

Read Beyond the Timescape Chapter 981: Incoming Dragon Chariot

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Outside of the continent of South Phoenix, in the depths of the Forbidden Sea, an enormous snake-shaped sea beast was pursuing its prey along the dark seafloor. Moving with astonishing speed, it opened its huge mouth and swallowed its prey whole. Then it let loose a howl of contentment. Its cry echoed out across the seafloor.

Xu Qing suddenly appeared out of that very sound. The moment he did, his body swelled up until he couldn't sustain the force, and he exploded. An instant later, the light of the sealing mark within him glittered, and he was back, this time back as his normal size. Only after coughing up seven or eight mouthfuls of blood did he manage to stabilize himself.

Expression grim, he looked down at his fleshly body. He was covered with cracks that oozed immortal mercury, which made him very horrid to behold. His soul was fractured and looked extremely weak through and through. As a result, Xu Qing's vision was blurred. As he looked around, everything looked twisted and distorted. Given how deep he was at the bottom of the sea, those distortions looked like demonic monsters, grimacing and scowling at him.

However, the weakness and dizziness only lasted for a moment before Xu Qing suppressed it. The distortions also vanished.

Unfortunately, the danger wasn't gone. Xu Qing knew that time was of the utmost value to him right now, so without any hesitation he tapped into the power of the violet crystal, causing a surge of recovery to sweep through him.

At the same time, he took out some of the broken face's blood and drank a mouthful. Instantly, the blood caused intense rumbling sounds to fill him. As a result, the cracks ceased to spread out across him as quickly.

Without the slightest hesitation, Xu Qing took out Flame Phoenix's feather to send a message. But yet again, a cracking sound echoed out. His message had been interrupted, and couldn't be sent.

It's not just a sealing lock. That Imperial Sovereign also has a precious treasure keeping me isolated from the outside world.

Xu Qing's expression was grim. He knew that in his current state, there was no way he could make a complete getaway. And his fleshly body could only sustain a few more blows.

I need to think of a way to get out of here. And if I can't... then time is definitely of the utmost importance!

He was currently in the inner sea, so the bigger the commotion being made, the greater the likelihood that someone would notice what was happening.

As for the sealing marks left in place by his master, they were there to protect his soul. If they were forced open... Xu Qing knew that the power of the broken face would cause his soul to disperse. That thought, coupled with the pain from both his fleshly body and soul, caused Xu Qing to feel colder than he had felt in a long time. Having tasted that coldness, he once again entered sound and followed his senses in the direction of the dragon chariot.

Maybe borrowing the strength of the chariot is my ticket to escaping!

The moment Xu Qing vanished, he heard Floating Fiend's voice.

"Erase."

The word was like a nightmare. The moment it echoed out, it filled an area that went far beyond Xu Qing's current location. Not only was all sound erased, but countless sea beasts simply ceased to exist. Xu Qing appeared again, blood spraying out of his mouth.

Behind him, Floating Fiend strode in his direction. Every step he took caused the seafloor to tremble. Each stride caused natural and magical laws to bend according to his will. It was as if heaven itself were trying to kill Xu Qing!

Then Floating Fiend's voice echoed out again. "The magical laws here are telling me that when you killed my son, you attacked in this way."

Xu Qing heard the words, but before he could take control of the sound, it was gone, thanks to the authority of erasure. At the same time, the cracks started spreading out on his fleshly body again. More than ever, he felt like he was about to explode. Search the novelFire.net website on Google to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

At that moment of crisis, blinding light suddenly erupted from Xu Qing as he turned into a sun. The dazzling light spread out, then converged into a beam. Moving with speed far greater than anything than before, he used a light evasion technique to shoot off into the distance. An instant later, there was no sign that it had even been present to begin with.

“Immortal light?” Floating Fiend murmured as he appeared on the spot Xu Qing had just disappeared from. He looked off into the distance and shook his head. *He’s still within my range, though. That said, this human clearly has a lot of karmic connections.... With that much fate stirring in response to him, I can tell that killing him will bring some big negative consequences.*

The ancient shears once again appeared in front of Floating Fiend, which quickly severed all of the threads coming off Xu Qing. However, there were some that, when the shears made contact with them, provoked a grating sound from the shears. Also, it looked more ancient, and even started showing spots of rust. Apparently, even the terrifying and mysterious shears had to pay a price for cutting those threads.

But at the same time, I can sense that if I do erase them, then... the might of the authority will replenish me. And his fleshly body... no wonder my son died trying to get it. Karma like this, plus such flesh and blood... it’s like a destined opportunity covered with poisoned thorns that need to slowly be peeled away. I can’t rush things. Especially with the threads. I don’t want to destroy my shears in the process. I need to handle this matter with finesse.

With such thoughts in mind, Floating Fiend advanced like a hunter, focusing all of his might on the prey.

Some tens of thousands of kilometers away, Xu Qing appeared again, the might of an Imperial Sovereign bearing down on him from behind.

Gritting his teeth, he sent light glittering out, then again used Light Evasion to flee. Light Evasion was a divine ability from the Profound Sun Immortal Light Magic. It was capable of unleashing astonishing speed, but it required two streams of light.

Xu Qing’s immortal light only had one stream which wasn’t enough to power the technique. Therefore, he chose to burn soul threads, thus emitting soul light. By adding that to the immortal light, he could just barely manage to pull off the technique.

It was a desperate move, and it wouldn’t work for long. He did it five or six times in a row. But whether it was on the surface of the water or on the seafloor, his situation never changed. It was as if there were *nets above and snares below*, no matter where he went. He couldn’t break free, and it didn’t seem possible to send messages.

Even more bizarre was that Xu Qing felt as though his existence was in the process of being erased. He realized this when he noticed that the sea beasts couldn’t detect him. He saw a lot of nonhuman islands on the surface of the water, plus many boats, as well as plenty of Seven Blood Eyes disciples. And yet no one detected even a trace of him.

There was one instance in which he landed on the deck of a Seven Blood Eyes boat, and yet, it was almost as if he was in a different dimension. It was as if he was invisible.

The realization caused Xu Qing's heart to sink. In fact, as he got deeper into the sea, his complexion became increasingly unhealthy, and he seemed weaker and weaker. Gritting his teeth, he kept moving.

He once again tapped into his soul threads, which resulted in him dropping from his previous level of 50,000,000 to about half of that number. Despite that, he was still unable to escape past Floating Fiend's range. The next time he appeared in the open, he felt the might of an Imperial Sovereign closing in from behind him.

However... Xu Qing had reached his target destination.

Rumbling sounds could be heard from the seafloor up ahead, along with the sound of footsteps. Those sounds seemed to be completely ignoring the authority of erasure. A terrifying pressure and aura spread madly from the seafloor, prompting Imperial Sovereign Floating Fiend to look down in that direction.

"Well who could have guessed?" Floating Fiend said calmly. "It's the dragon chariot of the crown prince of the Brilliant Heaven Godfolk, plus his corpse of a servant. No wonder I couldn't sense this until I saw it personally. The crown prince of the Brilliant Heaven Godfolk...."

"According to our species' records, this particular crown prince from ancient times agreed to be incarnated as a sun, while his sister incarnated as a moon. Together, they took turns illuminating Revered Ancient.

"That lasted until Eminent Desolation came, and both of them perished. The servant also perished, turning into nothing but a corpse. The dragon chariot and the corpse. You think those are your ticket to surviving?"

Xu Qing didn't respond. The moment he sensed the chariot, his eyes lit up with a crazy light. Then, black fire appeared around him, turning into a sea of flames. He quickly turned into an enormous golden crow. Within his claws was the severed hand of the musician as he shot toward the chariot and dragon.

Xu Qing was gambling. He was gambling on the fact that he had the same origin as the golden crow and the chariot, and also had the severed hand. He was gambling on karma, and gambling... that he wouldn't encounter too much resistance when trying to approach.

All of a sudden, the severed hand's eye opened, and the fingers began to move. *Natural Sounds Welcome the Moon* drifted out.

Chapter 982: A Slight Time Advantage

Sounds of nature drifted about the seafloor.

The aura of death neared. Ahead. Behind. It was the same.

But Xu Qing in golden crow form had eyes that flashed with determination. Gripping the severed hand, he followed the rhythm of the natural sounds as he sped forward. As he did, his eyes glittered, and golden crow fire flared around him. He was like a flower made of flames as he moved along the seafloor. As a result, the seafloor shone with dazzling, eye-catching light.

As he raced inexorably closer to the dragon chariot, his heart felt empty. He kept his thoughts externalized. He was completely focused on his golden crow form, and the music of the severed hand. He was almost like an actual golden crow as he got closer and closer to the bronze dragon chariot.

Seafloor sludge was pushed to the side while the black seawater churned. Xu Qing, surrounded by fire, was the most eye-catching thing as Floating Fiend's gaze lowered onto him.

The moment the gaze landed on him, Xu Qing in golden crow form shuddered. He could again sense the power of an Imperial Sovereign's gaze. Or perhaps it was most accurate to say that he felt the weight of the authority coming from those two eyes.

The power of erasure caused more cracks to appear. The gaze caused the black fire on him to start dying down. He shook from head to toe as more cracks spread out. Blood sprayed out of his mouth.

It was at that exact same moment that Xu Qing in golden crow form saw something incredibly terrifying some distance away in the water. It was a majestic giant. It was enormous and covered with countless tentacles that swayed and writhed. Draped over one shoulder was a massive chain that stretched behind it.

At the end of the chain was a bronze dragon chariot. The chariot was very rundown, covered with rust and other traces of extreme age. However, the body of the chariot had beautiful carvings that still emanated an imperial air.

The giant was dragging the bronze chariot behind it as it strode across the seafloor. Each step caused waves of silt to rise up, and sent waves rolling out on the surface. Along with it came the sound of terrifying teeth crunching together.

The moment Xu Qing heard it, lingering fear rose within him. Despite having a much different cultivation base than the last time he encountered the chariot and giant, the pressure he felt still caused him to tremble instinctively. However, he didn't slow down.

In fact, he sped up. An instant later, he pierced through the currents, passed through the silt, and appeared right in front of the massive giant and chariot.

In comparison, Xu Qing in golden crow form was incredibly tiny. However, the golden crow aura plus the music of the severed hand... formed a special karma that couldn't be severed by the shears. Suddenly, the giant stopped in place and looked up, allowing the golden-crow-form Xu Qing to pass by its head. That caused the giant's massive form to form an obstacle to Floating Fiend.

Xu Qing had gambled correctly. However... just as Xu Qing neared the giant and chariot, Floating Fiend looked away from him.

"Your dazzling body made it easy for me to lock my vision onto you," Floating Fiend said coolly. "You sought to use this giant and chariot to block my path. If my gaze of killing intent touched the giant, then it would meet some unknown conditions and result in certain complications?"

"My son had the treasured needle of a Grand Emperor, and now you have it, right? You can't connect to my karma, unfortunately. You're clever, I'll give you that. But not clever enough."

With that, he stepped to the side to avoid the chariot. It wasn't anything difficult as far as he was concerned.

After all, no matter how shocking the chariot and dragon were in years past, the giant was now just a corpse. It didn't matter that it could still move around on instinct. Without causing it to do something, it was basically useless.

That said, though Xu Qing's enemy immediately realized what he was trying to do, considering how much of a crisis moment it was, how could his plan possibly be as simplistic as that which Floating Fiend had just given voice to?

As Xu Qing shot past the giant's massive head, the eye of the severed hand he held turned bright red. Countless ghosts appeared. Then, the music that had, moments ago, been lovely sounds of nature, changed into the howling of ghosts.

It was the same tune, but the sound was piercing and mournful. It had turned into the sound of countless ghosts haunting the night. What was more, the rotting moon that the severed hand had previously used on Xu Qing appeared again.

Instantly, the seafloor was thrown into chaos. A rotting moon rose up in front of the giant, right by Floating Fiend. The vicious face of the young woman was there, eyes opened and looking directly at Floating Fiend! A godwarding like an ancestral curse spread out in shocking fashion. Godly might abounded. The giant shivered, lowered its head, and then fixed its turbid gaze on Floating Fiend.

Floating Fiend frowned and stopped in place, his eyes glittering.

Meanwhile, Xu Qing put everything on the line by burning more soul threads to flee with Light Evasion. In the blink of an eye, he disappeared from his position behind the giant.

When he reappeared he was 5,000 kilometers away on the surface of the water. Blood sprayed out of his mouth, and more immortal mercury seeped out of the cracks in the surface of his body. Together, the blood and mercury dropped into the sea below. He was currently staggering and hardly able to stand up straight. An aura of death spread from his distorted and rotting soul.

It was the curse power of the rotting moon. Though the curse spreading from the moon projection hadn't been targeting him, it was still so dangerous that it had affected him. Thankfully, he knew how to negate the curse.

Therefore, the moment he appeared, he had the severed hand convert to playing the true *Natural Sounds Welcome the Moon*. As the song entered his soul, it caused the will of rot to fade away. Next, he quickly sent a voice message, except that a moment later... his face turned extremely grim.

I'm still within his range!

Without any hesitation, he gritted his teeth and used Light Evasion again. He vanished.

Time passed.

