

## Villain 1031

Chapter 1031: What Belongs to Him Has Been Taken Away, and the God of Death Harvests All Souls

This figure appeared to be under twenty years old—thin and small, looking extremely inconspicuous. Not even taller than his opponent's shoulders, he had gray hair and gray pupils. His hair hung down, obscuring his true facial features, yet his eyes remained as calm as a gloomy ice field, devoid of any emotional fluctuations.

In contrast, though not burly, his opponent exuded an overwhelming sense of terror. His body was marked with various scars, and his arms were covered in fine, iron-blue scales. His eyes resembled vertical slits, gleaming with a cold, bloodthirsty light. Additionally, barbed horns protruded from his forehead, indicating he possessed the bloodline of a foreign race, though he maintained a predominantly human appearance.

As the two prepared to clash, a terrifying sound of wind and thunder erupted, as if the shock were piercing the void itself. Observing the arena, the significant size difference between them was strikingly evident.

Many figures in the spectator seats couldn't help but stand up, filled with excitement as they stared intently at the unfolding scene. In contrast, far less attention was paid to the duel on the opposite side. While equally intense, it was less engaging by comparison.

Soon, a fierce battle erupted there, and as the two fighters clashed, blood splattered everywhere. The sound of bone-cracking accompanied the gruesome scene, stirring the emotions of countless spectators and causing their heart rates to accelerate significantly.

Meanwhile, the rich middle-aged man in charge of the event, in high spirits, took the opportunity to introduce the origins of the two figures. The taller fighter was a dead warrior trained by the main

venue of Gufeng Ancient City, Wanzu Arena. Having endured countless battles, his fighting experience was exceptionally vast.

He could crush his opponents each time until hardly a whole body was left. If you were a frequent visitor to the Ten Thousand Clans Arena, you would undoubtedly be familiar with him.

In contrast, the other thin figure was more ordinary, having been sent over from the arenas in other ancient cities. He had also experienced nearly a hundred fights, successfully defeating and killing his opponents. However, unlike the fighter before him, he had been thoroughly crushed each time. Moreover, since arriving in Gufeng Ancient City, he had not truly participated in a duel, leaving even the person in charge unaware of his true strength.

It's truly a remarkable talent, naturally suited for the way of killing.

In the pavilion, Gu Changge set down his teacup, his gaze falling on the arena. He focused on the thin figure with gray hair and gray eyes, and several thoughts flashed through his mind. In fact, he had noticed this even before the duel began.

The figure exuded an almost innate killing intent, manifesting as if it were a natural law surrounding him. Without any deliberate cultivation or guidance, he had achieved such a level; it was evident that this talent was meant for this path.

“I wonder what Mr. Gu means?”

Elder Zhuo Jue asked curiously upon hearing his words. Although he was also a being of the Dao realm, he was not adept at reading fate and, after careful observation, saw no abnormalities.

Gu Changge smiled, choosing to say nothing further. The concept of fate was as elusive as luck itself. The method of spiritual civilization was primarily focused on extracting and condensing various original substances for cultivation.

In terms of divination and deduction, it was far inferior to that of Immortal Dao civilization. If a Dao Realm expert from the Immortal Dao civilization were present, they might be able to detect the anomaly after some deduction. Elder Zhuo Jue felt a bit embarrassed but wisely chose not to press further, instead redirecting his attention to the arena.

Gray hair and gray eyes?

In another pavilion, Wang He also noticed the scene unfolding in the arena. He couldn't help but be startled, his eyes locking onto the gray-haired thin figure, and his expression became troubled and uncertain.

How could this be such a coincidence?

If there are no mistakes in the life experiences of those individuals, then this figure should be the source of the disaster that will lead to the arena of all races in the future.

He recalled the day when the river of slaughter swept across the arena of all races, claiming countless lives. The gray-eyed figure had stood amidst it all, like a god of death descending upon the world to harvest souls.

Wang He whispered to himself, carefully scrutinizing the thin figure. Initially, this matter had seemed irrelevant to him, as it did not involve him directly.

Wang He was still contemplating whether to inform Hong Gui so she could address the situation sooner. If that gray-haired, gray-eyed figure truly was the root cause of future disasters in the Ten Thousand Clans Arena, he would need to take action. After all, if he hadn't encountered the situation himself, he likely wouldn't have gone to such lengths to plan for it. However, there was another, more pressing matter at hand.

But since the opportunity had presented itself, why not plan? This was the god of death of the future, after all.

“Wang He, what’s wrong with you?”

Hong Gui noticed the unusual expression on Wang He’s face and asked involuntarily.

Wang He snapped back to reality, his expression returning to normal. He shook his head slightly and replied, “It’s nothing. I just suddenly noticed the fight below and thought of something.”

Hong Gui was not convinced by his words, as she had some insight into Wang He’s scheming and methods.

“Oh, I see,” she said with a smile, not pressing further, and turned her gaze back to the arena.

Wang He observed the gray-haired, gray-eyed figure fiercely battling his opponent before quietly shifting his gaze to the arena on the other side.

He couldn’t help but sigh, “Senior Hong Gui is quite generous. Both of them possess cultivation talents that rival those of heirs from major families and great sects, yet here they are, fighting for the entertainment of the crowd.”

Hong Gui faintly sensed Wang He’s intentions, smiling as she replied, “Such young talents are indeed rare in our arena of all races. If it weren’t for the special circumstances, I wouldn’t be

willing to showcase them like this. Why, could it be that Wang He is interested in these two young talents?”

She was aware of Wang He’s establishment of the Scavengers Sect, which had developed rapidly and flourished in recent years. However, in terms of background, it could not compete with forces that had existed for tens of millions of years or longer. Thus, Wang He was likely considering ways to strengthen his lineage, seeking out talented cultivators and strong individuals to join the Scavenger Sect.

Hong Gui speculated that Wang He might be feeling a sense of urgency to nurture talent at this moment and wished to take both of them under his wing. The Ten Thousand Clans Arena cultivated these young seeds, naturally, for profit.

As long as the price Wang He offered was high enough, Hong Gui would naturally agree to his request and allow him to take the individuals away. Additionally, she could sell another favor to Wang He in the process.

Wang He did not conceal his intentions and stated plainly, “Senior, I really can’t bear to see these two today. If they receive substantial training in my Scavengers Sect, their future achievements will undoubtedly be significant. It’s far better than fighting here for the entertainment of others.”

“I’ve searched everywhere for disciples, and after many twists and turns, I couldn’t find suitable candidates. Yet, in your arena, I spotted two potential ones at a glance.”

Wang He was clever; he didn’t mention just one but expressed interest in both, which would prevent Hong Gui from raising too many doubts.

As Wang He anticipated, Hong Gui didn’t overthink it upon hearing his words. With a smile, she replied, “You can take them away if you wish, but you’ll have to wait until the duel is over.

However, Wang He, you should know the rules of my Ten Thousand Clans Arena. In the past, if other forces wished to buy these young talents, I couldn't agree. Although we share some friendship..."

Wang He recognized that the matter was nearly settled, so he smiled and interrupted her, "Don't worry; I will ensure that Senior Hong Gui doesn't suffer any loss. You know me well, so there's no need for concern."

Hong Gui felt quite satisfied upon hearing this.

The most important factor for her was to value Wang He. At such a young age, he was on the verge of entering the Dao realm, and his future achievements would undoubtedly be significant. If he wanted these two young talents, she could grant his request and, in doing so, secure a favor for herself in the future. She had nothing to lose in this deal.

Both of them were in good spirits; Wang He felt that everything was secured, and now he just had to wait for the duel to conclude. He was very confident in the gray-haired, gray-eyed figure, even though the current situation in the arena suggested he was at a disadvantage. After all, if he couldn't handle this fight, how could he possibly seek revenge in the arena of Ten Thousand Clans in the future?

Soon, the fighting in another arena came to an end. Two figures had been locked in a fierce battle, resulting in one dead and the other seriously injured. The seriously injured fighter was on the brink of death, with horrific wounds covering his body, yet he managed to win the fight by a slim margin. The person in charge quickly dispatched attendants to take him for treatment.

Meanwhile, the spectators were left amazed and excited by the thrilling moments of this contest. The fighting in the other arena also came to a sudden halt.

Many people didn't even see what happened; they only noticed that the slightly taller figure was clutching his neck in disbelief, blood spraying everywhere like a rain of red. Meanwhile, the thin figure stood to the side indifferently, allowing the blood rain to drench him.

“What...?”

Hong Gui was momentarily taken aback. She hadn't anticipated such a turn of events, but at that moment, there was a dramatic reversal. Logically speaking, such an injury should have been trivial for someone of the true immortal realm; they could easily regenerate from a drop of blood or a severed limb. Yet, the opponent of the thin figure had, in that instant, seen his vitality collapse completely—like fly ash blown away by the wind, he turned to dust.

She hadn't paid close attention before, but to understand it clearly, she needed to revisit the scene from just moments ago.

“It's worthy of being the future god of death; I read it right,” Wang He said, his eyes shining with excitement. The means by which the thin figure had caused his opponent's vitality to collapse so suddenly was precisely the intent to kill, a lethal force that could extinguish life in an instant.

“It was an unexpected fight,” Hong Gui remarked as she regained her composure, looking at Wang He with a complex expression. So he had guessed it earlier? No wonder he had said these two were exceptional talents and had been so eager to take them away.

In Hong Gui's heart, Wang He became even more mysterious. Just as Wang He was smiling, contemplating what to say to Hong Gui, a sudden sound of hurried footsteps echoed outside the pavilion. A maid responsible for delivering messages rushed in quickly and whispered urgently into Hong Gui's ear, her expression one of confusion.

“What...?”

Upon hearing the maid's words, Hong Gui's expression shifted once more, disbelief etched on her face. To confirm the truth of the message, she asked cautiously, "Is what you said true?"

"I wouldn't dare lie to the master; this message comes from Elder Zhuo Jue," the maid replied respectfully.

Receiving this affirmative response, Hong Gui let out a long sigh of relief. She then couldn't help but contemplate something further, and a smile gradually appeared on her face.

"If that's true, wouldn't it be a good thing for me? Maybe there's still a chance to connect with that mysterious lord," she murmured, excitement shining in her eyes.

When Wang He saw the maid approach, something stirred within him. Hearing Hong Gui's words now made his heart skip a beat.

"Senior Hong Gui, I wonder what's going on? Why do you speak like this?" he asked, still a bit uncertain.

At his question, Hong Gui snapped back to reality, regaining her composure. However, she couldn't completely conceal the smile and joy that lingered on her face.

She explained, "Elder Zhuo Jue just sent someone to inform me that the mysterious lord in white intends to take the individual who won the duel just now."

“What?”

Wang He’s expression darkened. Though he tried to suppress his disbelief, his tone shifted slightly. He never expected that, at this moment, someone would come forward to compete with him—especially the mysterious lord of unknown origin.

Hong Gui, however, remained unfazed and said bluntly, “I’m sorry about what happened just now. Since the lord has expressed his intent to take the victor, the agreement I made earlier can only be broken. I hope you won’t take offense.”

“But as for the other person, if that lord doesn’t want him, you can take him, Wang He, and I won’t ask for any price...” Without waiting for Wang He to respond, she beamed with joy and swiftly vanished from the pavilion, eager to rush over.

Wang He remained alone in the pavilion, his face growing increasingly grim. He felt humiliated, as if he were being mocked. They had just made an agreement, and now Hong Gui had changed her mind in the blink of an eye.

Moreover, Hong Gui’s last words left him feeling humiliated. Wang He had targeted that gray-haired, gray-eyed figure from the beginning and had no interest in the other person at all.

“Master, what’s wrong with you?” After Hong Gui left, a group of elders and disciples from the Scavengers Sect entered the pavilion. Noticing Wang He’s strange expression, they couldn’t help but ask.

At that moment, Wang He took a deep breath, suppressing the resentment of having what was rightfully his snatched away. He forced a smile, waved his hand, and said, “It’s nothing, I just feel a little uncomfortable all of a sudden.”

Chapter 1032: I don’t like this name, so you just follow me

Wang He knew he couldn't blame Hong Gui at this moment, yet he still felt extremely uncomfortable and unwilling. Given their years of friendship, it stung that she had so easily gone back on her promise. But what could he do? Should he confront that mysterious man in white?

Forget it, this is just a trivial matter and hardly worth mentioning compared to the major event in a few days.

I still need Hong Gui's help, so I can't afford to fall out with her just yet.

Taking a few deep breaths, Wang He tried to comfort himself and put the matter aside. However, it lingered in his mind, particularly because the man in white was now taking away the gray-eyed, gray-haired figure. What would happen to the life records of the other creatures he had seen?

After all, the life records of those creatures indicated that one day in the future, the Ten Thousand Clans Arena would face a terrible disaster. The root cause of this would be the revenge of the gray-eyed, gray-haired figure. Given the current situation, it seemed that many aspects of the future would change accordingly.

"It appears that many things cannot be fully trusted. When unexpected events occur, the established path will inevitably deviate."

Wang He reflected as he began to seriously plan for the next important matter.

The elders and disciples of the Scavengers Sect were unaware of the situation between Wang He and Hong Gui. However, noting his unusual expression, they wisely chose not to ask any further questions.

It would be great if I could use the Book of Scavengers right now.

Wang He sighed inwardly and attempted to call upon the spirit of the Book of Scavengers, but he was met with dead silence, receiving no response at all.

Although he felt helpless, Wang He wasn't entirely surprised. The artifact spirit of the Book of Scavengers had always been aloof, refusing to recognize him as its master. It viewed him as weak and unworthy of such recognition. After the spirit of the Book of Scavengers had recovered, it had attempted to abandon him, which led to several angry confrontations between them. Ultimately, the artifact spirit had no choice but to retreat into silence, treating him as invisible.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the Ten Thousand Clans Arena, several members of the Zhuo clan, accompanied by Elder Zhuo Jue, were making their way to the underground prison where the deceased were typically held. The slightly affluent middle-aged man from the arena led the way, wearing a submissive expression. He had just learned that the mysterious lord had taken an interest in one of the individuals who had won the recent duel.

This surprised the middle-aged man, who felt a mix of astonishment and envy. Having spent hundreds of thousands of years in the Ten Thousand Clans Arena, he had developed a keen sense of judgment. When Gu Changge arrived, he noticed that even Hong Gui, who typically appeared frequently, had come to greet him in person. In the past, she had relied on the elders of the Zhuo clan who stood by her side.

While he wasn't qualified to see Gu Changge's true face, he could vaguely guess at his identity. The individual who had just been fighting in the duel had, in essence, struck it rich. Aligning himself with that lord would elevate him to a status that would require others to curry favor with him.

The middle-aged man's emotions were complex; he lamented the impermanence of the world while feeling an overwhelming sense of envy.

“Where is Hong Gui? Why hasn’t she rushed over at this time?”

Elder Zhuo Jue’s expression soured slightly. He felt that Hong Gui’s absence was a sign of disrespect toward him and Gu Changge.

“Reporting to Elder Zhuo Jue, my master just received the news and is already on her way...”

The middle-aged man explained hurriedly, his tone respectful as he worried about Elder Zhuo Jue’s possible displeasure.

Elder Zhuo Jue let out a cold snort in response.

The underground prison seemed to have been carved out from the depths of an ancient planet. Its walls were intricately adorned with various patterns, each telling a story of its own. Even beings at the level of Immortal Kings could do nothing to destroy this place. Strong guardians were stationed every few miles to ensure that none of the prisoners could escape.

