

Villain 1011

Chapter 1011: Qing Yi's true identity, angered one of the three supreme beings in the Real Land

Judging by her appearance alone, it was difficult to determine the woman in black's age. She stood there with flat, emotionless eyes, seemingly devoid of any emotional fluctuations. No matter what she looked at in this world, her gaze remained steady, incapable of stirring up any waves. The atmosphere was calm, almost serene.

To Xiao Wang Yue, the depth of the black-clothed woman's eyes exuded a sense of dignity and indifference, as if she were overlooking countless sentient beings.

"Who are you, and why are you here?"

Wang Yue asked again, her voice tinged with anxiety. The woman in black instilled a deep sense of unease in her.

Wang Yue's hair stood on end, filled with vigilance and trepidation. Goosebumps prickled her skin, and cold sweat trickled down her back as if she were confronting some unspeakable horror. Moreover, what did the woman in black mean by mentioning immortal blood?

In her inherited memories, there was no mention of anything regarding the true blood of immortals.

"It doesn't matter who I am," the woman in black said, her tone flat.

“You should be grateful to your master. You are free to roam here, and since that’s the case, I won’t make things difficult for you.”

She didn’t answer Xiao Wang Yue’s question but spoke plainly, her words deliberate and clear. There was a calmness to her demeanor, as if she were in complete control of everything in the world, unbothered by any external concerns.

Xiao Wang Yue felt a strange urge to worship and submit before this figure, but the notion struck her as absurd and frightening. She quickly shook her head, trying to dispel the thought from her mind.

The woman in black didn’t linger, turning instead to walk into the palace, leaving Xiao Wang Yue in a state of confusion and unease.

Seeing this scene, Xiao Wang Yue’s anxiety surged. Despite her extreme unease and fear, she mustered the courage to rush forward and block the woman in black.

“The palace is a sacred place! No one who has nothing to do with it can enter!” she shouted, determination fueling her voice.

As she spoke, she unleashed a radiant heavenly light from her hands, summoning the phantom of a moon guardian immortal beast behind her. It manifested lifelike, as if it had truly reappeared in this world. The slender figure shimmered with immortal light, standing tall and imposing like a mountain. Its scarlet eyes, resembling flawless gemstones, radiated a fierce spirit as they charged directly at the woman in black.

Xiao Wang Yue was not skilled in combat; this was her first encounter with another human since her birth. Until now, she had lived a carefree life, free from worries about food or shelter. Qing Yi had taken good care of her during their time in the Upper Realm, ensuring her comfort. Even her somewhat distant master, Gu Changge, had provided for her needs through the clansmen, sending her the necessary resources.

However, now faced with the woman in black, Xiao Wang Yue could only rely on her instinctive memory as she moved to confront her, trying to halt her advance.

“Knowing you’re no match for me, yet you still dare to attack. This loyalty to protect your master is commendable,” the woman in black remarked without turning her head, her tone calm yet carrying a hint of approval.

“But it’s a pity you waste your true immortal blood. Any ancient moon guardian beast of the same realm could easily suppress you. There’s a lot of power within you, yet you don’t know how to harness it. It seems your master hasn’t taught you much, merely treating you like a pet.”

She continued, “A true moon guardian ancient beast seeks to expand its territory across the vastness, to conquer the skies and the earth.”

Buzz!!!

The moment the woman in black finished speaking, a layer of fuzzy golden ripples appeared around her, silently spreading as if enveloping the entire space-time and universe. In an instant, the place felt frozen, and the very flow of time seemed to halt.

Xiao Wang Yue was struck with terror as she found herself immobilized in the air. Even her thoughts felt alien, locked away, rendering her unable to think or move. She could only watch helplessly as the woman in black walked into the palace.

“Don’t worry, I have no malice toward your master. I came here just to bring her home,” the woman in black stated plainly before continuing into the hall, leaving Xiao Wang Yue in stunned silence.

The atmosphere was eerily empty inside the palace, with strands of white mist rising and floating about, creating an ethereal ambiance. In the depths of the main hall, one corner lay in disarray, the curtains billowing like clouds. There, a slender figure sat cross-legged, blurring into a scene that resembled a delicate painting.

After the woman in black arrived, a complicated expression crossed her face.

“Xiao Jiu...”

She approached softly, ready to speak. Qing Yi, who had kept her eyes closed in meditation, suddenly opened them, sensing the presence nearby. Her gaze was peaceful and transparent, like a bright moon and flawless jade, radiating an infinitely beautiful aura.

“Third Sister...”

Qing Yi said, looking at the woman in black before her. She nodded slightly, clearly recognizing her.

Unless marked by her, no one could find this hidden place. At this moment, it was clear that Gu Changge had not come here. Thus, ruling out that possibility, if someone from outside had located her, it would likely be from her own clan.

All living beings and spirits in the previous era of the real world of mountains and seas knew Qing Yi as the true spirit of that realm. However, they were unaware of her true identity as a member of a mysterious and peculiar family in the vastness, known as Ji Chan.

The Ji Chan family, named “Ji Chan Bearing the Era,” held immense significance; the slightest tremor of their cicada wings signified an impending change in the era, often leading to the downfall of common people. Throughout history, time flowed, eras reincarnated wherever Ji Chan passed, and everything was renewed.

The relationship between Ji Chan and the Epoch Tree was akin to that of a phoenix. Ji Chan sought refuge in the Epoch Tree, and the two coexisted, sharing both fortune and misfortune. The Epoch Tree nurtured all spirits and common folk, evolving the universe of the heavens. It was known by various names, such as the World Tree, the Ancestor Tree, and the Origin Tree, across different civilizations.

The Ji Chan race held great significance in the boundless world. Some civilizations viewed them as a sign of auspiciousness, while others regarded them as a harbinger of disaster, avoiding them like venomous snakes.

Wherever Ji Chan went, the outcome was always extreme: either everything returned to ruin and decay, or it prospered eternally. There were no in-betweens. However, the Ji Chan were incredibly rare, with fewer than a hundred individuals scattered throughout the vast expanse of existence.

Being part of this enigmatic race, Qing Yi had never revealed her true identity, not even to Gu Changge. Yet, this secrecy was likely why Gu Changge never pressed her on the matter. When he first encountered her, she was still somewhat naive and inexperienced. As the true spirit of the original mountains and seas’ real world, Qing Yi had led the Heaven-Slayers in their fight against the great reckoning.

Compared to the many powerhouses of the vast expanse, her strength was relatively small, just having crossed the threshold of the Dao Realm.

Naturally, such power wasn’t enough to attract Gu Changge’s attention; at the time, he had shown little interest in her. Over the years, Qing Yi’s performance was pretty ordinary, without revealing many extraordinary traits. While this was partly due to her careful concealment, another major

reason was the near-destructive trauma she had suffered long ago. Compared to a true Ji Chan, she was born with inherent weaknesses.

The Ji Chan race, incredibly rare and mysterious, were said to be on par with the Epoch Tree. Even when they were first conceived and born, their strength far exceeded that of ordinary races. Qing Yi's ability to operate independently from the Dao Chang Realm and create a separate place of reincarnation was due to her unique talents as a member of the Ji Chan clan.

The birth of a new Epoch Tree was a testament to her heritage. Strictly speaking, she wasn't truly the original spirit of the mountains and seas' real world. Her existence predated the real world itself, and the true spirit that later manifested was merely born after the real world had taken form.

There was a fundamental difference between the two. The gestation and birth of a real world were incredibly arduous. It involved the collision of countless substances within the chaos, with only a fleeting chance for evolution into a new world. The world's level continuously changed through numerous leaps and collisions, allowing the potential to transform into a true realm.

In contrast, the Ji Chan family possessed a talent akin to that of the Epoch Tree, enabling them to create and nurture worlds. The slightest tremor of a cicada's wings signified an era's change, the death of an old world, and the birth of a new one. This was a force akin to the very laws governing the universe.

The woman in black standing before Qing Yi was clearly also from the Ji Chan clan, as indicated by Qing Yi's recognition of her.

"I never expected you would entrust the life of the ninth true spirit to such a fragile realm. The spark of immortal civilization you took away back then was actually used here..."

The black-clad woman frowned, scrutinizing the green-clad woman whose aura felt somewhat off.

The woman in black stretched out her hand, gently placing it between Qing Yi's eyebrows. Golden ripples spread across the room, enveloping Qing Yi entirely. Suddenly, countless memory fragments flashed before her eyes, like fleeting images.

"I initially thought you had merely found a place to recover your body and restore your foundation. But I never imagined you had done so much over these epochs," the woman in black said, her tone growing more severe with each passing word. "If our mother learns of this, no amount of pleading from me will save you from the punishment you'll face."

Her expression darkened, a mix of uncertainty and frustration clouding her features. Qing Yi, remaining silent, shook her head slightly. She knew well that her third sister's strength far exceeded her own, leaving no room for resistance. Besides, in her current weakened state, she could barely maintain consciousness, let alone put up a fight.

It would be impossible for ordinary beings in the Dao Realm to delve so easily into her memories. But the woman in black wasn't just anyone—she was a member of the same Ji Chan clan.

The two's roots shared the same origin, enabling the woman in black to investigate Qing Yi's memories through extraordinary, heaven-defying means. Yet, even for her, the vast torrent of memory fragments spanning countless epochs wasn't something she could easily process all at once. She sifted through them, only focusing on what she deemed important.

"I always knew you were willful and reckless, but I never thought you would be so foolish," the woman in black muttered, her tone full of displeasure. She seemed ready to continue scolding Qing Yi, but upon seeing Qing Yi's current frail state, she stopped herself and swallowed the words that were on the tip of her tongue.

Despite calling her "Xiao Jiu," the youngest sister, after so many years, there was little joy in this reunion. The weight of time and circumstances seemed to dampen any warmth she might have felt.

Instead of feeling warmth, the woman in black grew angrier as she recalled everything Qing Yi had done over the years. However, Qing Yi remained calm, her tone indifferent, unaffected by the black-clad woman's growing frustration.

"Third sister, if you've come here just to lecture me again, then you can forget it. I've already heard enough of those words," Qing Yi replied calmly.

The woman in black, noticing Qing Yi's indifferent attitude, felt her inner calm falter as a wave of irritation surfaced. Despite the outward calm, her words dripped with frustration.

"You defied the clan back then, abandoning our family's fate, and stole the fire of the immortal civilization. Since then, you've been hiding in the vastness... Do you really think the clan hasn't been searching for you all these years? If it weren't for me and your other sisters covering for you, helping you from the shadows, do you think you'd have been able to remain hidden here safely for so long?"

Her tone, filled with frustration and disappointment, was far harsher than the demeanor she had shown before entering the palace. It was clear that this confrontation was deeply personal.

Qing Yi fell silent. She had always suspected that it was her third sister and the others who had secretly shielded her all these years. Otherwise, with her relatively limited strength, she would have been found and captured long ago, offered as a sacrifice to the clan's greater purpose.

"Third sister, I'm sorry..." Qing Yi sighed softly, her previously indifferent eyes softening as she acknowledged the truth behind her sister's words.

When Qing Yi fled from the clan, she was still very young—selfish, rebellious, and unaware of the far-reaching consequences of her actions. At the time, she didn't think too deeply. All she could focus on was the bitter thought that, despite having so many older sisters, her mother and the others had chosen her, the youngest, to be the sacrifice that would quell the looming catastrophe.

It felt unfair and cruel. In her youthful anger and desperation, she chose to escape, recklessly taking with her the invaluable spark of the immortal civilization.

As she reflected, Qing Yi realized how rash and naive she had been. With her meager strength back then, there was no way she could have successfully fled from the clan without the covert assistance of her sisters. Their help must have been why she had managed to remain hidden for so many epochs, living in relative peace and avoiding the wrath that should have followed her betrayal.

Her actions—fleeing, stealing the fire of immortal civilization—were crimes the clan would not forgive lightly. They were actions that could bring severe punishment, perhaps even death. Yet, somehow, no one had come after her. No one had hunted her down or made her pay for the turmoil she had caused within the clan. This peaceful existence was not something she had earned on her own but had been granted to her through the quiet sacrifices of her sisters.

Qing Yi had always carried guilt toward her clan, and her decision to protect the souls of those in the original mountains and seas was deeply tied to that regret over her selfishness. She knew that she wasn't an inherently selfless or loving person, but the weight of what she had done in the past had shaped her actions in the present.

Hearing this, the woman in black was momentarily taken aback, her eyes softening. She sighed, sensing that Qing Yi had indeed matured over the many years.

“It seems you've grown a lot after all,” she said, her tone gentler now. Despite Qing Yi's rebellious and selfish nature in her youth, she had been the youngest and most cherished among her sisters. And as Qing Yi had guessed, her sisters had protected her in secret during her time of hiding, shielding her from the consequences of her actions.

After a moment of hesitation, Qing Yi asked the question that weighed heavily on her heart, the one she had dreaded the most but could no longer avoid. “After I escaped, what happened to the clan?”

Beneath her calm exterior, Qing Yi’s emotions were roiling. She couldn’t forget the moment when a monstrous giant hand had emerged from the real place, snapping the mother tree of the Ji Chan family like a fragile twig, cutting off all their luck and vitality. It was a catastrophe beyond imagining, and she feared what had become of them after she had left.

It was said that the mother tree of the Ji Chan family had absorbed a significant amount of luck and origin from the boundless world, which ultimately led to its offense against one of the three most supreme and mysterious existences in the real land. When the mother tree was snapped off, the entire civilization to which the Ji Chan family belonged faced near annihilation.

This civilization, positioned close to the real place, had long served as an outpost and a formidable blade in times of crisis, often charging forward to confront threats on behalf of the greater realm. Yet, despite their valiant efforts, they found themselves facing the most terrifying natural disaster since ancient times, resulting in a catastrophic near-destruction that left them vulnerable and fractured.

Although the Ji Chan family was extraordinary, their position was elevated by the mother tree’s presence, their numbers were few. Despite their lofty status, they couldn’t compare to the strength of a supreme civilization. When the mother tree was snapped off, it did not quell the fury of that powerful being. Instead, the wrath manifested as relentless natural disasters and catastrophes, threatening the entire Ji Chan lineage.

As the primary culprits, the Ji Chan family faced near annihilation, with disaster looming over them constantly. In response, the high priest of the most powerful civilization nearby employed numerous methods, suffering great losses, to barely establish communication with the real place. It was determined that only by offering suitable sacrifices to that realm could the overwhelming anger be appeased, and the terrible natural calamities ended.

Chapter 1012: She escaped, but she stayed there forever, opened a new map

They should rightfully bear the calamity caused by the Ji Chan family. However, at that time, Qing Yi was still young and unaware of the significance of this catastrophe for the entire Ji Chan clan. All she knew was that she had been chosen, along with her mother, the high priest, and others, as a sacrifice, becoming a so-called saint. In reality, she was to be sacrificed to the other side, leaving her fate unknown and her future uncertain.

Though the ever-kind high priest insisted that being a saint was her supreme honor—an offering to that supreme being and a service by her side—Qing Yi felt differently. Countless individuals fought desperately to be chosen as saints, yet none were deemed worthy. This led her to believe that the priest's reassurances were mere attempts to calm her fears about escaping.

Since ancient times, no one had known what lay beyond the Real Land. Any existence or civilization that dared to approach this realm had been buried in the last ruins, annihilated in the long river of history.

Although the Ji Chan family enjoyed a long lifespan and possessed talents unmatched by other beings, they were still like mere flies in the presence of the Real Land, easily annihilated and hardly worth mentioning. Young Qing Yi did not fully understand many things. In the Ji Chan clan, she was cherished by her older sisters and had grown up carefree.

So, when she suddenly learned that she would be sacrificed to the Real Land, she could hardly accept it. This decision came from her mother and the very sisters who had always shown her love. Naturally, the young Qing Yi was unwilling to accept such a fate, and she was filled with dread at the thought of the Real Land.

According to ancient traditions, the Real Land represented the source of darkness and great terror, the ultimate endpoint of all things in the world. When Qing Yi was conceived and born, she encountered a terrible catastrophe that damaged her innate foundation, leaving her far inferior to her older sisters. In terms of cultivation strength and her understanding and control of the era tree, she lagged behind them significantly.

As a result, Qing Yi felt that, compared to her sisters, she was the most useless as the younger sibling. Willful, arrogant, and reckless, she was seen as the ideal choice for sacrifice. Her sisters were destined to become great figures, so how could they be sacrificed? This thought filled young Qing Yi with deep resentment and led to a rift with her sisters.

