his nascent divinity, giving the attack everything he could muster, filling it with natural and magical laws.

RUMBLE!

Xu Qing just stood there.

Without a word, Floating Fiend shot into motion, trying to circle around Xu Qing, and keeping about 3,000 meters of distance between them. He knew that he couldn't keep up his current level of battle prowess. Xu Qing's gruishness surpassed anything imaginable, to the point where he had never even heard of anything similar. At the moment, he didn't even want to think about what could be the reason for it. By now, his mind was overwhelmed with terror, despair, and shock. All he wanted to do was get away.

Turning to look at him flee, Xu Qing extended his right hand and pushed it out gently. It created a new boundary within the 500-kilometer area. That boundary was a well. The seawater inside became the well water. It was none other than Fishing the Moon in the Well.

Floating Fiend's son lurched to a halt as all of his magical techniques, treasures, and everything else about him were reflected in the water. That included the Grand Emperor's needle. Around that time, his immobility caused the burning of his cultivation base to naturally cease.

Xu Qing pulled back his hand as if to fish something up out of the water. A needle flew out.

When that was done, the rumble of a sword echoed out from within Xu Qing. Sword light glimmered as a heaven-shaking, earth-shattering stream of sword energy swept through the Forbidden Sea. Fate shattered as it slashed toward the soul and fleshly body of Floating Fiend's son.

The sword shattered his soul and shredded his body! The scream of the sword also became the authority of sound, devastating the battlefield. Floating Fiend's son had been destroyed in body and soul!

Having accomplished that, Xu Qing looked back into the depths of the sea. After cleaning up the mess, he would go back to waiting for the giant and the dragon chariot.

However, before he could go more than 3,000 meters, he stopped in place and looked over his shoulder. For the first time, a serious expression could be seen on his face, and his heart rate increased. It seemed that great danger was on the verge of arriving.

He had just sensed a terrifying gaze locking onto him! It didn't come from the giant and the dragon chariot. Instead, it came from the Vivifiend holy land, where Floating Fiend had been in seclusion for the past hundred years.

A terrifying figure sat cross-legged in the Vivifiend holy land, and his eyes had just opened.

As a result, the sky outside of the holy land went dark. Endless black clouds churned, and the sea reacted violently, sending huge waves out everywhere. Boundless energy swept through the cosmos, causing natural laws to bow their heads, and magical laws to prostrate. Surrounding islands trembled, and countless species on the Forbidden Sea were inexplicably shaken to the core with terror.

As for the Vivifiends in the holy land, their minds and hearts were spinning.

The might of an Imperial Sovereign rose up, along with a voice that surpassed heavenly thunder. When it spoke, it contained a horrifying killing intent that rolled out over the Forbidden Sea.

“You killed my son?? I see you!”

1. In this case, I'm using the term 'nascent divinity' because it's the same term that often appears in other Er Gen works. The word 'divinity' here is the same character for 'god' that appears in the god cultivation system. It also appears in Smoldering God, even though that's from the cultivator system and not the god system. It follows the same pattern as 'nascent soul' and in other Er Gen works is often a higher-level version of a nascent soul. Up to this point, I've generally been rendering that character as 'god' (as opposed to deity, divine, etc.), in an attempt to maintain some continuity as it relates to gods and the god system of cultivation. That character (god/divine/divinity) is common, and appears in ordinary words such as mind, nerves, energy (certain types of it), as well as things like divine sense and divine will. Many instances of the usage of this character have nothing to do with the 'god' cultivation system, which is why I've been trying to maintain consistency in that regard. Hopefully all of this makes sense. At this point, Xu Qing is basically on a completely different and unique path of cultivation, so as often happens in Er Gen works, the more orthodox system of cultivation becomes less relevant the further you go on, and that's the case here. Minor spoilers in that this 'nascent divinity' concept does not seem to be a major factor later in the story, at least as of me translating this chapter. It could theoretically become important in later chapters that have not been written yet. 📖

Chapter 980: Imperial Sovereign Authority

It was a gaze that contained a mysterious power!

The gaze of the broken face could invade heaven, earth, and the void. The gaze of gods could affect all living beings and entities.

The gaze of an Imperial Sovereign could sever the ancient from the modern. When combined with the individual authority of a specific Imperial Sovereign, it could unleash strength akin to that of a god.