Each cage within the prison looked quite simple, containing only a futon and a stone bed at its center, shrouded in darkness that obscured any view of the sky.

Of course, the more victories a fighter achieved in the arena, the better their living conditions would be; this particular place was only the first level of the underground prison.

Soon, under the middle-aged man’s guidance, Elder Zhuo Jue and the others made their way to the lower floors.

In one of the cages, the gray-eyed and gray-haired figure who had fought in the arena was sitting alone in a corner, his body shrouded in darkness, revealing only a faint outline. A strong, pungent smell of blood filled the air, permeating the surroundings. Despite having just experienced a fierce battle, there were no signs of him having been washed; he was still covered in blood.

Elder Zhuo Jue frowned at the sight, casting a disapproving glance at the middle-aged man.

“Is this the one you mentioned? You knew the lord intended to take him away, yet you left him in such a dirty state? The stench is unbearable. What are you playing at?”

The middle-aged man felt a bead of cold sweat trickle down his forehead and hurriedly explained, “Elder Zhuo Jue, please calm down. It wasn’t intentional; we didn’t mean for him to remain like this, and it’s not that we didn’t want him to clean up.”

“It’s just that this guy has a very peculiar temperament. The mothers-in-law and maids we assigned to him had their hands chopped off simply for touching him. If they hadn’t escaped quickly, they might have lost their lives,” the middle-aged man explained.

“Additionally, if anyone of the opposite sex approaches him carelessly, he perceives them as a threat and will kill them on the spot. We had no choice but to let him be; if he wants to clean himself up, he has to ask us for it.”

Elder Zhuo Jue was taken aback, not expecting such a situation to arise. “In that case, how did you allow him to fight in the arena?” he asked, curiosity creeping into his voice.

The middle-aged man hesitated for a moment, a hint of embarrassment crossing his face before he replied, “To be honest, Elder Zhuo Jue, this guy has clansmen and several younger sisters. He fights for the arena to ensure their protection, so he can look after his family behind him.”

Though the explanation was couched in terms of familial duty, Elder Zhuo Jue understood that it was likely the Ten Thousand Clans Arena that threatened the safety of the man's relatives.

Such methods were quite common among various forces, and Elder Zhuo Jue chose not to comment further.

"I don't understand what makes this guy so special that this lord is interested in him," he mused aloud.

He scrutinized the figure in the cage again, but still found nothing particularly remarkable. The only striking aspect was the peculiar technique the man had employed during his earlier fight, yet he had no intention of digging deeper into it. After all, he was merely acting on behalf of Gu Changge.

"Fine, I'll arrange for him to be cleaned up later and brought to the lord. If he's neglected even a little, the master behind you will have to face the consequences," Elder Zhuo Jue instructed, waving his hand dismissively. He cast one last glance into the cage before looking away.

In his position, he would typically never venture into such a place, but to demonstrate his sincerity in serving Gu Changge, he made the effort to come personally. After delivering his orders, Elder Zhuo Jue departed with the group of Zhuo clansmen, leaving the underground prison behind.

The middle-aged man let out a sigh of relief, his eyes reflecting envy as he signaled a few people from a distance to approach and explain the situation. Meanwhile, within the cage, the thin and small figure remained unmoved, even as he overheard the conversation outside. Sitting alone in the shadows, his gaze was somewhat vacant but predominantly exuded a calmness that withstood the chaos of the storm and the gray, oppressive sky.

He paid no attention to the envious looks directed at him, completely indifferent to their thoughts. A caretaker, typically responsible for his well-being, opened the cell door and approached him.

“Your hard days are over,” she announced.

“A mysterious lord, whom the entire Zhuo clan treats with utmost respect, plans to take you with him. From now on, you won’t belong to this world anymore...”

“Oh, it’s really annoying when people compare me to others. When will I have such good luck as you?” she added, a hint of sarcasm in her voice.

“Today, you should be obedient, clean yourself up, dress nicely, and prepare to meet lord.”

“In the future, you won’t have to spend every day in this dreary place, fighting for your life. You’ll finally escape this existence where danger lurks at every corner.”

Despite her words, she covered her nose tightly as she approached, her expression one of evident disgust.

It was tolerable from a distance, but as soon as one got closer, the pungent, repulsive stench of blood became overwhelming. She couldn’t fathom how the figure before her could endure such an environment for so long. He was disheveled and covered in scars, his skin dark and emaciated, leaving her puzzled as to why a mysterious lord would be interested in him.

As she spoke, the thin figure’s eyes flickered with a hint of recognition, a shadow of doubt crossing his face as if he struggled to comprehend her words. However, when the old woman reached out to

touch him, his expression changed dramatically. A terrifying murderous intent erupted from his body, freezing the air around them with an icy chill that penetrated to the bone.

“Don’t touch me.” His voice was dry and hoarse, laced with an unmistakable threat.

“You! you bastard! I’m helping you, old lady! Don’t mess around!”

The caretaker stammered, startled, and quickly retreated. Though she had her own cultivation, she was no match for the man before her.

Outside the dungeon, the middle-aged man felt a headache coming on as he watched the scene unfold, uncertain about how to handle it.

“Just take him there directly. If you delay, it will only anger that lord,” Hong Gui’s voice suddenly rang out from nearby.

She had arrived in person to take charge, and with her strength, she had no trouble subduing the man in the dungeon, effortlessly rolling up her sleeves and bringing him along.

In the pavilion where Gu Changge was resting, Hong Gui quickly arrived with her entourage. After Elder Zhuo Jue returned and explained the situation, she had grown concerned that Gu Changge might find it troublesome, so she decided to intervene personally.

“My lord, I truly apologize. This guy has a peculiar personality; he doesn’t want anyone touching him and refuses to wash up.” She explained as they made their way, revealing that she had already employed a dedusting technique to remove much of the bloody smell clinging to him.

But the odor lingered, still pervasive and unpleasant, as if he had been trapped in a killing field for years. Gu Changge, however, seemed unfazed. He casually asked, “What’s his name?”

Hong Gui quickly responded, “My lord, he doesn’t have an official name. Before he was brought to the Gufeng Ancient City’s home court, many simply referred to him as Hui Yan.”

Hui Yan?

Gu Changge murmured, rolling the name over in his mind as his gaze swept over the figure before him.

Hui Yan was completely restrained at that moment, unable to move. His eyes bore an intense fierceness, unyielding in the face of those surrounding him. He displayed a particular hatred toward Hong Gui, one that was hard to conceal.

Having spent some time in the Ten Thousand Clans Arena, he was acutely aware of the identity of the blonde woman in the red dress. She was not just any adversary; she was the very architect of his current predicament, the real master behind the Ten Thousand Clans Arena who had orchestrated his fall into this dire situation.

“We don’t know her real name, but we named her based on her characteristics. She actually comes from the Muge clan of the Qin Mang galaxy. She’s been fighting in the arena for hundreds of years and has extremely rich combat experience...”

Hong Gui recounted the details she had gathered about the gray-eyed woman, explaining them one by one. If it hadn’t been for the unexpected fight earlier, she might not have noticed this figure at all.

Despite her knowledge, Hong Gui couldn't grasp why Gu Changge would take an interest in Hui Yan. She found it hard to believe that it was merely due to her talent; such potential was not uncommon in Gufeng Ancient City. Given Gu Changge's status, he wouldn't be concerned about such trivialities.

There had to be a deeper reason for his interest. This thought suddenly reminded Hong Gui of Wang He's peculiar behavior earlier. His eagerness to take both combatants must have been a ruse. Wang He's true target was likely this gray-eyed figure standing before them.

A knowing smirk crossed Hong Gui's face as she considered this revelation.

No wonder Wang He had such a strange expression when he heard that the lord in front of him was going to take this person away; he must have felt cut off and unwilling.

This Wang He, thinking that I have been friends with him for so many years, actually wants to take advantage of me.

Hong Gui thought, her dissatisfaction growing.

"What a remarkable talent, nearly ruined by him. From now on, you will follow me, Yan." She decided on a new direction for Hui Yan, feeling the weight of her responsibility.

"Also, the name Hui Yan doesn't suit you. I'll give you a new one later." She declared with determination.

“As for the threats against your clansmen and relatives, you need not worry. From now on, no one will dare to threaten you again.”

After listening to Hong Gui’s reassurances, Gu Changge stepped forward with a faint smile, his demeanor calm and confident.

Chapter 1033: Can she really do it? As a teacher, I still have to count on you

Gu Changge didn’t stay long at the Ten Thousand Clans Arena. He instructed Ling Huang to bring the gray-haired, gray-eyed woman with him and then left directly. Elder Zhuoju of the Zhuo Clan offered to help him handle the follow-up matters.

Of course, even if Gu Changge had intended to take the woman by force, Hong Gui wouldn’t have dared to stop him. However, since he was traveling under the guise of leisure, it was naturally impossible for him to take someone away without reason. Elder Zhuoju, eager to curry favor, took care of the situation, which pleased Gu Changge.

As for Hong Gui, she certainly wouldn’t dare ask Gu Changge for any compensation. In her eyes, establishing any form of relationship with Gu Changge was worth far more than any material benefit. With this connection, she knew the Zhuo clan would take better care of her in Gufeng Ancient City from now on.

Upon returning to his residence, Gu Changge instructed Ling Huang to have the woman cleaned up before coming to see him again. It wasn’t that he was disgusted, but there were certain matters that had to be addressed with attention to detail.

In fact, Gu Changge could have easily imprinted a slave seal directly onto her heart and forced her to serve him. However, he had no intention of doing so. While hearts may be unpredictable, sometimes a person’s loyalty is far more dependable than any form of control.

Through Hong Gui, Gu Changge had already learned much about that woman's past. He deduced the rest just moments ago, and most of it aligned with his expectations.

She appeared fierce on the surface, but in reality, it was simply because she had spent so much time in the arena, enduring countless battles and duels. This forced her to adopt a protective facade. In a place like the arena, if you weren't ruthless and aggressive, you couldn't defend yourself properly.

Likewise, her choice to remain covered in dirt and blood rather than clean herself was another layer of self-protection. In truth, this was quite a clever individual. She had merely grown accustomed to safeguarding herself through viciousness and brutality.

Of course, Gu Changge wouldn't have bothered with her if he hadn't accidentally noticed her compatibility with the way of killing. He was now in need of cultivating a force that could be of use to him in the future. Since the woman before him fit the way of killing, Gu Changge didn't hesitate to assist her. In time, she would undoubtedly become a formidable weapon in his hands.

The Zhuo Clan must have caught wind of this situation, and Zhuo Fengxie is more cautious than I expected.

But do you really think I wouldn't notice your alliance with the Hun Clan?

Gu Changge didn't dwell on this thought for long and shifted his focus to another matter. During his stay in Gufeng Ancient City, things on the Zhuo Clan's side remained peaceful and quiet. Zhuo Fengxie had clearly figured out his intentions but lacked the courage to confront him.

It only showed that those who had reached this level were far more cautious than most. Zhuo Fengxie wasn't willing to risk his own life or the future of the Zhuo Clan, so he could only wait for Gu Changge's next move.

While waiting, Gu Changge received word from the Hun Clan, one of the top forces in the immortal civilization. If his guess was correct, the powerful figures behind the Hun Clan must have already noticed the situation and responded. Now, all he had to do was wait for the right moment.

If Zhuo Fengxie truly aligned himself with the Hun Clan, it would play perfectly into Gu Changge's plans. With Zhuo Fengxie's cautious nature, he would only approach Gu Changge to inquire about his intentions once he was confident enough. And this was precisely the opportunity Gu Changge was waiting for.

Until then, the Zhuo Clan and Zhuo Fengxie would maintain a front of harmony with him.

“The power of the Spiritual Royal Family alone doesn't compare to that of the Zhuo Clan. Depending solely on them won't be enough.”

Gu Changge shook his head slightly. If the strength of the Spiritual Royal Family were sufficient, he wouldn't need to deliberate so much.

Judging by the current situation, once the immortal civilization was subdued, many of Gu Changge's subsequent plans would proceed much more smoothly. As of now, the Xi Yuan Civilization, which the immortal civilization was subordinate to, seemed unaware of the developments taking place.

Being the most powerful civilization, Xi Yuan's level and foundation were far beyond that of ancient civilizations. It had long mastered the ability to control the flow of luck and destiny in the shadows. If the Xi Yuan Civilization were to focus on the shifts in the immortal civilization's luck, they would surely notice some anomalies.

In the past, when Gu Changge merely glimpsed the location of another supreme civilization—Xu Dan Civilization—through the endless expanses of time, space, and dimensions, he immediately

attracted the attention of many powerful beings there. This made him reconsider whether he should activate his other plans, such as those tied to the original world.

Meanwhile, after leaving the Ten Thousand Clans Arena, the gray-haired woman who had been following Ling Huang appeared to be in a dazed state. The unfamiliar sense of peace surrounding her left her feeling somewhat detached, as though the calmness was almost unreal.

In front of her, the dazzling yet gentle sunshine bathed the world in warmth, and a soft breeze brushed against her face. This was no longer the dark, bloody, and damp arena. Above her stretched a clear, cloudless sky, filled with fresh, abundant aura. She hadn't been able to stand quietly under the sun like this in a long time—enjoying its warmth, inhaling an indescribably pleasant scent carried by the wind.

This feeling took her back to her childhood, when she was carefree and free. If given a choice, why would she have ever allowed herself to be stained with blood and filth, like a rat hiding in a stinking gutter? Yet now, she was unsure of her current situation.

She didn't know much about Gu Changge's identity, but she did know that the master behind the Ten Thousand Clans Arena, as well as the elders of the Zhuo Clan, treated him with great respect and deference. Clearly, Gu Changge possessed a significant background.

But what did it mean that he wanted her to follow him from now on? What had he seen in her? Was it her ability to kill for him? Or was there something else he wanted?

The palace where Gu Changge was temporarily residing was located in the northeastern part of Gufeng Ancient City. It was a place of exceptional beauty—mist shrouded the area, exotic flowers bloomed everywhere, and the mountains and pavilions stretched endlessly, offering an unparalleled sense of peace and elegance, far removed from the noise and chaos of the city.

Ling Huang led the gray-haired woman through the process of washing up, changing her clothes, and cleaning off the mud and blood. This time, she didn't resist; she obediently followed along, knowing that resistance was futile.

She lay in a bath carved from bluestone, steam rising from the water, and colorful petals floating around her. Her long gray hair spread out in the water like seaweed drifting in the ocean. It had been so long since she had felt this kind of tranquility and relaxation, and she couldn't help but want to close her eyes and sleep peacefully for a while.

Ling Huang stood nearby, his hands tucked inside his wide sleeves, watching the girl who appeared to be only seventeen or eighteen. Based on her youthful appearance, it seemed more fitting to call her a girl, though her true age was likely far beyond that.

Although Ling Huang didn't know why Gu Changge had chosen to keep her, he could sense there was something extraordinary about her, something that set her apart.

Back in the gladiatorial arena, her methods of killing opponents were far beyond what someone at her level should have been capable of. Now, with the blood and grime washed from her face, her original features were revealed—delicate and sharp. Her face was small, with a petite and refined nose. When her eyes opened, her gray pupils gave off a calm yet cold aura.

However, whether it was intentional or a result of the injuries she had suffered, her face was marred with numerous jagged, centipede-like scars. These scars stretched across her face, creating a terrifying appearance at first glance.

Her body, too, bore the marks of countless battles—knife wounds, sword cuts—all of them visible, leaving behind deeply etched reminders of her violent past. Given her strength, which had reached the level of a true immortal, it stood to reason that she could have found a way to erase these scars if she wished. But she had chosen to keep them, perhaps as a shield or reminder of all she had endured.