Ultimately, she resolved to escape from the Ji Chan clan and refuse her fate as a sacrifice. While she put on a façade of accepting her fate, she secretly plotted her escape.

Finally, on the eve of the sacrificial ceremony, Qing Yi found a suitable opportunity to escape. She not only fled but also took with her an extremely precious spark of immortal civilization from the Ji Chan clan. This spark would later serve her well in the real world of mountains and seas, acting as the firewood that ignited the immortal cultivation system and laying the foundation for the reproduction and growth of all living beings

For many years, she lived in hiding, consumed by confusion, never returning to the Ji Chan clan. If it hadn't been for the woman in black finding her now, it might have been a long time before Qing Yi would have recalled these memories. The weight of her past filled her with bitterness and guilt, leaving her too afraid to confront them. Remembering the absurd and wrong things she had done in her youth only deepened her sense of guilt.

The woman in black was unaware of Qing Yi's emotional turmoil. When she asked about the events surrounding the Ji Chan clan, a look of mockery and bitterness crossed her face.

"After you left the Ji Chan clan, the ancient hidden civilization was furious and dispatched many powerful individuals to search for you. They wanted to retrieve you after your escape the day before the sacrifice. No one could withstand their wrath. At that time, the high priest of the ancient hidden civilization was irate and sent troops to surround the Ji Chan clan, demanding an explanation from us," the woman in black recalled, shaking her head.

The ancient hidden civilization was the supreme civilization that the Ji Chan clan belonged to. A certain contract had been established between the two, resulting in a state of interdependence and coexistence. The ancient hidden civilization provided shelter, abundant resources, and territory for the Ji Chan family, while the Ji Chan family gave birth to the epoch tree for the ancient hidden civilization and facilitated the evolution of all spirits.

This contract had endured for a long time, and barring any accidents, it was expected to continue until one party perished. However, due to the mother tree, the ancient hidden civilization found itself implicated by the Ji Chan family, leading to disastrous consequences.

The vast and boundless luck was abruptly cut off, causing the once-prosperous real world to quickly decline and wither. It was impossible to claim that the ancient hidden civilization did not harbor deep hatred for the Ji Chan clan. The Ji Chan clan had initially been presented with the opportunity to atone for their sins by sacrificing suitable candidates to appease the civilization's anger. However, they failed to seize this last chance, allowing Qing Yi to escape.

How could this failure prevent the ancient hidden civilization from being furious? They were eager to wipe out the Ji Chan family.

“Then what happened afterward?”

Qing Yi asked, lowering her eyes to conceal the guilt within them.

“The high priest of the ancient hidden civilization bluntly stated that we let you go on purpose. The presence of several ancestors surrounded the ancestral court of the Ji Chan family. If we didn't provide an explanation, our entire clan would face annihilation. Without the ancient hidden civilization, there would be no reason for our Ji Chan family to exist.”

“These are the exact words of the high priest of the ancient hidden civilization.” The woman in black wore a slight smile, though it was unclear whether she was laughing at herself or mocking the situation.

Although she spoke lightly, Qing Yi could sense the gravity of the situation at that time. The entire Ji Chan clan was on the brink of extinction. Any existence in the Ancestral Dao Realm could roam the boundless world at will, and few could stand against it, yet there were several such existences surrounding the Ji Chan clan. This formidable force could easily annihilate any ethnic group in the boundless world.

However, the woman's presence in black indicated that the Ji Chan clan had not been wiped out in the end. Noticing Qing Yi's silence, the woman in black shook her head and continued, "While what the high priest of the ancient hidden civilization said is indeed true, if we truly wanted to capture you, how could you have escaped with your strength?"

"At that time, my mother and eldest sister insisted that you had fled on your own. They were unaware of our situation. I chose not to act against the sleeping power, but it still demanded an explanation from us..."

"In the end, it was my eldest sister who took your place as a sacrifice to the Real Land, gradually calming the wrath of the skies." As she spoke of this, an expression of deep sorrow crossed her face, and she let out a sigh.

"Sister?" Qing Yi was momentarily stunned, her expression turning dazed as she recalled the striking and dignified face of the sister who had always been there for her. In the end, she had replaced Qing Yi and become the sacrifice. This was something Qing Yi had never expected.

If she was the chosen one for sacrifice, why had someone else taken her place? In her youth, Qing Yi had believed this decision was unanimous among her mother and older sisters. However, she later realized how mistaken she had been. How could the suitable candidate for sacrifice be chosen so casually? Whoever was destined for this fate in the dark could not escape it, no matter what.

This was not merely the decision of her mother and sisters, but the true will of God. To defy God's will would inevitably bring punishment and catastrophe. In the boundless world, the Real Land was regarded as the true "heaven."

“My eldest sister approached the sacrifice with a mindset of experimentation. She never expected that after the sacrifice, the wrath of the skies and the ensuing catastrophe would gradually subside, allowing the ancient hidden civilization to return to its normal course...”

“However, since then, we have never seen our eldest sister again, and we have no news about her. I don’t know how she is faring, but I can feel that her soul lamp is still lit, and her breath of life has not disappeared...” The woman in black continued.

She did not elaborate on what happened next, but Qing Yi had already deduced it. Once the wrath of the skies and the catastrophe were quelled, the ancient hidden civilization lost interest in her, and over time, no one inquired about the matter.

“I’m sorry, big sister... she...” Qing Yi’s eyes brimmed with guilt and sorrow. She never expected that the outcome would be like this. She had escaped, while her eldest sister remained behind, lost to her, not knowing whether she was alive or safe.

The woman in black glanced at her and noticed that the current Qing Yi had undergone significant changes. Out of Qing Yi’s many memories, the woman had only read a few that were particularly important to her, so she was unclear on what had transpired in Qing Yi’s life over the years.

“I came to you this time because my mother has discovered that her catastrophe is approaching, and her lifespan is rapidly depleting. She wants to see you again before she dies...” the woman in black continued.

“Mother’s catastrophe approaching?” Qing Yi was taken aback once more. In her memory, her mother, as the supreme emperor of the Ji Chan clan, possessed unfathomable strength.

Even the existence of the Ancestral Realm from the ancient hidden civilization would treat her with great respect. Yet, how could such a powerful mother face the approaching catastrophe? It seemed that the calamity of heavenly decline was imminent, and she understood that it would be difficult to overcome.

“It seems I really must return to the Ji Chan clan,” Qing Yi thought softly. Their lifespans were exceptionally long, which meant that in terms of emotions, they tended to be much weaker than ordinary beings. Thus, when Qing Yi reunited with the woman in black, there was not much joy; the atmosphere felt quite ordinary.

Qing Yi held a mix of respect and gratitude toward her mother, along with years of accumulated guilt. With her mother’s impending catastrophe, if she didn’t return, she would likely carry regrets for the rest of her life.

As for the Dao Chang Realm, despite many unexpected developments, it was still progressing according to her plans. Gu Changge had managed many things more effectively than she had, leaving Qing Yi with little to worry about.

At the same time, aboard the ancient warship of the Spiritualroyal family, a crystal-clear ancient mirror slowly dissipated in front of Gu Changge. The scene reflected within it quickly vanished. Before Ni Chen’s death, with the last remnants of luck from the Underworld Clan, the curse cast upon him had finally penetrated the Nether Void and wrapped itself around Gu Changge.

This curse was as black as ink, binding him like a chain and carrying with it endless resentment and hatred. It seemed intent on dragging him into an abyss of eternal doom, where he would be tortured forever. However, with just a slight shock from Gu Changge, the curse instantly collapsed, reducing itself to ashes.

He had been closely monitoring and understanding many events in the Dao Chang Realm, including Ni Chen’s exposure and Gu Xian’er’s appointment as the new Daoist. All of these developments were part of Gu Changge’s arrangement, unfolding step by step.

After this battle, Gu Changge no longer needed to pay too much attention to the Dao Chang Realm. Gu Xian'er, as the Daoist of the Heaven Slaying Alliance, had favorable luck and the assistance of the primordial tree she had condensed, so it wouldn't be long before she entered the Dao realm. Gu Changge had laid out a new, expansive map for her; without a Dao realm cultivation base, it would be challenging for her to establish a foothold. After all, the name of the Heaven Slaying Alliance would inevitably resonate throughout the vast expanse in the future.

As for Gu Xian'er, being a Daoist without a Dao realm would be somewhat embarrassing. Regarding matters in the Nine Heavens, Gu Changge had already made arrangements, so he didn't need to focus on them at the moment. The arrival of the ancient cultivator Yuan Chan was clearly influenced by the existence of the Nine Heavens. If it were not an accident, it must involve significant origins and backgrounds, particularly concerning a party reborn in the real world while containing the fire of immortal civilization.

Those behind the ancient cultivator Yuan Chan must have taken note of this and were very interested. Before this, Barbara, the apprentice Gu Changge had taken under his wing, also stood behind him. That individual must have recognized these developments early on.

In other words, at least two extremely powerful forces were paying close attention to the current Dao Chang Realm.

Barbara, an odd chess piece buried long ago, will come into play sooner or later. However, it's not time yet.

Gu Changge mused.

Judging from the current situation, it will not affect my plan.

In his mind, he realized that he really didn't need to expend much energy on the Dao Chang Realm at this point. Instead, he needed to concentrate more on the boundless world.

Chapter 1013: Such an embarrassing task, such a short-lived phenomenon?

Gu Changge contemplated the numerous plans ahead, no longer fixated on the Dao Chang Realm. His primary objective at this stage was to unravel the entire confusion, as this would provide him with greater possibilities and increased chances of success. He had previously noticed that the heavenly will had once struck down creatures in the boundless world, leading many to forget the origins of the heaven-slaying vaguely. This observation made Gu Changge wonder if the other two from the original world were scheming something.

Despite his grand ambitions, it was unlikely that these two individuals would engage with each other calmly, leaving him with no effective way to intervene. Reflecting on the years that had passed, he recognized that the true original ancestor would only value beings of equal standing. The three of them, as the original true ancestors, were fundamentally unique and conceptually singular. Their existence served to check and balance one another.

Like in the boundless world, the original world was incredibly mysterious and vast. Of the three supreme true ancestors, only one would appear in the same era, tasked with overseeing the law of heaven. Naturally, Gu Changge would not underestimate him; every step he took needed to be executed with utmost caution, leaving no room for mistakes. As an equal existence, he understood just how inconceivable, ineffable, and immeasurable the characters rooted in this realm truly were. This represented the limits of what concepts could convey, surpassing all imagination and thought within the world.

“My lord, our ancient warship is nearing the border of the civilization you seek. Do you wish to continue pursuing it?”

“I suspect the other party has noticed us and is employing some means to contact the civilization behind them, hoping to elicit a response.”

While Gu Changge was deep in thought, a voice broke through from outside the hall, snapping him back to reality. He nodded and allowed the individual to enter.

Dressed in a floor-length gown, Ling Huang walked in graceful lotus steps, emanating a faint fragrance as she reported directly. The Spiritual royal family had been tracking the ancient warship that sailed through the boundless sea using the branding coordinates provided by Gu Changge. Meanwhile, the army of the Lingxu royal family had assembled and was prepared for a significant battle, merely waiting for Gu Changge's command to begin capturing the unknown civilization on that side.

Wanyanxiu and the others were anxious, apprehensive, and eager, uncertain about the level of civilization they were about to confront. Gu Changge had never revealed the true nature of the immortal civilization to them, nor had he investigated its strength. This time, after confirming its boundless coordinates, the Spiritual royal family moved to follow up and launch an attack, primarily because they did not perceive the civilization in question as a threat significant enough to warrant his concern.

"Is it approaching so quickly?" Gu Changge inquired. While he had been focused on the affairs of the Dao Chang Realm during this time, he had not paid attention to the immortal civilization.

Ling Huang nodded and replied, "The ancestors have sensed that the space and time of the universe around them are somewhat abnormal, with a peculiar force that seems to permeate every crevice and infiltrate every space. The creatures of this civilization may possess a unique form of existence, unlike ordinary beings that rely on their physical bodies to survive."

As a Dao realm existence, if they could not even recognize such a distinction, they might as well not exist. In the boundless world, countless civilizations had emerged, some of which were remarkably peculiar, differing significantly from primarily flesh-based creatures. Ling Huang understood this well, so it was not surprising. However, more understanding was essential to deal with this relatively unusual civilization effectively. A hasty attack could lead to severe consequences.

Therefore, the ancestors recommended thoroughly investigating the situation before taking action, as they did not want to incur unnecessary sacrifices. However, they were hesitant to bring this up to Gu Changge, so they entrusted Ling Huang to convey their thoughts.

“My lord, should we ascertain the true nature of this civilization before discussing how to proceed with the attack?” Ling Huang inquired tentatively.

“Otherwise, I’m concerned that we may waste too much time and energy.”

“I understand. This matter certainly shouldn’t be rushed, but I’ve already made my plans; just follow my orders,” Gu Changge replied casually.

The way of existence of the immortal civilization was indeed somewhat unique. By combining certain strengths of the immortal civilization and deriving the peculiarities of its own existence from that foundation, they presented a distinct challenge.

The creatures of the immortal civilization, who focused primarily on cultivating spiritual power, had long abandoned their physical bodies, viewing them as nothing more than useless shells. The spirit was the ultimate secret to them, requiring constant cultivation and refinement. As a result, they transferred their spiritual power into various substances, both living and non-living. These could be as ephemeral as a cloud, a flame, a streamer, or as small as a grain of dust, a flower, or a blade of grass. If their spiritual power persisted, they would continue to exist indefinitely, becoming truly immortal and never facing extinction.

This method of existence bore similarities to the primordial spirit techniques found in the immortal civilization. In many ways, it could even be seen as an alternative method of “seizing the body.” However, as with many aspects of the world, particularly in the interpretation of Daoism, different paths often led to the same destination, and certain parallels were inevitable.

Still, viewing the creatures of the immortal civilization through the lens of primordial spirit techniques could lead to severe misjudgments and potential losses. But of course, with sufficient strength, whether dealing with a soul or a primordial spirit, either could be annihilated in a single thought, rendering such distinctions irrelevant.

After Ling Huang left to carry out Gu Changge's orders, she summoned numerous beings from the realm of immortality, many of whom were immortal kings, and they gathered respectfully outside the hall, awaiting further instructions.

Then someone was dispatched to inform Chu Lian that his trial mission was approaching, and he was asked to prepare alongside the other younger generations. As the "Heavenly Guest" specifically recruited by Gu Changge from Juxian Village, Chu Lian was expected to undertake certain tasks for him. Moreover, Chu Lian had always been cautious, concerned that the Spiritual royal family's army recruitment might impact him in the future.

To mitigate any potential risks, he had arrived at the front lines early. He mingled with a group of young individuals of good standing and backgrounds, which could provide him with protection from the frontline powerhouses in critical situations.

Curious about the nature of the mission Mr. Gu had planned and why Ling Huang had sent someone to inform him specifically, Chu Lian suddenly overheard a conversation among several companions nearby. He couldn't help but perk up his ears to listen intently.

"Have you heard the news? It seems that something significant is about to happen this time... The clan elders even specifically summoned me," a young woman with an attractive appearance said, her curiosity evident as she spoke.

"I heard that, too. This matter is very important, and my family has warned me to be cautious," another added.

"My grandfather suddenly told me that the Spiritual royal family has entrusted us with a critical task, one that only younger generations like us—who aren't highly cultivated and tend to go unnoticed—can handle." RANōBE.ℳ

“If I complete it, I’ll receive great benefits. Even my grandfather and the others will be generously rewarded. For this reason, my grandfather gave me several precious divine weapons,” she continued.

The voices of these young men and women were deliberately kept low, just within Chu Lian’s hearing range.

“A task that can only be undertaken by the younger generation?” Chu Lian felt a surge of excitement. He had come to the front lines to save his life and seek opportunities for steady growth in strength. He was unwilling to risk his life on chaotic tasks, especially those the Spiritual royal family ordered. The prospect of taking on a task that sounded dangerous and lacked any guarantee of survival was something he would fervently avoid.

However, Chu Lian also received a mission from “Mr. Gu” that matched his young companions’ discussion. To make matters worse, it was Ling Huang, whom he hadn’t seen in a long time, who personally sought him out to deliver the news. His expression darkened immediately.