After all, Imperial Sovereign was like a heavenly mountain in the system of cultivators. It was a sublime pinnacle. In the early part of that level, it was possible to fight with gods. Those at the peak were equivalent to the Flawless God level!

Although Floating Fiend was only in the early level, his arrival was still like that of a god. And now, Floating Fiend's gaze had its own unique authority, which caused Xu Qing's head to spin, and filled his soul with a suffocating sensation. It was a type of suffocation that didn't just relate to his breathing.

When it appeared in his soul, it was almost like a will of erasure. It was loneliness, darkness, and despair.

Xu Qing shivered from head to toe. All of the types of godly authority in his void soil, even the faint lineaments, began to flicker with bright light. And his fleshly body shone as if with mercury. His every asset fought back against the gaze, all while he fell back at top speed. He sent out his god perception, using sound to achieve speeds similar to teleportation.

At the same time, he took out Flame Phoenix's feather. His plan was to send a message.

Unfortunately, that was when a cracking sound rang out. It was as if an extremely sharp and incomprehensibly domineering pair of shears had cut off his every connection to the outside world. Mind spinning, Xu Qing put the feather away and accelerated as he fled.

In that private chamber in the Vivifiend holy land, Floating Fiend himself sat there cross-legged with a dazzling pair of shears floating above his head. The shears seemed ancient, as if they had seen the passage of immense amounts of time. They pulsed with that sensation of age, as well as a terrifying might.

Floating Fiend slowly rose to his feet, ultimately standing to his full height of 300 meters. That action caused the cosmos to rumble, and great winds to sweep about. A hundred years before, he, who possessed royal Vivifiend blood, and was at the peak of Smoldering God, chose to go into a deadly session of seclusion in an attempt to break through to the level of Imperial Sovereign.

The news quickly spread among all the terrestrial-level holy lands, and countless people paid very close attention to the matter.

The reason was that Imperial Sovereigns... were lords unto themselves. Those who succeeded in that breakthrough were *as rare as phoenix feathers or qilin horns*. The Vivifiend holy land was no exception.

Among the terrestrial-level holy lands, the Vivifiend holy land had been on the decline for a long time. For years, they had been relying on the fact that their patriarch was a peak Imperial Sovereign simply to stay afloat. On many occasions, they were backed into a corner and couldn't do anything.

There was nothing more important to the Vivifiends than Floating Fiend and his session of secluded meditation. If he succeeded, then the Vivifiend holy land would rise to a higher level of prominence.

If it weren't for the fact that the decree to come to Revered Ancient had been impossible for them to defy, they wouldn't have come at this time. Even though they were given no choice, and came, the fact remained that Floating Fiend's session of meditation was still the most important thing to them. That was one reason why they hadn't done anything dramatic, and hadn't caused any trouble for outsiders.

What was more, Floating Fiend, who had been in meditation for a hundred years, had no idea what was going on outside his meditation chamber. In past years, he had only been disturbed once, and that was to tell him that the holy lands had received orders to go to Revered Ancient. As for Revered Ancient itself, everything he knew about it was based on old information.

As of now, the fluctuations of the death of his only blood-related child caused a reaction both physically and in terms of karma, shaking him out of his slumber.

It was hard to say whether that was good or bad.

It could be good, because the reality was that it had actually been years since he stepped past the threshold leading into Imperial Sovereign. Unfortunately, his energy and might had been thrown into a state of primal-chaos, as if he had been sent into reincarnation.

Because of that continuous cycle, he couldn't wake up. It was something no one could help him with. He had to rely on himself to struggle through successfully. Only if he woke up could he successfully complete the breakthrough.

It was something virtually all Imperial Sovereigns had to deal with. It was also an experience that led to them forming their personal authority. That so-called authority was substructurally different from godly authority.

Normally speaking, it was something exclusive to Imperial Sovereigns, although it was possible, though rare, for certain spectacular chosen to do the same thing as a Smoldering God. For some, the process of acquiring authority happened in an instant. In other cases it took a hundred years or sometimes more than a thousand.

Thus, when the fluctuations appeared, they tugged on him, provoking killing intent and fury in his blood. That, in turn, resonated with his authority, and caused him to wake up.

When it came to the bad parts... they were the fact that his son had died, and also that his authority had some flaws thanks to him waking up earlier.

Regardless of anything, though, he was now an Imperial Sovereign. Opening his eyes, he peered through the void, opened karma, and searched the sensations of the heart.