Waves rolled out over the Forbidden Sea. The sea was black and seemed to have no end. It looked no different from usual. The species on the islands, the boats on the surface of the water, and the countless living beings all went on like normal. Cultivators cultivated. Hunters hunted. The bustling sound of activity could be heard on many islands as evening fell.

The afterglow of nightfall spread out across the black waves. The sky gradually turned forbidding. Night was on the way. Search the Nôvel(F)ire.net website on Google to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

No one could detect or sense that a fierce chase was going on in the Forbidden Sea. All traces of it were erased. Floating Fiend's authority of erasure ensured that cultivators who didn't have the same cultivation base as him couldn't detect what was happening.

As for the shears left behind by the Vivifiend Grand Emperor who had once followed Ancient Emperor Dark Serenity.... It was an ancestral device belonging to the Vivifiend holy land, and its powers bordered on authority. It had been given to Floating Fiend by the species' patriarch, where it had floated above his head for the past hundred years, repeatedly severing the misfortunes of failed breakthroughs. But there was something

more significant about it. It was how Floating Fiend's breakthrough to Imperial Sovereign allowed him to get the authority of erasure.

The moment Floating Fiend had succeeded, the blessing of the treasured shears enabled his powers of erasure to reach an incredibly high level. Though Grand Emperor senses couldn't be easily severed, it was possible for the shears to temporarily erase them. And it increased the range dramatically.

Before, Xu Qing had definitely appeared in front of people, only for them to not be able to detect him, as if he was in a different aspect of space-time. It was the same right now. From the beginning until now, the chase had been like this: quiet and undetectable.

As evening was buried by night, Xu Qing's soul thread count had dropped so low he only had a bit more than 3,000,000. He was reaching the end of what he was capable of. And even now, his sound powers weren't working.

It was as if all heaven and earth were within Floating Fiend's range. Of course, that couldn't actually be possible. But as night fell, it seemed to extinguish all hope.

I only have one Light Evasion left....

Night had fallen by the time Xu Qing reached a location not far from the Lobsterfolk. His face was pale, and both his fleshly body and soul had reached their limit.

That said, he was still completely calm at heart. An Imperial Sovereign was chasing him down to kill him. It was a moment of deadly crisis. But he had experienced many potentially fatal situations like this. This was probably more dangerous of a situation than any of the others, but that didn't mean he would let himself give in to negativity.

Taking a deep breath, he took the human nature he had been intentionally wiping away during the chase, and completely dimmed it. Coldly rational godliness then filled him from head to toe. His eyes suddenly became vastly more profound as he turned to look behind him.

He began to analyze things rationally. He knew that the giant and the dragon chariot could influence an Imperial Sovereign, but most likely, it wouldn't last for long. After all, no matter how amazing the chariot, the giant, and the rotting moon were, they were all dead things.

I bet this guy has a reason for letting me run away. From the look of it, my actions are furthering the erasure effect. He's basically halfway to success already.

Xu Qing looked down at a sea beast swimming through the water beneath him. Normally speaking, if this beast even sensed his aura from a great distance, it would flee trembling. But now it didn't even notice him.

He must be afraid of my karma, so he doesn't want to just directly kill me. Seems to me that continuing to run is pointless.

Xu Qing wasn't sure of all the details of this person's authority, and it was difficult to narrow down its scope and principles via analysis. All he could do was use the clues he had to make a plan of action. After a few breaths of time passed, Xu Qing looked down at the seafloor.

He needs time to erase me. And I also need time for the outside world to realize what's going on. But theoretically speaking, he needs a lot less time. Therefore, what I need to do is slow him down. And at the same time, give myself more time.... That means there's one place that's perfectly suitable.

After coldly assessing his remaining soul threads, he unhesitatingly started burning them, almost as if they weren't his own.

Using one last Light Evasion, he vanished. When he reappeared, he was in the depths of the sea at a marine trench. At the same time, the severity of his wounds passed a major threshold. His physical body began to crumble. Countless bits of flesh and blood spread out. Thankfully, the immortal mercury and the sealing marks managed to hold everything together.

Even still, at the moment, Xu Qing hardly looked human. His soul was also crumbling. Despite his godliness bolstering his mind and thoughts, he still lapsed into unconsciousness. However, just before passing out, he calmly sent an order to the god vine.

As he passed out, the god vine wrapped him up and shot into the marine trench, entered the bubble, and sped toward the dilapidated pagoda. After enough time passed for half an incense stick to burn, Floating Fiend appeared outside of the trench, his eyes gleaming.

So, the brat came here for his last stand? Floating Fiend took a step forward and appeared outside the bubble. As he tried to enter, the bubble's force of expulsion erupted, shoving at Floating Fiend with mountain-toppling, sea-draining force. After taking more than ten steps, Floating Fiend stopped. Looking at the dilapidated pagoda only a few dozen paces away, he frowned.

Then he continued onward.

Chapter 983: A Wind Picks Up On the Forbidden Sea

Late at night, the blackness of the Forbidden Sea grew even deeper. Using the naked eye, it was impossible to see more than a foot or two before everything was swallowed by inky darkness. Stretch out your hand and you would have a hard time seeing your fingers.

It was similar with the temperature. As night fell, the wind over the sea grew colder, screaming between the sea and the heaven as it blew northward. The cold wind carried a fishy smell, plus something rotten and decayed, almost like a sick old person with one foot in the grave, whose every exhalation contained an aura of death. That aura swirled about, combining with the cries of various unknown sea beasts. The night was full of mystery and fear.

It was the same with the dark currents under the surface of the water. They were more violent than they were during the daytime. On the surface, they gave birth to huge waves. Under the surface, they created numerous powerful vortexes. Over the countless years that had passed, nights were always like this on the seafloor. No one knew why the whirlpools formed. They only knew that they were essentially a natural occurrence in the Forbidden Sea. It happened that way over and over again, seemingly without end.

At the moment, a whirlpool rumbled through a particular area, kicking up silt to reveal numerous marine trenches that were almost like scars on the seafloor. Deep in one of those trenches was a huge bubble in the mire. Inside the bubble was a dilapidated pagoda. Outside of the pagoda was a god vine, which sent out fluctuations of anxiety and hostility.

Inside the pagoda... was a horribly mangled corpse. It looked almost chopped to pieces as it lay there, motionless. Whatever blade had been used to chop the corpse hadn't been a sharp one. As a result, the flesh hadn't been fully sliced apart. What was more, it was connected by drooping strands of a silver substance.

As time passed, the silver strands slowly began pulling the separated pieces of flesh back together. There was also a violet light shimmering faintly within the corpse.

A few days passed....

When the pieces of the corpse had all been pulled back together, it looked a bit more human. However, it was still covered with numerous cracks, and was appalling to look at. But then bits of life force began to pulse within it, as if it were being called back from the netherworld. The closed eyes slowly opened, and though weak, they pulsed with incomparable coldness.

The fact that I'm here, and alive, proves that I made the right decision. The Imperial Sovereign from the Vivifiend holy land was unable to get through the bubble and into this pagoda. I got back that slight time advantage.

Xu Qing looked calm on the outside, and was, in fact, very calm on the inside. He still maintained a certain level of godliness, giving him the ability to analyze the situation with cool rationality. His god perception was weak, but he sent it out to check the situation outside.

Eventually, he sat up. As he did, his body and soul ached with intense pain, such that most people would go mad or pass out. But filled as he was with godliness, Xu Qing apparently didn't even notice it. However, it did take him quite a bit of time. In fact, it was only after twelve breaths of time passed that he was able to fully sit up.

Taking out some of the broken face's blood, he consumed it, then closed his eyes and began meditating. He wanted to speed up his recovery as quickly as possible, and get his cultivation base back to its peak level. Simultaneously, he would use the time he had bought to wait for help to come.

Floating Fiend was seated cross-legged on the other side of the bubble, his face completely expressionless. A pair of rusty shears hovered overhead, shining with dim light. A terrifying mightiness circulated within them. They created a power that could cut off anything from the outside world, and erase all signs of everything. It made it so that anyone observing the area would see nothing at all there. Even the shears were fundamentally not there.

This is quite an extraordinary defensive barrier. The only way to get past it is with that sageheaven god vine.

Three days had passed in which Floating Fiend had tried a variety of methods to break into the bubble. All had failed. With great force, he could walk twelve steps inside, but couldn't get any further. At that point, the force of rejection from the bubble was too much for him to sustain.

That doesn't mean there's no way to break inside, though. I just need to temper my Imperial Sovereign authority a bit more. All that will require is time. A hundred days should be enough. There's another possibility that could work right away, which would be to use the essence power of the shears.

Forcibly using the essence power of the shears would wear them down much more quickly. Or, if the effect was too severe, it could result in the shears disappearing entirely and returning to become part of a great dao. That was something he couldn't accept.

Most importantly, when he was chasing Xu Qing, he had seen too many karma threads that he feared. He simply didn't dare to sever them directly. Besides, he had already tapped into some of the essence of the shears, specifically, the Grand Emperor might. That was how he had erected the temporary barrier of concealment.

If he did more than that, the shears would likely melt, once again becoming part of a great dao. Then he would never be able to use them again. And all the barriers he had created between himself and those terrifying karma threads would vanish.

If that happened, powerful experts would definitely show up right away. What's more, assimilating his fleshly body will take time. Time that I wouldn't have in that scenario....

After a lot of thought, Floating Fiend focused his gaze on the dilapidated pagoda inside the bubble. Gradually, his eyes started shining.

I can't quite accept failure. That's the flesh of the broken face! His body... is probably the only one like it in the world! Combine that with the stories I've heard about immortal mercury, and it means that his fleshly body, despite having so much karma....

Is probably the work of a Summer Immortal or possibly someone even more powerful than that! If I can get it, then I just need to stay hidden until the Emptystar holy land arrives. And then, even if that almighty individual gets greedy, he won't risk getting involved with Eminent Desolation's karma. In other words, chances are he'll just let me do my thing....

With his protection, then this brat's karma can be wiped out easily. And the Vivifiend holy land will rise to new heights!

After a bit more thought, he made his decision.

I have three options. Maybe it'll be risky, but those who search for the dao are born in the morning and die in the evening. It'll be worth it. When destined opportunities are born, anything is possible.[1]

Having reached this point in his train of thought, Floating Fiend closed his eyes. Almost at the exact same moment, a tremor passed through him, and a host of bloody flesh strands began to seep out of him and extend toward the bubble. They were so densely packed they were difficult to count, but there were definitely no less than 10,000,000.

Soon, the bloody flesh strands had wrapped up the entire bubble, whereupon they started slowly pulling it toward him. It was as if they were trying to pull the bubble right up to him so he could absorb it!

Floating Fiend paid very close attention to the process. However, what he was looking most closely at wasn't the absorption process. Instead, he was keeping an eye on the Grand Emperor's treasure floating overhead, as well as the surroundings. He was also checking to see if Xu Qing was doing anything.

In that manner, time passed.

The following day in the port at Seven Blood Eyes, Second Elder Sister sat in a Seventh Peak pagoda handling various sect matters.

Because of the arrival of the Vivifiend holy land, and the interactions with the people from there, the situation in the Forbidden Sea seemed to be going smoothly on the outside, but in reality, was very tense. Seven Blood Eyes was active both in the continent of South Phoenix and in the Holytide Region, and was considered an apex power. As a result, they had more responsibilities to handle than before.

Xu Qing was out training, Erniu seemed reluctant to leave his nonhuman friends, and Third Sib... was roaming the mainland, sowing wild oats and disinclined to come back to the sect. Their Master was in seclusion, and the patriarch was experiencing young love for a second time....

That meant that the only person left behind in Seven Blood Eyes to handle things was Second Elder Sister. Although the other mountain peaks offered a lot of support, it was obvious that the Seventh Peak was in charge of things.

Second Elder Sister was busy every single day.

It pained Huang Yan to see his beloved wife in such a situation. He kept her company constantly, and the flattering look never left his face. He would occasionally kneed her shoulders, would sometimes kneel to massage her legs, and would find time to put fresh fruit on her desk. He would even carefully peel pieces of fruit and place them in Second Elder Sister's mouth. He took care of her in every possible way. At the moment, he was also cursing her fellow apprentices.

"The first time I laid eyes on that Chen Erniu, I knew he was a scoundrel. Now he just can't *bear* to part with those nonhumans, which directly leads to you being so busy, Elder Sister. Damn him! And then there's Third Sib. He's just as bad as Erniu. He's definitely going to die of exhaustion sooner or later! As for Ah Qing...."

Huang Yan was going to continue speaking when Second Elder Sister suddenly looked up at him.

Huang Yan cleared his throat. He knew that his wife wasn't very articulate or expressive, but deep down, she cared deeply for her Master and fellow apprentices. He quickly changed his tone.

"Well, Erniu isn't *that* bad. And Third Sib is alright too. Ah Qing is the best, of course.... Speaking of which, I haven't been in touch with him for a few days."

Before Huang Yan could say anything else, his transmission jade slip vibrated. It wasn't just his. Second Elder Sister's jade slip also received an incoming message. They took their jade slips out simultaneously, checked the message, and then looked at each other with serious expressions.

The message was from Erniu. The Garmentfolk were a great distance away from South Phoenix, so Erniu had sent a message that needed to be routed through transmission portals in multiple prefectures before it finally arrived.