“It turns out that I’m being sent to follow several beings with immortal cultivation bases, accompanying them deep into that civilization to investigate its true nature...” he thought to himself. “This sort of task is incredibly perilous; one misstep could result in being shattered to pieces, with both body and spirit destroyed.”

“One side is not weaker than the civilization of the Spiritual royal family. How am I supposed to navigate this with my current strength?” He felt a wave of dread wash over him.

“They’re assigning me such a dangerous task, one that could easily lead to my demise. I should have known that Mr. Gu wouldn’t grant me so many resources without expecting something in return—he must have been waiting for this opportunity...”

Chu Lian's face shifted through various emotions, alternating between cloudiness and brightness, ultimately settling into a very gloomy expression.

"The young master is aware of the many dangers on this journey, so he specially prepared a few protective items for you. Of course, you can ask Brother Chu Lian for anything you need now. The young master said he would do his best to accommodate your requests," Ling Huang said with a smile, gesturing for the maid behind her to present several treasures that shimmered with heavenly light and were enveloped in mist.

As Chu Lian looked at Ling Huang, whom he hadn't seen in a long time, his nostalgic thoughts quickly dissipated. He understood that he had no room to refuse now. After signing the so-called contract with Gu Changge, he was obliged to follow the stipulated requirements. The salaries and cultivation resources were not easily obtained.

Moreover, this task did not force him to compromise his own morals. After presenting the treasures, Ling Huang took her leave. Chu Lian felt a mix of unwillingness and anger swirling within him, yet he had no outlet for his frustration.

Boom!

He slammed his fist onto the stone table in front of him, causing it to shatter into pieces with a cracking sound, the fragments turning to dust that filled the air.

"You're sending me to my death! We have no grievances..."

Chu Lian couldn't help but shout, cursing softly to vent his frustration. Even though he didn't want to, he now had to bite the bullet and accept the situation.

"What a pitiful mindset," he thought bitterly.

"These treasures are quite impressive and can easily withstand the attacks of beings at the Immortal King level. That Mr. Gu likely just wants to temper you; he doesn't intend for you to die."

"Moreover, I'll be by your side to guide you. Although this mission is indeed troublesome and dangerous, it's not enough to kill you. Why act so useless and unstable?"

Watching this unfold, the artifact spirit of the Ball of Ambitions couldn't help but think to itself.

The artifact spirit could understand Chu Lian's mood. After all, with the aid of the Ball of Ambitions, Chu Lian only needed a peaceful environment to steadily improve his cultivation and strength without taking any risks. However, being suddenly thrust into a life-threatening situation, with the possibility of death looming over him, was a reality he found hard to accept.

Chu Lian's current cultivation and strength were entirely dependent on the Ball of Ambitions. Yet, he overlooked the fact that the Ball could only provide support; he had to rely on himself in critical moments.

"True strong individuals grow through various life-and-death crises..." the spirit mused.

"After the strange halo of luck gradually faded, this host's performance has been worse than that of previous hosts."

The spirit of the Ball of Ambitions possessed an independent consciousness and emotions. In fact, its wisdom far surpassed that of an ordinary Dao realm cultivator. It had observed Chu Lian's performance during this period and noted his struggles.

Initially, the spirit had high hopes for Chu Lian, believing that being close to a nobleman would grant him great fortune and that his future achievements would extend beyond the confines of this Spiritual civilization, potentially leading to fame in the boundless world. However, looking at him now, those expectations seemed overly ambitious.

"Compared to true anomalies, there are indeed many shortcomings here. This host has missed out on essential trials and tribulations, and his fate has been far too smooth," it reflected.

"Could it be that the strange phenomena surrounding him were merely fleeting illusions?"

As the spirit contemplated this possibility, it could not calm down. It had viewed Chu Lian as its last hope, uncertain whether the Ball of Ambitions could be repaired in the future. Yet, at the very least, Chu Lian needed to grow into a strong individual in his own right. But given the current situation, he appeared to be afraid of even the slightest crisis and unwilling to confront it.

If Chu Lian remained at such a level, the fate of the Ball of Ambitions would be inextricably linked to his own, leaving him doomed and without a future. At that moment, Chu Lian was unaware that the spirit of the Ball of Ambitions had significantly shifted its attitude toward him.

After venting his frustration, he gradually calmed down, realizing that refusal was not an option; he could only bite the bullet and accept his circumstances. The priority now was to figure out how to survive this task. Completing it held little importance to him compared to preserving his own life.

The boundless world, with its infinite possibilities, had birthed countless civilizations and lives, filled with numerous adventures and crises. Outside the space-time territory where the immortal civilization resided, there existed a natural protective barrier.

In the past, the area floated like a thick fog, deep and vast, shrouding the southeast, northwest, above, below, and all ten directions. Upon closer inspection, one would see this magnificent substance resembling a nebula, with cosmic debris floating in every cloud, imbued with dead energy capable of corroding all life.

Now, the ancient battleship of the immortal civilization, which had escaped from the Dao Chang Realm, was rapidly approaching this space-time territory. Unlike the complex process of searching for “prey” in the boundless world, which required much time and exploration, returning to one’s own civilization was considerably faster and more straightforward.

After determining the boundless coordinates, a special method could be employed to open the quickest space-time channel for a rapid return.

Within this ancient warship, Zhuoyou, still gripped by fear, along with several other clansmen of comparable strength to the Dao Realm, were intently observing the crystal wall in front of them. They had already relayed the news of their great defeat back to their group in the immortal civilization.

Now, they only needed to pass through this barrier filled with death, after which they could approach the territory of the immortal civilization smoothly, where some individuals would come to greet them.

“It seems that the unfathomable and terrifying figure did not pursue us; we are truly safe...” said a clansman beside Zhuoyou, his eyes still reflecting shock and fear as he spoke with a lingering sense of dread.

Chapter 1014: Do You Recognize Me? I originally intended to destroy the civilization behind you

The clansman beside Zhuoyou had already undergone a spiritual transformation, his strength comparable to that of a cultivator who had survived a catastrophe in the immortal civilization. Yet, as he spoke, a flicker of fear and trembling lingered in his eyes, and he couldn't shake off the memories of their ordeal.

Just a single palm strike from the air had obliterated a clansman who was only slightly weaker than Zhuoyou. If they hadn't escaped quickly enough, they would likely have perished, their spiritual power completely erased.

"It's simply unbelievable that such a character appeared in the newborn real world," he remarked.

"It stands to reason that only a supreme civilization should be capable of giving rise to such an existence."

Another figure in the cabin echoed his sentiment, still shaken. "But regardless, we are safe for the time being. The mysterious figure did not pursue us. We just need to cross the barrier ahead, and we can return to the clan without harm."

"Miss Zhuoyou has sent the news back to the family. I believe strong individuals will come to meet us soon."

With those words, everyone's mood lightened, and they no longer felt as tense as before.

Zhuoyou stared intently at the crystal wall in front of her, refusing to slack off or relax despite the reassurances of those around her. The events that had transpired in the Dao Chang Realm were still vividly etched in her mind. She couldn't forget the terrifying figure whose Dharma body was so powerful it was inconceivable. If the true body were to appear, how unimaginable would its strength be?

Even if her grandfather from the family descended, he would undoubtedly feel as shocked and horrified as she had, without any thoughts of resistance. Moreover, after escaping from the Dao Chang Realm, she remained restless, as if some unseen gaze was watching her. She suspected that while the mysterious man had not pursued them, he was closely monitoring her actions and whereabouts through other means.

This realization made Zhuoyou feel even more uneasy. Despite examining herself several times afterward and finding nothing abnormal, she couldn't shake the intuition that this situation would not resolve so easily.

“As long as we pass through the barrier ahead, we will be able to return to the tribe safely. I hope these worries of mine don't come to fruition,” Zhuoyou sighed slightly, recalling the ominous words of the old man in the black robe.

He had warned her that she would bring unimaginable disasters to the civilization behind her, labeling her the sinner of her entire ethnic group.

At that moment, a shiver ran down her spine. That mysterious man had easily dispatched Zhuo Hua, who was weaker than her, with a single palm strike. But why had he allowed them to leave unscathed? Was it out of mercy, or was there another motive at play?

Could it be that he let us go on purpose, and his target is not us, but the civilization behind us?

This thought suddenly struck Zhuoyou, deepening her sense of dread, and the surprise and fear were evident on her face. From the very beginning, the immortal civilization had hunted and aggressed against other real worlds. Now, it seemed that prey had fallen into their hands.

“Not good...” As she processed all of this, Zhuoyou's complexion changed drastically, and a chill enveloped her entire being.

Boom!!!

At that moment, the ancient warship, shaped like a round flying shuttle, suddenly shook violently, as if struck by an enormous force in the air. Countless intricate and ancient lines flickered with bright, blazing light before quickly being extinguished, dimming almost immediately. The entire vessel trembled as if it were a star on the verge of falling in a storm on a boundless avenue.

Zhuoyou and the clansmen surrounding her were taken aback, their expressions shifting dramatically. A wave of fear silently enveloped their hearts.

“Is there a foreign enemy approaching? Could it be that mysterious man?” T

he strong figures in the cabin appeared terrified, trembling at the overwhelming sensation of an immensely powerful force attacking the ancient warship, threatening to tear apart their protective formations.

Even Zhuoyou couldn't conceal the horror on her face. This force was so fierce, like a violent tempest about to shred a rotting leaf, and it was clearly beyond anything they could hope to resist.

Boom!!!

At that moment, the ancient warship shook violently once more, and the crystal wall layer in front of Zhuoyou and the others cracked and distorted, revealing a terrifying fissure. From within that crack, a stooped old man in a black robe, his face obscured by a hood, materialized directly before them. His presence felt decayed, as if he had been buried in loess for countless years, yet it couldn't conceal the malevolent aura that sent shivers down their spines, freezing their very souls.

In the deep hollows of his sunken eye sockets, fierce glimmers flickered like a ferocious beast ready to pounce at any moment.

“Tsk...” the old man in the black robe remarked, a strange laugh escaping his lips.

“You really know how to hide. I almost couldn’t find you here.”

He stepped through the crack in the shattered crystal wall, his gaze sweeping over the terrified Zhuoyou and her companions. He nodded with apparent satisfaction, as if assessing his “prey.”

Zhuoyou and the others felt their scalps go numb, their mental fortitude waning under the weight of his presence. The strength of this black-robed old man towered far above theirs, leaving them utterly powerless.

Even an ancestor-level character who had undergone five spiritual transformations seemed insignificant in the presence of this black-robed figure. They were utterly perplexed about how they had provoked such a bizarre entity, who had brazenly torn through their protective layer and appeared before them without a hint of restraint. His demeanor suggested that he regarded them as mere insects, ready to be crushed at any moment.

The ferocity of this man reminded them of an existence they had heard whispers of in the vastness—a “lunatic.”

I wonder why this senior has come here.

Zhuoyou ventured, her voice steady despite the rising tide of fear.

I am a member of the Zhuo clan of the immortal civilization, and my ancestor's name is Zhuo Fengxie.

She swallowed hard, doing her best to maintain her composure while trying to ascertain the black-robed man's intentions.

As she mentioned her ancestor's name, Zhuoyou aimed to instill a sense of fear in the black-robed figure. After all, in several civilizations, the Zhuo clan of the immortal civilization held a considerable reputation. Their ancestor, Zhuo Fengxie, was a being comparable to the Ancestral Dao Realm, having survived five celestial declines.

Zhuoyou herself was at the level of a cultivator who had endured three catastrophes. If she could obtain the embers of the fire of the immortal civilization this time, she would have the chance to condense the source of immortality from it, giving her the potential to undergo a fourth spiritual transformation and reach the same level as her grandfather.

However, even among those who had survived the fourth spiritual transformation, there existed disparities in strength. While it was unnecessary to categorize them into specific ranks like late junior high or late middle school, the long years of cultivation and understanding would naturally create gaps in power within this realm. Nevertheless, a practitioner who had just passed through the fourth decline could easily obliterate someone who had only endured three. The differences in strength became more profound with each Heavenly Decline and Calamity.

At that moment, Zhuoyou hoped her mention of her ancestor would calm the old man in the black robe. Yet, it was becoming increasingly clear that her hopes were in vain.

The old man in black smiled cruelly as he reached out, grabbing Zhuoyou and the others effortlessly, as if they were mere chicks. A wave of terror washed over them; they felt completely immobilized, as if an invisible force had imprisoned them in place.

“The old man doesn’t care who your grandfather is,” he sneered.

If you’re sensible, you’ll come with me, and you might just save your lives.

The black-robed figure was none other than the Bone Ancestor, who held a deep disdain for the ancestor Zhuoyou had mentioned. “The young master has ordered me to capture you alive and bring you back.” His words dripped with a sinister assurance, leaving no room for doubt about his intentions.

If it weren’t for Gu Changge’s presence, the Bone Ancestor would have been able to dominate the nearby civilizations and assert his authority over a vast territory. Almost at the brink of the Ancestral Dao Realm, he had grown accustomed to a life of lawlessness, having destroyed numerous real worlds and civilizations in his wake. This time, Gu Changge had sent him on a mission to retrieve Zhuoyou and her companions, a task he deemed trivial, akin to killing chickens.

Zhuoyou’s heart raced with dread as she processed his words. She realized who the “young master” was, and a wave of bitterness washed over her. The truth hit her hard: she could not escape, and her earlier worries had come to fruition. She had unwittingly brought unimaginable disaster upon the civilization and ethnic group she held dear.

Oblivious to the nuances of Zhuoyou’s situation with Gu Changge, the Bone Ancestor focused solely on his orders. With a dismissive wave of his hand, he seized Zhuoyou and the others effortlessly, their figures blurring as they vanished swiftly from the crack in the crystal wall.

Inside the ancient warship of the Spiritual civilization, Gu Changge sat at the head of the palace, appearing as if he were resting with his eyes closed. Yet, his slender fingers tapped rhythmically against the armrest beside him, each digit as crystal clear as jade, flawless, as though orchestrating the endless laws of the Dao. Ling Huang, Wan Yanxiu, and the others waited respectfully in the main hall, the silence palpable; the sound of a pin dropping could be heard.

Suddenly, Gu Changge opened his eyes and turned his gaze toward the outside of the palace. Wan Yanxiu and the others followed his lead, their attention drawn to a spot where the space shimmered momentarily. A slightly stooped figure in a black robe emerged, revealing the Bone Ancestor, who seemed to be holding something in his grasp.

At this level of existence, everything could be adjusted in size and form at will. The Bone Ancestor's casual hold seemed to encompass a world of its own, capturing everything within it.

"Greetings, young master," he said upon entering the main hall, bowing slightly before Gu Changge. With a flick of his wrist, he tossed forward the captured Zhuoyou and her companions, letting them tumble to the ground before him.

Gu Changge nodded slightly, acknowledging the Bone Ancestor's efforts. "Thanks for your hard work," he said, his voice smooth and measured. His gaze then fell upon Zhuoyou and the others, who remained in shock, their expressions a mix of terror and disbelief.

Even though he had only sent a Dharma Body during the encounter in the Dao Chang Realm, the recognition was unmistakable. Zhuoyou and her companions, creatures of the immortal civilization, maintained their human shapes, though their features appeared unnaturally flat.

"Do you still recognize me?" Gu Changge asked casually, a hint of amusement in his tone.

Zhuoyou and the others quickly pieced together that the young master the Bone Ancestor mentioned must be him. However, the fear in their eyes was palpable.

“I naturally... recognized,” Zhuoyou replied, struggling to suppress the trepidation in her heart. Despite her efforts, her trembling voice and fluctuating demeanor betrayed her underlying fear.

Ling Huang, Wan Yanxiu, and the others observed the scene with growing curiosity. They were unaware of the specific events that had transpired between Gu Changge and these captured creatures, but it was evident that their terror of him ran deep. The aura emanating from Zhuoyou and her companions was comparable to some ancestors of the Spiritual royal family present in the main hall, placing them firmly within the Dao realm.

However, despite their curiosity, they dared not ask any further questions. Gu Changge’s methods were clearly beyond their comprehension.

“It’s good that you recognize me. Then you should know why I sent people to arrest you,” Gu Changge continued casually, his tone remaining steady and unfazed.

Zhuoyou’s mouth felt dry as she mustered the courage to respond. “I can guess it.”

Regret filled her heart as she reflected on her earlier desires for the Dao Chang Realm, which had now led to the disaster before her. It seemed they had brought this upon themselves, confirming the warnings of the old man in the black robe.