Ling Huang shook her head slightly, then took out a white porcelain bottle from her sleeve and placed it nearby.

“The Young Master instructed me to keep this. The bottle contains the best healing medicine, capable of healing all the injuries you’ve suffered, restoring you to your former self.”

“In front of the Young Master, you don’t need to have any worries, and you don’t need to rely on the methods you used in the past to protect yourself. Of course, the medicine is here. Whether you choose to take it or not is entirely up to you; no one will force you.”

“After you wash up, there are suitable clothes for you here. I will wait for you outside the hall.”

With that, Ling Huang left the room.

The gray-haired girl, still lying in the bath, was momentarily stunned by Ling Huang’s words. She hadn’t expected him to say that, and it relieved her that she would be left alone in the palace. Wasn’t he worried that she might take the opportunity to escape?

But considering the unfathomable strength of her captor, which was beyond her comprehension, it seemed pointless to worry about such small concerns.

It was truly rare for her to experience such a comfortable moment, free from scrutiny. And the idea of restoring her original form?

She slowly turned her head to look at the white porcelain bottle nearby, a mix of hesitation and longing evident in her eyes. If not for the circumstances she had faced, who wouldn't desire to be clean and beautiful? For her, this had once been an unattainable luxury.

On the first day she was threatened with being taken into the arena, she had seen the undisguised, greedy expressions on the faces of the dead soldiers as they looked at her. In that moment, she realized what might await her in the future. Without a second thought, in front of all those soldiers, she had marred her own facial features and allowed her blood to soak her entire body.

Sure enough, after that, the greedy, lustful gazes directed at her had mostly disappeared. However, that was not enough; there were still some creatures who cared little for such things. In their eyes, it didn't matter if her features were hideous, as long as she didn't look... inviting.

So, she spent her days surrounded by blood and filth, the disgusting stench of blood clinging to her body throughout the year. Coupled with her eccentric, indifferent, and ruthless demeanor, she had succeeded in ensuring that no one dared to attack her.

In the dark confines of the arena, she had struggled to protect herself until now. She didn't know how much longer she could hold on or how long this endless battle would continue, with no clear tomorrow or future in sight. When would it all come to an end? Sometimes, she truly wished for death.

In a fight, being killed by an opponent seemed preferable to the relentless torture she faced day after day. Yet, she couldn't allow herself that escape; she still had to protect her sister and her clansmen. If she were to die in the arena, her younger sister—or her clan—might be captured to take her place, forced to endure the same harrowing experiences she had faced.

The thought of watching her sister go through everything she had endured was unbearable.

Can I... really?

She murmured, her gaze fixed on the small white porcelain bottle nearby. A deep longing flickered in her eyes.

At this moment, deep within the Zhuo Clan, in the magnificent palace of Elder Zhuowu, a stunningly beautiful woman was grooming herself in front of the mirror, her expression impassive. She wore no makeup; her crescent-shaped eyebrows arched gracefully like willow branches, her nose was exquisite, and her lips had a natural rosy hue. Her hair flowed like a cloud, framing her cool, dignified features and revealing a swan-like slender neck that was so beautiful it could dazzle the eyes.

However, upon closer inspection, one would notice that her eyes were a dark golden hue, exuding a hint of majesty.

“As expected, you are the disciple whom the deity favors. Who would have thought that beneath the delicate features you present, such a formidable appearance lies hidden?”

Elder Zhuowu remarked, standing a short distance away with her hands clasped behind her back. She watched Mu Yan as she prepared herself, nodding in satisfaction. This was not only her chosen apprentice but also her selected vessel.

Elder Zhuowu was thoroughly satisfied with Mu Yan, both in terms of talent and appearance. Compared to her current self, Mu Yan's true beauty was something beyond her comprehension. When they first met in the Ice and Fire Hell, Elder Zhuowu had not even realized that Mu Yan was in disguise, concealing her true features. It was only after bringing Mu Yan back to the clan that she discovered the truth.

As Elder Zhuowu spoke, Mu Yan's expression remained unchanged; she continued to comb her hair with an impassive demeanor.

Elder Zhuowu didn't mind her silence and simply continued, "In the next few days, focus on cultivating according to the techniques I've taught you. After some time, I will personally announce to the world that I have taken you as my apprentice. At the acceptance ceremony, don't embarrass me as your teacher."

"I'm counting on you to uphold my reputation."

She paused, then added, "Also, remember your current identity. You met me by chance while traveling the world. The person you were before no longer matters."

As the Heavenly Elder of the Zhuo Clan, she held a prestigious status, her strength rivaling that of the Void Dao Realm beings in the Immortal Civilization who had survived three heavenly declines.

Thus, the announcement of accepting apprentices would inevitably be made known to the world, culminating in a grand ceremony. At that time, not only would representatives from all branches of the Zhuo Clan attend, but other renowned sects of the Immortal Civilization would also participate, sending congratulatory gifts to mark the occasion.

Chapter 1034: Stop doing things that hurt yourself easily, the tip of your nose is sore

Mu Yan was dressed in gauze as white as moonlight, paired with a soft robe embroidered with intricate and delicate patterns. Holding an ancient wooden comb in her slender jade-like hands, she slowly combed her hair in front of the bronze mirror, completely ignoring Zhuo Wu's words, her expression dignified and graceful.

Zhuo Wu, watching her from a distance, was not surprised by Mu Yan's reaction. Ever since Mu Yan had been forcibly accepted as an apprentice into the Hell of Ice and Fire and brought back, she

had always been like this, rarely paying attention to others. Those who didn't know her might even think she was mute.

But that was fine with Zhuo Wu—if she spoke less, it saved him a lot of trouble. Up until now, Zhuo Wu had not revealed any information about Mu Yan. As for the planned disciple acceptance ceremony, word had already spread within the Zhuo clan, and many members had been discussing it recently.

However, no one in the clan had yet seen the true appearance of the apprentice Zhuo Wu intended to accept.

In front of her clansmen, Zhuo Wu naturally couldn't accept someone who had killed her highly regarded junior as her apprentice. So she had to alter the story, claiming she had met Mu Yan by chance during her travels. According to her, Mu Yan was exceptionally talented and had been highly valued, which led to her being brought back to the clan. She explained that Mu Yan had been cultivating in seclusion ever since, which was why no one had seen her before. As for the murderer who had killed her junior, Zhuo Wu claimed to have personally dealt with them in the Hell of Ice and Fire.

“From today onward, the old you no longer exists in this world. Your new name is Zhuo Yan, given to you by the deity herself upon your apprenticeship,” Zhuo Wu said before shaking her sleeves and disappearing from the palace.

She wasn't concerned that Mu Yan would do anything reckless. Back in the Hell of Ice and Fire, Mu Yan had wanted to die, and living on in such a humiliating manner must have been unbearable. As one of the most outstanding figures in the world, how could Zhuo Wu fail to understand Mu Yan's inner thoughts?

But Zhuo Wu still didn't care. With the spell cast on Mu Yan, binding her to obey for the rest of her life, Mu Yan's fate was already sealed. To someone like Zhuo Wu, an existence so far beyond the immortal king, Mu Yan, who couldn't even reach that level, was truly no more significant than an ant.

After Zhuo Wu left the palace, Mu Yan, who had been quietly grooming herself in the mirror, put down the wooden comb and glanced outside with a hint of regret. Succumbing to Zhuo Wu and accepting her as her master—her greatest enemy—had been a desperate tactic, meant to buy time.

She had been thinking of countermeasures, searching for a way out. But in the end, Mu Yan realized that no matter how much she thought, there was no solution, no glimmer of hope. This time, unlike in the past when she had managed to escape seemingly hopeless situations, there was no path to survival.

She had cornered herself completely. Living on in such humiliation, she wondered if it would be better to simply end it all.

But I can't die now. My father's death remains unavenged, and the humiliation my mother suffered at the hands of that clan has yet to be repaid.

And then there's my mother's final wish before she died... asking me to take care of my brother.

Mu Yan gazed at the stunningly beautiful woman reflected in the bronze mirror, her eyes slightly unfocused. It had been a long time since she had seen herself like this. When she traveled outside, she never revealed her true face, always changing her appearance. Her beauty often attracted unnecessary trouble, so hiding it had become second nature.

Now, with her real face restored, she found herself feeling slightly uncomfortable. Over the past few days since Zhuo Wu captured her, her thoughts had been consumed with how to escape. But she had come to realize that Zhuo Wu seemed to know her every move, every thought, as if nothing could escape her notice.

She was like a caged canary, trapped with no way out.

The Zhuo clansman who captured me mentioned being worried that some powerful figure might be backing me, plotting against Zhuo Wu. If that's true, does it mean that family has been watching me? Or could it be... my brother?

Mu Yan sighed softly, her thoughts drifting to another matter.

She paused, contemplating.

But if that were the case, so much time has passed, and I haven't heard any rumors. Maybe they were just overthinking it. After all, how could there be anyone powerful behind me?

Mu Yan shook her head slightly. She had relied solely on herself to get this far—there had never been anyone supporting her from the shadows.

Although she carried the blood of the Eternal Protoss, it wasn't pure. Her father had been human, not a member of the Protoss. This complicated lineage involved a long-buried secret of the Eternal Protoss, one tied to her father's murder and her mother's lifelong grief.

Mu Yan harbored a deep hatred for Zhuo Wu and the Zhuo clan, but that was closely tied to her current predicament. Yet, thinking about it now felt pointless.

Is there really no other way?

She wondered, feeling as though there was nothing before her—not even a glimmer of hope.

Suddenly, a figure in white flashed through her mind, someone seemingly unrelated to her situation. She quickly shook her head, trying to dispel that thought, even giving her pretty face a light pat to rouse herself. “Why am I thinking of him at a time like this...”

But that guy trusts others so easily. He seems so innocent and easy to deceive. I wonder if he took to heart what I said.

If he gets tricked, he'll suffer greatly, and he can't blame me for not warning him earlier.

A helpless smile tugged at the corners of Mu Yan's mouth. In a moment like this, with her life hanging in the balance, she still found time to worry about someone else.

Still, she reflected on her parting with that guy—it had indeed felt a bit strange.

Although they had only spent less than half a month together, it had brought her immense happiness. She felt as if she had discovered a different kind of joy in her life, one that existed apart from cultivation. The news that Elder Zhuo Wu of the Zhuo Clan would hold a disciple acceptance ceremony in a few days quickly spread throughout the Zhuo Clan's territory, causing significant ripples across the universe. Many prominent families and factions within the immortal civilization received invitations to witness the event.

Elder Zhuo Wu held a prestigious position, renowned not only throughout the entire immortal civilization but also across various realms. Her name resonated in countless worlds and universes; whenever it was mentioned, there was no one who did not recognize it or feel a sense of awe.

In many ancient cities, sculptures of such figures adorned public spaces, and temples were erected specifically to worship them. People would bow and pray day and night, leading to hundreds of millions of devoted followers.

To be accepted as an apprentice by such a prominent figure carried immense significance, opening doors to opportunities and prestige beyond imagination.

For a time, discussions about this matter filled every universe and ancient city. Not long ago, Elder Zhuo Wu of the Zhuo Clan had lost her most important junior within the clan's territory, an event that sent shockwaves through all factions and sparked a fierce uproar.

Enraged, Elder Zhuo Wu had struck out across an infinite distance, but the murderer managed to escape. In response, the Zhuo Clan established a ten-direction universe barrier, sealing all realms and time to prevent the fugitive from fleeing.

Elder Zhuo Wu's fury intensified, leading her to personally draft a wanted notice, offering a substantial reward for the capture of the murderer. This news spread rapidly, igniting discussions among countless cultivators and beings, all astonished by the audacity of the perpetrator.

Such actions were seen as desperate, akin to signing one's own death warrant. True to expectations, in the following days, the Zhuo Clan dispatched numerous individuals to apprehend her.

In various universes and ancient cities, many cultivators and beings offered sky-high rewards for the capture of the murderer. Soon after, numerous strong figures from the Zhuo Clan took it upon themselves to apprehend her, ultimately imprisoning her within the clan. This matter appeared to gradually settle down, with fewer people mentioning it.

However, when Elder Zhuo Wu of the Zhuo Clan suddenly announced her intention to accept disciples and hold a ceremony, speculation arose almost immediately regarding a connection

between these two events. Many wondered if her decision to accept disciples was a response to the death of her highly regarded junior, and what that implied about her current state of mind.

There were whispers among the populace, with some suspecting that the individuals responsible for the death of Elder Zhuo Wu's descendant might have ties to hostile factions, such as the Hun Clan, the Wu Clan, or other mysterious forces. Did this apprenticeship ceremony signify a forceful message to her adversaries? Was it a statement of strength and defiance?

Suddenly, across the universe and the vast realms of immortal civilization, the factions that had received invitations began to speculate that Elder Zhuo Wu's upcoming ceremony for accepting apprentices might not be straightforward.

In Gufeng Ancient City, within the Arena of Ten Thousand Clans, amid a series of towering palace complexes, Hong Gui received the news. Being relatively close to the Zhuo Clan and present in Gufeng Ancient City, she naturally received the invitation letter.

What surprised her, however, was that Wang He had mentioned this event beforehand.

How did Wang He find out about it? Could it be that he met Elder Zhuo Wu prior to this?

That doesn't seem right either. Is it possible that he truly is a prophet, knowing the movements and whereabouts of a heavenly elder in advance?

Hong Gui felt a mix of surprise and confusion. Nevertheless, since she had promised Wang He that she would take him to witness the ceremony, she was determined to keep her word.

Although there was some tension between the two, it paled in comparison to their long-term interests. On the other side, Wang He was not surprised when he learned about the ceremony; a smile of anticipation played on his lips.

This time, the disciple acceptance ceremony will mark the first appearance of the future Empress Pingtian before the world... I'm so fortunate to witness this moment with my own eyes.

He mused.

But this is just the beginning of the story between us. I will bring the most anticipated light and hope to her dark life.

With a beaming smile and unwavering confidence, Wang He soon turned his attention back to the members of the Scavengers Sect gathered before him, explaining the benefits of the upcoming event. Afterward, he stood up and headed to visit Hong Gui, intending to discuss the ceremony that was just days away. He knew she must have received an invitation letter.

The mountains in the distance were stunning, and nearby, elegant pavilions were surrounded by a serene atmosphere. Gu Changge, dressed in a loose white coat, sat cross-legged on a rug, an incense burner beside him releasing a fragrant mist that carried the scent of spring rain through the empty mountains.

He held an ancient scroll in his hand, studying it intently. The tea next to him still steamed, its aroma rich and inviting, clearly indicating that both the tea and the leaves were of exceptional quality.

After a refreshing bath, a gray-haired girl—who looked almost reborn—changed into a clean gray robe and was brought to him by Ling Huang.

“Huh? Cleaned up?” Gu Changge said, glancing up as he heard footsteps.

The gray-haired girl stood beside Ling Huang with her head lowered, her height barely reaching his shoulders, indicating she was only around sixteen or seventeen years old. However, compared to her appearance at the Ten Thousand Races Arena, she had transformed remarkably. Her hair was now smooth, her skin extraordinarily delicate and fair, resembling flawless ice and snow. All her scars had vanished, revealing a lively beauty.

“Keep your head up... You don’t need to hide your face with your hair. You have such a beautiful face; why choose to conceal it so no one can see it?”