“I recently had an inexplicable uneasy feeling. It’s like something really big happened. Second Sib and Second Brother-in-Law, is Little Ah Qing doing well with you two? I can’t get in touch with him!”

Second Elder Sister immediately sent a voice message to Xu Qing. When she didn’t get a response, she sent a message to Sir Bloodsmelter asking for any information. Her last interaction with Xu Qing had been a request for him to go check on their Grand-Master.

The patriarch quickly responded. When Second Elder Sister saw the message, her expression turned grave, and she looked at Huang Yan.

“Fourth Sib went chasing after a godly entity and now nobody can get in touch with him!”

Huang Yan yawned and smiled placatingly. “It’s fine, really. There are a lot of things on the seafloor that can disrupt transmissions. It’s totally normal. There aren’t any godly entities that can pose a threat to that little punk. Besides, I gave him one of my feathers. If he runs into anything really dangerous, he would reach out to me. But since you’re worried, I’ll see if I can track him down.”

Huang Yan cast his senses out to his feather. An instant later, his eyes went wide, and flames were visible within them. He couldn’t sense his feather at all. Just looking at Second Elder Sister, he could sense the emotions roiling within her, so he plastered a relaxed smile onto his face.

“Don’t worry. I found him! The little punk ran into a sea beast that’s on the verge of igniting godfire. I’ll go take care of it right now.” With that, he turned to leave.

“Huang Yan,” Second Elder Sister said.

He stopped in place and turned to look at his wife with a genuine smile on his face.

“Bring Fourth Sib back,” she said softly.

“Don’t worry.” With a hearty laugh and a relaxed facial expression, Huang Yan turned back around and kept walking. As soon as he was facing in the other direction, his expression turned extremely serious. An instant later, he was gone. Search the novel_Fire.net website on Google to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Out on the Forbidden Sea, in a location not visible from Seven Blood Eyes, dark clouds roiled in the sky, obscuring the sun, and casting the sea into shadow. Endless lightning crashed in the clouds, and something that looked like a phoenix and an eagle could just barely be seen flying overhead. Its brown torso looked like a mountain boulder, and its feathers were like burning flames. Wherever it passed, the sky ignited.

It was none other than Flame Phoenix. *What powerful entity is out there that blocked my senses?*

1. The saying about 'those who search for the dao' has been used by the author before. Unfortunately, in past translations not even I maintained consistency in how I rendered the phrase, much less the other translators. In any case, it came up in *I Shall Seal the Heavens* in chapters 597, 631, 1144, 1145. It also comes up in *Pursuit of the Truth* in chapter 1422, as well as 12 times in *Renegade Immortal*, even being the chapter title of chapter 317. It didn't show up in *A Will Eternal* or *A World Worth Protecting*. 📖

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Chapter 984: An Incoming Hurricane!

"Something happened to Xu Qing!"

Black clouds seethed in the sky over the Forbidden Sea. Crimson fire billowed out in all directions, setting everything ablaze. It was a sky of fire now. As the flames dropped down onto the sea, the water itself filled with flames. It became an actual sea of fire.

Flame Phoenix's aura accompanied the flames as they spread through the dome of heaven and connected to the sea below. He was questioning heaven, questioning the sea, questioning the birds, and questioning the sea beasts in the water. Search the NôvelFire(.)net website on Google to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Where is he??

Countless thoughts began to stream into Flame Phoenix's consciousness. Gradually, the thoughts began to merge together as if to form a complete picture. Except... a power with no form, no reason, no result, and no will interrupted the thoughts. It came with no sound or voice, rippling and distorting everything, twisting the void, and causing the thoughts to be nothing but chaos.

The flame-wreathed entity that looked like part phoenix and part eagle soared through the sky, letting loose a cry that shook the heavens. A sound that surpassed heavenly thunder exploded out. It was like something that could smash all obstacles, and it caused the interference to instantly shatter.

Next, hundreds of millions of sensations poured into Flame Phoenix's mind. Every single one... contained Xu Qing's aura, as well as traces of Flame Phoenix's feather. Those sensations came... from the fish in the Forbidden Sea, from the countless sea beasts, and even some godly entities. The distribution seemed endless, which obviously wasn't possible.

Whoever did this didn't actually erase my karma. It just scattered it all over the place.

Flame Phoenix's heart sank. He knew full well that only a god or Imperial Sovereign could do something like this. His enormous frame dropped from the sky, smashed into the water, and sank down at a high rate of speed, wreathed in flames the whole time. The mutagen in the water evaporated, causing the water to change color. At the same time, hundreds of millions of sensations continued to flood into him.

An incense stick of time passed.

Countless entities affected by the karma wailed as they burst into phoenix flames and then crumbled into ashes. Backed by the power of the ashes, a low-pitched voice echoed through the Forbidden Sea.

"Turtle Shell the Arousing; Fish Guts the Clinging; Fishtail Offensive the Receptive! Nail the Creative; Halberd the Abysmal; Loom Threads the Gentle Gate! Evening Star the Sun; Malfunctioning Spirit; the Joyous Rises to the Look; Burden the Grass; Using Keeping Still to Seek!"[1]

The voice echoed loudly through the Forbidden Sea. The seafloor trembled, and huge waves formed on the surface. An ancient will accompanied it, forming terrifying might filled with hundreds of millions of thoughts.

Find Xu Qing!

Deep on the seafloor, within the marine trench, was Floating Fiend, who had erased all traces of himself within the darkness. He was currently outside the bubble, which was completely covered by his bloody flesh strands. As they slowly pulled the bubble toward him so he could absorb it, the sphere of flesh shrank down. Suddenly, his eyes snapped open, and the shears above his head vibrated.

Discovered so soon??

Floating Fiend's face fell, and he quickly performed an incantation gesture. A host of sealing marks flew into the shears, causing the Grand Emperor's treasure to tremble slightly before going calm. However, only a moment later, it started shaking again. What was more, the rust spots on it started to grow larger. It looked like it might bust apart at any moment.

Seeing that, Floating Fiend quickly bit the tip of his tongue and spat out some precious dao blood, which landed on the shears. Blood-colored light shimmered on the shears, and the vibrating again ceased. Yet clearly, that wasn't enough. Only moments later, powerful fluctuations erupted from the shears.

Floating Fiend's eyes then shone with determination as he lifted his right hand and viciously grabbed his left arm. With a violent jerk, he ripped his arm off and sacrificed it to the shears. By means of the left arm, the shears released a massive amount of might.

The authority of erasure in the shears emanated an ancient will, and the trembling ceased. Furthermore, it was locked in that state. However, the price paid, other than Floating Fiend losing an arm, was that a horrendous fissure appeared on the shears. It was something that could not be erased nor repaired.

At the same time that the shears ceased trembling, Flame Phoenix looked up, his eyes shining brightly.

This person... has a Grand Emperor treasure! However, despite the fact that he erased all traces of himself, I can tell... where he's from!

Flame Phoenix looked over his shoulder at the Vivifiend holy land. In the brief moment of contact moments before, he had sensed the aura of that location. There was now no need to suppress the fire in his heart. As it erupted, flames burst out around him, and he shot in the direction of the Vivifiend holy land, immolating the sky and sea alike as he did.

Flames raged everywhere.

Back in the marine trench, the bubble in front of Floating Fiend, which was surrounded by his own flesh, had been pulled so close to him that he could suck it into his body. A moment later, a fleshy tumor appeared on his shoulder.

Eyes narrowing, Floating Fiend spoke coldly into the tumor, saying, *"Next, I just need to assimilate it.... It'll take some time. But now, you can't escape."*

With that, he stood and looked off into the distance. He was now considering what to do next. He didn't even consider going back to the Vivifiend holy land. Although the holy land might seem like a safe place, he knew that what he had done couldn't be kept a secret forever. It just didn't seem like a good idea to go there. Besides, hiding at home wasn't a long-term solution.

The patriarch is aware of my dao. There's no need to explain things to him. He obviously approves. In that case... I suppose I should just go into hiding. On the one hand, I can assimilate this little brat, and at the same time, I can just wait for the Emptystar holy land to get here with that almighty individual.

When Floating Fiend thought about the almighty individual from the Emptystar holy land, he shivered instinctively.

On the day that venerable individual arrives, it marks the beginning of the glory days of the holy lands in Revered Ancient.

Turning, he shot off along the seafloor and vanished in the distance. As he moved along, he kept exerting pressure on the tumor on his shoulder as he assimilated it.

A tempest of fire raged across the Forbidden Sea as Flame Phoenix's wings flapped. Astonishing might weighed down, along with terrifying pressure. And it was all focused on the Vivifiend holy land. The sky was crimson. The Forbidden Sea seemed to be burning endlessly.

Large numbers of nonhumans on islands here and there looked up in the dome of heaven with wonder and astonishment. Beneath the surface of the sea, countless entities trembled.

They were witnessing the rage of the South Phoenix!

Things weren't limited to that, though. Erniu hadn't just sent a message to Second Elder Sister and Huang Yan. Because of the deep unease he felt, he had sent messages to lots of people. That included parties in Sea-Sealing County, the imperial capital of humankind, the Moonrite Region, and even to the Firemoon Darkheavens.... The contents of the jade slip were the same as what he sent to Second Elder Sister. Except there was one additional line.

"Something happened to Xu Qing!"

Those words spread through the east of Revered Ancient, creating... a massive hurricane larger than anything kicked up by Flame Phoenix!

1. This passage is a complicated mix of all ten of the Heavenly Stems with all of the Eight Trigrams, plus a few other characters thrown in. Maybe the author had some reason for putting them together the way he did, or maybe he just put them together in a way that sounds cool to him in Chinese. I honestly don't know, as there is never any explanation or depiction of what it all means. My translation choice involved taking the original oracle bone script meaning of the Heavenly Stems and combining them with the translated meaning of the Eight Trigrams according to Richard Wilhelm, and then also

translating the non-stem non-trigram words according to their most basic meaning. If I were you, I wouldn't try to decipher the meaning based on the English. All of the stems and all of the trigrams have multiple meanings depending on how you interpret them. I think it's just supposed to sound like a cool divination/search spell. It doesn't rhyme, incidentally. Probably most notable are that the characters for "search" and "look (for)" are in there, making it clear that the intention of the passage is something relating to searching for Xu Qing. ☹️

Chapter 985: Dramatic Events in the Forbidden Sea!

The phoenix flying over the Forbidden Sea shook all living beings.

On this day, countless species on islands everywhere looked up to see heaven completely obscured! A crimson glow replaced the normal color of the sky. The surging tempest overhead replaced the air. Burning fire took over the power of the waves. And everything was focused in one direction, bursting with killing intent and rage.

"The South Phoenix took to the sea!"

"That's Flame Phoenix!"

"What happened to make Flame Phoenix so angry??"

Voices full of both astonishment and reverence rose up in islands everywhere. Countless gazes focused on the dome of heaven, and the terrifying figure in the tempest there. Speculations ran wild. But regardless, as of this moment... every species in the Forbidden Sea who saw what was happening were stricken with monumental levels of astonishment.

And without even thinking about it, all of them started looking in the direction that the tempest was heading in.

Above what had once been the Forbidden Sea was the mountain-like Vivifiend holy land. The mountain was so majestic that it was hard to see the top of it. And the base covered a massive area. Even from a distance, it was possible to see the mysterious magical symbols flowing just under the surface of the mountain. Occasionally, they would collide with each other, causing loud rumbling sounds to echo out. Some were faint. Some were like chants. Some were violent. Some were thunderous.

The sounds came from the Vivifiend holy land's grand protective spell formation, which had been put in place years ago by their peak Grand Emperor.

Holy lands were called holy lands because they had Grand Emperors. Back when Ancient Emperor Dark Serenity departed Revered Ancient, the species that qualified to

leave with him were naturally those who had Grand Emperors. Unfortunately, as time went by, for a variety of unknown reasons, the Grand Emperors perished.

That was why the terrestrial-level holy lands came to be. When a Grand Emperor carved out a holy land, then perished, and no new Grand Emperor succeeded, then that holy land... was referred to as terrestrial-level.

That was exactly what happened with the Vivifiend holy land. That said, though the Grand Emperor had perished long ago, the grand protective spell formation he put in place had remained there for tens of thousands of years.

Unfortunately, the fact that no Grand Emperor had come along to maintain and repair the formation, meant it had gradually weakened over the years that passed. Right now, it was far from what it had been at the peak of its mightiness. That didn't mean it was weak, though. The spell formation glittered brightly, and the thousands of kilometers of ice sludge on the surface of the Forbidden Sea trembled in response.

Boats couldn't enter that area, and sea beasts didn't dare to go there. As a result, the entire location was like a mountainous island in the middle of the Forbidden Sea.

Couple that with the starry sky aura coming off the mountain, and the incredibly ancient air, and it lent an indescribable grandeur to the place. What was more, its interaction with the environment of Revered Ancient caused swirling mist to billow out from it. As that white mist spread out from the mountain in all directions, it created a strong contrast with the black color of the Forbidden Sea. The end result was that, in the hearts of the many nonhumans on nearby islands, the place was like an immortal paradise.