Among the creatures in the hall, the weakest were all at the Dao Realm, and there were quite a few of them. Zhuoyou couldn’t help but wonder just how many powerful individuals Gu Changge had at his disposal.

Not to mention that Gu Changge's own strength had reached a level that she couldn't even fathom.

"That's good," he said, rising from his seat and walking down unhurriedly. A faint smile played on his lips as he continued, "I originally planned to destroy the civilization behind you, but now I have changed my mind. I want your civilization to be used by me. Are you willing to help me?"

Zhuoyou and the others shuddered at his words. The notion of destroying a civilization sounded grave, yet Gu Changge spoke about it with such ease, as if crushing an ant beneath his foot. His tone dripped with contempt and indifference.

The expressions of Wan Yanxiu and the others shifted subtly as they absorbed the weight of his statement.

"Huh? Don't you want to?"

Gu Changge asked, noting their terrified silence. His smile faded slightly, and a more serious tone crept into his voice.

Zhuoyou's complexion changed abruptly; an overwhelming sense of fear engulfed her, threatening to drain her spirit and collapse her resolve. In that moment, she couldn't even muster the courage to speak.

Zhuoyou didn't know what fate awaited her if she shook her head or uttered the words "I don't want to." The fear among the clansmen behind her was palpable; some, unable to withstand the oppressive atmosphere, knelt on the ground, trembling as they hurriedly responded, "I wish, I wish..."

Seeing this, Zhuoyou had no choice but to bite the bullet and quickly agree, “Of course, I would.” Ants could still cling to life; how could they not? But deep down, she sensed that even if she protested, Gu Changge had the power to compel her to comply. She felt entirely cornered.

Gu Changge observed their reaction without surprise, a faint smile playing on his lips. “I have always admired smart people,” he said. “You can save me some trouble by being sensible.”

He wasn’t worried about their refusal. Even if they had chosen to resist, Gu Changge possessed the means to manipulate their thoughts. However, he preferred not to take that route, as it would be more troublesome and could attract unwanted attention from the immortal civilization.

Unlike the Spiritual civilization, the immortal civilization was tied to a formidable entity known as the Xi Yuan civilization. A direct attack could lead to unexpected complications and draw the scrutiny of other powerful civilizations within the boundless world.

Although Gu Changge himself was unfazed by such obstacles, he was aware that the forces at his disposal were not sufficient to sweep across the entire boundless world. Thus, he needed to tread carefully and consider his next moves.

Chapter 1015: This mission has ten deaths and no lives, so why is Mr. Gu here?

Although Zhuoyou and the others had agreed to serve him, Gu Changge would not allow them to remain idle. A few streams of light flew from his raised hands and entered the depths of their brows. This light resembled a drop of ink—extremely dark and imbued with a gloomy, icy aura.

It took root like a seed as soon as it entered their foreheads. Strands of root-like matter penetrated and spread into their spiritual sea, as if nourishing and growing.

“This...?”

The expressions of Zhuoyou and the others changed suddenly; they became extremely pale and shocked. They could clearly feel their spiritual sea being eroded and occupied, as if it were being used to nourish the growth of this black seed.

It seemed that the day the black seed germinated would mark the end of their lives.

“My... my lord, please forgive me...”

The clansman from the immortal civilization who had knelt on the ground felt an even deeper terror, sensing his spiritual sea being eroded constantly. It felt as if a small bug had suddenly burrowed into his mind, gnawing away at his very existence. The immortal civilization had abandoned the physical body and focused on spiritual power, which could be entrusted to all things in the world.

Gu Changge's action was akin to completely seizing their lifeline; with a single thought, he could determine their life and death. Fear and trembling gripped everyone present.

“I said I like smart people. As long as you are wise, you need not worry. This demon may threaten your life, but on the contrary, it can greatly benefit your cultivation. Of course, if you act foolishly, then you can't blame me...” Gu Changge smiled lightly, offering little explanation about what it truly was.

Zhuoyou and the others understood his meaning and hurriedly agreed one by one; they would not joke with their own lives.

“That's good.”

He nodded slightly with a faint smile at the corner of Gu Changge's mouth, though the emotion in his eyes remained unchanged. Naturally, he couldn't trust these people completely. Still, by planting a demon seed, he ensured that if they ever had intentions or actions against him, he could immediately stop the threat without consequence.

In the main hall, Wan Yanxiu, Ling Huang, and the others watched the scene, startled and chilled to the bone. If Gu Changge chose to deal with them as he had with those from the immortal civilization, they would likely find themselves unable to refuse or resist. Thinking of this, they felt a sense of relief.

Gu Changge's approach to them seemed, in comparison, somewhat gentle. Ling Huang, in particular, felt extremely fortunate at that moment.

Not to mention Gu Changge's respect, the two of them had shared a "heart-to-heart" conversation before. She believed she understood him far better than anyone else there. Moreover, Gu Changge had given her a mysterious substance, which she expected would help her survive the second catastrophe in the coming days.

Although I don't know what the young master has experienced, as long as I respect him, I will achieve even more in the future.

These people are foolish; the young master's actions have left plenty of room for maneuver.

Ling Huang thought secretly as she glanced at Zhuoyou and the others. Her gaze shifted back to Gu Changge, and a bold thought emerged—one she had never considered before. However, it was only a fleeting notion; she dared not dwell on it for fear that Gu Changge might notice and be displeased.

She understood that Gu Changge's current respect for her was due to her determination during their initial encounter. Even if she were to offend him, she didn't want to become a mere tool for her

ancestors to curry favor with him. Only under that premise could she be truly appreciated by Gu Changge. If she appeared too useful now, she risked incurring his hatred.

Especially since her bold idea just now was disrespectful. Gu Changge had once stated that he was not interested in her. Throughout her years of cultivation, Ling Huang had never entertained the thought of wanting to be with someone forever; she had never considered it in that way.

Outside the ancestral hall of the Spiritual royal family, many immortals who Ling Huang had summoned were waiting. Soon, these individuals were called forward and informed that they needed to accompany Zhuoyou and the others to the immortal civilization to uncover its true nature.

These individuals were primarily from the Spiritual civilization, comprising high-ranking and powerful ancestors from various races. Their strength was formidable, with the weakest among them comparable to true immortals. However, upon learning about this mission, their complexions changed drastically, and they were filled with terror.

The level of danger associated with this task was no less than venturing deep into a dragon's lair or a tiger's den, where they could easily meet their end. However, a group of ancestors from the Spiritual royal family had gathered here, and a single thought could determine their life and death. Though they were terrified and panicked inside, they didn't dare refuse and reluctantly accepted the mission.

"My lord is kind; he knows that your mission this time is fraught with dangers, so I will bestow a treasure upon you. It will provide substantial protection for your bodies and ensure your safety."

"You need not worry; those before you, who are comparable to the Dao realm, are the young master's subordinates. When the time comes, you will follow them, and your lives will be secure."

Ling Huang wore a simple long dress, her high temples adorned with light makeup, and a sheer gauze covering her face, exuding an air of majesty in her gentle eyes. She swept her gaze across the gathered individuals, nodded slightly, and then waved her slender hand.

Several treasure chests enveloped in immortal light appeared out of thin air and landed in the hall.

At the same time, to reassure these individuals, she also clarified the identities of Zhuoyou and the others.

“Thank you, my lord...”

“Thank you, Your Majesty...”

Hearing these words, those who had felt frightened and apprehensive suddenly found themselves much more at ease. As they looked at the radiant treasure chests, they expressed their gratitude.

Previously, they had vaguely heard that a mysterious figure had appeared within the Spiritual royal family, one whose identity was unknown and whose strength was unfathomable, commanding deep respect from all the ancestors. Now that they saw him in person, it felt as if they were witnessing the true face of that figure with their own eyes.

In their eyes, Gu Changge’s figure was shrouded in endless fog; they couldn’t even see his face clearly, as if he didn’t exist in any time, space, or latitude. However, since they served such an enigmatic individual, they believed their lives must be guaranteed.

Gu Changge observed this scene from his elevated seat, slightly surprised. He naturally didn’t care about the life and death of these people, let alone their safety. Ling Huang’s words were clearly self-

serving. The treasures she offered were merely part of her daily collection. By presenting them now and speaking those reassuring words, she aimed to calm their hearts.

It's acceptable to do so. To become the emperor of a clan does require some ability and skill. She is worthy of my regard.

Gu Changge thought, showing a hint of appreciation.

Her actions not only comforted and won people's hearts but also encouraged them to accept his kindness and, in turn, pledge their loyalty.

"After completing this mission, you and the ethnic group behind you will receive countless benefits. I would not give you this opportunity if I didn't see that you are reliable in your daily affairs. You must understand that many ethnic groups are eyeing these rewards. This mission allows for no mistakes."

Ling Huang maintained the image of a majestic and indifferent empress as she spoke. Once she finished, she dismissed the gathered individuals and returned to Gu Changge's side, asking respectfully, "My lord, is there anything else you need me to do?"

Gu Changge nodded slightly, a smile of appreciation on his lips. "Good job."

Pleased by his praise, Ling Huang couldn't help but smile. Wan Yanxiu and the other ancestors looked on with envy as they observed Ling Huang—a junior they had previously overlooked—being so highly regarded by Gu Changge. However, they didn't linger for long and soon departed with Zhuoyou and the others.

They also had plans to capture the immortal civilization this time. Since Zhuoyou and the others held significant status within the immortal civilization, they could obtain essential information from them first. Wan Yanxiu and the others did not expect to uncover any secrets from Zhuoyou and the others. Matters related to the heritage and secrets of civilization were deeply protected and could not be easily disclosed. Even attempting to probe into Zhuoyou and the others' spiritual consciousness would prove completely futile.

Meanwhile, in Juxian Village, a jade chariot descended from the sky, taking away Chu Lian and the other "guests" who had been summoned to join the rest of the younger generation on their missions. No matter how unwilling Chu Lian felt, he could only grit his teeth and go along with it.

"In this mission, there will be ten deaths and no survivors. The focus is on saving your life..."

Chu Lian had been pondering how to survive in the past few days. As for the spirit of the Ball of Ambition, it claimed that this was a trial for him, which Chu Lian found utterly mocking. From his perspective, having won the Ball of Ambition, he and its recognized master did not require such unnecessary training at all.

The Heavenly Son couldn't sit still; with the Ball of Ambition, he was certain to have a smooth journey ahead, free of twists, turns, and many dangers. While other cultivators needed to endure countless battles and hardships to grow, he felt he did not require such trials. This kind of meaningless training was utterly useless to him.

The artifact spirit of the Ball of Ambition chose not to comment further on Chu Lian's attitude. On the jade chariot, he noticed some familiar faces from Juxian Village, who had also been summoned to join the mission to the immortal civilization.

However, Chu Lian was quite surprised to see that these so-called colleagues seemed unafraid and appeared calm and composed. Their demeanor resembled that of slayers trained by major families, who had long since set aside concerns about life and death.

This observation sparked a new idea in Chu Lian's mind; perhaps he could leverage the strength of these colleagues to ensure his own safety.

Soon, the jade chariot brought Chu Lian and his young companions to a steep hill.

"After a while, the powerhouses sent by the Spiritual royal family will arrive and take us along," one of the young people explained.

"Actually, we don't need to do anything; we just have to follow them. Our cultivation base is low, so we won't attract the attention of that civilization. When the time comes, we'll rely on our own means to gather information."

As they waited, several young individuals began to clarify the details of the mission for everyone present. Chu Lian paid little attention; whether the task succeeded or failed was of no real concern to him. His primary focus was on how dangerous the mission might be.

Then, before the eyes of everyone waiting, an ancient warship, bearing the marks of time, broke through the void and swiftly descended from a high altitude. A golden pathway extended downwards, enveloping Chu Lian and the others.

At that moment, the immortal beings who had been summoned in the ancestral hall of the Spiritual royal family, along with Zhuoyou and the others, were all aboard this ancient warship.

After bringing Chu Lian and the others aboard, the powerful beings merely glanced at them without much interest and instructed them to find their own caves or courtyards to rest. In their eyes, these younger generations could only play a limited role; at most, they could serve to confuse the eyes and ears of others. They were uncertain why the Spiritual royal family had arranged for these younger generations to come along. If it was for tempering, it seemed unlikely.

Chu Lian and the others did not dare to voice any objections and left one after another.

“Our strength isn’t particularly strong, so we won’t attract the attention of those truly powerful in this civilization...” one of the younger individuals remarked.

“So when the time comes, we need to cooperate with these adults.”

The immortal beings continued to chat in low voices, discussing how to address the challenges ahead.

Zhuoyou and the others remained expressionless. In the past, these individuals would have seemed no different from ants in their eyes—there would have been no reason to care about them, let alone collaborate. But now, their fate was entirely in their hands.

The ancient warship quickly left that space, returning to the shuttle of the immortal civilization where Zhuoyou and the others had previously been. When the Bone Ancestor captured them, he did not disturb the other occupants of the shuttle. After all, Zhuoyou and the others held special identities and strengths and typically stayed together. The rest of the creatures from the immortal civilization were not deemed worthy of meeting them unless there was something important to report.

Upon returning to the original cabin, Zhuoyou and the others felt a sense of warmth, akin to basking in sunlight. Yet, the broken crystal wall in front of them constantly reminded them that everything they had experienced was not merely a dream but a stark reality. Their lives were now entirely out of their control.

“Fix the crystal wall first, then return to the family to discuss the rest,” Zhuoyou instructed, his complexion shifting as the spiritual ocean deep within his brow surged up and down. A persistent, tingling pain reminded him of his precarious situation.

At that moment, as Chu Lian searched for a cave within the small world of the ancient warship, planning to wait and see what unfolded, he was shocked to discover two familiar figures.

“Why are Miss Ling Huang and Mr. Gu here? Shouldn’t he be at the Spiritual Royal Family?” Chu Lian’s complexion changed as disbelief washed over him.

Not far from his mountaintop, he noticed a serene valley filled with the fragrance of birds and flowers. From a distance, the layout in the center appeared scattered yet harmonious, featuring pavilions, flowing water, wind corridors, and rockery lakes, all surrounded by lush green bamboo and billowing white mist, creating a scene reminiscent of paradise.

Miss Ling Huang, the girl he had often spoken about, and the handsome, elegant man in white appeared to be engaged in conversation, both smiling as they covered their mouths. Their faces were stunningly beautiful.

This was the first time Chu Lian had seen her true face, and he was momentarily taken aback. The visage beneath the veil was so exquisite that it seemed almost otherworldly, almost too beautiful to be real.

Chapter 1016: Just an ordinary child of luck, feeling endless humiliation

The valley’s environment was serene, and the scenery was stunning. In the distance, purple clouds enveloped the mountains, pines clung to the rocks, and a light white mist floated, creating a scene reminiscent of paradise.

Chu Lian stood frozen, gazing at the slender figure before him, momentarily unable to recover.

He had often imagined the enchanting face hidden beneath that plain veil. Still, upon seeing it in reality, he was struck by the blend of joy and anger reflected in those flawless features, which was truly mesmerizing—almost dreamlike.

Such beauty made it impossible for one not to want to indulge, reluctant to awaken from this reverie.

Miss Ling Huo!!

A bitter feeling welled up in Chu Lian's heart, prompting him to shake his head and regain his composure.

Beside that slender figure stood a tall man in white, his presence striking and seemingly cloaked in an invisible mist accentuating his extraordinary demeanor, making his noble aura difficult to conceal.

This was "Mr. Gu," the individual who had signed the guest agreement with him.

Chu Lian was puzzled about why these two were in this place; logically, they should have been at the spiritual royal family.

How could he appear in person, come to this shuttle of the immortal civilization, and place himself in a dangerous situation? Furthermore, this mission had been personally ordered by "Mr. Gu." Why would he come himself?

At that moment, Chu Lian was completely bewildered.

Why do I care so much? Experts for protection undoubtedly surround Mr. Gu, so he isn't worried about his own safety.

Chu Lian shook his head, realizing he had been overthinking. Whatever plans or arrangements Mr. Gu had were of no concern to someone as insignificant as him.

Yet, watching how Ling Huang spoke with him caused a pang in Chu Lian's heart. It felt as if something that belonged to him had been taken away.

When he first encountered Miss Ling Huang on the official road, he had been captivated by her refined and elegant demeanor at first sight.