The gray-haired girl was taken aback by his words and instinctively raised her eyes to meet Gu Changge’s gaze.

He sat there with his usual warm smile, drinking tea leisurely, his eyes half-closed as if nothing in this world could alter his expression. It had to be said that he possessed an almost immortal temperament; to describe him as detached or refined felt insufficient. He was entirely different from any man she had ever encountered.

This difference was not merely in temperament, appearance, or demeanor, but in the very sense of his existence. Although he was present, visible, and seemingly within reach, he gave off the impression of being in an entirely different realm from everyone else. He seemed to exist nowhere, as if he were not tethered to anyone or anything.

“Well, your current appearance is more pleasing to the eye. All beautiful girls in this world should cherish their looks. After you follow me, don’t engage in self-destructive behavior,” Gu Changge said casually, seemingly unaware of the gray-haired girl stealing glances at him.

When the gray-haired girl heard this, she paused for a moment, feeling an indescribable warmth in her heart. It was a sensation akin to warm sunshine pouring down and a gentle breeze caressing her skin.

For some reason, she felt as though all the indifference she had cultivated was slowly disintegrating, leaving her with a slight soreness in her nose. After Ling Huang said his piece and departed, she found herself unable to resist the allure of the healing medicine in the small white porcelain bottle. Despite her strong willpower, she ultimately uncapped the bottle and swallowed its contents whole.

Immediately, her body began to undergo almost complete transformation. The water in the bath changed eight times, with the first change revealing a mixture of black and blood, accompanied by layers of dead skin and scars that had sloughed off. The stench was overwhelming.

The same unpleasantness persisted with the second change. The odor from the first three changes made her face flush; she couldn't believe that these were the impurities being expelled from her body. It was hard to reconcile with the fact that she possessed the strength of a true immortal; she was no longer a mortal and had long freed herself from the dirt and impurities of the world. Yet, so many impurities remained.

Fortunately, after the next few changes, the bathwater showed no further alterations. She also realized that her cultivation had significantly improved.

Chapter 1035: Choose one of them, the river of fate stirs up ripples

Clearly, the elixir in the white porcelain bottle possessed not only the healing effects mentioned by Ling Huang but also the ability to help her sort out her meridians, cleanse her marrow, and strengthen her bones once again.

Although it was impossible for her to achieve a direct breakthrough in her cultivation, melting the rich medicinal power within would undoubtedly allow her to enhance her current abilities. This kind of elixir had the potential to turn decay into divinity; even an immortal king would likely be tempted to fight for it.

During her time at the Ten Thousand Clans Arena, despite being seriously injured, almost no one paid her any attention. She would simply retreat to a corner to lick her wounds and endure in silence.

Previously, no one would have offered her such a precious elixir. While it was likely that such a valuable item meant little to Gu Changge, to her, it was incredibly precious.

“It seems you are still quite wary of me, but you can rest assured.”

“I bear no malice toward you. The reason I want to bring you out of the Ten Thousand Clans Arena is simply that I see you as a valuable seed. It would be a shame to ruin your potential here.”

“You have a much broader horizon than being stuck in this filthy, stinking gutter.”

Gu Changge noticed the gray-haired girl in front of him was overly cautious, so he shook his head slightly and spoke casually.

At his words, the gray-haired girl lifted her gray eyes to glance at him briefly before quickly looking away and lowering her head. Her long, smooth hair fell over her palm-sized face, while her small, round chin had a flawless complexion like ice and snow, resembling an ice beauty carved from thousands of years of ice.

She remained silent, standing there quietly, but an unusual chill seemed to envelop her, appearing almost natural. She didn't fully trust Gu Changge's explanation. After years of living in the arena, she was no naive girl oblivious to the world.

On the contrary, she was smarter than many and more ruthless and decisive with herself.

“What was your original name?”

Gu Changge seemed to find her attitude somewhat frustrating. He rubbed his temples and sat up straight.

Upon hearing the question, the gray-haired girl moved her lower lip as if she wanted to respond but then shook her head slightly and remained silent. In truth, she had almost forgotten her name.

In the dark confines of the arena, each day was consumed by endless fighting, and her sole focus was on survival. The only thing she still remembered was that she came from the Muge clan of the Qin Mang galaxy and had several younger sisters who needed her protection.

“It’s fine if you don’t remember; I planned to give you a new name.”

“The name Hui Yan is really ugly. I don’t like it, and you probably don’t like it either.”

Gu Changge’s reaction was not surprising at all. He contemplated for a moment and then asked, “Do you have a name you prefer?”

The gray-haired girl had never anticipated that Gu Changge would bring up this topic.

At first, she thought Gu Changge was merely making casual remarks, but she didn’t expect him to take it seriously. The feeling of being valued by someone surprised her, yet at the same time, it warmed her heart.

“No... no.”

After a moment of thought, she shook her head and replied, her voice sounding dry as if she hadn't spoken in a long time. She had intended to remain silent as she usually did, but for some reason, she found herself subconsciously answering Gu Changge's question. ~~NO~~

If anyone who knew the gray-haired girl from the Ten Thousand Clans Arena were present, they would be astonished to witness this scene. Was this still the strange, indifferent freak they knew?

“If not, let me think of one for you.”

Gu Changge didn't seem surprised by her response at all; instead, he appeared to be deep in thought.

Hearing this, the gray-haired girl raised her eyes again to glance at him secretly.

But it seemed she was afraid of being noticed by him, so she quickly withdrew her gaze, as if nothing had happened. She didn't understand why Gu Changge treated her this way.

In her view, everything in this world revolved around the cycle of cause and effect. If there was an effect, there had to be a cause; nothing good came without reason. There were no real pies falling from the sky.

What could be the reason for Gu Changge's treatment? Did he have ulterior motives, or was it out of pure compassion?

“What do you want from me?”

The gray-haired girl asked herself in her heart.

Her background? She was merely an ordinary member of the Muge clan. Before Gu Changge took her away, she had been a dead woman walking in the arena, not even considered a servant in the eyes of some prominent families.

If it was to showcase her beauty and body, that was even less likely. In the Ten Thousand Clans Arena, her body reeked of blood and filth, and her face and body were marred by ugly scars. Even the maids responsible for cleaning the prison were disgusted by her appearance.

Gu Changge’s identity and strength meant he could have any girl he desired with just a beckon.

The stunning beauty by his side was so captivating that she seemed almost unreal. The gray-haired girl shook her head inwardly, unable to grasp the situation.

“How about calling you Hui Yi or Hui Tong? Well, Hui Tong doesn’t seem quite right either. In that case, Mo Tong might be more suitable.”

Gu Changge’s voice suddenly broke through her thoughts, pulling the gray-haired girl back to reality from her speculations. She raised her head to look at him, momentarily dazed, as if she hadn’t fully processed his words. Hui Yi? Hui Tong? Mo Tong?

Was he truly serious about naming her?

“What? Don’t you like these names?”

Gu Changge asked with a smile, taking a sip from his teacup.

The gray-haired girl wore a complex expression for a moment before shaking her head. Although these names sounded rather random, they were indeed chosen based on her current characteristics and not selected haphazardly.

“I... like it,” she replied softly.

“Then you can choose one of them yourself,” Gu Changge said with a smile.

Of course, he hadn’t chosen these names at random. One of these three names was meant to be the one the gray-haired girl would ultimately select for herself. To avoid creating karma and confusion, Gu Changge had glimpsed the gray-haired girl’s future at the moment of naming. He had chosen the other two names arbitrarily to give her a choice.

In the future, she would become a master of the way of killing, possibly the one who had traveled the farthest down that path in both ancient and recent times. Even without his interference, she would still be able to reach that stage.

Gu Changge himself did not wish to interfere too much; when naming her, he intended to prevent unnecessary causal confusion that could lead to strange changes in the fate of immortal civilization and draw the attention of higher-level beings.

“Then... let’s call it Mo Tong.”

The gray-haired girl appeared to be contemplating her choice seriously. A trace of entanglement flickered in her eyes, as if she also held a deep fondness for another name. Ultimately, though, she chose the one that was more flexible and pleasant to the ear.

“Are you sure?”

Gu Changge was taken aback; he hadn’t expected her to select that particular name. Among the three, it was indeed the most pleasing, yet in the future, she would refer to herself as Hui Yi, not Mo Tong.

Although he didn’t want to interfere with the trajectory of her destiny, allowing her to grow naturally, it seemed that her choice at this moment had shifted her path. The future was uncertain, and no one could truly predict it. The future Gu Changge had glimpsed just moments ago quietly changed the instant her thoughts shifted.

A flutter of butterfly wings in this world could lead to a change in the times, let alone these matters. This was the eternal law of heaven—self-circulation, without error.

“I am sure.”

The gray-haired girl replied softly, a hint of happiness evident in her voice regarding the name.

“Okay, then from today on, you will be called by this name.”

Gu Changge didn't say anything more. At that moment, the fate of the gray-haired girl remained clear in his eyes, showing little change due to these two names. However, he knew that since fate had shifted in this instant, corresponding changes would inevitably follow in the future.

This made Gu Changge contemplate other possibilities. Although it had been a whim to glimpse the gray-haired girl's future to gauge her potential, he hadn't anticipated that her choice would differ from what her future self would embrace.

In other words, at this very moment, the fate of the gray-haired girl had already triggered a change in the entire fate of the immortal civilization. The lake had begun to ripple. As a result, it could lead to subtle and unexpected changes in the future.

Destiny is the most illusory concept. Many Dao Realm beings believe they can see through their own fate and that of others, but what they perceive is merely a snapshot of the present—the fate of themselves and that creature. The future of that creature may be subject to countless twists and turns due to unpredictable events.

This world is interconnected, and any single individual can undergo numerous changes due to shifts in the fate of the world. Everyone influences everyone else; it's just a matter of scale. It is because of these changes that the so-called variables come into existence.

Of course, to truly understand and control a person's destiny, one must control all the destinies of the world to which that person belongs. Everyone's fate is intricately connected. The existence of the gray-haired girl is closely tied to the entire immortal civilization. In the future, she would grow into a figure who could not be overlooked, even within the immortal realm.

If Gu Changge wanted to genuinely control her destiny, he would need to oversee the fate of the entire immortal civilization. This was no easy task. It is already challenging to control the fate of others, let alone one's own destiny.

Thus, for many Dao Realm beings, this presents a question that feels almost like a rebuttal. The so-called control over one's own destiny is, at best, merely pulling one's fate out of the long river of destiny and grasping it in one's hands. It does not equate to having a clear vision of one's own destiny, controlling future achievements, or knowing all one's fates, disasters, and experiences.

The stronger a person's abilities, the larger the world that accommodates them, and the more people and existences at the same level are interconnected. When one truly controls their own destiny, it is essentially about seeing through the fate of the world they inhabit. The past may be easier to perceive, but predicting the future remains challenging—this is fundamentally the reason behind it.

Gu Changge returned to his thoughts, no longer entangled in this aspect. The fate of the immortal civilization was like a lake; although it had stirred some ripples, who could say which fish had caused them? This river of destiny didn't imply a lack of ups and downs; the waves were ever-present, constantly shifting due to various factors. He realized he had been a bit too cautious.

“From now on, you can live here with peace of mind. You can leave whenever you wish; no one will stop you, and I won't give you any orders. Of course, if you want, you can also return to your clan to visit your clansmen.”

Gu Changge spoke casually, glancing at the gray-haired girl, who seemed a bit happy about her new name. Now she should be called Mo Tong.

When Mo Tong heard this, she snapped back to reality, as if struggling to believe his words.

Here's the refined version of your text:

“You... Aren't you worried that after I leave, I won't come back?” she couldn't help but ask.

Gu Changge maintained a casual smile and replied, “It's the same to me whether you come back or not. You can rest assured; I don't have the time to spare to send someone after you. Where you choose to go is entirely your freedom. I brought you out of the arena, and I don't expect anything in return.”

“It's just that if you leave, it means there will be no relationship between us.”

Hearing these words, Mo Tong was momentarily stunned; the sentence lingered in her mind. She seemed to awaken suddenly at this moment. To Gu Changge, her existence or absence made no difference, and it would have no impact on him. Yet, she had been preoccupied with worry and contemplation just moments ago.

On the contrary, for her, following Gu Changge would open up a broader future that countless cultivators and creatures could only envy.

Mo Tong opened her mouth to say something, but Gu Changge had already waved his hand, signaling Ling Huang to take her back. What he had just said was indeed true: taking Mo Tong away from the arena was a matter of convenience. Her existence or absence held no influence over him at that moment. Of course, Gu Changge knew that it was highly unlikely for her to leave.

Ling Huang took Mo Tong back to temporarily reside in the palace complex, but for Gu Changge, this was merely a small episode.

Meanwhile, Elder Zhuowu of the Zhuo Clan had just sent someone to Gufeng Ancient City with an invitation letter, seeking to invite Gu Changge to attend the disciple acceptance ceremony. Due to the arrival of some important figures from the Hun Clan, Elder Zhuowu had to receive them alongside many elders, making it impossible for her to extend the invitation in person.

Chapter 1036: The two of us will meet again, there are always ants who want to peel into the glory of gods

Gu Changge found it a bit puzzling that Elder Zhuowu of the Zhuo Clan was planning to take on disciples. However, after some thought, he realized this matter was far more intriguing than he initially expected. Many interesting events were bound to unfold at Elder Zhuowu's apprentice acceptance ceremony.

"Someone from the Hun Clan seems to be spying in this area. Go and teach them a lesson," Gu Changge ordered after Ling Huang left with Mo Tong.

He briefly glanced in a particular direction of Gufeng Ancient City before summoning the Bone Ancestor.

He had no interest in handling such tasks personally, knowing that the Bone Ancestor's strength was more than enough to settle the matter.

The Hun Clan powerhouses had come to the Zhuo Clan because they sensed something was amiss and wanted to discuss it with Zhuo Fengxie. With internal discord brewing within the Zhuo Clan, Zhuo Fengxie now had no choice but to pin his hopes on the Hun Clan.

He had simply underestimated Gu Changge's strength. Though Zhuo Fengxie and others stood at the pinnacle of the immortal civilization, they couldn't even spy on Gu Changge, let alone go unnoticed by him.

"Understood, my lord," the Bone Ancestor responded.

“These insignificant insects always try to spy on the gods’ brilliance, yet they have no idea what they’re up against.”

The Bone Ancestor’s figure materialized from the void, his withered face briefly showing a ruthless glint. After answering respectfully, he dissolved into a puff of gray smoke and vanished.

Once the Bone Ancestor had departed, Gu Changge’s expression turned unreadable as he made his move. The invitation letter from Elder Zhuowu appeared in his palm, detailing his plans to accept disciples. The letter also revealed that, during the upcoming ceremony in the main hall, Elder Zhuowu intended to make his apprentice, Zhuoyan, a renowned name throughout the world.

Zhou Rou... Mu Rou...

Gu Changge softly murmured the two names before suddenly chuckling, “I said, we two would meet.”

At that same moment, deep within the Zhuo Clan’s territory, in the secluded land where Zhuo Fengxie usually cultivated, something was stirring. On a towering and ancient mountain, two figures stood tall.

One of them appeared old and withered, but his aura was overwhelmingly terrifying. With his hands clasped behind his back, his eyes opened and closed, radiating an aura that seemed capable of swallowing the world and suppressing all paths.

In stark contrast, the other figure appeared ordinary and tranquil. Yet, in his palm, the laws and order of the Dao flowed and intertwined, as if he wielded the ultimate principles and infinite power of heaven and earth.