But today... a devilish wind had picked up outside of that immortal realm, and it echoed with a devilish sound. That wind was made of fire, and it came from the south. When it appeared, the canopy of heaven turned as crimson as fresh blood. It was as if the end of days had come.

Burning black mist on the Forbidden Sea surged, as if innumerable demonic monsters were on the prowl, howling in gruish voices.

That was only part of the devilish sound. The other part was the screaming of the wind. On this day, heaven howled, earth roared, and all living beings wept mournfully. The sound combined into a deafening, heaven-shaking, earth-shattering cry.

The Vivifiend holy land bore the brunt of the sound. The thousands of kilometers of icy sludge melted instantly. The white mist surrounding it ignited, becoming a part of the fire. And the raging wind quickly made the huge mountain clearly visible....

The color red filled the canopy of heaven. Blazing flames covered the Forbidden Sea. The wind howled. And then all of that coalesced into the image of a majestic figure that looked like both a phoenix and an eagle, charging toward the Vivifiend holy land.

The moment he appeared, the figure reached an enormous claw out of the black clouds. Surrounded by lightning, the claw viciously flew toward the mountain! It seemed that the claw was going to rip that mountain off the surface of the sea!

Flame Phoenix's claw was like the hand of a god. Where it went, the air shattered, rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth, and the Forbidden Sea sank down. Terrifying might was joined by maddened rage, to spread out in all directions. The fiery flames spread out to cover the sea water and fill the sky. And of course, they enveloped the entire mountain. Intense rumbling sounds split the sky and shook the sea.

The Vivifiend's mountain started trembling violently.

However, that was when a cold snort coldly echoed out from within the mountain. At the same time, all of the mountain's magical symbols rose up into the air to create a shimmering shield of light. It was the grand protective spell formation.

Light swirled dazzlingly in all directions. Within it were countless symbols, all of them radiating majestic power. In an instant, the defensive barrier formed by the shield of light was at maximum power, and it was fighting back against Flame Phoenix's claw.

Rumbling sounds echoed out everywhere. Ripples erupted into a large portion of the Forbidden Sea. Enormous waves surged out everywhere.

Flame Phoenix's claw couldn't reach the mountain, and instead slammed into the spell formation shield. Within the formation, the Vivifiends were stunned, and looked out in astonishment at Flame Phoenix, who obscured heaven on the other side of the formation.

As they reeled, an old man appeared at the top of the mountain. He was the peak Imperial Sovereign patriarch of the Vivifiend species. He looked through the shield at the outside world. He knew who Flame Phoenix was, and was aware of his status in the continent of South Phoenix. And he was able to instantly assess his strength and current state.

It fell in line with his previous judgment regarding the strength of the phoenix. However, when it came to his current state, he wasn't sure what to make of it.

He could be considered an extremely rare mutant entity in Revered Ancient, and even the starry sky in general. He has terrifying godsource, and yet, does not have any of Eminent Desolation's karma.... He is walking the path of gods, and yet... hasn't ignited any godfire!

He's contending with our grand protective spell formation with no godfire, only his own godsource. The level of might on display isn't quite at the level of an Altar God, nor a Grand Emperor. But I'm afraid he's roughly on par with me....

How did he do this? To get to a level like this with godsource reserves alone, and no godfire? I've never even heard of anything like that. And if he did ignite his godfire....

Patriarch Vivifiend looked incomparably serious.

Reserve powers as profound as that could be considered exceptional.... This mutant entity has some extremely high ambitions. Does he want to build up enough reserves to unleash them all at one time, ignite godfire, and become a first-level True God?

Except, I can sense... flaws! He's stuck! Some unknown entity trapped him in the continent of South Phoenix in this sea, making it impossible for him to go too far away from it. In order to become a first-level True God, he has to break out of that trap?

Having reached this point in his train of thought, Patriarch Vivifiend spoke in a solemn voice that echoed like thunder. "Fellow Daoist Flame Phoenix, you're clearly angry. But you still need to explain yourself."

"Hand over Xu Qing!" Flame Phoenix responded in a similarly thunderous voice as his claw pressed down onto the spell formation shield.

"Xu Qing?" Patriarch Vivifiend replied. He had already come up with some speculations as to why Floating Fiend had come out of seclusion. However, Floating Fiend represented the future of the Vivifiend holy land. He was the individual the patriarch had selected to keep the species safe going into the future, and was in fact the *only* person who could do it. That made him more important than any other individual in their species.

That was especially true considering that the patriarch had a lingering wound, which would never heal. In fact, it was accurate to say that even if all the other Vivifiends died, as long as Floating Fiend survived, the species could continue. Otherwise, if the patriarch lived out his days and Floating Fiend perished, then the Vivifiend holy land... wouldn't continue on for much longer afterward.

There were quite a few other holy lands which had long been eyeing the Vivifiends. According to the holy lands' records, over the tens of thousands of years that had passed, all of the other holy lands that lost their Imperial Sovereigns ended up being split up and divided amongst the others.

Isn't that what happened to the Fardark holy land? [1]

He couldn't help but sigh inwardly at what was obviously a very thorny problem. In fact, it was downright deadly. But he also knew that Floating Fiend wasn't an idiot, so whatever he had done, he had likely weighed the potential benefits and consequences.

There must be something about Xu Qing that Floating Fiend felt was such a potential asset to our species that he was willing to risk his life over it.

Patriarch Vivifiend frowned and put a surprised look onto his face.

“This Xu Qing you’re talking about. Is he the region lord of the Holytide and Nightspirit Regions?”

As he spoke, he took out a jade slip and pressed down on it gently, causing a host of images to appear above it. They were individuals the Vivifiends had gathered information about recently. One of them was none other than Xu Qing.

“Fellow Daoist Flame Phoenix, is this the human you’re talking about? I’ve never met him before.” He turned to look at his holy land. “Have any of you met him before?”

All of the Vivifiends shook their heads.

“You see, Fellow Daoist Flame Phoenix,” the patriarch said calmly, “you’re actually being a bit of a bully here. Did you ever consider that you might have gone looking in the wrong direction?”

However, the moment the words left his mouth, killing intent flared in Flame Phoenix’s eyes. Flapping his wings, he flew high up into the dome of heaven. After reaching a certain height, he wheeled around and dove down trailing fire like a meteor! The entire process went very smoothly, and he didn’t lose an ounce of momentum. The air shattered, heaven shook and earth trembled, the sea water boiled, and a terrifying aura built up. The surrounding flames went completely wild.

When Patriarch Vivifiend saw that, his heart sank, but his eyes glittered. His immediate plan was to bolster the power of the spell formation and absorb Flame Phoenix’s attack.

Except that was when intense rumbling sounds could be heard as a massive teleportation portal opened up in the middle of the air.

The aura of the Moonrite Region erupted out with wild and violent force. Along with it came a cold voice, like a stream of sword energy that could slice through heaven and earth.

“So what if it’s bullying? We’ll find out if this is the right person or not after we step through!”

Out stepped Ninth Sib from the Moonrite Region, who was also known as Grandpa Ninth. He clearly had a Smoldering God cultivation base, but at the moment, he was pulsing with a ferocity that could threaten Imperial Sovereigns.

Behind him came the Heir Apparent, Princess Brightblossom, Princess Fifth, and Eighth Sib. All of them pulsed with immense energy and raging authority that was vastly beyond what they had been like years ago. Li Zihua’s children had Smoldering God authority that earned them the praise of Dark Serenity back in the day, which was why

they had each been considered a chosen. In the past, they had been tormented by Crimson Mother, but after being freed, how could they possibly be considered ordinary!

Here they were! After getting Erniu's message and learning that something happened to Xu Qing, they had come as quickly as possible. They had also brought the Moonrebel Congregation's precious treasure with them.

What was even more astonishing was something that Xu Qing or Erniu would have noticed immediately if they were present. They all pulsed with the aura of Li Zihua!

Ling'er hurried after them anxiously, a furious glare on her face as she looked at the holy land.

Seeing that, Flame Phoenix stopped in place.

And that was because the moment the Moonrite contingent appeared, more majestic teleportation portals opened up. Countless cultivators poured out, all of them bursting with killing intent. It was a huge army from the Holytide Region! They were here to rescue their region lord! Among them were countless Nightshade high priests clad in violet robes, with violet moon totems on their foreheads. They... were from the Violet Moon temple, there to fight for the Violet Lord!

What happened next caused the Vivifiend cultivators to reel, and sent Patriarch Vivifiend's heart racing. Search the Novelfire(.)ne*t website on Google to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

An even more majestic teleportation portal glittered into being above the holy land. A terrifying destiny aura power emerged from the portal, spreading through the area as a massive army of cultivators stormed out, virtually exploding with killing intent. Leading them was King Firecrusher!

And things weren't even over yet....

That was because the aura of a god began to emerge from time itself!

Dramatic events were unfolding on the Forbidden Sea!

1. The story of the Fardark holy land was told in [chapter 919](#). 📖

Chapter 986: Godly Edict in the East

The sky rumbled, flowing like rippling fish scales, an effect that spread as far as the eye could see. It was as if some immense being were crushing the clouds and causing them to fall like flower petals down to the earth below. The dew in the clouds became like a timescape river, sweeping up the waves of time and then causing them to pause right over the Vivifiend holy land.

Pressure weighed down on the mountain, the cultivators inside the mountain, and on the sea in all directions. The Vivifiend holy land trembled, and ripples flowed out across the surface of their spell formation shield. The cultivators there were shaken and trembling down to their souls. Search the Novel(F)ire.net website on Google to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

The water in the area sank down, forming a massive whirlpool that reached all the way down to the broken ruins of Forbidden by the Zombie.

It was profoundly eye-catching. But what was even more eye-catching were the waves in the dome of heaven, and the god that was emerging. This god had a godly aura that created an imperial robe. Destiny aura made an imperial crown above an expressionless face. Godfire roiled left and right, filled with a powerful air of death.

The god had two eyes that were as calm as dead water. That water was dead, but there was something terrifying beneath the surface that, if it were to erupt, would send out heaven-destroying, earth-extinguishing force.

This was the godly authority of battle! The god that had emerged was one of the five zombie gods of humankind. This was... Emperor Eastglory!

When hē stepped out, hīs eyes were closed. But when thēy opened, thēy were pitch-black. At the same time, a sensation of destruction and power erupted within hīm. Hē was looking right at the Vivifiend holy land.

The holy land trembled as Eastglory's voice echoed out.

"These are the words of Empress Summer Departure, who wishes to ask the Vivifiend holy land: Considering your species has polluted the karma of Imperial Tutor Xu Qing, does this mean you wish for your entire species to die?"

Eastglory's voice rang out like heavenly thunder. Summer Departure was the empress' new imperial name.

All of the Vivifiends in the holy land were terrified. Only Patriarch Vivifiend reacted with a mere frown. He opened his mouth to speak.

But then, in the River of Time in the dome of heaven, waves rolled out and the river water turned black as a sinister sensation erupted from within. Astonishingly, a host of corpses appeared within the river, howling in anguish.

Similarly, a never-ending host of corpses appeared within the Forbidden Sea. Forbidden by the Zombie seemed to be shaking with exceptional intensity. It was almost as if it were on the verge of awakening. And that was because the incoming darkness was a godly authority from the netherworld.

The aura of death spread, and from within the black river water overhead, a god emerged. This god also had a godly aura as an imperial robe, with an imperial crown made of destiny aura.

This was none other than Emperor Dark War! Of the five zombie emperors of humankind... two were present!

Countless Vivifiends were shaking uncontrollably within their holy land. Patriarch Vivifiend's heart had sunk even further, and inside, he was sighing continuously. His gaze was focused on what lay outside the spell formation.

To the east was the seemingly endless army from Sea-Sealing County, all waiting in combat readiness. Clearly, a single command would send them out to crush anything in their path. To the south was King Firecrusher, killing intent raging, an army of human soldiers behind him pulsing with baleful auras. To the north was the contingent from the Moonrite Region, imposing, threatening, and deadly. To the west... were two gods, with mightiness that shook heaven and rocked the sea. Up above was Flame Phoenix, who had ceased his dive, but whose outstretched wings would shock the highest heavens.

Boundless killing intent from all directions was all weighing down on the Vivifiend holy land. And they had all come because of Xu Qing!

Patriarch Vivifiend could only sigh as his fear intensified.

Yet, there were still more people on the way!

The canopy of heaven was split open by a giant that was several tens of thousands of meters tall. It grinned viciously at the Vivifiend holy land as it held open the rift in heaven to reveal the world beyond. Astonishingly, what was visible on the other side of the rift was God Mountain, home to the three gods of the Firemoons. Though separated by the rift, the godly aura from there was still terrifying. Then a cold voice drifted out from God Mountain, through the rift, and down to the Forbidden Sea.

“Whoever harms our Grand Darkheaven makes an enemy of the Firemoon Darkheavens!”

The words affected the Forbidden Sea itself, causing currents of water to slow. And the Vivifiend holy land's spell formation began to tremble.

Patriarch Vivifiend had a very serious expression on his face. He knew exactly who the Firemoon Darkheavens were, and was aware that Sunfire, Moonfire, and Starfire were all terrifying Flawless Gods. The events that were playing out were now enabling him to personally understand the truth about this Xu Qing, whom he had only heard about from reports up to this point. In the east of Revered Ancient, Xu Qing... was a very significant and important person.