In their subsequent conversations, there was a palpable sense of camaraderie when confidants met. After parting, he couldn't shake the thoughts of her from his mind. What surprised Chu Lian was that the two would encounter each other again in another place.

After meeting several times, he found it impossible to forget this beautiful, elegant, and demure woman, who shared similar knowledge and thoughts with him.

Unfortunately, Chu Lian never learned her true origins; he only knew she hailed from a prominent family with an extraordinary background. As a member of the Ghost clan, he had survived for a long time, but despite his master's unfathomable strength, he had long since distanced himself from worldly matters, especially his children's private affairs. Naturally, his background could not compare to that of Ling Huang.

This disparity made Chu Lian bury his emotions deep within his heart.

Later, on the way to Juxian Village, after witnessing Miss Ling Huang's admiration for Mr. Gu, he felt a surge of unwillingness and a desire to compete for her affection once more.

However, the spirit of the Ball of Ambitions hinted to him that Mr. Gu had an unusual origin, likely coming from other super civilizations, making it clear that he was not someone Chu Lian could provoke at this moment.

Only then did Chu Lian gradually let go of those thoughts, burying his admiration deep within his heart. But today, he accidentally caught a glimpse of Miss Ling Huang's true face, causing his heart to tremble once more, making it difficult for him to restrain his emotions.

"You should leave; otherwise, others will see you, and you'll be the one who loses face."

"That Miss Ling Huang comes from an extraordinary background, making her somewhat elusive. She is not someone you can covet."

"You are now the guest of Mr. Gu, and there are certain boundaries you cannot cross."

At that moment, the flat, indifferent voice of the spirit of the Ball of Ambitions echoed in Chu Lian's ear again. It had little patience for this unsatisfactory host, reminding him that Miss Ling Huang should not tempt him. RǎNŌBEě

Although Chu Lian had made a firm promise at the time, his mind had become active again. He was destined for greatness in the future, so how could he allow himself to become so deeply entangled in personal relationships?

He also recognized that staying there was not wise. Despite it being merely a coincidence, he felt an urgent desire to leave.

However, at that moment, in the valley in the distance, Ling Huang, who was conversing with “Young Master Gu” by the lake, suddenly seemed to notice something.

She glanced in Chu Lian’s direction, her expression shifting to one of surprise, clearly having spotted him.

No, Miss Ling Huang saw me.

Chu Lian was momentarily taken aback; he hadn’t expected her to look over just as he was about to leave. If he turned around and left now, it would certainly raise questions about the situation.

As he pondered how to handle this predicament, he felt a mix of anxiety and uncertainty.

However, Ling Huang had already donned her veil again, and a golden light rose from beneath her feet, propelling her directly toward him.

“Master Chu Lian, why are you here...”

Before she arrived, her slightly surprised voice reached him. At this point, Chu Lian couldn’t turn around and leave, so he had no choice but to stay put and face her.

“I was planning to find a nearby mountain range as a cave to rest for a while, and I didn’t expect to encounter Miss Ling Huang and Young Master Gu here.”

Chu Lian suppressed the discomfort in his heart, forcing a calm smile as he explained.

Ling Huang smiled slightly, seemingly untroubled by his words, and replied, “In that case, Mr. Chu Lian might as well join us for a conversation; my cousin is here as well.”

In front of outsiders, she always referred to Gu Changge in that manner. Given this, Chu Lian couldn’t refuse her invitation, so he followed behind her as they made their way into the valley together.

Gu Changge seemed to anticipate Chu Lian’s arrival in the valley and waved his sleeves. A few cups of fine wine suddenly appeared on the stone table nearby, filled with a strong aroma that could intoxicate even an immortal.

“Young Master Gu...”

As Chu Lian followed Ling Huang to the scene, he felt increasingly uncomfortable and awkward.

“Brother Chu Lian, please have a seat.”

Gu Changge, dressed in immaculate white, lounged casually on the stone bench, sipping wine alone. Upon seeing Chu Lian approach, he gestured for him to sit down.

Chu Lian couldn't shake the feeling of an indescribable sense of oppression and fear that enveloped him in the presence of this mysterious Mr. Gu. Furthermore, after arriving, he noticed that the Artifact Spirit of the Ball of Ambitions seemed to be afraid of the black-robed old man behind Gu Changge, showing no signs of its usual aura. No matter how much he called out in his mind, it remained unresponsive.

Reluctantly, Chu Lian had no choice but to sit down opposite Gu Changge.

"I'm going to prepare some appetizers."

Ling Huang looked virtuous and elegant, offering a slight smile before her graceful figure quickly disappeared into the nearby pavilion.

"I wonder what Brother Chu Lian thinks of this mission?"

Gu Changge played with the cup between his slender fingers, casually smiling as he engaged Chu Lian in conversation.

Chu Lian suppressed the discomfort in his heart, carefully considering his words before replying, "I don't know much about this mission, so I will do my best to follow the seniors, inquire about the necessary information from them, and strive to complete Mr. Gu's instructions."

Gu Changge smiled and lightly set down his wine glass, saying, "This task is actually quite simple, and Brother Chu Lian doesn't need to worry too much. The reason I asked you to come along is quite significant; I want to train you in the process. It's all for your benefit, and it's not life-threatening."

“And this so-called mission is merely a cover. I don’t expect you to uncover any information about the immortal civilization. My real aim is to find a few individuals who can take care of things.”

Chu Lian was taken aback by Gu Changge’s words and still didn’t grasp their full meaning. Was this merely a way to grind them down? And was it really just a cover?

On the contrary, the spirit of the Ball of Ambitions within his sea of consciousness was momentarily stunned, vaguely piecing together some insights. From the artifact spirit’s perspective, Gu Changge—a young man with an unfathomable background—must have a significant reason for coming to the Spiritual Civilization.

It was likely related to an assessment or task assigned by the forces behind him. This mission could enable him to control or occupy a powerful civilization without relying on the support of any external forces. The Spiritual Civilization was merely a pawn in his game.

At that moment, the spirit inferred that Gu Changge’s true target was likely this immortal civilization.

“Brother Chu Lian, there’s no need to be overly vigilant or suspicious of your subordinates. I genuinely want to recruit you because a talent like yours is indeed rare, and I cherish it. Building a good relationship now may prove beneficial for me in the future.” Gu Changge poured himself another glass of wine, smiling faintly.

Chu Lian’s heart trembled at these words.

Apart from the Artifact Spirit of the Ball of Ambitions, this was the second time someone had mentioned his fate to him. He understood that the reason he was regarded as the host of the Ball of Ambitions was due to his extraordinary fate, which was considered a variable in legend. Even those

ancient civilizations, throughout their long existence from birth to extinction, might not have produced an anomaly like him.

Now, someone had actually perceived his fate and spoke of it casually. How could this not shock Chu Lian?

“I didn’t expect that Mr. Gu could see Chu Lian’s fate. It seems I have underestimated his origins again. Could it be that he will be the future successor of a Supreme Civilization?”

The Artifact Spirit of the Ball of Ambitions was equally astonished at this moment, unable to suppress its curiosity. It truly hadn’t expected Chu Lian’s fate to be so easily discerned. Could it be that the mysterious old man in the black robe had revealed this to Gu Changge?

As Chu Lian’s thoughts churned, making it difficult to calm down, Ling Huang returned with some delicacies in hand.

Upon seeing her, Gu Changge smiled slightly and added, “But there’s one thing I need to tell Brother Chu Lian in advance. I know you have feelings for Ling Huang, but she is also very fond of me. So, with that in mind, it’s better for Brother Chu Lian to hold back his thoughts; otherwise, things might become complicated for me later.”

While speaking, he reached out to gently wrap his arm around Ling Huang’s slender waist. She seemed a bit surprised and shy at first, but then settled comfortably in his embrace. With her other hand, she placed all the delicacies on the table and then lifted a wine glass, bringing it to Gu Changge’s lips.

As Chu Lian heard this and witnessed the scene unfolding before him, his head suddenly buzzed as if struck by a heavenly hammer. In an instant, he froze in place.

He didn't even recall how he left the valley afterward; the memory of that moment felt completely blank in his mind. When he finally regained his sense.

Chu Lian felt an overwhelming sense of humiliation wash over him. His teeth clenched and his fists creaked with tension. Although the so-called "Mr. Gu" seemed to hold him in high regard, every word spoken was laced with aloofness and condescension, as if he didn't take him seriously at all.

Especially those last words—did he mean to convey that Chu Lian was unqualified to compete with him? Was he telling him to completely give up any hopes he had?

"It's just too much to bear..."

The resentment of humiliation and the pain of having his affection snatched away felt insurmountable. Chu Lian's teeth were almost ground to dust, and his eyes were bloodshot with fury. The scene that had unfolded before Ling Huang had stripped him of his dignity; he would likely feel too ashamed to face her again in the future.

But now, they had already left the valley, and Chu Lian couldn't find an outlet for his anger.

He could only unleash his frustration on the surrounding ancient forests, sending chips of wood and dust flying through the air. Gradually, his mood began to calm down.

The Artifact Spirit of the Ball of Ambitions had initially thought that after Gu Changge's words, Chu Lian would come to terms with the situation. However, it hadn't anticipated such a dramatic shift in Chu Lian's mentality. In that moment, even the spirit was taken aback and found itself at a loss for words.

From its perspective, the identities and strengths of Chu Lian and Gu Changge were not on the same level at all. Gu Changge had spoken to him in a manner that could be considered respectful, perhaps even gentle and easygoing. What kind of humiliation was this?

Moreover, Miss Ling Huang had admired “Mr. Gu” at first glance, while her connection with Chu Lian had barely reached the level of friendship. What kind of disparity was this?

“What’s going on? How could the host chosen by the Ball of Ambitions be so weak?”

The Artifact Spirit of the Ball of Ambitions was utterly bewildered at that moment. It had completely given up any hope for Chu Lian as its host.

Meanwhile, in the valley, which felt like a paradise, Gu Changge sipped his wine with a leisurely expression.

“According to the timing, it should be almost right. The so-called outlier is no different from a child of luck; the only difference lies in the degree of their luck.”

“After losing the aura of that variable, he is merely an ordinary child of luck, or even worse. And since that treasure is alive, it will surely find a way to save itself at this moment.”

When Gu Changge interfered with Chu Lian’s fate before, he had already disrupted his identity as a variable. The Child of Destiny and the Child of Luck each had their own personalities, and these personalities were not static.

For instance, Chu Lian's unique personality had been disturbed by Gu Changge, causing him to lose the protection that came with his identity as a variable and the training he should have received. This was why the Artifact Spirit of the Ball of Ambitions sensed something was amiss and noticed a significant gap between Chu Lian and what it had previously perceived.

While Chu Lian had great luck, he had missed the most crucial training and experiences that shaped him. Without suffering and trials, he would ultimately struggle to grow.

Although these challenges and tribulations seemed unfavorable to Chu Lian, he had the protection of a variable, making it easier for him to navigate these hardships and grow more quickly. In a sense, these tribulations were merely his sharpening stones.

Chapter 1017: False Fabricated Destiny, Immortal Civilization Base Camp

The strange aura around Chu Lian has diminished significantly. If I want to, I can easily discern his fate now.

I didn't expect such a dramatic change in his fate in such a short time.

Ling Huang had returned to her usual composure in the valley, though a faint glow still lingered on her face. She gazed in the direction where Chu Lian had departed, surprise evident in her expression.

Initially, she had hesitated to confront Chu Lian because of his unusual fate. But now, he seemed to have lost the protective aura of that fate and was no longer as unpredictable as he had once been.

Ling Huang was unaware of the method Gu Changge had used to alter the fate of a variable. This left her feeling both astonished and impressed.

“There still seem to be some issues. Although his fate can be explored, I still can’t fully grasp what treasure he possesses. It feels incomplete,” Ling Huang said suddenly, her surprise growing even more.

She had intended to take advantage of Chu Lian’s loss of the variable’s protection to gain insight into the opportunities and fortunes he had obtained. However, she found herself stuck and unable to continue her deductions.

“The fate you perceive doesn’t belong to Chu Lian’s true fate; it’s merely a false fate I fabricated. Thus, what you see is naturally incomplete,” Gu Changge explained with a casual smile.

Upon hearing this, Ling Huang’s astonishment deepened. A false fate fabricated so easily? Yet, this false fate resembled a genuine script of life that Chu Lian would experience in the future.

This was a power she could hardly fathom at that moment—the ability to fabricate fate at will and alter a person’s future, especially for someone considered a variable, who could not be easily discerned by fate.

Gu Changge chose not to elaborate further. Among the countless living beings, some were born with extraordinary fates, favored by the heavens. Though their lives were often filled with ups and downs, they ultimately managed to turn dangers into blessings. Such individuals were known as children of luck.

In Gu Changge’s view, the lives of these children of luck followed a predetermined path. If not for human interference, they would develop along the original trajectory laid out by destiny, effectively playing the leading role in their own life stories.

Everyone had their own fate—ordinary people’s destinies were typically straightforward: a simple life that culminated in old age, or a life interrupted by illness. In contrast, those with good fortune often encountered numerous adventures throughout their lives.

These adventures would bestow upon them benefits far beyond what ordinary people could attain. For cultivators, this might manifest as skills, spiritual objects, or treasures from heaven and earth; for common folk, it could mean the favor of nobles, wealth, and fame. Regardless of the form it took, these benefits were predetermined from birth.

From the moment of birth to the moment of death, the experiences one would have were already etched in the long river of fate. This applied equally to both ordinary people and children of luck. Only beings at the Dao realm, possessing profound cultivation, could truly survey fate and gain insight into this river. They alone could accurately control their own destinies, escaping the constraints of fate and remaining untainted by cause and effect.

Their fates, which existed solely in their hands, had long been determined. It was nearly impossible for others to spy on or manipulate the changes in their paths. Beings at the realm of immortality—such as quasi-immortal emperors and immortal emperors—had pasts obscured by fog, making them difficult to perceive. Yet, their fates did not truly belong to them.

In the eyes of those with even deeper cultivation, who existed beyond the reach of fate, it was relatively easy to discern everything about such beings, including their pasts and futures. While the luck of the child of luck was remarkable, those who attained the stage of Daoism had often undergone numerous opportunities and fortunes themselves. Thus, it could be said that no one understood the existence of the Son of Destiny better than they did.

Before one could truly control their own destiny, no matter how extraordinary that destiny appeared, it could be calculated and seen through by others. Those who could perceive such fates might even rob the individual of their opportunities or eliminate them before they could flourish. Chu Lian, as an existence with a concealed real fate, qualified as a true variable.

His fate was shrouded in mystery, meaning that if it didn't inherently belong to him, it couldn't be doomed. Consequently, no one could predict how far he might grow in the future or what adventures and fortunes awaited him. Gu Changge's intent was to dismantle the peculiar aura that surrounded Chu Lian.

In reality, Chu Lian's true fate had never been predetermined or open to scrutiny. Instead, Gu Changge had crafted a narrative specifically for his interpretation, simulating a false fate for Chu Lian's evolution. This fabricated fate effectively obscured his genuine destiny. Within this false fate, the script for Chu Lian's future had already been meticulously written.

As long as he advanced step by step, Chu Lian could seize numerous opportunities. With the support of various factions within the Spiritual civilization, he would eventually succeed in overthrowing the rule of the Spiritual royal family. Ultimately, he would establish a peaceful new nation and emerge as the new ruler of the Spiritual civilization.

This was the fate that Gu Changge had meticulously arranged for Chu Lian long ago, ensuring that from that point forward, his life would be smooth sailing—devoid of the necessary trials and tribulations that often accompany significant growth. Gu Changge had devised this plan in part due to his prior experience with his apprentice, Barbara.

Though Barbara was a variable, she had been trapped within a fate script created by someone else, undergoing continuous reincarnation without the ability to break free. Her true destiny had never been shattered or controlled by anyone. The individual behind her sought to manipulate or dismantle her strange fate. Given Gu Changge's current strength, orchestrating all of this was exceedingly easy for him, allowing him to operate undetected.

Therefore, in the eyes of the artifact spirit of the Ball of Ambitions, Chu Lian's fate had taken a drastic turn for the worse. The mist that once obscured his destiny had dissipated, revealing a clearer, less extraordinary path. What once appeared to be an enigmatic and unpredictable fate now seemed like a fleeting illusion. The spirit began to question whether Chu Lian had ever truly been a variable at all.