These two were Zhuo Fengxie and Hun Yuan Jun, the most prominent figures of the Zhuo and Hun clans, respectively. Though they had been sworn enemies for countless years, their mutual respect was such that they could almost be considered closer than confidants.

This time, Hun Yuan Jun had come with the Hun Clan for a visit. While the rest of the Hun clansmen were being received by the elders of the Zhuo Clan, Hun Yuan Jun had come alone to meet Zhuo Fengxie in private.

Even within the two clans, few knew what was unfolding at that very moment between these two legendary figures.

“What do you make of this?”

Hun Yuan Jun asked, his voice carrying the weight of his forceful personality. As he spoke, vast and terrifying visions evolved around him—the moon disappeared, stars fell, worlds were born and destroyed, all intertwined within his presence.

Zhuo Fengxie shook his head solemnly at the question.

“It’s precisely because I can’t see clearly that I’m hesitant. I don’t know how to handle it. But from what I can sense, it feels as though this visitor harbors no good intentions.”

“Zhuoyou and the others—he holds their very lives in his hands now. If this individual had merely come to this world for a solitary journey, why choose such a path?” Zhuo Fengxie paused, his concern deepening.

“Moreover, I fear that this person’s plan is far larger than we can comprehend, perhaps not limited to just the immortal civilization. A dark premonition warns me that the road ahead is fraught with danger. One wrong step, and everything could shatter into pieces.”

He voiced the gravest of his concerns, revealing what weighed heaviest on his mind.

In the immortal civilization, those who reached their level could often glimpse the past, peer into the future, sense looming disasters, and evade crises before they struck. Zhuo Fengxie, deeply versed in the workings of immortal civilization and skilled in divination and deduction, had long honed this ability. ƎANŌË§

His words left Hun Yuan Jun visibly surprised, raising his eyebrows in response to the unexpected gravity of the situation.

The situation is as serious as you say, but when I carefully deduced it, I couldn't detect anything unusual. However, the origin of that person is indeed incredibly mysterious and doesn't seem to belong to the Xi Yuan civilization. It's possible they come from another super civilization.

Hun Yuan Jun mused.

As far as I know, the competition between certain super civilizations for the real world and its resources is absolutely terrifying. If this truly involves a conflict between two such civilizations, then the immortal civilization could indeed be shattered to pieces.

Hun Yuan Jun, well acquainted with Zhuo Fengxie's methods, didn't dismiss his concerns as mere exaggeration. His own expression grew heavy with worry, brows furrowed in deep thought.

Though the various races within the immortal civilization often engaged in skirmishes, they exercised restraint, avoiding full-scale war. If a powerful external force were to intervene now, it would undoubtedly shatter this delicate balance and bring disaster to the entire civilization.

At that moment, a troubling suspicion began to take root in Hun Yuan Jun's mind—Gu Changge might be from a supreme civilization. Under the guise of traveling, he could be here to assess the immortal civilization's strength and plan to covet the super civilization that it was tied to.

“If this is the case, should we report this to the Xi Yuan Civilization and begin preparations in advance?” Zhuo Fengxie asked, frowning as he weighed the pros and cons.

The immortal civilization was attached to Xi Yuan Civilization, but it could just as easily align with another supreme civilization. The relationship between them was one of dependency, with no real sense of loyalty involved.

“However,” he continued cautiously, “before we act, we need to verify our suspicions. If we're wrong, not only could Xi Yuan Civilization hold us accountable, but we may also end up completely offending this individual.”

Hun Yuan Jun nodded in agreement. Although his personality was forceful, he was far from foolish. He understood that the two races now stood at a pivotal moment—a turning point that could lead them down two completely different paths. This decision would shape their future, but they needed clarity before taking any irreversible steps.

As Hun Yuan Jun spoke and contemplated, he didn't cease his efforts at deduction. The intensity in his eyes grew, radiating brilliant light. An overwhelming aura spread across the land, causing countless stars to tremble and the fabric of the universe to seem as if it might tear apart.

Seeing Hun Yuan Jun so unrestrained in his actions, Zhuo Fengxie's frown deepened, unease gnawing at him. “Hun Yuan Jun, you should be more cautious,” Zhuo Fengxie advised.

“Your mental strength may be unparalleled, and you even defeated the original Dharma Ancestor, but that man in white, surnamed Gu, is of unfathomable strength. If you try to spy on him like this, you might suffer retaliation.”

In the past, Zhuo Fengxie wouldn't have offered such a warning. He knew Hun Yuan Jun's reputation as a force unmatched. His brilliance had illuminated the world, surpassing countless eras and leaving both ancient and present beings in awe, unable to raise their heads in his presence.

This ancestor of the Hun Clan had once devised a peerless method for spiritual cultivation, renowned as the most powerful training technique in the immortal civilization. It allowed the practitioners to nurture and transform their spirits, embedding their essence into any material. Hun Yuan Jun had even pioneered the art of creating spiritual fetal membranes, enabling a single ray of spiritual energy to be infused into the universe and ancient realms, giving rise to countless bodies.

In terms of mastery over spiritual power, if Hun Yuan Jun were called the second in the immortal civilization, no one would dare claim to be the first. But now, the circumstances had changed, and Zhuo Fengxie feared that such a move could result in a significant setback for him.

“It doesn't matter,” Hun Yuan Jun responded confidently.

“I recently realized a new method during my seclusion. It allows me to extend my boundless spiritual power to touch the river of fate itself, using the power of destiny to spy on an individual. Even if their strength surpasses mine, they won't be able to detect it.”

A hint of arrogance crossed his face as he spoke, his tone full of self-assurance. He said this not just to explain, but also as a subtle provocation directed at Zhuo Fengxie, his long-standing rival.

As expected, upon hearing these words, Zhuo Fengxie's expression shifted slightly, clearly unsettled by the bold claim.

“Dang!!!”

Barely moments after Hun Yuan Jun spoke, a thunderous explosion resounded from the distant horizon, as if the heavens had shattered. The shockwave rippled across the world, causing countless cultivators and creatures to tremble in fear, their souls shaken and their bodies quaking.

In the Zhuo Clan’s territory, the clansmen’s faces turned pale with horror as they looked up, startled by the sudden upheaval. A vast sea of black mist surged, blotting out the sun like an endless dark cloud that enveloped the sky. The stars and moon dimmed, plunging the world into a deathly gloom.

Amidst the oppressive darkness stood the hunched figure of an old man in a black robe, facing the direction of the Zhuo Clan. Though his face remained obscured, the sheer coldness and terrifying aura he emitted made hearts tremble with unease.

The black mist that surrounded him was boundless, billowing with the malevolent energy of countless destroyed universes. It shifted and churned, obscuring everything in its path. His gaze was locked on a specific place deep within the Zhuo Clan, his presence so overwhelming that it seemed to blot out the heavens themselves.

Countless cultivators and creatures looked on in stunned disbelief, completely unaware of the monumental events unfolding before them.

In various vast regions, many powerful figures rushed out in alarm, yet they were gripped with fear, too terrified to approach the scene.

“What in the world is happening?”

“Isn’t that black-robed figure the same old servant who followed the mysterious man in white when he appeared in Gufeng Ancient City?”

“This power is terrifying beyond belief! It’s shaking the entire Zhuo Clan’s territory. Even the Heavenly Elders wouldn’t dare breathe in the presence of such an existence.”

Countless eyes gazed in shock as the black mist engulfed the skies, with many strong figures from various ethnic groups utterly stunned. The chilling aura that emanated from the black-robed figure was enough to annihilate any force with ease, striking fear deep into their hearts.

Even though this overwhelming power wasn’t directed at them, it was so suffocating that it left them trembling, as if they were on the verge of collapsing to their knees.

In Gufeng Ancient City, countless eyes watched as well. No matter how powerful the cultivators or creatures were, they all shared the same horrified sensation, as though an impending catastrophe loomed over them.

In a more distant location, within areas shrouded in darkness, a sound suddenly pierced the silence as a pair of dark golden, terrifying eyes opened, gazing intently from afar. Zhuo Fengxie and Hun Yuan Jun both sensed that something was amiss deep within the Zhuo Clan’s territory.

“This is bad.”

“I warned you to stop, but you wouldn’t listen. Now we’ve been detected.”

Zhuo Fengxie's face paled as he turned to scold Hun Yuan Jun, who had been so confident just moments ago.

"How can this be?" Hun Yuan Jun's expression soured as disbelief washed over him. The other party had sensed his probing instantaneously?

Amid the countless horrified and trembling onlookers, the Bone Ancestor, enveloped in black mist, looked toward Zhuo Fengxie's territory with a sneer.

There are always those who disregard life and death, attempting to spy on existences that should not be meddled with.

Though the young master is kind, it does not mean you can offend him at will.

Boom!!!

The black mist roiled, shaking the sky as cold, hostile eyes filled with fury bore down on the scene. A monstrous hand emerged from that direction, sweeping across the heavens and effortlessly pulling down countless stars, which hung between its fingers like mere specks of dust. The sheer size of the hand was unimaginable, its shadow blotting out the light.

Zhuo Fengxie stumbled back, while Hun Yuan Jun felt a shiver run down his spine, realizing that the attention was fixed on him rather than on Zhuo Fengxie beside him.

This incident was an accident, fellow Daoist. I hope to appease your anger.

Hun Yuan Jun's face turned grim as he ascended into the sky. With a single step, a tempest of mental power surged around him, evolving into the forms of a real dragon, an immortal phoenix, a white tiger, and other divine beasts, which compressed the atmosphere and astonished the world.

His actions drew the astonishment and shock of all present. Many members of the Hun Clan who had accompanied Hun Yuan Jun to the Zhuo Clan were equally bewildered by the sudden turn of events. But as they witnessed their ancestor's emergence, they quickly grasped the gravity of the situation.

“This...”

Many elders and members of the Zhuo Clan were deeply shocked and found themselves in a dilemma. Initially, they believed that Gu Changge's dissatisfaction stemmed from poor hospitality. They never imagined it was connected to the first ancestor of the Hun Clan.

Given that context, it was no wonder such chaos ensued. However, this incident was unfolding within the territory of the Zhuo Clan. The Hun Clan was visiting as guests, and Gu Changge had previously been received personally by Zhuo Fengxie, treated as a distinguished guest by the Zhuo people.

Thus, the Zhuo Clan had no involvement in this matter.

Moreover, if any intervention were to take place, it would have to come from someone like Zhuo Fengxie, as the other elders had no authority to act.

It's the ancestor of the Hun Clan, as renowned as Zhuo Fengxie—Hun Yuan Jun.

I heard he recovered after emerging from seclusion some time ago, but I didn't expect him to appear in the Zhuo Clan's territory now and stir up such trouble.

Many ancient beings familiar with Hun Yuan Jun were astonished, struggling to comprehend the situation.

"Hun Yuan Jun and Zhuo Fengxie are the heads of their respective clans, the ones most likely to enter that realm."

"Yet, even someone like Hun Yuan Jun, an invincible figure who has never faced defeat, may find himself in difficult circumstances."

Some whispered with a hint of glee, clearly relishing the unfolding drama. Meanwhile, many young and middle-aged cultivators, unfamiliar with Hun Yuan Jun, leaned in as others began to explain his significance.

Chapter 1037: Fellow Daoist, listen to my explanation, immediately became confused

Although many had never seen Hun Yuan Jun in person, legends about him circulated throughout the great universes of the immortal civilization. When people spoke of him, they often refrained from using his true name, referring to him instead as Ancestor Hun. He was an invincible figure who had dominated multiple eras, renowned both in the past and present as the ancestor of the Hun Clan and the most distinguished being of his time.

No one had anticipated that he would emerge in the depths of the Zhuo Clan and cause such significant upheaval.

“Hun Yuan Jun hasn’t revealed his true form in this world for many years. It’s said he’s working on an even more terrifying method...”

“Such an invincible existence, once engaged in battle, can easily devastate the universe and shatter worlds.”

“However, that mysterious old man in the black robe also possesses terrifying and unfathomable strength.”

Across many realms, countless eyes were fixed on the scene, filled with shock. These were ancient beings of various races who had lived for immeasurable ages. Hun Yuan Jun had appeared to confront the monstrous hand of the Bone Ancestor.

He knew he was in the wrong, but as a well-known and powerful figure in the immortal civilization, he couldn’t simply allow others to strike him without consequence. How could he endure such a loss of face?

“Fellow Daoist, please listen to my explanation. I acknowledge my fault in this matter, and I am willing to compensate you,” Hun Yuan Jun said in a deep voice.

As he spoke, the phantom of a divine beast appeared, seemingly summoned from an unknown realm, to confront the giant hand descending from the old man in black.

Terrifying energy erupted, filling the sky and overwhelming the universe. Many extraterrestrial galaxies were annihilated instantly, reduced to ashes that scattered across the cosmos.

“Compensation? That’s not for you to decide,” Bone Ancestor replied with a disdainful sneer. Accompanied by the swirling black mist, he stepped down, causing the entire sky to seem to sink momentarily.

The terrifying giant hand continued its relentless descent, showing no signs of dissipating as it loomed across the sky, casting a shadow over the universe. The scene was utterly chilling; heaven and earth were shrouded in darkness, the stars dimmed, and the sun and moon lost their light.

Chaotic energy evaporated into luminous particles, swirling between the fingers of that colossal hand.

“This is too deceitful! But I must ask you, what kind of methods do you possess?” Hun Yuan Jun exclaimed, his expression darkening as he shouted again. Throughout his endless years, he had never known defeat and always prided himself on his strength. How could he allow such a formidable opponent to bully him?

Endless golden mist swirled around him, embodying countless worlds and containing supreme, surging power. The two figures clashed, and the very fabric of time and space in that area became chaotic. Only those truly powerful could glimpse what transpired.

The ground shook with a terrifying tremor, and boundless energy boiled, threatening to disintegrate entire realms. Battling such an existence was catastrophic; entire worlds were annihilated with each clash, and the long river of time itself seemed to evaporate in their wake.

The territory of the Zhuo Clan was thrown into chaos, as creatures and cultivators alike felt a wave of unease and panic wash over them. It had been years since they had witnessed a battle of this magnitude, and even the elders of the Zhuo clan felt powerless to intervene.

“This kind of battle is beyond my reach,” one elder remarked, watching in awe.

“They’ve already moved beyond our territory. That realm is lawless and unrestrained—a battlefield where only beings of their caliber can tread.”

As word spread across the many realms of the immortal civilization, countless ancient forces and ethnic groups were shaken by the events unfolding that day. Within the Zhuo clan, senior officials exchanged worried glances, their faces reflecting shock and concern.

In the distant territory of the Hun clan, many members watched the confrontation from afar, trembling in fear.

Zhuo Fengxie stood at the heart of the clan, his expression clouded with worry. He had never anticipated that Hun Yuan Jun's overconfidence would lead to such an alarming situation.

Moreover, this trouble would not be resolved easily. The battle was destined to last for some time. While Hun Yuan Jun had initiated the conflict, it was clear that the old man in the black robe was acting on someone else's orders. The true architect behind this situation was Gu Changge.

“What is his intention with this? Is he warning both the Zhuo and Hun clans?”

In Gufeng Ancient City, a commotion erupted as people were thrown into a state of panic and disbelief. Although the clash between Hun Yuan Jun and the Bone Ancestor had transcended their world, the lingering, terrifying aura still permeated the air.

Many could see an arm, seemingly composed of countless white bones and enveloped in boundless black mist, stretching out from the battlefield and continuously striking at its opponent. This was the true hand that covered the sky and the earth, and with a single grasp, it seemed to envelop the entire universe.