As he had said, he... saw Xu Qing. He wasn't familiar with the outside location, but based on earlier information, he could tell that they had arrived at Revered Ancient. He didn't know the identity of the person who had killed his son. But he didn't need to. It didn't matter who the culprit was. As of this moment... he was dead-set on killing him.

That was the only way for him to repair his mental state, and fix the flaw in his authority. It was related to his dao!

That was especially true considering that, though he had used the treasured shears that had once belonged to a Grand Emperor of his species to sever the culprit's connection to the outside, the culprit had already used some gruish concealment technique to go into hiding. Therefore, Floating Fiend didn't hesitate at all to take a step forward.

When his foot landed on the floor of his meditation chamber, ripples spread through heaven and earth, shaking all providence. He vanished.

Because of the tug of the bloodline and the coordinates his gaze had locked onto, that single step was all it took to arrive within Xu Qing's 500 kilometers of hell. His presence gave the natural laws a master, and made all magical laws servants.

The heavenly daos of Revered Ancient were influenced by the will of Revered Ancient, and they resisted the holy lands which had left so long ago. However, an almighty Imperial Sovereign... would be welcomed in any location. After all, years ago, the heavenly dao had been created to be in subjugation to cultivators.

Therefore, when Floating Fiend arrived in the 500 kilometers of hell, the natural and magical laws acknowledged allegiance to him, and almost became an embodiment of his mind. His will became the will of heaven. His spirit became the spirit of heaven. If he wanted a location to be sealed, that location would instantly be sealed. If he wanted to exterminate Xu Qing, then killing intent would erupt in Xu Qing's area.

The killing intent was a manifestation of the will of heaven, and that was controlled by Floating Fiend's thoughts. It was impossible to perceive. Countless streams of invisible killing intent gathered, but because of Floating Fiend's will, they became corporeal.

In front of Xu Qing appeared a bright-red skeletal finger with five digits. The moment the finger appeared, everything around it seemed to solidify. Even thoughts were weighed

down. The sea water no longer rippled. The only thing that could move was the killing intent.

In an instant, it weighed down on Xu Qing, whose heart was racing as he fled at top speed, all while fused with the sound in the area. In that location, the sea water exploded, heavenly will exploded, and killing intent exploded. Terrifying pressure and horrifying killing force bore down on Xu Qing with unstoppable, unblockable momentum.

Little Shadow wailed. The god vine cracked. Moonlight shattered. Sound authority dimmed. Ninedawns. The Grand Darkheaven Armor. Everything else was completely useless.

The finger was like a foreordained doom as it descended upon Xu Qing.

RUMBLE!

Every defense he had ceased to be functional. All divine abilities and magical techniques shattered. It was as if none of his assets were meaningful in any way.

Mountain-toppling, sea-draining force raged through his soul and body with the intention of destroying and crushing it. He was to be destroyed in body and soul! Rumbling filled Xu Qing as he was sent tumbling off to the side like a leaf in the wind.

Yet he didn't collapse!

As a result, Floating Fiend's eyes glittered. "Oh, I see."

Although Xu Qing's body hadn't collapsed by the attack of an Imperial Sovereign's finger, he was coughing up mouthful after enormous mouthful of blood. Cracks spread out across his fleshly body, out of which seeped immortal mercury like fresh blood. The cracks weren't because of the Imperial Sovereign's finger. They had always existed within him, a result of the broken face's flesh, and had been held together by the immortal mercury.

They were where the seals within Xu Qing were located. The Imperial Sovereign's finger wasn't capable of destroying his fleshly body, but... it was already showing it might be capable of doing something to the immortal mercury that was holding it together.

Xu Qing's body hadn't completely fused into one. That was why Master Seventh had told Xu Qing that his fleshly body could defend against anything under the Imperial Sovereign level.

As his body cracked apart, pain swept through him like a storm, overwhelming his senses and threatening to topple his mind. Xu Qing trembled from head to toe as

unimaginable torment filled him. But what really made his eyes go red was the splitting sensation in his soul. A feeling of deadly crisis rose up within him.

However, Xu Qing had been in a lot of potentially deadly situations in his life. He wasn't unfamiliar with circumstances like these. And he knew that in a moment like this, he needed to stay clear-headed. Forcing himself to just endure the pain from his body and soul, he gritted his teeth and unleashed the godly authority of sound. Instantly, he merged into the sound and shot off into the distance.