It lamented its decision to choose Chu Lian as its host, realizing that it had made a grave mistake. However, at this point, even if it wanted to change the situation, it was already too late. With the fog of fate cleared, Chu Lian's fortune was no longer as protective as it once seemed. His every move, including the fact that he possessed the Ball of Ambitions, could now be easily discerned by those more powerful than him.

What once made him special—his luck—was now a liability. The treasure he carried was no longer hidden, and it would inevitably attract unwanted attention. Figures like Mr. Gu and the mysterious old servant, with their vast insight and strength, would undoubtedly see through Chu Lian's secrets with ease.

At that moment, the artifact spirit of the Ball of Ambitions felt an impending sense of doom. If things continued this way, not only would Chu Lian lose his life, but the Ball of Ambitions itself would also collapse, its power disintegrating into nothingness. As the spirit of the artifact, it would be left with no choice but to vanish, consumed by the smoke of failure. It knew that it had to find a way to preserve itself, to protect its existence, even if Chu Lian was unaware of the turmoil raging within the artifact.

Unaware of the Ball of Ambitions' inner turmoil, Chu Lian himself, having regained a sense of calm, made the decision to stay far away from Gu Changge and Ling Huang. He sought out a quiet mountain peak, where he could carve out a cave and find temporary refuge. Despite the humiliation he had endured at the hands of Gu Changge, Chu Lian harbored no thoughts of retreat. In his heart, he vowed that one day he would repay the disgrace he had suffered.

Meanwhile, in a distant and desolate universe, a streak of azure light shot through the vast emptiness, carrying a group from the immortal civilization. The flying shuttle, tasked with resisting the descent of the immortal civilization, surged forward through the void. Within the cabin, Zhuoyou and the others watched the scenery outside the crystal wall without much enthusiasm. The return to their civilization didn't fill them with joy or anticipation.

The territory of the immortal civilization was vast and ancient, a realm unlike the birthplace of many other life civilizations scattered throughout the boundless universe. It was a place of great power and mystery, separated from the chaos and decay of the outside world.

From a distance, the scene was breathtaking—thousands of magnificent crystals standing tall throughout the universe, emitting a kaleidoscope of colorful light. These crystals, immense and extraordinary, appeared like giant crystal diamonds, stretching endlessly across the cosmos. Each

crystal spanned hundreds of millions of miles, with their refracted brilliance shimmering like a gathering river of galaxies, surging with vibrant energy.

These awe-inspiring crystals, resembling ancient life stars, were known as “life source crystals” by the immortal civilization. Each complete life source crystal symbolized a place where life had originated within the immortal civilization, holding immense significance.

However, within each life source crystal lay something even more unique—a vast, hollow space filled with a network of small worlds, layered and stacked upon one another. These stacked worlds, organized like goose eggs, extended infinitely in all directions, creating a complex and intricate structure that seemed to defy the normal laws of space and time.

In this grand expanse, one small world stood adjacent to another, separated by void turbulence and world barriers. Without a certain level of strength, it was almost impossible to break through these barriers and cross over into other small worlds. Each of these worlds was the cradle of an ancient civilization, and within every universe, countless creatures belonging to the immortal civilization thrived.

Yet, despite the vast population, only a few ethnic groups truly held control over the peak power of the immortal civilization. The societal structure was like a pyramid, layer upon layer, with power concentrated at the top. The Zhuo Clan, to which Zhuoyou and the others belonged, was among the most powerful factions within this hierarchy.

At this very moment, in the base camp of the Zhuo Clan, stood the imposing ancient structures of the Glazed Temple. These temples stretched endlessly into the sky, their tops obscured by the heavens, radiating an overwhelming sense of grandeur. Surrounding these towering edifices were various ethereal and fantastic phenomena, floating like rivers of fire, divine light, and bolts of lightning. The air shimmered with vibrant hues—gold, yellow, orange—creating an illusion of celestial starlight, endlessly interwoven and radiant.

Around this magnificent complex, numerous streamers of light could be seen darting through the air, gathering from distant places and converging around the towering structures, adding to the sense of power and grandeur that permeated the Zhuo Clan's domain.

These streamers, though varying in shapes, took on human forms with indistinct facial features and a radiant glow as they approached the building complex.

"I heard from the clan that Elder Zhuoyou encountered an unexpected accident while searching for a new civilization. Nearly the entire army she brought was wiped out," one figure said with a heavy tone.

"She fears they may have pursuers, which is why she requested the family send reinforcements to meet them."

"I'm not sure if it's true, but I heard the same from the clan. That's why I rushed back." Another figure added, their expression equally serious.

"Several elders are already convening in the Elder Temple. They're discussing the situation."

"Elder Zhuoyou's faction has suffered significant losses. I heard one of the accompanying elders' spiritual inscriptions shattered—he died out there."

"Could it be they stumbled upon a forbidden area of life? I can't think of any other explanation for a new civilization posing such a deadly threat," mused another, their voice laced with uncertainty.

The figures descended from the skies, hurrying toward the grand palace complex at the center. Their faces remained solemn, burdened by the grim news and the mystery surrounding the events that had unfolded.

Many conversations buzzed through the air, with shock evident in the hearts of those who had learned of the news. This was the core region of the Zhuo Clan, a place only true core members were permitted to enter. Zhuoyou, with her status as a powerful elder of the clan, was of particular importance, having undergone three spiritual transformations.

In the Zhuo Clan, only those who had completed spiritual transformations were granted the prestigious title of “elder” and could take a seat in the Elder Temple at the heart of the clan’s domain.

The Zhuo clansmen who rushed over came from various factions. Some were closely aligned with Zhuoyou’s faction, while others were more indifferent and kept their distance, showing little concern about the unfolding situation. These indifferent members, barely pausing to discuss the events, turned into streaks of light and made their way toward the palace.

Within the palace, many figures had already gathered. Only the elders were allowed to stand at the forefront, commanding respect with their presence. The rest of the Zhuo clansmen followed in strict order, maintaining an atmosphere of solemnity and silence. Upon arriving, none dared to show the slightest hint of disrespect.

In the center of the temple stood a majestic statue of a deity, its face blurred and flat, making it difficult to discern its gender—an embodiment of a supreme god passed down through generations. This statue represented the first ancestor of the Zhuo Clan, one of the oldest figures in the immortal civilization who had founded the clan. Renowned throughout the entire immortal civilization, this ancestor was also celebrated among several ancient and powerful civilizations in the surrounding regions.

However, this ancestor had long since vanished, his whereabouts unknown for countless years. The Zhuo people were oblivious to his current situation, the realm in which he resided, and the identity he might now possess.

Inside the palace, numerous elders and important figures had gathered, speaking in hushed tones. Each individual was a formidable powerhouse, comparable to those of the Dao Realm within the Immortal Dao Civilization, exhibiting monstrous strength. This was only to be expected, as the Zhuo Clan was one of the most powerful ethnic groups in an ancient civilization, with a background that exceeded the imagination.

It was certainly incomparable to the newly formed real world like the Dao Chang Realm.

“Almost everyone has arrived. This time, Elder Zhuoyou sent back a message requesting the clan to come pick her up, fearing that pursuing troops would come to attack her,” one of the elders stated.

“I have dispatched some powerful members of the clan to meet her, and it’s expected that Elder Zhuoyou will return to the clan shortly.”

“She went out to search for the newborn real world, aiming to condense the origin material of the immortal civilization, but encountered a life-and-death crisis. As for her experiences, she hasn’t fully relayed them yet; she only asked the clan to prepare for any impending threats.”

Soon, several high-ranking elders in the Elder Temple raised their hands, calling for silence. They exchanged glances before informing everyone of the news they had received from Zhuoyou.

The location of Zhuoyou’s expedition was quite distant from the immortal civilization, and even an entity comparable to the Dao Realm found it challenging to relay all events instantly. Before Zhuoyou managed to contact her grandfather, she had already depleted many of her communication resources.

Thus, the Zhuo Clan was left with only a vague understanding of what had transpired. They knew that Zhuoyou and her group had faced a terrifying enemy during their assault on that new civilization. One elder had been killed on the spot, and Zhuoyou and the others were fortunate to escape quickly, ensuring their survival.

Chapter 1018: Brought about a terrible disaster, at least in the ancestral Dao realm

Although the Zhuo clan had many elders, only a few truly held power, and they were collectively known as the Elders of Heaven. Zhuoyou was one of these heavenly elders, and she had a significant chance of undergoing the fourth spiritual transformation. In the civilization of the Immortal Dao, this transformation signified entry into the True Dao Realm, an existence capable of roaming across endless time and space, unrestrained.

Zhuoyou's return to the clan was naturally a major event for the entire Zhuo family, especially since she and her companions had narrowly escaped death and experienced a true life-and-death encounter. Many within the clan were eager to learn what Zhuoyou and the others had faced.

What kind of terrifying being could kill an elder with a single palm strike?

"The Elders of Heaven have discussed this matter. Regardless of the circumstances, we must ensure Elder Zhuoyou returns home safely," a voice declared.

"As for what she has gone through, it must not be shared with the Zhuo clan, lest it be leaked to other families."

In the Elder Temple, the leader, clad in silver robes shimmering like moonlight, gazed flatly at the many clan members gathered below as he spoke.

He was an elder of the Zhuo clan, named Zhuoxiu, who had already successfully undergone the fourth spiritual transformation and was closely tied to Zhuoyou's lineage. The other Heavenly Elders also nodded in tacit agreement. The most pressing task was to bring Zhuoyou and her companions back safely.

As for what Zhuoyou meant when she mentioned having the clan prepare, they would need to wait until her return to inquire further.

The immortal civilization had deep roots, with its inheritance spanning over tens of millions of epochs, securing its position in the vast, boundless world. In addition to the Zhuo clan, several other great clans existed within the immortal civilization, each with strength and background rivaling that of the Zhuo clan, and they often found themselves in competition with one another.

Together, these powerful clans of the immortal civilization had established the Cabinet of Elders.

Each clan selected esteemed elders to take on crucial roles within the Cabinet of Elders, overseeing the entire immortal civilization. It could be said that the Cabinet represented the pinnacle of power in the immortal world. Every million years, new candidates were chosen to serve in the Cabinet.

Among those who held such a prestigious position was an elder from Zhuoyou's lineage—her current grandfather, Zhuo Fengxie. He was highly ranked within the immortal civilization and was rumored to be on the path to rivaling, or even surpassing, the Zhuo clan's ancestors, potentially becoming an existence on par with them.

Even some of the Heavenly Elders, who maintained a distant relationship with Zhuoyou's lineage, harbored a deep respect and fear for Zhuo Fengxie. As for Zhuoxiu, who was addressing the group, he was closely aligned with Zhuo Fengxie.

It was at Zhuo Fengxie's behest that Zhuoxiu convened this meeting of elders to arrange Zhuoyou's return to the clan.

In the Elder's Temple, as everyone quietly discussed the matter, several figures suddenly rushed in from outside the hall and reported, "Elders, I bring news: Elder Zhuoyou has returned to the clan grounds. Under the guidance of the clan's strongest members, she has arrived safely. Elder Zhuoyou and the others are on their way here."

Upon hearing this, the expressions of everyone in the Elder's Temple shifted. Those close to Zhuoyou's lineage couldn't suppress their smiles, visibly relieved as they sighed in relief. The rest remained impassive, their faces expressionless as though indifferent to the news.

Zhuoxiu smiled faintly and said, "It's good that Elder Zhuoyou has returned safely. We will wait here for her. Perhaps this journey to seek out the newborn real world will bring unexpected surprises."

Though Zhuoyou's strength was only at the threshold of the Heavenly Elders and slightly weaker than the others, her talent was immense. She was expected to make significant progress in the future and, as a direct descendant of Zhuo Fengxie, held a prestigious position within the clan.

Soon, outside the magnificent palace, several bright lights appeared as if conjured from thin air, rushing straight toward the hall. Leading the group was Zhuoyou, who strode in confidently alongside several other clan members.

Her expression was remarkably calm; rather than displaying joy at her safe return, she appeared burdened by something weighing heavily on her. In the Elder's Temple, all eyes were on her, and many noticed the unusual look on her face. Several individuals exchanged perplexed glances, sensing that Zhuoyou had indeed been profoundly affected by her experiences during this outing.

In the past, Zhuoyou had been fearless, always bold and confident, often acting with reckless abandon.

“It seems this dangerous journey has taught Elder Zhuoyou some hard lessons,” someone whispered with a mocking smile.

“Elder Zhuoyou has endured much, but now that she’s returned safely, there’s no need to worry anymore,” another person chimed in.

“Here, on our Zhuo clan’s territory, she won’t face any more danger.”

“Still, it’s puzzling,” someone else added.

“Why did Elder Zhuoyou urge the clan to prepare for an imminent catastrophe upon her return? What did she experience out there?”

Zhuoxiu and the other Heavenly Elders, while outwardly concerned, refrained from saying too much. They simply inquired about Zhuoyou’s ordeal, as the entire Zhuo clan was paying close attention to the matter. After all, Zhuoyou had nearly lost all the clansmen she brought with her, including an elder—a considerable loss for her lineage.

It was clear that even Zhuoyou would face consequences for this.

Zhuoyou gazed at the people in the hall with a complicated expression, her fear barely concealed. It was clear she did not wish to relive the events, but after a heavy sigh, she began her explanation.

“I never imagined what transpired could have happened. I believed we were only dealing with a weak newborn real world. There was a lingering aura of the Immortal Dao civilization’s fire, and I

thought we could recover the remaining ashes and extract the original material of the Immortal Dao civilization.”

“It seemed like a battle we were certain to win. The strongest figure we encountered was only on par with me, and the cultivators on other levels were far weaker than the army I led.”

She paused briefly, her voice trembling slightly. “But at the critical moment, a terrifying figure descended, wiping out countless powerhouses with a single hand. That’s when I realized something was terribly wrong. I fled as quickly as I could, but many were not so fortunate and remained there... forever.”

Zhuoyou’s face darkened as she continued. “That figure wasn’t even their true form—it was just a dharma body. If the real body had descended, none of us would have escaped. From what I could sense, I believe its true form is comparable to an existence at the ancestral realm of the Immortal Dao civilization.”

The mention of the Ancestral Dao Realm caused a ripple of unease in the hall. A being of that caliber meant they had passed at least six Heavenly Declines. Even within the boundless world, such figures were the most powerful—those who established ancestors and created civilizations, with unfathomable strength.

A single thought could open up the space and time of the universe, born from chaos, and create endless worlds. Such a being’s real body could break free from the shackles of fate, no longer subject to its control. Merely by perceiving the countless beings and phenomena in a single world, it would become omniscient and omnipotent, mastering time and space. If its strength increased further, it could truly command fate and control the threads of cause and effect. With a snap of its fingers, it could create a world from a speck of dust, evolve creatures and races, and bring forth infinite derivatives.

The former ancestor of the entire Zhuo Clan was rumored to have undergone nearly six spiritual transformations, almost reaching the heights of the Ancestral Dao Realm.

Zhuoyou's words sent shockwaves through the Elder's Temple. The mere mention of the "Ancestral Dao Realm" was like an immense mountain pressing down on everyone's heads, suffocating them under its weight. Only those who had truly entered the Dao Realm could grasp just how terrifying and awe-inspiring an existence of this level was.

Even the Heavenly Elders found it hard to comprehend the powers wielded by beings far beyond their own strength. It was like a frog at the bottom of a well; only upon leaving the well did it realize the true vastness of the world. Likewise, they had just begun to step beyond their limited perspective and glimpse the infinite expanse of the universe, only to realize how small and insignificant they truly were.

"If we've truly offended an ancestor in the Dao Realm, we must prepare ourselves for the consequences. The wrath of such an existence is not easily soothed," Zhuoxiu said, his tone grave. The other Heavenly Elders also wore serious expressions.

Although the Zhuo Clan was one of the most powerful families within the immortal civilization, the possibility of confronting an ancestor from the Ancestral Realm filled even them with dread. Despite the strength of their clan, an encounter with an existence of such immense power could shake them to their core.

While a civilization with an ancestor in the Dao Realm had the potential to ascend into a supreme civilization, that only marked a threshold, not the full measure of its strength. The presence of a single ancestor did not define the complete might of a supreme civilization, and there were likely multiple ancestors within such realms.

Similarly, the immortal civilization, though ancient and powerful, had not yet reached the heights of a supreme civilization. Nonetheless, this did not mean it lacked the power or methods to contend with beings of the Ancestral Realm. Even without supreme status, civilizations like theirs could still possess the means to counter such forces.