Floating Fiend had trifled with someone he shouldn't have trifled with. Patriarch Vivifiend understood that now. Except... if he admitted fault right now, then it wouldn't matter whether Xu Qing was currently alive or dead. Floating Fiend... would perish. If Floating Fiend hadn't become an Imperial Sovereign already, then it would have been a simple matter. The patriarch could just track him down and do what needed to be done to resolve the situation. After all, his death wouldn't have been significant compared to the survival of the species.

But... as soon as Floating Fiend became an Imperial Sovereign, he became vitally important to the species.

Having reached this point in his train of thought, Patriarch Vivifiend sighed again. He knew that there was no way to determine the truth of the situation right now. But no matter which angle he analyzed the situation from, and no matter how much of a disadvantage he was in, he needed to protect Floating Fiend. It was the most sensible thing among all the insensible options.

Floating Fiend, I sure hope you made the right decision.

Taking a deep breath, he looked at the forces arrayed against him. "I am the patriarch of the Vivifiend holy land, and I hereby swear upon the dao that I have never seen this Xu Qing that you seek. Xu Qing has nothing to do with me, and nothing to do with our holy lands. My species—"

Before he could finish speaking, his face fell, and he backed up, his cultivation base powering up.

He had taken Flame Phoenix seriously from the beginning. Moonrite couldn't be underestimated. Sea-Sealing County and the human army caused his heart to sink. The arrival of the two gods from humankind made things very tricky. And the Firemoons were terrifying. But as of this moment, he was truly flabbergasted!

The moment he backed up, a woman's hand appeared outside the holy land's spell formation. It pushed down gently on the shield.

The moment that happened, the spell formation emitted rumbling sounds that quickly grew deafening, followed by loud cracking sounds. Crack spread out from the palm, quickly sweeping over the shield to create what looked like a spider web. As the entire mountain swayed back and forth, immense amounts of spirit energy poured into it to make repairs.

But the pressure from the hand stopped all of that. A domineering will crushed down with heaven-rending, earth-crushing force.

At its height, the spell formation that had protected the Vivifiend holy land for tens of thousands of years couldn't have been broken open by anyone other than a Grand

Emperor. But it had become rundown over the years, losing much of its power. And since a second Grand Emperor had never appeared among the Vivifiends, it had never been repaired.

As a result, the power of that hand was pushing it toward the brink of what it could sustain. The formation started cracking like a broken mirror....

Intense rumbling sounds exploded out. The formation shattered, and the shrapnel became a tempest that raged directly onto the holy land itself.

Patriarch Vivifiend's expression flickered wildly as he threw his hands out and unleashed the power of his cultivation base in an attempt to block it. In the end he managed to block a portion of the tempest. But about thirty percent of the shrapnel hit the holy land.

The mountain quaked as crevices opened up all over it. The peak itself was wiped out. As for the Vivifiends... many of them didn't even have a chance to react before they were shredded into ashes.

Only then did the owner of that hand slowly appear.

In that instant of revelation, everyone, be they in the east, west, south or north, regardless if they were from Sea-Sealing, Holytide, or Moonrite, bowed their heads. That included Flame Phoenix.

"Greetings, Empress!"

This person was none other than Empress Summer Departure of humankind. It was not the empress in the flesh, though, but rather, a projection. Even still, the Altar God might that weighed down was astonishing.

Shē stood as straight and tall as a mountain, surrounded by swirling destiny aura and dazzling light. Looking down at the rubble of the spell formation, the devastated holy land, and the pale-faced Patriarch Vivifiend, shē calmly said, "You're right, Xu Qing isn't here. And you don't have anything to do with him. But you have another Imperial Sovereign involved. Plus a third person. Since you'd clearly rather die than cooperate, your Vivifiend holy land will hereby be sealed. And if Xu Qing is dead, then this place will be your tomb."

With that, Altar God sealing power descended onto the Vivifiend holy land as well as every member of the species. It became like chains.

The patriarch was no exception. After being wrapped up in the chains, and feeling the immense pressure, all of the Vivifiends were compelled to drop to their knees. Some of them coughed up blood, and seemed like they might explode.

The patriarch trembled and tried to resist the pressure. His head swam.... Finally, he bowed his head.

The empress stood, looking into the depths of the Forbidden Sea, in the general direction of the continent of South Phoenix. A few breaths of time passed in which shē seemed very thoughtful.

Then shē looked away and coolly said, “Send an imperial decree throughout the east of Revered Ancient. Seal all borders. No teleports will be permitted. No traveling. No crossing between regions. Whoever finds Imperial Tutor Xu Qing will be awarded with a destined opportunity leading to godfire. All shall heed this order, including heaven, earth, rivers, lakes, plants, vegetation, living beings, heavenly daos, and gods!”

The empress’ words were heard throughout the east of Revered Ancient, as well as the Forbidden Sea. Countless living beings trembled in response. Godly entities stirred excitedly, and numerous nonhumans suddenly started thinking about the potential benefit to be had.

What happened next, though, shook everyone in the east of Revered Ancient even more deeply. Words echoed out from the direction of the Firemoons.

“Let the east of Revered Ancient heed the dharmic decree of the Firemoons. All living beings including gods will respect these words. Find our Grand Darkheaven Xu Qing. The reward is a destined opportunity leading to godfire.”

Humankind issued a decree. The Firemoons issued a decree. The two decrees overlapped, becoming the most paramount level of will possible in the east of Revered Ancient.

The echo of the words became like an asteroid slamming into the sea, sending out endless waves that became a tsunami and a hurricane at the same time. Every location in the east of Revered Ancient was abuzz. Even going back countless years to ancient times, nothing like this had ever happened in the east of Revered Ancient. People everywhere were going crazy for godfire, and as a result, were searching for Xu Qing!

That was especially true of the godly entities, who were more active than ever before. Gods were no exceptions. This was a destined opportunity leading to godfire! And not just leading to the chance to ignite it, but to the fire itself.

Deep in the Forbidden Sea, Floating Fiend had erased all traces of himself, and had even disguised himself as a human as he made his way carefully along. He had also transformed the tumor on his shoulder so that it looked like a huge sword strapped to his back.

Projecting his voice, he said, *“That pagoda you’re in might be mysterious, you little brat. But there are some things which are simply foreordained.”*

Inside that ‘sword’ was the pagoda, and inside of the pagoda, Xu Qing sat with his eyes closed as he meditated.

Chapter 987: Floating Fiend’s Pressure

“Xu Qing has gone missing!”

“The humans issued a dharmic decree saying that whoever finds Xu Qing will have a destined opportunity leading to godfire!”

“The Firemoons issued a similar decree to all the gods in the east!”

The dharmic decrees issued by humankind and the Firemoon Darkheaven people, and especially the rewards offered, instantly sparked a huge commotion in Revered Ancient. It was like a wind that started in the Forbidden Sea, blowing from South Phoenix into Emperor-Receiving Prefecture. From there, it filled Sea-Sealing County and then the Holytide Region. Eventually, it became a hurricane that covered everything in the east.

In the east of Revered Ancient, all the regions, all the counties, all the prefectures, all the species, all the organizations, and all the sects, whether they were righteous or evil... were all hit by astronomically large waves of shock. Everyone issued orders to start looking for Xu Qing.

Almost immediately, figures shot out from species and groups, scattering in all directions to start the search. Some experts with high cultivation bases used their respective organizations’ prized treasures to expand the area they could search. Sects and species alike mobilized their members to join the ranks of the search.

The east of Revered Ancient was buzzing. At any given moment, countless cultivators were out looking for Xu Qing.

Plants and vegetation. Mountains and rivers. Heaven and earth. Countless godly entities. All were going mad. A destined opportunity leading to godfire was inherently an astonishing level of good fortune. After all, the process of igniting godfire was incredibly difficult, and the ceremony involved was very complex. There was a lot of uncertainty involved, plus it required extensive preparation and precious materials. In addition to all that, there were a host of variables.

Whether it was Crimson Mother’s godchild or the grand steward of the Firemoon Darkheaven people, both had failed despite all their best efforts. From that it could be seen how difficult the process was.

But as of now, the human empress had shifted from the path of cultivators to the path of gods. Shē was now a first-level Altar God, whose words could surpass natural and magical laws. Hēr story had already spread through Revered Ancient, so when shē said shē would give a destined opportunity that could lead to godfire, then it meant the chances of success were incredibly high.

Add in the Firemoon dharmic decree, and it made that destined opportunity even more enticing, and led to a level of madness among countless entities.

An Altar God and three Flawless Gods were jointly offering a destined opportunity to reach godfire... For all intents and purposes that meant that the chances of success were as close to 100% as could be possible!

Many godly entities couldn't hold back from roaring as they burst into motion to join the search. There were even gods in the Godfire level who felt similarly. Wherever their lairs were, they woke up and sent out their godly auras to scour the east of Revered Ancient. To them, it wasn't a matter of malicious intentions or good ones. It wasn't a matter of being righteous or evil. All they cared about was attaining omniscience! And omniscience came from improving a god's personhood. Finding Xu Qing would just take such gods one step closer to omniscience.

Therefore, it was no exaggeration to say that on this day, the east of Revered Ancient exploded because of Xu Qing. No one didn't hear about what was happening. No one was unaware.

The reserve powers being tapped into ensured that Xu Qing's name, though already in the forefront, now glittered even more brilliantly than before, like a star shining above Revered Ancient.

The majestic hurricane raging in the east was obviously noticed in other locations in Revered Ancient. And that ensured that Xu Qing's name spread even farther. Organizations throughout the mainland could truly sense that the east... was home to a peak level of power.

And that power came from the humans and the Firemoons.

To the Redland Nobleplexuses, the Northfate Kings, and the Netherworld Chasmcorpses, this search for Xu Qing was symbolic of something else. What it truly signified was... the first demonstration of the power and will of the alliance of humankind and Firemoon Darkheavens! Domineering might was being revealed in the east of Revered Ancient! That might was truly shaking things in all directions. The Redland Nobleplexuses and other top species could sense it very clearly.

There were others who could sense it as well. And they were the other terrestrial-level holy lands similar to the Vivifiend holy land. They immediately ordered the members of

their own species to return to their respective holy lands and keep a low profile. Now was not the time for any of them to cause trouble and incite disaster.

This display of power by humankind and the Firemoons resulted in a huge search for Xu Qing. It was a hurricane that just kept getting bigger and bigger until it surpassed the will of heaven, and in fact, everything else. Actually, the discussions among various organizations became part of the growing hurricane.

For example, out on the Forbidden Sea in a spot somewhat close to Emperor-Receiving Prefecture was an island occupied by the Seamammoths. The chatter in their marketplaces was a microcosm of what was happening throughout the east of Revered Ancient.

The Seamammoths were generally humanoid in appearance, but didn't look like humans much at all. For one thing, their average height was about three meters. They were green from head to toe, were covered with dense scales, and had long trunks that hung down their chest, similar to those of elephants. Surrounding their trunks were masses of tentacles that made them look very gruish and ferocious. Despite their appearance, they were actually more kind and gentle than some of the violent species on the Forbidden Sea. That, coupled with the fact that their lands were close to Emperor-Receiving Prefecture, ensured that their lands were a popular spot for commerce on the open sea.

The marketplaces on their islands were usually filled with cultivators from a variety of species. At the moment, the marketplaces were bustling, with a cacophony of voices filling the air. While many people were doing business, there were also a lot of people discussing the news about Xu Qing.

"This fellow Xu Qing was actually famous in the Forbidden Sea years ago!"

"He comes from the continent of South Phoenix, and was a disciple of South Phoenix. Over the decades, he's slowly become a legend!"

"It really defies imagination that someone like him would go missing and cause such a commotion!"

"This situation is totally crazy!"

"This one person has thrown the east of Revered Ancient into complete chaos!"

As the discussions raged, there was one particular middle-aged human cultivator who was making his way through one of the markets. He wore tight clothing, had a big sword strapped to his back, and he pulsed with the fluctuations of the great circle of Foundation Establishment. As he heard the talk around him, his expression remained neutral. He just listened and walked.

He was none other than Floating Fiend. Although he had concealed all traces of himself including his karma, he still needed to go out and get information about what was going on in the world, including matters related to himself.

Though Flame Phoenix's search had ultimately failed, Floating Fiend could sense that he was in great danger. That was why he had come to this place. In the course of his eavesdropping, he eventually heard people in the marketplace talking about what happened at the Vivifiend holy land.

"Holy land shmoly land!"

"That Vivifiend holy land was acting all kind and virtuous before. But they were obviously harboring evil intentions. How bold and reckless of them to be involved in Xu Qing's disappearance."

"They're complete idiots! Didn't they even take a minute to consider who Xu Qing is?"

"Flame Phoenix himself stepped in to help Xu Qing. A huge army from Sea-Sealing County came to take the lead, and top experts from the Moonrite Region came as well. The army from the imperial capital showed up, along with the three gods from the Firemoons and two human gods!"

"Even the human empress stepped in, crushing the defenses of that holy land with one blow, and crushing their patriarch. Ultimately, the entire holy land was sealed!"