What they witnessed was merely a reflection of the chaos unfolding in that distant battleground. They were powerless to spy on the real confrontation, unable to grasp its full scope.

“Master...”

In a remote location, several of Hun Yuan Jun’s personal disciples awoke, their voices rising in anguish as they gazed toward the battlefield, desperate to help but realizing their limitations. This unparalleled clash was not only capturing the world’s attention; it was consuming the very fabric of reality around them.

Gu Changge watched the unfolding chaos with a calm demeanor, in stark contrast to the restlessness and concern radiating from the various ethnic groups. He sat comfortably by the window of a pavilion, savoring a fragrant cup of tea that sent up gentle tendrils of steam.

“Senior Bone Ancestor’s strength is truly unfathomable,” Ling Huang remarked, her expression filled with admiration as she gazed into the distance. With her current abilities, she could only catch glimpses of the battle’s true nature, unable to fully grasp the magnitude of the conflict between the two powerful figures.

Beside her, Mo Tong stood in silence, unable to mask her shock and disbelief. She had never anticipated that the seemingly unremarkable black-robed old man accompanying Gu Changge possessed such terrifying strength. His opponent, Hun Yuan Jun, was an invincible ancestor of the Hun clan, a figure she had always regarded with awe and reverence.

“He’s slightly underestimating the enemy,” Gu Changge remarked with a smile as he set down his teacup.

But this battle doesn’t necessarily need to be won through force. I merely wish to convey an attitude to the Zhuo and Hun clans.

As Zhuo Fengxie sought to gauge Gu Changge's stance, the latter was more than willing to provide him with this opportunity. In Gufeng Ancient City, countless cultivators and beings focused intently on the unfolding conflict, eager to discover its outcome. Many onlookers cast complicated glances in the direction of Gu Changge's temporary residence, grappling with disbelief that the formidable black-robed figure clashing with the ancestor of the Hun clan was merely an old servant to the man in white.

“Master, when will we have such a powerful existence leading our Scavengers Sect?”

In another inn, Wang He and other members of the Scavenger Sect were also captivated by the spectacle. Many young disciples found their hearts swelling with admiration and longing as they watched the extraordinary display of strength.

To the onlookers, what they witnessed that day felt like the resurgence of ancient legends and myths, reshaping the very fabric of their world. It was a sight they could hardly fathom in their everyday lives.

There will be a day!

Wang He thought, his heart brimming with enthusiasm and a deep yearning for the invincible power that dominated the realm. Currently, he stood at the half-step Dao realm, just a step away from breaking through into the Dao realm. He believed that with the right opportunity, he could leap forward, unlocking the mysteries of the Book of Scavengers and ascending to a higher level of existence.

But speaking of it, such a formidable figure is merely an old servant under someone else. What could be the origin of that mysterious man in white?

Some young disciples pondered, their thoughts drifting to the implications of Gu Changge's power and influence. They felt an even greater shock and disbelief as they realized the depth of the enigma surrounding him—an existence that seemed to surpass any level they could comprehend or imagine.

For them, witnessing such events felt like stepping into the realm of the Arabian Nights. Even if someone had recounted the tale, few would have believed it. Hearing their astonished remarks, Wang He couldn't help but feel a pang of resentment. It reminded him of how the mysterious figure had intervened and taken away the gray-haired girl he had been eyeing.

He had tried to dismiss the thought, but it lingered like a thorn in his heart. Every time he recalled it, a wave of unwillingness surged within him, as if something that rightfully belonged to him had been snatched away. This emotion had clung to him for days, making it increasingly difficult to meditate properly.

Moreover, wasn't the power wielded by that old servant—the very strength he had been pursuing for so long—now reduced to servitude before others?

“Shut up! Don't talk about this kind of thing,” Wang He snapped, his face darkening.

“It's not good for you to be so high-minded. You can only go further if you keep your feet on the ground.”

The disciples of the Scavengers Sect immediately fell silent upon noticing Wang He's sudden anger, unsure of what had caused his outburst. It was unusual for him to scold anyone in such a tone, and they exchanged uneasy glances, deciding it was best not to bring up the subject again.

A cultivator in the true Dao realm, having survived at least five catastrophes, yet reduced to nothing more than another's old servant.

Wang He muttered under his breath, his mind racing.

But just then, an indifferent voice, so faint it was almost like a whisper carried by the wind, reached his ears. The tone was emotionless, detached, and it said, “Is what your disciples said true?”

Wang He froze in surprise, his face betraying a mixture of confusion and astonishment as he processed the sudden intrusion.

However, Wang He was not one to display anger or frustration openly. He quickly composed himself, waved his hands to dismiss his disciples, and then focused his thoughts to respond to the voice he had just heard.

“What my disciples said is undoubtedly true. Do you have some insight into this matter?” he asked calmly.

“Hehe, a cultivator who has survived at least five catastrophes reduced to being an old servant.” the indifferent voice replied, a mocking tone evident in its tone.

Wang He frowned slightly. He was accustomed to the artifact spirit of the Book of Scavengers maintaining a detached attitude toward him. This time, he had sought its input out of curiosity, but it seemed unwilling to share any information. Its lack of response led him to believe that his plan to garner its interest through this topic had failed, leaving him feeling somewhat defeated.

“I didn’t expect that I would wake up from a deep sleep and hear such an interesting thing,” the artifact spirit remarked.

“But I advise you to tread carefully; there are some matters best left alone. Inquiring too deeply will do you no good.”

Wang He’s frown relaxed slightly at the spirit’s warning.

“Are you actually caring for me by saying that?” he replied with a smile. To him, it was unusual for the artifact spirit to express itself so freely. He would not have believed it if he hadn’t sensed a hint of concern for his safety.

“Loveless,” the spirit responded, its tone still indifferent and cold. After uttering those four words, it fell silent.

“Sooner or later, you will submit,” Wang He said, shaking his head as the smile faded from his face.

He understood that the Book of Scavengers and its spirit were essentially two separate entities. The spirit could influence the book in certain ways, which prevented Wang He, as its master, from exercising complete control over the treasure. However, he noted that the spirit was no longer what it once was. It seemed resigned to its fate, no longer fighting for dominance. Yet, the artifact spirit’s unusual reaction to his words today caught his attention, hinting that perhaps there was more beneath the surface than he had initially realized.

The ultimate battle outside the world finally came to an end, and stars fell like rain. One after another, they plummeted from the sky as the dome of the heavens disintegrated and collapsed. The terrifying energy that had surged through the battlefield began to subside, yet many areas lay dried up and reduced to ruins. This devastation was merely a result of the leaked fluctuations; the true horror of what transpired in the heart of the battlefield was beyond the imagination of ordinary people.

However, no one in the outside world knew the outcome of the clash—how tragic it had been or who had emerged victorious. Hun Yuan Jun returned to the territory of the Zhuo Clan, appearing much like he had before. Yet Zhuo Fengxie could see that his complexion was grim, and his aura was unstable. It was evident that Hun Yuan Jun had not gained the upper hand in this battle and had likely suffered a significant loss.

“Tomorrow morning, you will accompany me to visit Mr. Gu and apologize to him,” Hun Yuan Jun instructed curtly. He said little else to Zhuo Fengxie before disappearing from the area in an instant, clearly feeling humiliated by the outcome of the confrontation.

Zhuo Fengxie’s expression grew heavy upon hearing this. Even as one of the strongest figures, having faced countless invincible opponents throughout history, he found himself powerless against the mysterious old man in the black robe.

If Zhuo Fengxie were to engage in combat against him, the outcome would likely be similar. “Things are getting more complicated and tricky...” he thought, frowning and sighing inwardly.

At that moment, Bone Ancestor returned to Gu Changge’s side, and compared to Hun Yuan Jun’s grim demeanor, he wore a peculiar smile. “This battle was truly enjoyable. That guy’s methods were impressive; he managed to tap into about 70% of my strength. However, in front of the young master, I could easily suppress him with just one finger.”

Bone Ancestor relished the experience, finding it to be the most exhilarating fight he had engaged in since awakening. Mo Tong, observing him closely for the first time, felt a mix of admiration and astonishment. She was taken aback by Bone Ancestor’s earlier remark but was utterly stunned by his next statement, which further revealed the depth of his confidence and power.

Chapter 1038: Something About Wang He, Another Eternal Artifact

Mo Tong could hardly believe her ears as she gazed at Gu Changge in a daze. This astonished expression was a stark contrast to her usually indifferent demeanor, making her appear almost cute.

What had the invincible being, who had just battled the ancestor of the Hun clan, claimed? That Gu Changge could suppress the ancestor of the Hun clan with just one finger?

Words eluded her as she struggled to comprehend the shock of such a fantastical notion. It seemed utterly unbelievable. Yet Gu Changge's expression remained unchanged—calm and composed, showing no signs of denial. Ling Huang, standing beside her, appeared equally unfazed, as if this were something she had known all along.

Could it be that what Bone Ancestor said was true? Mo Tong had always perceived Gu Changge as merely someone with an extraordinary background, thinking the black-robed old man was merely tasked with protecting him. However, the revelation that Gu Changge might actually be the most mysterious and unfathomable figure among them left her in disbelief.

She was taken aback, realizing that Gu Changge was not much older than many of the young cultivators in the immortal civilization, yet he carried an aura of power that set him apart.

Although Mo Tong understood that, at a certain level, age could leave little trace on a cultivator, the revelation of Gu Changge's true strength was still hard for her to grasp. The realization that he was the most terrifying among them left her in disbelief.

Noticing the stunned and incredulous look on Mo Tong's face, Ling Huang couldn't help but purse her lips into a smile. However, her veil concealed her allure, leaving no one to appreciate the beauty behind it.

“Young Master, the ancestor of the Hun clan mentioned that he would come with Zhuo Fengxie to apologize to you tomorrow,” Bone Ancestor reported, his earlier amusement replaced by a serious tone.

Gu Changge nodded, unfazed by the news.

“Zhuo Fengxie is a smart person. After this incident, he should understand what needs to be done.” His instruction for Bone Ancestor to act had been a calculated move to put pressure on Zhuo Fengxie, ensuring he would recognize the gravity of the situation.

Although Zhuo Fengxie was cautious, he now understood the strength of Bone Ancestor and recognized the choice he had to make moving forward.

“What’s the latest move of Chu Lian?”

Now that Gu Changge had achieved his goal, he didn’t intend to waste any more energy on the current situation. Instead, he inquired about the whereabouts of Chu Lian, who had come to the immortal civilization alongside him.

Once matters here were resolved, he would consider acquiring the treasure from Chu Lian. He had spent enough time planning to wear away the last remnants of the alien personality within Chu Lian. A wise bird selects the best tree to roost in, and a good minister chooses the right master to serve.

Although Chu Lian had obtained the treasure and recognized its owner, he had effectively tied his life to it. However, since the Supreme Treasure possessed an independent and intelligent spirit, it would naturally seek fortune and avoid misfortune. Moreover, Gu Changge had previously set in motion various schemes to ensure this outcome.

The spirit of the treasure should also recognize that Chu Lian, having lost the protection of the variable, would no longer be able to safeguard it. In this civilization, powerful beings were abundant, and there might even be existences comparable to the Dao Realm who could notice the anomaly within him and attempt to seize the treasure without regard for the consequences.

To mitigate this risk, Gu Changge had arranged for Ling Huang to monitor Chu Lian’s whereabouts, ensuring that no one could take advantage of the situation and snatch the ripe fruit that rightfully belonged to him.

Hearing this, Ling Huang replied, “That fellow Chu Lian has been staying with the younger generations of the Spiritual Royal Family that I arranged. There hasn’t been anything unusual for a while.” R ANŌβEs

“Very good,” Gu Changge said with a faint smile as he walked to the window of the pavilion, his hands clasped behind his back.

From this vantage point, he could clearly see the entire Gufeng Ancient City laid out before him. Smoke and clouds lingered in the air, mist transpiring with the rising luck of certain areas, where cultivators, surrounded by images of dragons and tigers, leaped and thrived. In other parts of the city, purple auras floated and danced, while golden light surged upward, painting a vibrant tapestry of life and energy.

As a landmark ancient city of the Zhuo people, Gufeng Ancient City had existed for countless epochs, weathering the sands of time and the tempests of thunder.

Suddenly, Gu Changge noticed something that piqued his interest. Bone Ancestor and Ling Huang followed his gaze, but they saw nothing out of the ordinary.

“Chaos Inn? If I remember correctly, this is the property of the Zhuo Clan, right?” he mused aloud.

“Gu ask Zhuo You to come see me; I have something I want to know.”

Gu Changge spoke casually, his eyes sweeping across the magnificent inn that loomed like an ancient city. He quickly looked back, focusing on the tall, clear gray stone tablet standing at the inn’s entrance. The tablet was intricately engraved with the two ancient characters for “Chaos.”

These characters were clearly crafted by a powerful hand, exuding a strong and domineering essence. The clear brilliance and chaotic energy that lingered around it indicated that it was indeed something extraordinary.

However, what Gu Changge truly cared about was not the inn itself, but the individuals residing within it. He had sensed an abnormal aura during the Ten Thousand Clans Arena incident, but it had been fleeting, and at the time, his attention was focused solely on Mo Tong, leading him to overlook it.

Today, however, that same abnormal aura had resurfaced, clearer and stronger than before.

“By the way, go and inform the owner behind the Ten Thousand Clans Arena; let her come to see me as well,” Gu Changge instructed.

As Ling Huang was about to leave, he called her back, wanting to ensure Hong Gui was included in this meeting.

Soon, the somewhat apprehensive Hong Gui followed Ling Huang to the pavilion. Zhuo You, standing nearby, had already briefed Gu Changge about the Chaos Inn. While it was indeed owned by the Zhuo Clan, the origin and information about the guests staying there were well-guarded, adhering to the strict rules established by the Zhuo Clan.

But since it was Gu Changge who wanted to know, then this rule was, of course, irrelevant.

Hong Gui's pretty face reflected her apprehension, and she found it hard to remain still. Stealing a quiet glance at Mo Tong nearby, she struggled to reconcile the image of the beautiful girl—who seemed to be carved from ice and snow—with the dead soldier who had once exuded a bloody aura.

However, compared to that confusion, Hong Gui felt more worried and anxious, entirely unaware of why Gu Changge had suddenly summoned her. She had witnessed the battle between the ancestor of the Hun clan and the old man in the black robe at the Ten Thousand Clans Arena, a scene that left her startled and terrified, causing chills to run down her spine. It was astonishing to think that such a formidable being, one comparable to the ancestor of the Hun clan, could appear as a mere servant before Gu Changge.

“I wonder, Mr. Gu, why have you called me here?”

Hong Gui asked, summoning her courage. She reassured herself that she had not offended Gu Changge in any way.

On the contrary, during these days, people had been sent to resettle the group of gray-haired girls.

“You don't have to be nervous. I just want to ask you something. Just tell me what you know in detail,” Gu Changge said casually, glancing at her.

Hearing this, Hong Gui let out a sigh of relief; the stone that had been weighing on her heart finally fell to the ground.

“I don't care what the young master wants to ask; I will tell you everything I know,” she hurriedly replied.

“I want to ask you about a man named Wang He... You should have had a lot of contact with this person, right?” Gu Changge smiled lightly.

Hong Gui was startled, wondering why Gu Changge had suddenly asked about Wang He. Could it be that Gu Changge had discovered that Wang He wanted to take the gray-haired girl away that day?

She didn't dare to think too much or ask too many questions. At this juncture, even if she had some friendship with Wang He, she wouldn't risk hiding anything.