“This matter requires careful consideration, but we shouldn’t worry excessively. The existence of an ancestor in the Dao Realm, without the vast coordinates of the immortal civilization, would find it difficult to locate us,” Zhuoxiu said, trying to reassure the group.

“Perhaps I was too anxious. If they truly desire it, it may be challenging for Elder Zhuoyou to return safely,” he continued. “However, even if they do find us, I’ll be prepared. I wonder who will truly suffer in the end.”

While the elders in the hall expressed some concern, they ultimately felt that the likelihood of such an occurrence was slim and remained optimistic.

Zhuoyou, however, felt a bitter pang in her heart. She couldn’t voice her worries in the face of the elders’ seemingly unfounded optimism. The calamity was imminent, yet they remained unaware of it. Moreover, this impending disaster was a consequence of her actions for the entire immortal civilization.

Quickly, a group of elders from the Zhuo clan relayed the news back to their respective branches and began preparations. On the bright side, the Zhuo clan had several elders managing daily affairs, but in reality, the true decision-making power lay with a few senior members of the clan. Among them was Zhuoyou’s grandfather, Zhuo Fengxie.

“Initially, when Zhuoyou asked me to perform a divination, it clearly indicated there would be no danger. So why did this happen?” Zhuoxiu pondered aloud.

“Could it be that when the divination was made, an accident had already occurred, and someone knew in advance and concealed the truth?”

He continued, "If that's the case, Zhuoyou's return to the Zhuo clan may not be so straightforward, and a hidden crisis looms in the shadows. I always suspected that the real world associated with the fire of the Immortal Dao civilization was far from ordinary."

At that moment, deep within the Zhuo Clan, there was a tranquil place, still and undisturbed, as calm as a glassy lake. A magnificent round crystal ball, shimmering with an unusual hue, floated quietly. The mental power within it surged turbulently, akin to a storm brewing on the horizon.

If unleashed, it would easily devastate the world and obliterate all of time and space. This peculiar crystal ball contained the current spiritual power of Zhuo Fengxie, Zhuoyou's grandfather. To put it simply, he was among the most powerful beings in the Zhuo Clan at that time.

Zhuo Fengxie was not only immensely talented but also one of the most astonishing figures of his time. Having undergone five spiritual transformations, he was nearly comparable to the ancestors of the Zhuo clan from generations past. He excelled in deduction and divination, having acquired the legacy of an ancestor from the Immortal Dao civilization, which granted him profound insights in this area.

However, Zhuo Fengxie's rise to power wasn't solely due to that legacy; he had encountered numerous opportunities and actively sought out prospects for the descendants of his family. After his original physical body decayed, he took residence in the body of a descendant. In reality, this physical form belonged to one of his descendants, making his seniority far greater than that of Zhuoyou's grandfather. Yet, in the context of the Immortal civilization, age and lineage held little significance.

Now that he sensed something amiss, Zhuo Fengxie was cautious and planned to have his clansmen prepare for potential dangers. He feared that if Zhuoyou and the others managed to return to the clan, someone might be orchestrating something sinister behind the scenes, complicating matters further.

It seems I must meet with Zhuoyou and the others in person to assess whether there's a problem.

He thought.

At that moment, in the base camp of the Zhuo Clan, the shuttle that Zhuoyou had piloted earlier rested on an exceptionally wide flat crystal.

A series of bright portals appeared, and the remnant army that had accompanied Zhuoyou stepped out from within. Numerous Zhuo clansmen were present, tasked with assessing the losses incurred during this ordeal.

High in the sky, a flat, crystal-clear mirror, spanning a thousand feet in width, hung gleaming, reflecting blinding light. This mirror served to display all the creatures exiting the shuttle, ensuring they wouldn't be confused and inadvertently enter an unknown existence.

Chu Lian and the other younger clan members followed behind the immortal figures of the Spiritual civilization, their hearts pounding with anxiety and cold sweat pooling on their backs. He watched in horror as a creature ahead of him was illuminated by the mirror, from which a thick black energy erupted.

In an instant, a pillar of light, as wide as a star, blasted down and annihilated the creature, reducing it to mere ashes. Traveling across such vastness, it was inevitable to become tainted by strange auras. There was even a risk of being possessed or overtaken by unspeakable mysterious substances or beings.

Chu Lian couldn't shake the fear that, as a creature of the Spiritual civilization, he might be struck down by the mirror at any moment. All he could do was hope that the rare treasure Gu Changge had bestowed upon them would prove effective.

Soon, everyone from the Spiritual civilization, each with their own emotions, walked through the reflected brilliance, their bodies covered in cold sweat. Fortunately, as they passed, they merely felt a gentle warmth enveloping them, with no danger in sight, allowing them to relax.

Chu Lian let out a sigh of relief; it appeared that Gu Changge's origins were indeed mysterious, and the strange treasure he had bestowed upon them truly protected them from harm. However, he felt a twinge of surprise because he had not seen Gu Changge or Ling Huang.

Clearly, they had not remained on the shuttle of the immortal civilization. Before leaving that small world, Chu Lian had intentionally visited the valley where Gu Changge had been, but found it empty.

It doesn't matter where he is or what he has to do with me. The most important thing now is to survive.

Chu Lian thought to himself.

The immortal civilization was older and more powerful than the Spiritual civilization. Though this location was merely the base camp of the Zhuo clan, it was far more expansive than any territory Chu Lian was familiar with. The universe and the realms ruled by the Zhuo race were virtually limitless, beyond counting. Inquiring about the Zhuo clan and the entire immortal civilization proved to be extremely challenging.

The territory of this immortal civilization is indeed vast. I can't even imagine how many times larger it is than our Spiritual realm. The foundation of the Zhuo clan alone is not to be underestimated.

Meanwhile, in the lands of the Zhuo clan, beneath a quiet starry sky, three figures walked slowly: Gu Changge, accompanied by Bone Ancestor and Ling Huang. Upon entering the territory of the

immortal civilization, they exited the shuttle and proceeded into Zhuo territory. Although the region was heavily guarded and challenging to navigate, they were sheltered within the Zhuo clan's shuttles, and few dared to investigate them seriously.

At this moment, Ling Huang spoke, her eyes wide with amazement as she surveyed the scene before her, comparing it to the Spiritual civilization. The world structure of the immortal civilization was markedly different from that of other civilizations. The magnificent crystal formations resembled ancient planets and were imbued with a vibrant life force. Each colossal crystal could be considered a galaxy of life within the immortal civilization.

However, the overall strength of the ethnic groups inhabiting these galaxies was relatively weak, far from the might of the Zhuo clan.

Chapter 1019: The next target is Xiyuan Civilization, Ten Direction universe sealing barrier

These magnificent galaxies formed a continuous expanse, reflecting nebula-like colors and inhabited by numerous ethnic groups of the immortal civilization. The army that Zhuoyou brought to fight against the Dao Chang Realm this time originated from these galaxies' ethnic groups. In terms of background alone, it was far inferior to forces like the Zhuo clan. However, compared to other new civilizations, the power of these ethnic groups should not be underestimated, as there were individuals within the clan comparable to immortal kings.

All kinds of crystal-bright rays of light, reflected from these galaxies, were vibrant and rich. Throughout the vast universe, strands of luck surged from all directions, turbulent and expansive, resembling undulating oceans. This was the base camp of the Zhuo Clan, which had accumulated the strong luck of this group for hundreds of millions of years.

In the past, the other great clans of the immortal civilization could not enter without permission.

The luck of just one major clan is almost comparable to the entire accumulation of the Spiritual civilization. The foundation of this immortal civilization is truly terrifying.

Ling Huang thought, feeling secretly shocked by the sights she encountered along the way.

They had not yet reached the core area of the Zhuo clan; this could only be considered a relatively peripheral region. If they ventured into the actual core, the power of luck would undoubtedly be even more astonishing. She could only lament that it truly deserved its high ranking among the ancient civilizations, showcasing an extraordinary background.

At best, the Spiritual civilization had only managed to touch the threshold of ancient civilizations and was not ranked among them at all. As the empress of the Spiritual royal family, she had long faced blame due to her ancestors' orders, resulting in scorn from all clans. Yet, deep down, she fervently hoped for the growth and prosperity of the Spiritual royal family, aspiring for it to move toward a more glorious era.

Bone Ancestor, dressed like an old servant, remained silent, though the disdain in his eye sockets was unmistakable. After all, he was on the verge of achieving the ancestral realm and was not easily shocked by what lay before him. Among the civilizations he had once destroyed, many existed that were comparable to the Zhuo clan; why would he care about those in front of him?

Gu Changge, Bone Ancestor, and Ling Huang walked beneath the vast and empty starry sky. Though their pace seemed slow, they covered thousands of miles, leaving the entire universe behind them. In that moment, even those in the Zhuo clan who were comparable to the Dao Realm could not perceive their aura fluctuations, let alone detect their presence.

Within the territory governed by the Zhuo Clan, numerous large universes and ancient worlds existed. Essentially, in each large universe, there would be beings comparable to or even surpassing the immortal king.

One side of the world advanced like this; even with an invasion by foreign enemies, they would have to pay a substantial price to penetrate the depths of the clan. The closer one got to the core area of the Zhuo Clan, the stronger the beings residing in the large universe became, with many individuals comparable to the Dao Realm.

“The immortal civilization has four major clans: the Zhuo clan, the Hun clan, the Wu clan, and the Gou clan.”

“The strength and background of the other three tribes are not weaker than that of the Zhuo clan. Among them, the Wu tribe and the Gou clan are the oldest clans in the immortal civilization, and their strength may be slightly greater.”

Ling Huang spoke softly, sharing information she had obtained from Zhuoyou and others earlier.

The Zhuo clan and the Hun clan actually have a long history. It is said that their first-generation ancestors were conceived from the most primitive turbid air at the dawn of the immortal civilization. That wisp of turbid air evolved into two beings, who became the first-generation ancestors of the Hun clan and the Zhuo clan, respectively. After many epochs of development, the present-day Zhuo and Hun clans came into being.

The other two clans, the Wu clan and the Gou clan, had an even longer history, and even Zhuoyou and the others couldn't explain it clearly. Yet, the entire immortal civilization had developed into a four-legged confrontation, with the four races coexisting and restraining one another.

“Given the current strength of the Spiritual civilization, it is indeed challenging to break through and occupy the immortal civilization from the outside, and there is almost no hope,” Gu Changge said, nodding slightly in agreement.

Naturally, he did not expect to rely on the power of the Spiritual civilization to fully and firmly control the immortal civilization. After all, the immortal civilization could be considered the most powerful among the ancient civilizations. The gap between the Spiritual civilization and the immortal civilization was akin to that of an ordinary immortal creature facing an immortal king.

Gu Changge had other plans for his visit to the immortal civilization this time.

In his opinion, Zhuozu represented a significant breakthrough. “The background of the immortal civilization is terrifying, and it is also tied to the Xi Yuan civilization. Every era, it pays tribute with numerous resources in exchange for protection.”

“The Xi Yuan civilization is a renowned and powerful entity in the boundless world, with an unimaginable foundation. It has endured many purges and calamities, remaining immortal.”

“For the Xi Yuan civilization, the immortal civilization is merely a servant. If an accident were to occur here, it would alert the Xi Yuan civilization and lead to even greater trouble.”

At this moment, Ling Huang was also analyzing the situation they might face seriously. Although Gu Changge’s strength was unfathomable, he was just one person after all. Behind the immortal civilization stood the Xi Yuan civilization, a powerful force comparable to the Xu Dan realm. Just sending a being from the ancestral Dao Realm could quell many disasters.

The real world where the Spiritual civilization originated was actually within the jurisdiction of the Xu Dan Realm. However, the heritage of the Spiritual civilization was insufficient to capture the attention of the Xu Dan Realm, rendering it unqualified for any affiliation.

In the boundless world, besides the Nine Heavens, the Xudan Realm, Xi Yuan Civilization, and other supreme powers were among the most renowned. Of course, this was only from the perspective of the Spiritual civilization. The boundless world was vast, and in other regions, there were undoubtedly other supreme civilizations that were not weaker than the Xudan Realm and Xi Yuan Civilization.

Xi Yuan civilization.

Gu Changge muttered these three words softly, yet he did not launch a direct attack on the immortal civilization. In reality, it was because the currently available power was insufficient, which would lead to numerous complications. If he were in control of a supreme civilization, he wouldn't have to contend with such worries.

The Xi Yuan civilization, to which the immortal civilization was attached, was his next target. However, as Gu Changge pondered these matters, he remained cautious.

Boom!!!

In the core area of the Zhuo clan ahead, a misty divine light suddenly shot up into the sky. This ethereal light pierced through all the great universes at once, as if it were opening a series of time and space passages. Many dark and deep universes were illuminated by this misty divine light, transforming them into crystal clear and blazing realms.

From the perspective of Gu Changge and the others, a barrier resembling a light curtain suddenly emerged from the deep region of the Zhuo Clan, instantly covering a vast area of the clan's land and territory. The light of this enchantment was extremely dazzling, radiating a strong aura of law around it.

Moreover, the barrier was impressively thick, extending hundreds of feet, completely sealing off the void. Heavy and majestic chaotic fluctuations permeated and interwove near the barrier, cascading down like a vast galaxy pouring from the heavens. Without the strength of the Immortal King level, it was absolutely impossible to tear through this barrier and escape.

At this moment, the Zhuo people in the area seemed to be alarmed. Streams of light flew out from many universes, transforming into figures filled with shock and surprise.

“What happened? Why did some elders suddenly activate the ten-direction universe barrier to block this area?”

“Could it be that something major has occurred? Only the heavenly elders are qualified to activate the ten-direction universe barrier.”

“Once the ten-direction universe barrier is activated, no one from the Zhuo Clan is allowed to leave without authorization, and without the strength of the Immortal King, no one can break through the formation...”

The clansmen of the Zhuo clan, filled with shock, appeared in various starry skies. The resplendent formation turned into a divine light that soared into the sky, covering a vast area of the surrounding universe. Turbulent laws and fluctuations permeated the air, blocking everything.

The ten-direction universe barrier was a decree of the Zhuo clan. It would only be activated in the event of a major incident, preventing clansmen from going out, or when someone was to be apprehended. It had been tens of millions of years since the last activation of the ten-direction universe barrier, and many members of the Zhuo clan had almost forgotten this decree.

At this moment, I sensed once again the terrifying aura that sealed the world and imprisoned time and space.

The expressions of many people shifted to shock and surprise.

On the territory of the Zhuo clan, who would dare to be so presumptuous as to compel a heavenly elder to activate the ten-direction universe barrier and seal off the entire world, along with time and space?

“What’s going on? Could it be that the Zhuo clan has noticed our arrival and wants to block these universes to prevent us from escaping?”

“However, the Zhuo clan seems to have underestimated our strength. How could such a large formation possibly trap us?”

Ling Huang was also taken aback by this sudden turn of events, but as she processed it, her astonishment grew.

Gu Changge’s expression remained largely unchanged. He shook his head slightly, gazed into the distance, and said with a hint of curiosity, “This great formation that seals the sky and the earth is not meant to trap us.”

Boom!!!

The moment his voice fell, in a dark place hundreds of millions of miles away, a brilliant rain of light suddenly erupted, far more shocking and dazzling than the great formation just now. This radiant light illuminated the area translucently, revealing a white-haired figure with a human face.

“Dare to kill my descendants! From now on, you will roam heaven and earth without a chance of survival, and no one will save you.”

Standing there, her figure seemed to fill the entire starry sky, her face radiating coldness and killing intent, while her voice echoed with anger throughout the universe. The eyebrows of this white-haired woman glowed, then split apart like vertical pupils.

With a mere glance, endless light and rain poured forth, spreading across hundreds of millions of miles and distorting time and space.

Countless particles of energy and light continuously flew around her, drawn in by her outstretched hand as she began to reorganize them, attempting to re-evolve a specific scene.

It's Elder Zhuowu.

I heard what Elder Zhuowu said. Could it be that someone has killed her descendants? Who would dare to harm even the descendants of a Heavenly Elder?

This is simply suicide!

The members of the Zhuo clan in the great universe were utterly shocked by this figure. Many knelt down in fear and reverence, not daring to show any disrespect. Some Zhuo clan members were even more concerned about being implicated, their bodies trembling with terror.

The wrath of a heavenly elder was not something to be easily appeased, especially the blood-soaked hatred stemming from the murder of her descendants.