"Did you hear what the empress said in the end? If Xu Qing perishes, the holy land will become a tomb!"

"The empress' words were about as domineering as you can get."

"I know which words you're talking about. *In the east of Revered Ancient, all shall heed this order, including heaven, earth, rivers, lakes, plants, vegetation, living beings, heavenly daos, and gods!*"

Enthusiastic conversations were going on everywhere. Nobody seemed to notice that one particular middle-aged human cultivator who looked visibly shocked.

"So, it seems your name is Xu Qing," he projected into the sword with divine will.

Inside the dilapidated pagoda, Xu Qing calmly opened his eyes. Although he couldn't sense what was happening outside, he was able to make an educated guess based on what Floating Fiend had just said. Voice cool, he responded, "*The fact you know my name seems to indicate news has spread about me going missing. In that case... it makes you wonder how your Vivifiend holy land is doing right now.*"

Floating Fiend said nothing in return. The news he had heard about his home caused killing intent to swirl within him. But at the same time, he felt immeasurable pressure weighing down on him.

Back when he started chasing Xu Qing, he'd known that he was pursuing someone important. That was obvious given the terrifying karma threads. As a result, he had prepared himself mentally before coming out. However... the fact that this incident had resulted in such a dramatic situation in the east of Revered Ancient was a bit too much for him.

For that empress to be able to destroy a holy land's grand spell formation with a single blow would require a cultivation base of Grand Emperor at the very minimum.... And they're also talking about the three gods of the Firemoons. I'm not sure what level those gods are. In any case, the fact they issued decrees that stirred up the entire eastern portion of Revered Ancient means that this situation has become very tricky indeed....

Floating Fiend's heart just kept sinking as he stood there on the island. Feeling very uneasy, he turned to leave. But then, a frown appeared on his face as he looked off into the distance.

All of a sudden, the island trembled. The shaking filled the island, causing even the mountains to sway back and forth. Countless cultivators looked around in pure astonishment as the rumbling sounds turned deafening. Then, a huge head rose up from the water just outside of the island.

The head resembled that of a crocodile, and was about as big as half of the entire island. It had black scales and emanated a terrifying godliness that turned into a massive pressure over the island. Huge waves surged out in all directions.

The Seamammoths looked over in abject terror. But after only a moment, they seemed to realize what was going on, and they quickly dropped to their knees and bowed, crying out to their god. At the same time, their high priest flew out excitedly to offer pious obeisance. [search the NovelFire\(.\)net website on Google to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.](#)

This godly entity was the 'god' that they had worshiped for years on end. However, for many years, this godly being had been little more than a legend, and no matter what calls they issued, never appeared in person. There were even times when their species had been forced to relocate to different islands due to the threat of extinction, and yet, the god never showed up.

Even the high priest had started to believe that the godly entity they worshiped was nothing more than a legend invented by their earliest ancestors.

But now... the god had actually appeared! The moment the god was visible, a boundless divine will spread out, almost like a terrifying roar.

“Ye shalt... find... Xu Qing... for me!”

As soon as the divine will spread out, every member of the Seamammoth people prostrated, their minds spinning. At the same time, they instinctively acknowledged the orders. The godly entity's divine will swept back and forth on the island for a moment. Then the god sank back down into the sea to continue its own search.

Floating Fiend disappeared the moment the godly entity showed up. After vanishing, he reappeared deep on the seafloor, his expression dour. The news had been bad enough. But then he saw an actual godly entity on the prowl, and he knew full well it wasn't an isolated incident.

The words he had heard spoken on the Seamammoth island kept reverberating in his mind.

“In the east of Revered Ancient, all shall heed this order, including heaven, earth, rivers, lakes, plants, vegetation, living beings, heavenly daos, and gods!”

However, a moment later, Floating Fiend's eyes shone with cold determination.

Alright, let's see how wide your search for Xu Qing will really spread. Can you really issue orders that all living beings will follow??

Chapter 988: Floating Fiend Breaks Down

Similar to the Holytide Region, the Southisle Region bordered the sea. In the wilderness there, Floating Fiend raced along, this time disguised as a nonhuman. He had been traveling in disguise for two days.

At first, he had intended to go along the seafloor until he reached the outer sea. It seemed to him that if the search for Xu Qing was going on in the east of Revered Ancient, then the outer sea would be a safe place to hide out. The outer sea was a dangerous place; it wasn't somewhere to enter blithely. But it seemed like the perfect place to stay out of sight.

Unfortunately, when he realized that there was some sort of invisible sealing magic separating the inner and outer seas, he eventually had to give up on that plan. That sealing magic came from the orders issued by humankind and the Firemoon Darkheaven people. By using godly might to manipulate natural laws, they sealed all exit routes. Getting too close to that magic would make it difficult to keep his disguise up. After studying it very closely, his heart sank.

Ultimately, he turned and went in the opposite direction.

His next plan had been to just hide out on the seafloor. But during the two days that had passed, he sensed the streams of divine will scouring the seafloor increasing

constantly. There were more of them and they were more densely packed as time went on. It was as if all the godly entities in the sea were joining the search.

Even the water itself gave Floating Fiend a very strange feeling, as if the currents around him were somehow growing in number.

And then there's that Flame Phoenix, who seems to be scanning the sea constantly. If things keep going on like this, the Grand Emperor's treasure won't last much longer.... I need to get out of this area!

The sense of pressure and danger eventually forced Floating Fiend to give up on his idea of going to the outer sea, and also his plan to stay hidden on the seafloor. That was what led him, not to Sea-Sealing County, but to the Southisle Region.

There weren't many human forces in the Southisle Region. Instead, the place was controlled by seven mid-sized nonhuman species. Normally speaking, they didn't have much contact with outsiders, and thus, the area had a reputation for being isolationist.

The terrain in the region was primarily mountainous, although there was a huge desert on the border. The region seemed like the perfect place to hide out, except, for that very reason, it was the subject of a lot of attention in the search for Xu Qing. Sadly, Floating Fiend had no other good options.

The upside is that, even though this place is in the east, it isn't controlled by humans....

Keeping such thoughts in mind, Floating Fiend entered the region. As he traveled, he continued to change his appearance every so often, and made sure to sever all traces of his passage, as well as any karma. And thus, he proceeded carefully through the mountainous wilderness.

All the while, he continued assimilating the dilapidated pagoda in the hopes of getting to Xu Qing, who was inside. Sadly for him, the pagoda was mysteriously powerful, and the bubble's force of rejection kept resisting him. The assimilation process was going very slowly.

That just increased Floating Fiend's anxiety. He was particularly frustrated by Xu Qing. He had only said one thing to Xu Qing earlier, only for Xu Qing to use that to deduce some important information. Over the following days, Xu Qing had resisted him with greater intensity, and had occasionally attempted to send out messages via divine will. Though he managed to sever all such streams of divine will, preventing them from going out, they still left him feeling increasingly glum.

Xu Qing, still seated in a cross-legged position, was now about half recovered from his injuries. At a certain point, he sent out a message via divine will.

“You didn’t answer my last question. I guess that just proves that your Vivifiend holy land is in a bad situation.”

He got no answer.

“I suppose another possibility is that... it doesn’t exist anymore.” Xu Qing’s expression was placid. With godliness dominant within him, he was incomparably rational. Thus, despite the fact that he wasn’t a person who liked to talk much, he knew that his only way of getting information about the outside world was to interact with this Imperial Sovereign. *“That means that you must be on the run right now, being chased by humans. You’re probably looking for a good hiding place.”*

Floating Fiend was no fool, and therefore, no matter what Xu Qing said to him, he didn’t provide any response or feedback. And yet, his heart only continued to sink and sink.

Thankfully, his impression of the Southisle Region turned out to be mostly correct. Even after traveling through it for a few days, he didn’t encounter any streams of divine will searching the place. After weighing all the options, he finally picked a cave in which he sat down cross-legged to hide and focus on assimilating the dilapidated pagoda.

However, his moment of peace and quiet only lasted for a few hours. As night approached, rumbling sounds filled heaven and earth outside of Floating Fiend’s cave as several streams of divine will swept through the area. All of them came from powerful experts.

Floating Fiend’s eyes opened, and they shone with the utmost vigilance. About six hours later, the divine will moved on. However, before Floating Fiend could breathe a sigh of relief, an even more terrifying will arrived, accompanied by a godly might that could crush anything in its path.

It filled the area, causing the sky to shake, the land to quake, and mountains to sway back and forth.

It was from a god!

Floating Fiend’s expression flickered as he took out his shears. The authority of erasure spread out, adding to the concealment effect he had around him. Outside of his cave, a great wind blew.

Within that wind was a very gruish voice.

“Xu Qing... Xu Qing... Xu Qing....”

It was hoarse and seemed to conform to an indescribable rhythm. This was clearly a god who was issuing a cry bolstered by godly authority. Outside, wild colors flashed in

heaven and earth. Meanwhile, the sword on Floating Fiend's back vibrated, and within the dilapidated pagoda, Xu Qing's eyes opened.

At that moment, Floating Fiend quickly made a decision. Biting the tip of his tongue, he spat out some of his precious dao blood onto the shears. The shears vibrated and the rust spots on them expanded. But the shears did manage to erase all traces leading to him. Eventually, the voice faded away.

Floating Fiend's face looked incredibly pale. As of now, he didn't dare to stick around. After confirming that the god was gone, he raced off. This time, he didn't put the shears away, but instead, used the authority of erasure constantly as he fled.

In that manner, two more days passed. He passed through countless mountain ranges, shifting directions constantly, until he eventually reached a desert.

The entire time, he was jumpy with fear. He ran into the will of gods a few times, and without his Grand Emperor shears, he would definitely have been discovered. Sadly, the constant use of the shears was wearing them down significantly.

And because he was consistently forced to use his precious dao blood, his cultivation base, which had just experienced a breakthrough, was destabilizing. Unfortunately, he had no other options. The pressure he felt kept growing more intense, until he found himself in the desert. There, he transformed into a host of sand grains that started moving with the wind.

On the first day, everything proceeded normally. On the second day... Floating Fiend in sand form suddenly lurched to a stop as he caught wind of a strange singing off in the distance.

"In ten miles of sand I looked for you; for a hundred miles of swamp I examined each clue; through a thousand mile tomb you fled and flew; ten thousand miles of bamboo passed through my view; Floating Fiend oh Floating Fiend, where could you be; perhaps I'll just wait for you to come to me."

The song was grish and sinister, and when it sank into Floating Fiend's heart, he felt waves of terror assailing him. And that was because the song mentioned his name!

As the song echoed through the desert, the sand vibrated and floated up into the air, turning into numerous little hands that almost resembled swaying stalks of grass.

Astonishingly, the song emanated from those pieces of sand. As it drifted back and forth, it caused a terrifying sensation to build within the visibly astonished Floating Fiend. It gradually turned into an intense sensation of deadly crisis.

Breathing heavily, he unhesitatingly detonated half of the sand that made up his form, which turned into droplets of dao blood that splattered onto the shears. A loud cracking

sound rang out as he severed all karma and all traces of himself. He even severed the time belonging to the shears, as well as its own essence.

To Floating Fiend's senses, everything around him turned blurry. When it became clear again, he was away from the desert, having used the essence of the shears to teleport to safety. He was now in an unfamiliar swampy region. The moment he appeared, he couldn't stop from coughing up a massive mouthful of blood. Before the blood could even land on the ground, he reached out, took the blood and erased it out of existence. He couldn't leave any traces of himself. The terror in his eyes was clearly visible.

What level of god was that?? That god... very nearly had me within its omniscience!!

Breathing unsteadily, Floating Fiend hurried along. Things were just getting more and more dangerous, and also increasingly gruish. Though he had an Imperial Sovereign cultivation base, he felt like he was walking the line between life and death. Before he could get his bearings, his heart lurched all of a sudden.

And it was because... the water in this unknown swamp was stirring. The mud was trembling, and the plants around him were swaying. Even the bugs seemed to be on the move. It was as if everything around him had a will of its own. There wasn't much of that will, and it seemed to be pure instinct. But that instinct... was searching for him and for Xu Qing.

The sense of danger within Floating Fiend exploded to new heights. There wasn't time to do much thinking. He unleashed more of the essence of the shears, and an instant later, he disappeared without a trace.

After a number of teleportations through different areas, the shears were getting rustier, and Floating Fiend was feeling increasingly exhausted. That was when he found himself in front of a bare mountain that looked like a tomb. That was when the lingering fear within him disappeared. However, his heart was now like dirt that had been baked by the sun until it cracked.

Xu Qing then sent out another message with divine will.

"You're running out of time."

"Shut up!" snapped Floating Fiend, which was the first time he had responded after all of the various dangers he had been through.

Only two words were spoken. But they were enough to cause Xu Qing's eyes to glitter brightly. He had his answer.

"It seems time... really is running out for you."

Looking very grim, Floating Fiend cut off the divine will from Xu Qing. The killing will in his heart bubbled.

“Let’s see which happens first, me assimilating Xu Qing, or you people finding me!”

With that said, he turned to leave the mountain. Except that was when boundless and never-ending clouds surged on the horizon. They were like the sea rushing in his direction. Within those clouds, it was just barely possible to see a gigantic baby, crawling along rapidly. Heavenly might came with it, almost accompanying it, as the baby wailed and cried out for ‘daddy.’ It seemed furious. The sound caused natural law to tremble and magical law to prostrate.