“To tell the truth, Mr. Gu, Wang He and I do know each other. I accepted some kindness from him back then, so...” Hong Gui took a deep breath and began explaining her friendship with Wang He and her understanding of him in detail.

“Oh, I see...” Gu Changge replied, his interest piqued. “Is he the owner of the Scavengers Sect?”

After listening, Gu Changge's expression turned intrigued as he repeated the name of the sect. He didn't press Hong Gui further, and soon after, she was sent out by Ling Huang.

“What is going on...?”

Hong Gui's expression remained a bit dazed as she pondered why Gu Changge had suddenly asked about Wang He. Could it be that Gu Changge was aware of Wang He's terrifying talent and his imminent breakthrough to the Dao Realm in just ten thousand years?

Perhaps he valued talents as he did with the gray-haired girl. Hong Gui was filled with speculation but found it difficult to voice her thoughts. Until Gu Changge revealed even a hint of his intentions, it would be challenging for her to find Wang He and inform him about this.

The heavenly elder of the Zhuo Clan, Zhuo Wu, was set to hold a ceremony to accept apprentices a few days later, announcing the event to the world. During this time, an uproar ensued as many ancient ethnic groups within the immortal civilization received news and invitations. In numerous great universes and realms, various forces sent their clansmen with congratulatory gifts.

Meanwhile, in the territory of the Zhuo Clan, news of Hun Yuan Jun, the ancestor of the Hun Clan, appearing and battling against the black-robed elder beside Gu Changge spread far and wide, igniting waves of rumors. Countless cultivators and beings discussed the incident, their shock palpable.

The Eternal Domain was a unique boundary within the immortal civilization, home to the ancient and mysterious Eternal Race. This clan preferred to call themselves the Eternal Protoss, devoutly believing in an eternal God who they claimed created the entire world, including time and space. According to their beliefs, the Eternal Protoss were the chosen people of this Eternal Beginning God, who was regarded as the original source of the immortal civilization and the very essence of all spirits in existence.

However, the number of Eternal Protoss was rare. Despite their powerful talents and strengths, breeding offspring proved to be a challenge. In the vast Eternal Domain, aside from the Eternal Protoss, other ethnic groups and sects were affiliated with this race, each boasting remarkable backgrounds. Collectively, they formed a force with deep foundations within the entire immortal civilization.

Sun Lake was a peculiar landscape nestled deep within the Eternal Domain, perpetually surrounded by the true fire of the sun. This vast lake, resembling the scorching sun in color, contained an abundance of fire essence. As a result, vegetation struggled to grow along its shores, leaving only gleaming golden sands and enormous stones standing upright, creating a surreal terrain.

Wisps of red-gold clouds drifted above the surface of the lake, and every ray of rosy light emanating from it held an extraordinarily high temperature capable of annihilating anything in its path. Even the most resilient immortal gold could be burned and transformed into a vaporous state under such intense heat.

Many of the massive stones found here were composed of purer and stronger materials than most forms of immortal gold. However, very few creatures dared to tread upon this land, let alone extract materials for use as refining tools.

At this moment, in the depths of Sun Lake, an ethereal figure sat quietly amidst the swirling waters, resembling a wisp of smoke and mist. Hundreds of millions of rosy clouds intertwined around her, continuously flocking to this figure, evoking the imagery of an ancient immortal who feasted on the clouds and drank the morning dew.

Her face remained obscured by a haze, with only a pair of moon-like eyes visible, radiating an otherworldly glow. She wore a long golden dress that flowed with shimmering light, moving gracefully against the backdrop of the clouds, embodying the essence of an ancient sun goddess. This noble and timeless figure occupied a realm where ordinary cultivators dared not venture, adding to the air of mystique surrounding her.

In front of her, the lake appeared almost ordinary.

Saint!

Son of God, please see me.

Suddenly, several female figures emerged on the shore of Sun Lake. Their faces were obscured by the divine brilliance of the sun, yet they could not conceal their formidable auras.

“Don’t want to,” the figure sitting in the depths of the Sun Lake replied calmly, her voice betraying no hint of emotion.

Although this place was not a forbidden realm of the Eternal Protoss, it was rare for any creatures to venture here on ordinary days. She had chosen this location for her cultivation because the unique aura resonated with her, providing the ideal environment for her practices.

Who would have thought she would be found here? Furthermore, aside from those present, even the elders of the Eternal Protoss were unaware of her whereabouts. How, then, did the Eternal Son of God come to learn of it?

“It seems that he has placed eyeliner around me.”

As the contemporary saint of the Eternal Protoss, she had been hidden from the world for a long time, only emerging in this era, which granted her an extraordinary status. Even the elders of the Eternal Protoss did not dare to be presumptuous in her presence. Yet here was a mere god, bold enough to place spies around her.

The woman in the golden dress smirked at the thought, but her expression soon returned to calm.

“Saint, the elder has an order. Elder Zhuowu of the Zhuo clan has sent an invitation for you to accompany the Son of God. This is also the patriarch’s wish.”

“It is reported that the patriarch and others have sensed the fluctuation of another eternal artifact...”

At the mention of the Eternal Artifact, a spark of interest ignited in the woman's moon-like eyes, revealing a glimpse of her inner turmoil.

Chapter 1039: The rumors of the five eternal artifacts, are you still afraid that I will fail?

The Eternal Artifact was a rumor among the Eternal Protoss. It was said that the five artifacts forged by the Eternal God, the creator of the Eternal Protoss, were among the most powerful weapons in existence. These five eternal artifacts were scattered across endless space and time, awaiting those destined to find them.

Legend had it that obtaining any one of the five artifacts would grant the incredible power of world creation and immortality. Furthermore, if all five eternal artifacts were gathered, one could summon a projection of the Eternal God, gaining access to the eternal secret treasure left behind and uncovering all the mysteries of heaven and earth. Additionally, countless powers awaited discovery by future generations.

Once the five eternal artifacts were collected, they could form a grand formation of yin and yang alongside the eternal gods. This was the most powerful formation, one that could inspire envy in even the Supreme civilization. It was said that even the ancestral realm, having survived six catastrophes, could never break it.

However, very few creatures had actually seen the eternal artifacts, and even the eternal gods had only encountered two of them: the Eternal Divine Furnace and the Eternal Sword. Many years ago, an internal rebellion within the Eternal Protoss led to the loss of the Eternal Divine Furnace, and it has not been seen since. The Eternal Protoss has since dispatched numerous individuals to search for and investigate the whereabouts of the Eternal Divine Furnace, but they have yet to receive any news.

The Eternal Divine Sword had always been enshrined in the ancestral hall of the Eternal Protoss, accessible only to the elders who were eligible to engage in worship.

The fluctuation of the other eternal artifact seems to indicate it should be the Eternal Furnace.

The saintess of the previous generation took it from the Eternal Protoss, and ever since, the Eternal Divine Furnace has disappeared without a trace. Even when she returned to the clan after her transgressions, the elders did their utmost to investigate, yet they uncovered not a whisper of news.

If it truly is the Eternal Divine Furnace reappearing in the world, then it seems necessary for me to go out.

The woman in the golden dress sat cross-legged in the depths of Sun Lake, softly speaking to herself.

Logically, with two of the five eternal artifacts— the Eternal Divine Furnace and the Eternal Sword — belonging to the Eternal Protoss, the situation was unusual. However, now that the Eternal Divine Furnace was lost, only the Eternal Divine Sword remained in their possession. This had caused the Eternal Protoss to take a closer look at this eternal artifact.

With the lessons learned from the past, unless they had the permission of numerous elders and clan leaders, they could only approach the ancestral hall. Using or taking away the Eternal Sword was nearly impossible.

The other three eternal artifacts were the Eternal God Map, the Eternal Seal, and the Eternal Orb. However, even the Eternal Protoss had never seen these three artifacts; they only knew of their existence through rumors.

I must find a way to obtain the Eternal Divine Furnace.

The eyes of the woman in the golden dress flickered with determination as she rose from Sun Lake, contemplating her next move. Brilliant golden rays flowed between her palms, reminiscent of an ancient sun goddess—dazzling, noble, and lofty.

A golden Dao stretched out beneath her feet, and golden clouds soared into the sky as she appeared directly on the shore.

Let's go!

She cast a brief glance at the maids in front of her, recognizing them as likely spies for the contemporary Son of the Eternal Protoss. However, she paid them no mind. With a swift step, her figure vanished from the area in the blink of an eye.

At this moment, outside the Sun Lake area, on a renowned mountain, a strikingly handsome young man stood with a dignified bearing, his hands relaxed at his sides. Billowing golden light surrounded his body, and even his hair appeared golden, as if cast from molten gold, giving him the appearance of a young emperor surveying the world.

The most captivating feature, however, was his eyes—within them was a distinct dark golden cross-shaped crack. From time to time, an aura of temporal and spatial distortion swept across, hinting at the power to split the universe and shatter the very fabric of time and space.

A faint glow radiated between his brows and along his cheekbones, and the soul fire burned as brightly as the sun, eclipsing both the sun and moon. This was a clear sign of his powerful cultivation and terrifying talent.

This individual was none other than the contemporary God Son of the Eternal Protoss, named Li Yang. His father was the current patriarch of the Eternal Protoss, and his mother, the saintess of the previous generation, endowed him with a status of unparalleled prestige and dignity.

How are things progressing?

Li Yang stood on the renowned mountain with his hands clasped behind his back, exuding a calm and confident demeanor, as if very few things in the world could disturb him. This composure was a trait he had cultivated since childhood; even if the sky were to fall before him, his expression would remain unchanged, as if everything were within his control. After all, as the young master of the Eternal Protoss, he was destined to inherit this ancient race.

Within the vast immortal civilization, even powerful clans like the Zhuo clan and the Hun clan dared not underestimate the Eternal Protoss.

Reporting to the Son of God, our people have sent back news and informed the saint.

I just don't know how the saintess will choose.

As soon as Li Yang finished speaking, several phantoms emerged behind him, seemingly concealed within the void, their true forms hidden from view.

Father has personally ordered that we accompany the elders to the Zhuo clan and observe the current situation of the various forces along the way.

In the depths of the ancestral hall, several ancient ancestors have awakened one after another during this time, likely all related to this matter. Moreover, it may also involve the Eternal Divine Furnace that was lost back then. ㄝ

Li Yang nodded, a thoughtful expression crossing his face.

However, when he mentioned the Eternal Divine Furnace, discomfort flickered across his face, and a shadow of obscurity passed through his eyes. The loss of the Eternal Divine Furnace was officially attributed to the internal rebellion of the Eternal Protoss, but Li Yang knew the truth: it was caused by his mother. She had taken the Eternal Divine Furnace away back then. To protect their reputation, the Eternal Protoss altered their narrative to the outside world.

Thus, if he wanted to erase this humiliation, he had to find the Eternal Divine Furnace.

With my mother's past lessons in mind, I must find a way to marry Mr. Xiang as soon as possible. Although my father ignored the past and married her after my mother returned to the clan, I know he is entirely constrained by rules and status.

There is no real relationship between my father and mother at all. The culprits responsible for my mother's death from depression are that father and daughter. My father's disregard for my mother is entirely due to them.

As Li Yang contemplated this, his eyes filled with gloom, a strong desire to wash away the stain and humiliation that had marred his life.

To maintain the purity of their offspring's bloodline, the Eternal Protoss specifically selected men and women of the same generation with the most exceptional talents, designating them as the young master and saintess. When the time was right, they would bathe in the divine water of the ancestral hall and undergo double cultivation as a married couple.

Li Yang was the contemporary young master of the Eternal Protoss, while Luo Xiang was the contemporary eternal saintess. Although she had been sealed away for ages and had only recently emerged, as the eternal saintess, she was naturally destined to be his future wife.

Li Yang couldn't understand why Luo Xiang remained indifferent to him; they had only met a few times over the years. However, from a certain perspective, she was indeed his future wife, destined to bear his offspring. Even if her current attitude was indifferent, their fate had already been sealed, and it was impossible to change it.

Yet, having witnessed his mother's experience firsthand, Li Yang had natural worries about such matters. He had been contemplating various ways to win Lord Luo Xiang's favor but had struggled to find a path. Despite his numerous visits, he couldn't even gain entry to the palace gates.

In terms of strength alone, Lord Luo Xiang was undoubtedly above Li Yang, though he was unsure just how far she had progressed. Among the Eternal Protoss, Li Yang was believed to have a bright future. Every clansman treated him with respect, confident that he would lead the Eternal Protoss into a more glorious era.

Aside from the shame of his mother's past as a fallen member of the Eternal Protoss and the fact that he had never gained favor with Lord Luo Xiang, it could be said that there was not a single stain on Li Yang's reputation.

As Li Yang pondered whether Lord Luo Xiang would comply with the elders' orders and accompany him to the Zhuo clan, a sudden golden haze emerged in the distance. The Dao of golden light extended, accompanied by a golden lotus that signified nobility and holiness.

“Miss Xiang...”

Upon seeing the blurred figure approaching, joy spread across Li Yang's face.

“Let's go.”

Luo Xiang merely cast an indifferent glance at him before her figure vanished from sight. Surprised that Miss Luo Xiang agreed to the elders' order this time, Li Yang felt a surge of happiness and hurriedly followed behind her, hands clasped.

The acceptance ceremony for Elder Zhuowu of the Zhuo clan was held in a vast oasis located within the territory of the Zhuo clan. This oasis was surrounded by endless rivers, their rolling waves and surging currents adding to the area's beauty. It was Zhuo Wu's favorite spot for meditation, adorned with hundreds of renowned mountains that were towering and ancient, beautiful and magnificent. Verdant vines, sacred trees, bronze halls, jade platforms, and golden pavilions filled the landscape, creating an enchanting atmosphere.

Rich energy substances permeated the air, transforming into colorful mist that lingered throughout the oasis. Streams of light and flying boats arrived from all corners of the nation, received by numerous clansmen under Elder Zhuowu's lineage. The visitors were then arranged to rest in various locations, waiting for the ceremony to commence.

Various ethnic group forces had traveled vast distances—hundreds of millions of miles and across multiple universes—to attend, fully aware of the importance of respecting Elder Zhuowu.

What a wonderful place! It is said that this oasis was formed from a complete ancient planet forcibly captured from the outer domain. No wonder there is such vibrant life here.

Many creatures and cultivators visiting for the first time were left in awe by the breathtaking scenery.

But then again, Elder Zhuowu was a renowned figure in the immortal civilization, and even though this was merely his secluded place for cultivation, it was far from ordinary.

Wang He, the master of the Scavengers Sect, had arrived ahead of time alongside Hong Gui. He observed everything with a calm demeanor, carefully calculating and formulating his plans for what lay ahead. By his side were only a few trusted elders of the Scavengers Sect.

Yet, Wang He couldn't shake a nagging feeling—he had noticed something strange in the way Hong Gui looked at him, as though she were hiding something. Still, since he was relying on Hong Gui for now, he chose not to press the matter and pretended to be oblivious.

“The people of the Eternal Protoss are here...”

Suddenly, someone in the distance exclaimed, causing many cultivators and creatures to stir, directing their gaze toward the outskirts of the island. Numerous members of the Zhuo clan had appeared to welcome the newcomers, including several elder-level figures, adding to the growing anticipation.

The Eternal Protoss held an elevated and enigmatic status, so much so that even powerful entities like the Hun and Zhuo clans took them seriously. When Wang He heard the commotion, he too glanced over, though standing on the periphery, he could only make out faint outlines.