In the future, the clan land of the Zhuo clan would likely not be peaceful. If the murderer could not be found, it would be impossible to lift the ten-direction universe barrier, and people would undoubtedly come to inspect it every day.

“To make Elder Zhuowu so angry, I fear that someone has killed her most important descendant. It may even be that her soul light was completely extinguished, leaving nothing but emptiness. Resurrection, reincarnation, and reconstruction would all be nothing more than extravagant hopes.”

The most important descendant of Elder Zhuowu? Could it be Zhuo Tianyin, one of the ten most powerful contemporary evildoers of our Zhuo clan?

This is a serious matter. I truly wonder who could be so ruthless!

Within the clan land of the Zhuo clan, many clansmen who were somewhat familiar with Elder Zhuowu were equally horrified and incredulous. This was one of the ten most powerful contemporary evildoers of the Zhuo clan, right in the heart of their territory.

Moreover, he was also a descendant of a heavenly elder. This alone was enough to make people tremble with fear; it was likely to pierce the heavens.

Hundreds of millions of miles away, the heavenly elder named Zhuowu wore a frosty expression. She employed supreme means to continuously gather large amounts of energy and light particles, extracting them from various times and spaces. The long river of time boiled in front of her, and the light and rain grew increasingly brilliant, aiming to reproduce the scene of her descendant's death and identify the location of that demise.

That descendant was a vessel she had painstakingly cultivated, meant to house her spirit after her physical body decayed. But now, her descendant had been killed, and even the last flicker of soul light had been extinguished, leaving no trace behind.

How could this not make her furious? She longed for her real body to descend from the ancestral realm of the Zhuo clan, to personally capture the murderer, pull out his muscles and bones, and tear him to pieces so that he could never be reborn.

However, this was still the clan land of the Zhuo clan.

As a Heavenly Elder, she couldn't act recklessly, as it would provoke the dissatisfaction and anger of the other elders. Many clansmen present were also descendants of those elders, and she could not act on her own accord.

It's hateful; it's impossible to reshape the scene from that time. However, there is a fragment of my spirit within that descendant of mine. If you kill him, it means you have become entangled with my karma. With the backlash of this karma, you cannot escape—I will find you.

Zhuowu's expression darkened, but then she sneered once more. She attempted to reshape the scene from that time, tracing back through space and time to determine the circumstances of her junior's death. However, it seemed the other party had been prepared, completely obliterating and burning all traces of the scene that once was.

It's a pity that the other party underestimated her abilities. Although the traces of the past had been obliterated, the cause and effect of the future were difficult to sever. Could the other party truly accept the cause and effect of the Dao realm?

Ahem!

Indeed, a descendant of a Heavenly Elder is not so easy to kill. I have already suffered a terrible backlash before I even managed to kill him.

If he is truly dead, even with the protection of the Eternal God Furnace, he will sustain great injuries.

At this moment, hundreds of millions of miles away from Zhuowu, in a galaxy belonging to the Zhuo Clan, a figure spoke weakly to himself. This galaxy was shrouded in gray; from a distance, it resembled a boundless desert, but in reality, it was composed of gray crystals.

The figure sat cross-legged on a piece of crystal, his body cracking in multiple places, blood gushing forth—a clear indication of his severe injuries. In front of him, a sacred furnace surrounded by brilliant flames bobbed up and down, burning a screaming figure within it. Despite the weakness in her breath, her eyes shone brightly.

Chapter 1020: The daughter of great luck of the immortal civilization, are they scared to death?

This divine furnace, crafted from an unknown material, radiated a deep crimson glow. Wisps of blazing, eye-catching flames cascaded down continuously, engulfing a screaming and writhing figure within.

Leave me a trace of true spirit! I swear I will never trouble you again, and I will never cultivate again. Can you let me live?

The figure appeared vacant, almost unable to maintain a human form. Its distorted and fuzzy face was etched with pain, screaming and pleading for survival. As one of the most powerful young talents of the Zhuo Clan in the contemporary era, she had a promising future ahead of her. Moreover, she had an ancestor who cherished her and served as a Heavenly Elder within the clan.

If there had been no accident, she would have undoubtedly grown to a point where she could rival the elders in the future. While she might not have become a Heavenly Elder, she would certainly have been a mainstay of the Zhuo Clan. But now, she was on the verge of falling, with the last trace of her true soul about to be consumed by the eternal true fire.

As strands of flame cascaded down, her body emitted a burning sound, transforming into puffs of black smoke. Sitting cross-legged on the gray crystal, she seemed oblivious to her surroundings, desperately attempting to heal her injuries. However, the hideous wounds were still alarming to behold, with blood constantly gushing forth, staining the area a bright red.

As expected of one of the most powerful geniuses of the Zhuo Clan in contemporary times. I paid a heavy price for killing you.

But I won't show mercy. When you hunted me down and sought to rob me of my treasures, did you ever consider this day?

Moreover, the actions of the Zhuo Clan merit the consequences they face.

She glanced at the figure roaring continuously in the divine furnace, on the brink of being burned away, her voice devoid of emotion.

As one of the most powerful geniuses of the Zhuo Clan, she had various means to save her life. Just moments ago, she had managed to deceive the investigation and tracing efforts of the Zhuo Clan's Heavenly Elder by leveraging the unique properties of the Eternal Divine Furnace. However, if she didn't kill Zhuo Tianyin quickly, she would inevitably be found again, bringing about unnecessary complications.

The geniuses of the Zhuo Clan bore special imprints that could be tracked by others. Although the Eternal Divine Furnace was formidable, it was far from something she could fully control with her current strength. Every breath required a tremendous amount of mana.

Without hesitating, she waved her palm, disregarding her injuries, and activated the Eternal Divine Furnace. In an instant, she completely obliterated the last remnant of her true spirit, reducing it to fine ash.

Puff!

The figure in the Eternal Divine Furnace screamed as puffs of black smoke billowed out, quickly dissipating into the void. The Chosen One of the Zhuo Clan vanished completely, leaving no trace behind. Had there been even a particle of her spiritual light remaining, the elders of the Zhuo Clan could have intervened, using their extraordinary means to traverse thousands of reincarnations for her resurrection.

Unfortunately, the Eternal Divine Furnace was unique in its ability to directly burn and evaporate the true spirit of this Zhuo Clan genius, erasing all remnants from the fabric of time and space.

After completing this grim task, the figure raised her palm, and the Eternal Divine Furnace transformed into a stream of light, soaring back to the center of her brow. At this point, she let out a sigh of relief, but as she brushed against her injuries, her brows knitted tightly, and she instinctively inhaled sharply.

“This backlash is truly terrifying, but thankfully, the Eternal Divine Furnace is special; it helped me offset most of the repercussions. Otherwise, it would have been challenging to annihilate her completely.”

She shook her head, retrieving several healing herbs from her storage space and stuffing them into her mouth as she continued to tend to her wounds.

Looking around, the landscape resembled a solidified sandbar. From time to time, gusts of yellow wind swept across the sky, enveloping the entire world in a haze, obscuring anything beyond a few miles.

The figure in this desolate setting was a woman who appeared to be in her twenties. Her facial features were delicate and bright, and her tall, slim figure bore a striking resemblance to that of the

human race. She wore a rather ordinary coarse cloth dress, but upon closer inspection, her dark golden eyes sparkled like legendary dragon pupils, radiating an eternal brilliance.

The woman's name was Mu Yan, and she was not a member of the Zhuo Clan. As she recovered from her injuries, her brows furrowed in deep thought, contemplating her next move. Having ventured into the territory of the Zhuo Clan and taken the audacious risk of killing one of their most talented geniuses, she had invoked the wrath of the Heavenly Elder behind the clan. This bold action prompted the activation of the ten-direction universe barrier, sealing off the area and complicating her escape.

The next challenge Mu Yan faced was the full-scale search and pursuit of the Zhuo Clan.

Before that, it's better to keep a low profile and be more cautious. I refuse to believe that the ten-direction universe barrier will remain in place forever.

She muttered to herself.

I will settle this hatred with you slowly.

While she had no choice but to kill Zhuo Tianyin, she knew that worrying about it was futile now that the deed was done.

"Hey-hey..." she chuckled darkly, attempting to reassure herself. "Just need to keep breathing."

However, at that moment, the void where Zhuo Tianyin's figure had been completely erased suddenly erupted. A chilling, creepy sneer echoed through the air, sending a shiver down Mu Yan's spine.

Faintly, the shadow of Zhuo Tianyin, which had just been wiped out, began to coalesce once more. A strange black line emerged from it, leading into the boundless emptiness. In the midst of this darkness stood a terrifying figure, seemingly sneering as it observed the scene from the endless void and distance.

It was the Heavenly Elder of the Zhuo Clan.

The abilities of such a Dao realm existence stretched across the heavens, traversing countless universes and dimensions—powers that were unimaginable to ordinary beings.

“Not good...”

Mu Yan’s face went pale, her heart racing and trembling in her chest.

In a panic, she hastily summoned an ancient rune, which shimmered with power. The moment it activated, it broke through the barriers surrounding her, propelling her figure across a distance of a million miles in an instant. Just as she vanished, the area around her collapsed silently, as if the very fabric of reality had been torn apart.

A terrifyingly large hand shot out from the nothingness, radiating an overwhelming power that obliterated the entire galaxy in an instant.

“It’s impressive how quickly you can escape. That ancient sacrificial talisman is quite rare; your origins must be extraordinary,” Zhuowu remarked, her voice dripping with disdain.

“However, the deity has locked onto your aura. You won’t be able to flee.”

She commanded, “The Zhuo Clan, heed my order: hunt this person down. If she can be captured alive, you will be rewarded handsomely.”

Far away, Zhuowu seethed with fury, her previous disbelief morphing into a chilling sneer. With the aura of her target confirmed, there was no longer any reason for concern. In her mind, this was merely a cat-and-mouse game—the more desperate the fleeing figure became, the more satisfying the eventual confrontation would be.

The anger she felt for the loss of her descendant fueled her determination. She inscribed a decree with the captured aura, amplifying it across the vast cosmos of the Zhuo Clan, ordering them to pursue and capture the intruder alive.

In an instant, the surrounding universes vibrated violently, setting in motion a relentless hunt.

Countless members of the Zhuo Clan were stirred into action. When a Heavenly Elder personally issued a decree offering a reward for the capture of the murderer, the air crackled with urgency. Many clansmen quickly detected the fluctuation of the targeted aura, transforming into streaks of divine light as they raced across the starry sky in pursuit.

The reward from a Heavenly Elder was not something to be taken lightly; it sent waves of excitement rippling through the Zhuo Clan.

“If you dare to kill my descendants, I will ensure you endure endless torture and despair in this world,” Zhuowu declared, her eyes cold and resolute, reflecting her unwavering determination to exact vengeance.

Boom!!!

Hundreds of millions of miles away, entire galaxies exploded and collapsed under the weight of overwhelming force. Mu Yan coughed up blood, her injuries grave. Though she had utilized the space sacrificial talisman to move rapidly and cover tens of thousands of miles in an instant, she found herself in a different universe, only to realize that the pursuit of a Dao Realm existence was a terrifying ordeal. The very fabric of time and space was ensnared, leaving her with no refuge.

The star field she had entered disintegrated in an instant, vanishing without a trace. An icy, murderous intent clung to her like a parasite, determined to block every possible escape route. It was a chilling presence that enveloped the entire universe, causing all living beings within it to tremble in fear, as if their very souls were freezing.

“It’s unbelievable. This is just a killing intent, not even a direct attack, and it’s already so terrifying,” Mu Yan thought, panic rising within her.

“The Heavenly Elder of the Zhuo Clan is truly the most formidable force in existence—far beyond my current capabilities. Just a single thought from her could annihilate an entire universe’s worth of creatures.”

Again, Mu Yan coughed up several mouthfuls of blood. Though she possessed many treasures, she hesitated to use them, knowing their value. This was her first encounter with the divine power of a Heavenly Elder, and the experience was nothing short of overwhelming.

If it had been anyone else in the same realm, they would have been annihilated in an instant; there was no way they could have escaped as far as she had. Sacrificing that incredibly precious space sacrificial talisman once more, the time and space before her blurred, opening a passage for her to quickly escape through.

In that moment, the stars above dazzled, and the very fabric of heaven and earth turned upside down. However, just as she stepped into the passage, the terrifying killing intent caught up with her. It swept across the entire universe, instantly causing the space-time passageway to explode.

Mu Yan's figure shook violently, her already horrific injuries worsening as the force of the explosion hit her. Blood covered her body, and her face was obscured, making it nearly impossible to recognize her.

Moreover, her figure hadn't had time to escape to the other end of the space-time passage and fell halfway. The territory of the Zhuo Clan was vast; after fleeing for so long, Mu Yan found herself still within the scope of these sealed universes, making escape impossible.

As she fell from the passage of time and space, she didn't dare linger for long. Suppressing her injuries, she realized it was too late to eliminate any traces of her presence. Urgently, she continued to move, escaping from one starry sky to another thousands of miles away.

Though this new location was far from where she had killed Zhuo Tianyin and distanced from many universes, she remained locked onto by Zhuowu's killing intent, unable to break free. A thick shadow loomed over her heart, marking this as one of the most dangerous experiences she had ever faced in her life.

Boom!!!

The time and space behind Mu Yan surged with a terrifying momentum, as if a boundless torrent were about to crash down, causing the galaxy to begin collapsing. Zhuowu's killing intent swept over her again, vast and powerful.

Gritting her teeth, Mu Yan summoned her resolve once more, transforming into a stream of light as she fled forward. She had no intention of standing still and awaiting her doom.

As she sped away, she caught sight of three figures under the starry sky ahead, who noticed the chaos unfolding and were looking in her direction. They stood on an extremely barren crystal planet not far from her location.

In her desperate bid for survival, Mu Yan didn't take the time to examine the three figures closely but could vaguely make out their outlines. Wanting to protect them from being dragged into her peril, she called out, urging them to flee before they could get any closer.

"If you don't want to die, quickly run away!"

Mu Yan shouted, fully aware that Elder Zhuowu would show no concern for the lives of others. Even within the clan land of the Zhuo Clan, she had been known to obliterate entire galaxies without a second thought.

Gu Changge observed the blood-soaked woman with a mix of intrigue and concern. Upon realizing they were nearby, she had quickly changed direction, fleeing with all her might in an effort to spare them from her fate. However, she had clearly underestimated the strength of her pursuer.

The entire starry sky seemed to tremble under the weight of that terrifying killing intent. Spider web-like cracks rapidly spread behind her, fracturing time and space itself. A colossal hand, blocking out the sun, emerged from the void, poised to crush everything in its path. It was evident that Elder Zhuowu intended to eliminate her without regard for any living beings in the vicinity.

"Every civilization seems to have its share of individuals blessed with great luck, but who among them can truly reach the Dao realm or ascend to even higher levels without traversing this path?"

Gu Changge mused, his gaze sharpening as he scrutinized the situation. “Yet, there’s something off about this woman’s aura.”

“My lord...” Ling Huang inquired, her voice laced with urgency.

“Are we going to intervene?”

She had been astonished to witness the Heavenly Elder of the Zhuo Clan unleashing the universe barrier and sealing the skies, only to now find herself face-to-face with the very culprit behind it all. However, the woman was clearly teetering on the brink of a life-and-death crisis.

With her current strength, it seemed nearly impossible for her to withstand the overwhelming killing intent of a being comparable to the third Heavenly Decline of the Dao realm. Even with her myriad of adventures and fortunes, it would be of little use against such absolute power.

Gu Changge remained silent, his eyes reflecting deep contemplation.

For Gu Changge, rescuing this woman was merely a matter of convenience, but his thoughts were already racing ahead.

Mu Yan, on the other hand, had done everything she could to steer clear of the trio, hoping not to involve them in her dire situation. Yet, they remained indifferent, showing no intention of fleeing.

“Could it be that they can’t sense the terrifying aura trailing behind me?” she wondered. “Or are they just too scared to act?”

With a sigh in her heart, Mu Yan acknowledged the futility of her concerns; even if they decided to run now, it would be too late. The murderous intent emanating from the elder of the Zhuo clan swept through the starry sky, encompassing all living beings—no one would be spared.

As she drew closer, she finally caught a clear glimpse of the scene ahead. On a distant hill, three figures stood together. The leader appeared to be a young man dressed in white, bathed in a faint moonlight, with sunlight glimmering behind him.