Floating Fiend’s eyes went wide.

“Heavenly dao!” he blurted in shock. The shears appeared overhead, and again he unleashed their power. A loud cracking sound rang out as more cracks covered the shears. They now looked to be in horrific shape. However, Floating Fiend did manage to vanish.

When he reappeared, he was completely and utterly lost. All he could do was pick a direction based on instinct and intuition. As he fled, he heard the crying baby several times, as well as numerous instances of the aura of gods and spirits. Each time, he used the shears, no matter how much it pained him to do so.

Over and over again, he spat out dao blood. After fleeing for eight days straight, he was feeling completely exhausted.

However, he’d found a location where there was no divine will, no cry of a baby, no chanting of a god. There was only... a bamboo forest that went on for ten thousand miles! Search the Novel(F)ire.net website on Google to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

The bamboo was bright red! When the wind blew, the bamboo leaves rippled like a crimson sea. The sound of the leaves rustling against each other seemed like wind blowing through a desert and causing the sand to scrape against itself. Along with that sound came something like a nursery rhyme that caused Floating Fiend to completely break down.

“In ten miles of sand I looked for you; for a hundred miles of swamp I examined each clue; through a thousand mile tomb you fled and flew; ten thousand miles of bamboo passed through my view; Floating Fiend oh Floating Fiend, where could you be; perhaps I’ll just wait for you to come to me.”

That nursery rhyme slammed into his mind like heavenly lightning. At the same time, a god strolled through the sea of bamboo. The canopy of heaven turned red thanks to his arrival. The earth became filled with crimson fog thanks to his presence. Time became

a river stained with scarlet thanks to hīs approach. All of that red, from heaven, to earth, to time, converged to create a bright red robe.

The newcomer was a handsome middle-aged man with long, flowing hair. Each strand of that hair was like flowing light, and hē emanated a godly might that would cause suns and moons to lose their glory.

This god's name was Yu Liuchen!

Striding forward until hē was right in front of the trembling Floating Fiend, he laughed softly. *“Floating Fiend oh Floating Fiend, where could you be; perhaps I’ll just wait for you to come to me.”*

Floating Fiend's mind was spinning, and he had completely lost any power to fight back. He couldn't even think properly. The nursery rhyme echoed in his mind, reminding him of everywhere he had been as he fled.

Out in the boundless void, there was a host of clay figures bearing a shrine as they marched through time. They were headed in the direction of the same bamboo sea where Yu Liuchen stood.

Erniu was among the clay figures, waving his god vine and casting his senses about.

A languid voice drifted out of the shrine. “It’s no use, Niu’er. Stop tormenting that little vine. I know where Xu Qing is.”

Chapter 989: A Story-Telling God

A cool breeze picked up outside of the 10,000-mile bamboo forest. The red bamboo stalks swayed back and forth, creating a faint rustling sound. It was not like the sounds of nature. It surpassed that.

Floating Fiend's mind and heart were in turmoil as he felt himself becoming a part of that sound that surpassed anything from nature. It affected his entire body, until he was trembling everywhere. And his thoughts seemed to be fading into nothing. However, that fading of thought wasn't happening very quickly, and thus, he had time to recall what had just played out.

The ‘ten miles of sand’ represented the desert he had been to. The ‘hundred miles of swamp’ was obviously the unknown swamp he had fled through. The ‘thousand mile tomb’ was definitely the bare mountain, while the ‘ten-thousand miles of bamboo’ was the forest in front of his very eyes.

The nursery rhyme had correctly described the exact route he took. It was almost as if everything from the moment he entered the desert had been fabricated by means of the nursery rhyme.

It was a guish type of godly authority. And its name was: storytelling.

By the time Floating Fiend's thoughts led him to the point of being aware of this godly authority, he was defeated. His mind became blank. His gaze became vacant, and he entered an ethereal daze as he stared at the ten-thousand mile forest and the god standing in front of him.

To him, the figure in front of him was immeasurably large, and could control everything. It had omniscience regarding everything.

He had become a character in a story. A fabrication. He couldn't think, because of course, the thoughts of a character in a story are controlled by the person creating the story. He couldn't move, as the actions of a character in a story are determined by the person telling the story. He even lost the ability to feel fear or confusion.

To a certain extent, the person telling the story was actually very kind in that regard. The merciful Yu Liuchen lifted his right hand and made a cupping motion. A ripping sound could then be heard as the long sword on Floating Fiend's back was torn off his body. It flew up into the air. As chunks of disgusting flesh and bones tumbled off it, it revealed the very dim bubble, and the pagoda within it.

Smiling, Yu Liuchen projected a message into the pagoda. *"Well, I say! There's a person in there!"*

Inside the pagoda, Xu Qing quietly stood. Then he walked out of the pagoda, through the bubble, and into the presence of Yu Liuchen.

"Greetings, Senior," he said, bowing his head.

Although Xu Qing had considered that someone would come to his rescue, none of his various analyses had featured Yu Liuchen as the rescuer. It was true that Yu Liuchen had, to some extent, worked together with Grand Emperor Swordsage right before the latter perished. But from Xu Qing's perspective, Yu Liuchen had seemed guish and unpredictable, both in thought and action. In an instant, he could change from being happy to furious, or from being malicious to benevolent. It made it almost impossible to get a read on him.

"Hold on, aren't you Swordsage's successor?" Yu Liuchen asked with an enigmatic smile.

Xu Qing cleared his thoughts, clasped hands, and bowed very respectfully. "Your grace in rescuing me will be forever engraved in my memory, Senior."

Yu Liuchen chuckled. Hē waved hīs right hand, and a host of bamboo stalks flew over and created a table in front of hīm, atop which rested five cups of tea. There was also a furnace off to the side, the flames of which heated a worn teapot. It took only a moment for the water in the teapot to boil. Then, five streams of water flowed out of it, which entered the five tea cups. A fragrant aroma began to fill the area.

Having accomplished that, Yu Liuchen sat down cross-legged, picked up one of the cups of tea, and took a drink. “You say you’ll engrave it in your memory? Are you referring to the current version of you, in which godly nature is dominant? Or are you talking about the version controlled by human nature, the version in which things are easily forgotten?”

Xu Qing thought for a moment. Then he took a blank bamboo slip out of his bag of holding, upon which he carved six words.

Huge favor owed to Yu Liuchen.

He put the bamboo slip back into his bag of holding and looked at Yu Liuchen. “I’ll use that to remember.”

Yu Liuchen’s eyebrows shot up in amusement. Hē looked a bit more closely at Xu Qing. “Interesting. Well, sit down and have some tea.”

Xu Qing didn’t hesitate. He sat down, picked up a cup of tea, and took a drink. After the scalding tea passed down his throat, it seemed to explode. Heat spread through his entire body, slamming into his mind, and stirring up all of his memories going back to his youth. Those memories were like images floating up in his mind.

He saw Peerless City. He saw the bitterness he experienced as a child. He saw the first time he killed someone, and how withdrawn he had become afterward. He saw the death of Grandmaster Bai. He saw the camaraderie he had experienced in Seven Blood Eyes. He saw his conflicted reaction to facing Zi Qing. He saw Palace Lord Kong and Grand Emperor Swordsage.... He saw Plumdark, Ling’er, and his Eldest Brother....

And yet, all of those experiences, all of those images, somehow seemed unfamiliar, as if they were from someone else’s life. The joys and sorrows, the vicissitudes of life, didn’t seem capable of affecting his heart. But then, because of the heat of the tea, the memory images became more colorful and vibrant. The happiness, anger, sorrow, and joy became more obvious. Ultimately, they became so prominent they were like peals of heavenly thunder, cracking endlessly.

RUMBLE!

Xu Qing shook from head to toe with joy.

RUMBLE!

His mind spun as he felt fear, then anger, then confusion, and then sadness....

All of the various emotions and longings of human nature came out in force. To him, the world was different compared to before. It was more colorful.

Panting for breath, Xu Qing looked up. His expression was no longer calm like it had been before. All of the human nature that he had struggled to keep suppressed before was now bubbling. It was once again forming an equilibrium with the godliness he had intentionally released.

What was more, uncontrollable killing intent toward Floating Fiend appeared in his heart. Xu Qing immediately turned to look at the disoriented Floating Fiend, his eyes burning with the desire to kill. But only an instant later, he took a deep breath and looked back at Yu Liuchen. Standing, he clasped hands and again bowed deeply at the waist. Search the Nôvelfire.net website on Google to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

“Many thanks, Senior!”

Yu Liuchen took a drink of tea. “There’s no need to thank me. I came here mostly to satisfy my curiosity.”

Xu Qing hesitated as he tried to wrap his mind around what exactly Yu Liuchen had been curious about.

Looking closely at Xu Qing, Yu Liuchen said, “I’m curious about a person with a body made of Eminent Desolation’s flesh. Before you, nothing like that ever happened. So I came. To be honest, if I hadn’t come, someone else would have rescued you. And soon, at that. That’s why you really don’t need to thank me. I don’t want any big karmic connection to develop between us.”

Xu Qing looked down thoughtfully at the bamboo table. Yu Liuchen had drunk tea from one cup, while Xu Qing had drunk from another. But there were three other cups.

“But I do have to say, this whole thing is very, very amusing....” Smiling, Yu Liuchen waved his hand at the befuddled Floating Fiend.

Floating Fiend shivered as he regained both his senses and his ability to move. His pupils constricted as confusion and terror returned to them.

Then Yu Liuchen began speaking in a very casual and relaxed manner. “Floating Fiend has some very nice shears. However... they can’t fool my eyes, let alone the eyes of that empress you humans have. Besides, from beginning to end, your Master never said a single word.

“Of course, you have no way of knowing... that after you went missing, both humankind and the Firemoons issued dharmic decrees. Every organization you can imagine sprang into action. They cooperated perfectly. The east of Revered Ancient has been working together as if it has a single, united will. That was quite intimidating to the other areas of the mainland, and it was quite intimidating to the holy lands around here. At the same time, many forces used the search for you as an excuse to deploy troops and plan for war. Some of the details... are even impossible for me to perceive clearly.”

Yu Liuchen clucked hīs tongue in admiration.

Xu Qing had no trouble picking up on the hidden implications in what Yu Liuchen said. He sighed.

As for Floating Fiend, what he had heard already had him feeling extremely nervous.

“My guess,” Yu Liuchen continued, “is that your empress’ next move is going to be... using your situation as a justification for kicking the holy lands out of the east. It would be completely logical to claim that it’s to make sure nothing like this happens again in the future. By paying only a small price, the entire east can be purged. No wonder Swordsage picked hēr.” Yu Liuchen’s eyes narrowed as hē looked at Xu Qing. “This really must have been tough for you! All twists and turns, right? Gods really can be ruthless. Rough. So rough!”

Xu Qing couldn’t think of anything clever to say. Looking at Yu Liuchen, he said, “That’s pretty deep, Senior...”

Hearing that caused Yu Liuchen to smile happily. Hē was intentionally trying to sow discord, for no other reason than he found it amusing. Except, hīs smile faltered when he heard what Xu Qing had to say next..

“However, Senior, the situation with me isn’t that simple.... If things really played out as you just described, it seems more likely to me that my Master has been paying attention the whole time. Senior, isn’t it possible that you showing up was actually part of what my Master predicted would happen?”

Yu Liuchen blinked a few times. After what Xu Qing just said, hē suddenly didn’t feel as amused as before. Hē actually looked thoughtful.

That was when Floating Fiend’s eyes filled with madness. Spinning, he unleashed every scrap of his cultivation base and aura, paying every price possible, including as much dao blood as he could spare, to try to flee. The Grand Emperor’s shears appeared above him, and they slashed down toward him. Then a cracking sound rang out as the shears sliced through the air. Floating Fiend vanished.

Xu Qing watched it all happen coldly.

Yu Liuchen, meanwhile, didn't spare a second glance. Instead, he coolly said, "Allow me to tell you a story, kid."

"The story is about a cultivator named Floating Fiend. He walked through a ten-mile desert, a hundred-mile swamp, a thousand-mile tomb, and a ten-thousand mile forest. Eventually, he got lost. But then he got lucky and managed to find his way back. In a show of gratitude, he blew himself up, and then he took a drink of my tea."

All of a sudden, the spot where Floating Fiend had just disappeared rippled and distorted. Floating Fiend appeared, dilapidated and weak. In fact, he seemed like he was about to collapse. The moment he appeared, he looked at the two people present as if he hadn't seen them for an entire month. His expression was one of absolute astonishment and unending terror.

A month ago, he had severed his karma with his shears, then detonated the essence of the shears to perform a greater teleportation. After that, he fled for a month, experiencing all sorts of deadly situations. He crossed numerous dangerous regions... only to return to this very spot.

Trembling, he looked at Yu Liuchen, then unhesitatingly decided to self-detonate. Rumbling built up within him. It was the only way he could think to free himself.

But then he became lucid again and found himself staring at the same bamboo forest, the same Xu Qing, and the same Yu Liuchen. He did not wake up where he thought he would wake up. Instead, he woke up here.