Golden light swirled around the group, illuminating the tallest and most striking figure among them—the eternal saintess. Her face was obscured, shrouded in a veil of golden mist, revealing only a pair of dreamlike eyes.

Beside her walked a handsome man who resembled a deity. He followed the elders of the Eternal Protoss, exuding a serene confidence. His bright eyes and calm smile radiated an air of control, as if he held dominion over all things.

Many cultivators gazed in awe, but they could only shake their heads in disappointment, for even they were unable to clearly discern the true face of the Eternal Saintess.

Many had heard rumors that the eternal saintess was the most beautiful woman in the world, but it was unfortunate that almost no one had ever seen her true face. The fact that such an exquisite woman would eventually be betrothed to the Eternal Son of God stirred feelings of indignation and envy among many young cultivators who had come with their elders.

The Eternal Protoss!

Wang He muttered as he observed the scene from afar, his thoughts racing. While others might not be aware, he knew well the depth of hatred between the future Empress Pingtian and the Eternal Protoss. Furthermore, this Eternal Son of God was, by blood, the half-brother of the future Empress Pingtian.

Empress Pingtian's childhood had been one of misery and desolation, much of which was due to her younger brother. The early arrival of the Eternal Protoss caused a great stir, but Elder Zhuowu had yet to make an appearance, as he was occupied with receiving the Hun clan.

The mysterious identity of the apprentice that Empress Pingtian wished to accept had sparked widespread speculation among the guests, who eagerly discussed the matter. Meanwhile, in the ancient city of Gufeng, within the pavilions, Zhuo Fengxie of the Zhuo Clan and Hun Yuan Jun, the ancestor of the Hun Clan, had come as promised to see Gu Changge and apologize for the events of the previous day.

They had come alone, without any of their clansmen, and their demeanors were serious and respectful.

“You two don't have to be so formal, especially given your status. Are you afraid of me?”

“Ling Huang, bring seats for our guests and make some tea. Otherwise, if they keep standing like this, it’ll seem as though I lack hospitality.”

Gu Changge smiled faintly at the two figures before him.

Chapter 1040: Even the supreme civilization can only face the enemy, I will give you two choices

In the pavilion, while Gu Changge sipped his tea contentedly, Hun Yuan Jun and Zhuo Fengxie appeared noticeably uneasy. Hun Yuan Jun, in particular, who had previously clashed with the Bone Ancestor and suffered a hidden defeat, found it difficult to stand still. He was uncertain about Gu Changge’s true strength, but the closer he stood to him, the more he sensed a vast and unfathomable presence.

Though Gu Changge stood right in front of them, it felt as if endless time, space, and years separated them, as though he existed outside the realms of heaven, earth, or any known dimension.

“You were right... the mysterious Mr. Gu before us is far beyond imagination,” Hun Yuan Jun reflected silently.

Zhuo Fengxie, having met Gu Changge before, was not unfamiliar with this overwhelming aura. The two had come alone to offer their apologies for the incident the previous day, without informing any of their clansmen. Given their status, the situation felt somewhat embarrassing and unreasonable to them.

Gu Changge, however, remained indifferent, showing no particular concern about the matter.

After Ling Huang received the order, she approached, poured tea for the two guests, and brought over two chairs. However, neither Zhuo Fengxie nor Hun Yuan Jun took a seat; they remained standing.

“What happened yesterday was due to my abruptness, and I hope Mr. Gu will not take offense,” Zhuo Fengxie said, his tone more conciliatory than Hun Yuan Jun’s. Being less assertive, he took the initiative to address the situation.

Seeing Zhuo Fengxie speak up, Hun Yuan Jun followed suit, cupping his hands and adding, “I appreciate Mr. Gu’s mercy regarding the events of yesterday, and I chose not to pursue the matter further.”

As they spoke, both of them produced two boxes crafted from purple immortal copper, placing them on the table beside them as a gesture of apology. Purple immortal copper was a unique metal prized for its ability to be forged into weapons for Daoist cultivators and treasures of civilization. The choice of material for the boxes suggested that the items contained within were likely to be of considerable significance.

Moreover, when they presented the boxes, both Zhuo Fengxie and Hun Yuan Jun displayed clear signs of discomfort on their faces. Gu Changge merely glanced at the two boxes, showing little interest.

“I’m not the type to hold grudges. What happened yesterday was not a big deal. You two shouldn’t worry too much,” he said, maintaining a light smile and an air of calm.

Upon hearing this, both Zhuo Fengxie and Hun Yuan Jun let out a sigh of relief. Their greatest concern had been that Gu Changge would continue to pursue the matter, and they knew they couldn’t take such a situation for granted. If it escalated, it would only lead to their own embarrassment.

However, their visit to Gu Changge was not solely about offering apologies for yesterday’s events. The two had primarily come to gauge Gu Changge’s intentions and feelings regarding the situation.

Now it seemed that Gu Changge held no ill will toward them, and Zhuo Fengxie realized they had been overly concerned.

“Actually, apart from apologizing for yesterday’s incident, there’s another matter we wanted to discuss with Mr. Gu,” Zhuo Fengxie said, finally addressing the doubts that had been troubling him. Since Gu Changge didn’t appear hostile, Zhuo Fengxie felt more confident in raising his concerns.

With Hun Yuan Jun also present, he believed they could escape if anything unexpected happened. After all, they were close to the Zhuo clan’s ancestral land, where reinforcements could arrive swiftly if needed.

“You want to ask about the purpose of my visit to the immortal civilization, don’t you?”

Gu Changge responded, unsurprised by Zhuo Fengxie’s inquiry. He smiled faintly and then stood up, his movements calm and deliberate.

Seeing Gu Changge’s reaction, Zhuo Fengxie and Hun Yuan Jun grew more cautious, stepping back in unison, their expressions tightening.

“That’s precisely our concern,” Zhuo Fengxie continued in a low voice.

“Young Master Gu’s strength is beyond comprehension, yet you suddenly appeared in our immortal civilization. Without knowing your purpose or intentions, it’s only natural that the various ethnic groups would feel unsettled.”

His words painted a clear analogy: the arrival of a stronger beast in a forest full of creatures with their own territories. Until the intentions of this beast were understood, none of the others could rest easy. This was exactly the concern that had kept both Zhuo Fengxie and Hun Yuan Jun on edge.

As two of the most powerful figures within the immortal civilization, they were already among the few who knew that Gu Changge had not been invited by the Zhuo clan as a guest. They realized that if other cultivators and beings at lower levels learned this truth, their worries would only escalate further.

Hearing this, Gu Changge let out a soft chuckle, a faint amusement glimmering in his eyes.

Gu Changge's smile deepened, and his eyes gleamed with amusement as he observed the reactions of Zhuo Fengxie and Hun Yuan Jun. "Kidding?" he asked lightly, his tone carrying a subtle edge.

"Perhaps. But tell me, is it really that unbelievable?"

Zhuo Fengxie and Hun Yuan Jun exchanged uneasy glances, still reeling from the weight of Gu Changge's words. The mere suggestion of conquering the immortal civilization was audacious, almost absurd. But standing before Gu Changge, they couldn't dismiss it as an idle boast.

"Young Master Gu," Hun Yuan Jun spoke cautiously, his voice steady despite the growing tension.

"With all due respect, conquering the immortal civilization is no small feat. Even with your strength, such an endeavor would spark unimaginable chaos. Every major power would rise in opposition."

Zhuo Fengxie nodded in agreement, his expression more solemn than before.

"The forces that protect this civilization aren't easily swayed. Even the Eternal Protoss, Zhuo clan, and Hun clan, while powerful, are only pieces in a larger game. To challenge that balance is."

“Ambitious,” Gu Changge finished for him, still smiling. He stood up and walked toward the edge of the pavilion, gazing into the distance as if the entire star field was within his grasp.

But I never said it would happen all at once.

The two elders remained silent, sensing the gravity in Gu Changge’s words. The idea of conquest, once laughable, now felt disturbingly plausible. In their minds, they wondered just how deep Gu Changge’s plans ran—and whether they were already caught in them.

To understand the entirety of civilization is to recognize that it extends beyond mere familial ties. It represents the evolution and accumulation of diverse forces and ethnic backgrounds, spanning countless eras and years. Although the Zhuo and Hun clans were the dominant powers of the immortal civilization, they could not claim to possess the strength and background necessary to sweep away all opposition and achieve invincibility.

Many mysterious ethnic groups and forces lay deeply hidden, their true strength known only at the most critical moments. Additionally, one civilization had endured numerous catastrophes, spreading across multiple space-time universes, with the worlds involved being far too numerous to count.

Regardless of how powerful Gu Changge was, he remained just one person. It was unrealistic to think he could subdue an entire civilization by sheer force alone. Conquering and destroying are fundamentally different. From their perspective, if Gu Changge were truly ruthless, annihilating a civilization would not pose a challenge. However, his intent was subjugation, not destruction, and many complications were involved.

“Do you think I’m joking with you?”

Gu Changge remarked, glancing at the two of them with a light smile.

Zhuo Fengxie and Hun Yuan Jun exchanged glances, finding it difficult to respond to the question, yet their expressions grew more serious. They were both ancient figures, having lived for countless years, and possessed a deep understanding of many matters. Gu Changge's directness in addressing them indicated he must have considerable confidence; it was impossible for him to speak without a solid basis. Most importantly, they were unaware of Gu Changge's origins and what kind of power and means lay behind him.

"During this period, I have also taken a close look at the immortal civilization. Although I haven't traveled extensively to trace its history, I still have a good understanding of it," he continued.

"The structure of immortal civilization may seem complicated, but it is actually quite simple. Over the years, the Hun and Zhuo clans have appeared to engage in fierce battles, each vying to replace the other. Yet, at critical moments, they manage to reach a consensus and stand united."

"In contrast, the Wu and Gou clans tend to be more low-key, with few conflicts in their day-to-day interactions. However, they carry a significant problem inherited from their ancestors—a problem that will inevitably resurface. These two clans can only survive for so long..."

As Gu Changge spoke, he walked slowly to the window, gazing out at the entire Gufeng ancient city, a casual smile on his face.

He understood why Zhuo Fengxie and Hun Yuan Jun regarded this as a fantasy. The immortal civilization was fundamentally different from the Spiritual Realm. The Spiritual Realm was governed by the spiritual royal family, which had only just begun to step into the threshold of the ancient Realm, resulting in a relatively simple composition of forces. All other ethnic groups and sects followed the authority of the spiritual royal family. Thus, as long as Gu Changge commanded the royal family to comply with his orders, he could easily control the Spiritual Realm.

In contrast, the power structure of the immortal civilization was more intricate, with a background that had accumulated over a vast expanse of time. The Zhuo clan and the Hun clan, along with the other two families—the Gou clan and the Wu clan—had been in opposition for many epochs. Additionally, there were numerous powerful sects operating both openly and covertly, and the overall strength of a single family might not match that of the Zhuo and Hun clans.

However, the advantage of these factions lay in their multitude and complexity. Hun Yuan Jun felt a jolt of shock in his heart; these insights were typically known only to their ancestors. Gu Changge had been in the immortal civilization for such a short time, yet he understood these matters as if he were intimately familiar with them.

“He must have a profound insight into the phenomena of all beings in the immortal civilization, allowing him to discern the crux of the various races.” He was secretly shaken by this realization.

The phenomena of living beings were complex, yet they represented the changes in the heavens and the earth, the universe, time, and space throughout different periods, allowing for a general trend of events to be deduced. Zhuo Fengxie’s mind raced as countless thoughts flashed through him, prompting him to speak in a deep voice, “Since Mr. Gu has said this, it must have been planned.” Both he and Hun Yuan Jun were astute individuals, recognizing that Gu Changge’s bluntness was clearly a signal.

It was evident that Gu Changge was preparing to attack the immortal civilization. During this time, he had indeed been observing, not merely passing through, but closely examining the entire immortal civilization and waiting for the right moment.

“Hehe, you two must be quite intelligent as well. After living for so long, you can grasp many things without needing to say much,” Gu Changge remarked with a light smile.

“I intend to subdue the immortal civilization. Anyone who stands in my way will be erased from this world at any cost.”

Despite his calm demeanor, these words caused Zhuo Fengxie and Hun Yuan Jun to break into a sweat. A chill ran down their spines, and their hearts were filled with tumultuous waves. It was clear he wanted them to express their views.

“Of course, I don’t intend to use unnecessary means unless absolutely necessary. The Zhuo and Hun clans are intertwined and have a strong foundation; it would be a pity to simply destroy them...” Gu Changge said with a faint smile.

“I know that you have many connections with Xi Yuan Civilization, but Xi Yuan Civilization is hundreds of millions of light-years away, existing in infinite time and space. No matter what happens to the immortal civilization, it is beyond reach.”

This point had been made previously, and Gu Changge showed no intention of concealing it. From Hun Yuan Jun and Zhuo Fengxie’s perspective, it was clear he was trying to see through them. At the moment Gu Changge’s words fell, both Hun Yuan Jun and Zhuo Fengxie sensed a significant shift in their surroundings.

It felt as if they had traveled an infinite distance, suddenly finding themselves in a boundless void that was almost unbelievable. In this place, there seemed to be no laws and no concept of time; naturally, there was no Daoism or divine powers either. A bleak and thin gray mist emerged from nowhere, enveloping every inch of space and every corner.

In this place, they could not perceive any aura of the Great Dao, nor could they sense any fluctuations of power.

“True lawlessness?” Zhuo Fengxie’s complexion changed drastically in an instant, a hint of horror in his eyes. He turned his head to look, only to see the endless gray fog sweeping toward them, enveloping everything.

Boom!!!

Hun Yuan Jun's expression turned grim; his cheekbones glowed, and his mental power surged like a vast universe, ready to burst forth from his body and tear apart the space around him. However, a more terrifying force suppressed him, forcing all his spiritual power back. At the same time, his body began to crack, horrific fissures appearing as if he might collapse at any moment.

“This place doesn't truly exist; it's a mental space created by him. Your mental power is useless here,” Zhuo Fengxie warned, noticing Hun Yuan Jun's reluctance to stop his attempts.

The more you resist, the greater the blowback.

The mental space that had easily trapped both of them was unimaginably strong. It was countless times more difficult than opening a vast world with a mere hand.

For existences in the Dao realm, size was ultimately irrelevant; the gathering and dispersing of matter were impermanent, and a single thought could alter the state of existence, transcending the limitations of world creation. At this level, it was easy to create living beings and transform matter. The fog of fate had long been pushed aside; it was already known and controlled by Gu Changge.

At this moment, Hun Yuan Jun realized the vast chasm that separated them from Gu Changge, leading him to abandon his resistance.

“What does Mr. Gu mean?”

Zhuo Fengxie sighed softly in his heart, recognizing that they had still underestimated Gu Changge's capabilities.

With a single thought, he had taken them away from the real world and brought them to this indescribable land where there was neither heavenly Dao nor any restraint. This was likely something only a peak existence in the Ancestral Dao Realm could accomplish. In other words, Gu Changge's strength might not be far from the pinnacle of the Ancestral Dao Realm, and it was highly likely that he actually stood within that realm.

The realization that such a terrifying individual had come to the immortal civilization filled him with bitterness. In a vast and boundless world, once an existence of this caliber approached a territory, even the supreme civilizations would have to confront the threat or face annihilation.

“At your level, truly killing you would be troublesome, but not difficult,” Gu Changge remarked.

However, I have always cherished talent, so I want to offer you both two choices.

Gu Changge's figure manifested not far away, remaining unhurried and calm.