I need to get out of here and figure out a way to send a message!

Unfortunately, an Imperial Sovereign had come in person. Even if Xu Qing was stronger than he currently was, he would have limits. Therefore, though he fled within sound, as Floating Fiend's gaze descended....

Floating Fiend's cold voice swept out.

"Erase."

It was the power of Floating Fiend's authority! The words he spoke caused all sound within the 500-kilometer area to vanish. Those sounds weren't being taken away. They weren't being controlled. They were being erased! All sounds ceased to exist.

Because Xu Qing was within the sound, if he didn't break free, he would also be erased. Therefore, he had no choice but to emerge from the sound.

The moment he appeared, a huge bright-red hand appeared over his head. The hand had seven fingers with five digits each, and looked extremely gruish, like something straight out of the Yellow Springs.

It covered the sky over Xu Qing, becoming his world as it dropped down to grab him. Before it even landed, it created an intense pressure that caused more cracks to appear on Xu Qing.

Again, immortal mercury flowed like blood, and he felt more than ever like his body might collapse. His soul grew weak from the pressure, and the sensation of potential death became like a tidal wave crashing into him. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and his eyes became even more bloodshot. At that critical moment, his eyes gleamed with determination. Without any hesitation, he performed a double-handed incantation gesture and then swept his hands out in front of him.

The fluctuations of detonation rose up within the 500-kilometer area. Xu Qing had set up this area to deal with the giant and the dragon chariot, and had filled it with a large amount of godsource, which was intended to make his godly authority easier to use. But as the self-detonation fluctuations spread out, the entire 500 kilometers of hell

noiselessly erupted. search the NovelFire(.)net website on Google to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Areas throughout it where Xu Qing had set up godsource began to explode one after another. There were hundreds of those areas, and every one that detonated added to the terrifying effect. After they all exploded, they created a shocking tempest with Xu Qing in the middle. All of it shot toward that huge hand!

Because of the authority of erasing, there was no sound in the area. But the tempest still contained violet moonlight and the power of taboo poison, which made the huge tempest even more dominant. It grew larger and larger, until it was like a godly volcano erupting on the seafloor, unleashing heaven-defying force that slammed into the Imperial Sovereign's hand.

The hand faltered in midair. The tempest was resisting it!

But Imperial Sovereigns were like gods, so no matter how grand that tempest was, it could only give it a moment's pause.

In the end, the hand kept dropping. It slammed into the seafloor. The seafloor in the 500-kilometer area shattered as a huge crater opened up.

However, the clash of the two types of power did a bit to ease the authority of erasure. And because of that, there was now a bit of sound present. It started minutely, but quickly expanded.

That was exactly what Xu Qing wanted: sound.

The moment the sound came to exist, he ignored his injuries and used the sound to shoot off into the distance. Blood sprayed out into the water. Immortal mercury flowed into the void. Wherever the sound went, it left behind a streak of red and silver.

Within the sound, Xu Qing was starting to lose consciousness, but he kept fleeing. The direction he was going led toward where he knew the approaching dragon chariot was.

Far off in the Holytide Region, in the region controlled by the Garmentfolk, Erniu lay snoring in a pile of colorful clothing. Each item of clothing was a woman's garment, and they were all clustered close to him. Clearly, the Garmentfolk had been very welcoming, and he had made plenty of friends that he was close enough to that he could slumber alongside them. That one particular glove lay on his chest, the fingers all curled up....

Suddenly, Erniu shivered and opened his eyes.

As he did, the surrounding pieces of clothing also woke up one after another, and floated up into the air. That included the glove. All of them were now floating in front of him as if asking if something was wrong.

Erniu shook his head. He looked confused. "No, it's nothing. I just had a bad dream. In the dream, little Ah Qing was trying to tell me something. Hunh. What a weird dream."

Upon hearing that, the articles of clothing flew back and forth in what seemed to be a comforting manner.

"You're right," Erniu said. "Maybe I've just been getting too exhausted lately. Are you going to keep massaging me?" He licked his lips. "Alright, I guess I'll go back to sleep. You just keep up the massage."

With that, Erniu lay back down excitedly. An instant later, he sat back up.

"No. No way. I need to take a trip back to South Phoenix. It really feels to me like something big is happening. Are all of you going to miss me? Or will you come along?"