"Have some tea," Yu Liuchen said coolly.

Floating Fiend looked at the cups of tea on the table. Trembling in despair, he reached out, took a cup, and drank.

Meanwhile, the distant horizon turned gray, as if it were turning into clay. The effect spread as a procession of clay people appeared, bearing a shrine. Among the team was Erniu. Looking very excited, he waved at Xu Qing.

"Little Ah Qing! Your Eldest Brother is here!"

Chapter 990: And Now, I'm the Hunter

When Xu Qing saw the clay people and the shrine coming over the horizon, he knew exactly who was on the way. And upon seeing Erniu, all of the exhaustion Xu Qing felt after having been hunted and experiencing the assimilation process... faded away.

An instant later, the clay people were hovering in midair overhead.

Erniu excitedly stepped out of the procession and dropped down next to Xu Qing. There, he punched Xu Qing softly on the shoulder, causing a stream of warm power to flow through Xu Qing. When Erniu sensed how weak Xu Qing was, and detected the evidence of how many times he had exploded, he said nothing. He just winked and laughed.

“Little Junior Brother, tell me, when you were running for your life, were you thinking of me? Let me guess. Whenever I’m not around, you have a hard time stomaching food. You don’t sleep well. You just can’t get used to life like that! I bet your cultivation even gets boring. No matter what you did, you felt like something was missing.

“Did I guess correctly? Well, did I? Hahaha! Come on, there’s no need to feel embarrassed. It’s fine! Just muster up the gumption to tell the truth!”

Erniu was clearly feeling very pleased with himself, and yet, he didn’t forget to butter up Yu Liuchen while he was at it. Turning, he bowed deeply and plastered a very flattering look onto his face. “Well now, this handsome and elegant individual, who has such a noble demeanor and an imposing bearing, could only be the legendary Senior with the most noble of spirits, Yu Liuchen. In his presence, the glory of heaven and earth fades, while the starry sky glitters brightly for his sake. I am your humble servant Chen Erniu. Greetings, Senior!”

As Yu Liuchen sat there with teacup in hand, hē looked Erniu up and down, blinked a few times, and then smiled as if in amusement. “Xu Qing, this Eldest Brother of yours really held nothing back. He was the first one to realize that you went missing, and he sent jade slip messages to about half of the east of Revered Ancient.”

When Xu Qing saw his Eldest Brother and heard Yu Liuchen’s words, a smile broke out on his face for the first time in a long while. He was about to say something when the shrine up above glittered.

A wind blew, and the shrine’s curtain parted, revealing a clay fox within. The clay fox initially seemed like an inanimate object, but in the blink of an eye, it filled with such color that it seemed to be alive. And then it really became alive as it transformed into a bewitchingly charming young woman who stepped out of the shrine and into the bamboo forest. Search the novel Fire.net website on Google to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Her ample bosom swayed with her as she walked, while her hourglass figure and astonishing curves were enough to cause anyone’s heart to start racing. There were few other words that could describe her other than: perfect. She wore gauzy red clothing that only half-covered her, and looked like it might fall off at any moment. Her skin was so fair it was almost translucent, and her curvaceous body was so attractive that anyone who looked at her would be overwhelmed with the desire to be with her.

Once in the bamboo forest, she stepped over to Xu Qing's side and then spoke in a languid voice that dripped with charm. "You gave your primal yang to someone else behind my back, you naughty little boy. Because of that, I wasn't planning to come rescue you."

Xu Qing didn't react to her words. Instead, he put on a brave face and bowed in greeting. "Well met, Senior."

The clay fox snorted coldly. Then she looked him up and down. She seemed pleased. "I have to admit that Niu'er was right, though. Now that you have this new body, you basically have all your primal yang back."

Erniu cleared his throat and smacked his chest. "That's right! I might try to trick other people, but I would never try to trick you, ma'am. What's more, now that my little Junior Brother has a new body, he's definitely going to be more passionate than before. Look, this body of his is virtually bursting at the seams. That energy and blood is burning sky-high!"

He looked at Xu Qing and blinked a few times.

Xu Qing said nothing in response to Erniu's strange words.

"Ah, whatever," the clay fox said. "I'm not going to quibble with you." It seemed that her heart had started racing in response to what Erniu just said, and she even licked her lips instinctively as she looked Xu Qing up and down again.

"How slutty," Yu Liuchen said coolly.

Starfire paid no heed to his words, and instead turned to look at Floating Fiend with eyes so cold they seemed to be a gaze on a dead man. "So you're the filthy imbecile that conspired to take Xu Qing's fleshly body?"

Erniu also looked at Floating Fiend, his eyes filled with icy killing intent. Erniu wasn't sure how much killing intent others felt toward Floating Fiend. But at this moment, his desire to put Floating Fiend to death couldn't have been more intense. Though he had seemed relaxed up to this point, and had bragged a bit to Xu Qing, the reality was that he just wanted to ease some of Xu Qing's exhaustion after a period of such intense danger.

In fact, there were few people in the world who had been more anxious than him. And when he sensed how weak Xu Qing was and how many times he exploded, his heart burned with flames of rage. And that rage wasn't just directed toward Floating Fiend. He was also angry with the empress.

I'm not the only one who had a goddamned plan at work. Therefore... the fact that this whole thing went so south is something I sure as hell am not going to forget!

As Erniu snorted coldly in his heart, he looked at Floating Fiend with more and more killing intent.

Floating Fiend shivered and felt like he was about to collapse mentally. The woman who had just arrived was also a god. What was more... he detected a bit of the aura of an Altar God. That indicated that this god was at the ultimate peak of Flawless God. His despair ran as deep as the sea, and he knew that there was no escaping this situation. He just hoped he could die quickly. That was his only hope. Except that earlier, self-detonating hadn't done a thing.

The only way out of this will be to get one of these gods to kill me outright....

Having reached the conclusion that this was definitely the best idea, he suddenly lunged toward Xu Qing as if to attack him with full force. In reality, he was just hoping to die.

Xu Qing, his face completely calm, didn't attempt to dodge. He just looked coldly at Floating Fiend closing in on him.

Starfire reached out and gently tapped Floating Fiend's forehead.

A rumbling sound echoed out as Floating Fiend's cultivation base shattered. A tremor passed through him, and he deflated like a popped balloon. In an instant, he was emaciated and weak in both aura and fleshly body. However, he wasn't dead.

Then Starfire spoke, and the words caused his withered body to shake uncontrollably. "What we see here isn't the full you, right? That's why you're trying to get yourself killed."

Starfire was absolutely correct. Floating Fiend wasn't here in full. It was only part of him. After sensing the karma connected to Xu Qing, he had obviously made certain preparations. He had also taken precautions in case he failed and ended up dying. Specifically, during the chase, he had used an immortal skill that had been passed down in his species.

It was a very gruish immortal skill that involved inscribing one's memories into a seed that could be planted in another life form. When activated, the memories would erupt, and in a process very similar to reincarnation, he would take over that other life form and become a new version of himself! If his plan went smoothly, then he wouldn't have any need to activate the immortal skill. But if things didn't go smoothly... then after he died, the skill would activate. In that case, even if he did perish, he would essentially be resurrected.

Right now, he wanted to activate the immortal skill, except that even dying now seemed like a luxury.

Xu Qing's eyes looked both cold and thoughtful as he walked toward Floating Fiend, who was now completely incapable of fighting back, thanks to High God Starfire.

As he neared, Floating Fiend managed to look up at the human he had very nearly assimilated. It took effort, but he managed to grin in a very scornful manner, and even put some killing intent into his eyes. He didn't speak, but he made his attitude clear via his facial expression. He was telling Xu Qing: *"Without help from others, you would have become a part of me. You... are nothing."*

Xu Qing understood what that look meant. And he also understood the reason for the look. Floating Fiend wanted to die. Therefore, upon nearing, he took Floating Fiend's bag of holding, then lifted his hand. A dagger appeared there, which he stabbed into Floating Fiend's body.

Blood flowed out. Face completely expressionless, Xu Qing pulled the dagger out, then stabbed it again. And again. And again, until he stabbed him eight times. From the moment he first saw Floating Fiend until now, nine days had passed. But he only stabbed him eight times.

As blood flowed down Floating Fiend, and his aura fragmented, Xu Qing's shadow slowly covered him.

Xu Qing issued a command via divine will, and Little Shadow opened its mouth and started devouring Floating Fiend's shadow. At the same time, the god vine emerged from Xu Qing and viciously burrowed into Floating Fiend and started chewing him up from the inside.

Floating Fiend shook as a look of indescribable pain filled his bloodshot eyes. He shrieked in astonishment, and yet, managed to hold back from expressing pain. He wanted to die. But death was slow in coming.

As his fleshly body experienced torment, Xu Qing lifted his right hand, put his hand on the top of Floating Fiend's head, and started... to assimilate his soul! He had practically no soul threads left, and he needed to replenish them. There could hardly be something more suitable than the soul of an Imperial Sovereign.

Floating Fiend shook violently as his soul collapsed and was assimilated, bringing pain that far surpassed anything from his fleshly body. He wanted to fight back, but the suppression from High God Starfire shattered any ability to resist. He was like a piece of fish meat that could do nothing but allow Xu Qing to assimilate him. In fact, it was almost exactly how he had been trying to assimilate Xu Qing earlier. The roles had been reversed.

Time passed. The assimilation continued. Xu Qing's soul threads formed anew. The pain turned into a sea of despair, until Floating Fiend couldn't suppress it any more. Face distorting, he unleashed a howl of anguish.

Xu Qing's expression remained placid in the face of the howling. Eventually, his soul threads were fully recovered. At that point, he turned to look at Erniu.

Erniu naturally knew what that look meant. Licking his lips, he stepped forward and clamped his hand onto the trembling Floating Fiend. In the blink of an eye, the image of the Heavenly Dog appeared, voracious and full of killing intent. Its jaws snapped.

Floating Fiend's screams grew shriller. After enough time had passed for an incense stick to burn, Floating Fiend's soul was so shattered that only a bit of it was left keeping his life force from dispersing. The soul of an Imperial Sovereign was too much for Xu Qing and Erniu to contain. Therefore, Starfire helped them to take the portion they currently couldn't eat and convert it into a host of soul pearls. The sparkling and translucent soul pearls were so impressive that even one would send a host of cultivators into a frenzy.

However, Xu Qing's revenge wasn't over yet. Having assimilated the soul, his eyes glittered with coldness as he unleashed the Profound Sun Immortal Light Magic. As a sun, he rose up into the air, becoming a golden crow that spat fires of assimilation onto Floating Fiend. The fire, combined with the magic of the immortal light, was completely terrifying. Eventually, the golden crow devoured the entire fleshly body to burn and assimilate it internally. Xu Qing wanted to see if he could actually assimilate Floating Fiend's authority of erasure.

Now that Floating Fiend's fleshly body had been devoured, the only thing left behind were the dilapidated shears.

Xu Qing collected the shears up, his eyes shining with ferocity. You want to assimilate me? Fine. I'll assimilate every scrap of you! When it was done, Xu Qing turned to Yu Liuchen and Starfire. He bowed.

Yu Liuchen put down his cup of tea.

"You owe me a favor," he said coolly. "Once you've taken care of certain matters, I'll come looking for you."

With that, he disappeared along with the bamboo forest. After he was gone, the surroundings turned into... a majestic desert.

High God Starfire looked at the spot where Floating Fiend had disappeared and sighed. "Do you need me to help you find the rest of that filthy thing?"

Xu Qing shook his head. "I'll always remember your kindness, High God. I can handle what's next."

Starfire smiled and then said some words that were very similar to those spoken by Yu Liuchen, except with a very different meaning. "That's fine. I suppose you owe me a favor now. After you take care of certain matters, I'll come looking for you, okay?"

High God Starfire licked hēr lips and seemed more charming than ever.

Xu Qing hesitated.

The god swayed back to the shrine and turned into a clay fox. Then the clay people carried the shrine back up into the sky and off into the distance.

The desert was now empty except for Xu Qing and Erniu.

Erniu looked at Xu Qing and grinned. "What are you going to do next, little Ah Qing?"

Xu Qing's heart was full of icy killing intent. Looking in the direction of the Forbidden Sea, he narrowed his eyes and spoke in a voice like a blade. "He still owes me. Now, I'm going to be the one hunting him."

On the seafloor in the Forbidden Sea, a snakeneck dragon swirled along hunting for prey. However, just as it opened its mouth to devour its target, it suddenly shivered as five-colored light built up in its eyes. Memories that weren't its own erupted in its mind, becoming a tempest that swept through its fleshly body with devastating force. It exploded in a bloody haze.

A moment later, the chunks of flesh converged back into a humanoid shape. Its eyes opened, and though they looked blank at first, they quickly became lucid, and then grim.

Looks like my true form failed!

The person who had formed from the exploded snakeneck dragon looked around. He suddenly felt uneasy.

Which of the people connected to that brat by karma ended up killing my true form...? Regardless, I'm obviously very weak now. I'm not even as strong as an Imperial Sovereign. I guess I need to follow my original plan and find a place to hide out.

Suppressing his anxiety, he raced off to find a hiding spot.

Deathblade's Thoughts

Many thanks to **Mlovell** for the review!