

Emperor 4971

Chapter 4971: Missing People

Back at the academy, Princess Ming Shi and the others anxiously awaited Li Qiye's return.

Fortunately, they didn't need to wait long before he was back.

"You scared us, we were about to go look for you." Ming Shi heaved a sigh of relief while patting her chest.

"What's there to worry about, who can kill me?" Li Qiye smiled.

The group thought about it and agreed with him. He had just killed five dragon lords without facing any resistance.

Even if he found himself in trouble, they wouldn't have been able to help in the slightest. A worthy foe would be far beyond their reach.

"Where's the rooster?" Li Qiye looked around and smiled, looking for Goldcrest Young Noble.

"He ran away." Ming Shi chuckled and said: "Judging by his shady appearance, he probably is up to no good and doesn't want us to know."

"I believe his sect is calling him back." Jian Yunyun said.

Goldcrest initially stuck around for Li Qiye. However, something came up and he left in a hurry. The group didn't wish to pry.

"Young Friend..." The schoolmaster was also present. He walked forward and bowed with a wry smile: "Ahem, Young Noble, may I ask you a question?"

He has been waiting as well in order to ask about Li Qiye's experience.

"There's something you wish to know?" Li Qiye smiled.

"Young Noble, what was your experience up there? Ah, of course, it's okay if you don't wish to speak." He was truly curious about the supreme existence of the academy.

Only a selected few had seen this being and he was not qualified despite being the schoolmaster.

"Not much, just went to take a look." Li Qiye said.

"Spill it already, what did you get up there, where's the treasure, take it out so that we can take a look too." Ming Shi insisted.

"What treasure? I could have gotten anything I wanted, no need to go up there for that." Li Qiye shook his head.

She paused for a moment and realized that this was indeed the truth. What treasure was more valuable than the dao controller? The divine mountain had enough treasures to satisfy him if that was his goal in the first place.

“The schoolmaster brought up the supreme existence.” Jian Yunyun said.

“Right, right, did you see anyone?” The schoolmaster became anxious.

“Yes, we chatted for a bit.” Li Qiye smiled.

“...” The schoolmaster was left speechless. They actually chatted? This supreme existence made Celestial Court back off even after losing their emperors. Not to mention juniors, even ancient ancestors of the academy would need to perform a full kowtow if they were ever lucky enough to be granted an audience. Now, Li Qiye made it seem that he was talking to a friend or a random passerby.

“Who did you meet? Did they have three heads and six arms? Must be as tall as the sky, right?” Ming Shi’s bright eyes brimmed with curiosity.

“No, very gorgeous.” Li Qiye responded.

“So it’s a beauty.” Jian Yunyun said.

“More beautiful than anyone in the world.” Li Qiye added.

She was surprised to hear such high praises from Li Qiye. He was very stingy with his evaluations before.

"I see..." Jian Yunyun couldn't possibly imagine a beauty of this level. She was gorgeous herself but couldn't be described as such.

"I want to see her in person." Ming Shi said with awe.

The schoolmaster was emotional as well. This revealed to them that the supreme existence was a woman.

"Anything else?" The schoolmaster asked.

"No." Li Qiye said, clearly not wanting to dwell on this matter.

The schoolmaster became disappointed but didn't push the issue.

"Young Noble, will you stay at the academy?" Jian Yunyun asked.

"I have to return to Untethered, you should just come with me. It's a great place." Ming Shi suggested, wanting to be around Li Qiye.

"No." Li Qiye shook his head and then asked Jian Yunyun: "Did you meet whoever you were looking for?"

"Yes, it was the schoolmaster. He saw the key and answered my questions." Yunyun said.

"I know very little about it." The schoolmaster said: "Divine Empress Dowager did come to the academy to see Sword Lord Zhuo Yijian, I was there to greet her."

Li Qiye had heard about this sword lord before.

"However, she came too late. He left a while ago and didn't return." The schoolmaster continued.

"Went missing." Li Qiye commented.

"Yes." The schoolmaster nodded: "If he is alive and wishes to hide, he would still report this to the academy. After all, he is serving as the school guardian and has responsibilities to uphold. As far as I know, he's not the only one missing. Divine Empress Dowager and Phenomena Conqueror are gone too."

"Anyone else?" Li Qiye asked.

"Void Saint Child." The schoolmaster revealed everything.

"He's a brilliant genius, another to become a conqueror at a young age." Ming Shi became startled.

"Yes, he is from the same generation as me, my senior brother. He left though to join Immortal Platform later on." The schoolmaster said.

"I heard that he had six fruits and left for the upper continents." Ming Shi said.

"Senior Brother did have six fruits. I told him to ascend but I don't know if he did. We lost contact." The schoolmaster said: "I asked Immortal Platform later for information but they lost contact with him too."

He then stared at Jian Yunyun: "It wasn't until you came that I'm certain that these missing cases are related somehow. We have a great relationship so if he were to ascend, he would have told me first."

"These are some amazing cultivators, what the heck happened? Who could actually capture them?" Ming Shi murmured.

The group exchanged glances after hearing this.

Chapter 4972: Who Did It?

"No one in the lower continents can do so without anyone knowing, especially not all of them together." The schoolmaster said: "Well, maybe there is one person capable of this."

"Conceal Conqueror!" Jian Yunyun blurted out but thought that this was improper.

"I see..." Ming Shi said but Yunyun pulled her sleeve, telling her to stop speaking.

This was indeed the right answer but the schoolmaster didn't wish to be so direct. Moreover, the timeline didn't quite line up.

Nonetheless, she was the only person capable of making a five or six fruits dragon lords disappear without unnecessary commotion. Even the great Stone Ox couldn't do so.

After all, people didn't forget about how she ambushed and killed Heavenpeak Conqueror despite having one less fruit.

The problem was that they had disappeared far before her current achievements. She didn't have the power to do so back then.

"Why were they chosen as targets? What are the connections between them?" Yunyun asked.

"Hmm..." The schoolmaster pondered: "There isn't any, at least not from first glance."

Divine Empress Dowager belonged to The Alliance from Primal. Void Saint Child came from Immortal Platform and Sword Lord was from the academy. As for Phenomena Conqueror, he was from Lunar.

"There is one similarity." Li Qiye spoke: "Their power."

"Their power!" The schoolmaster repeated and became emotional.

"Wait, back then..." He suddenly recalled something and fell into rumination.

"In other words, they're only picking those with four dao fruits or five sacred fruits and up." Li Qiye said.

“What’s the reason?” Ming Shi asked.

“Because they have to leave.” Yunyun answered.

“Yes, cultivators at that level should ascend to the two upper continents.” The schoolmaster agreed.

Conceal and Eight-stallion were historically rare cases of powerful cultivators choosing not to leave. The missing cultivators were gone at the right opportunity to ascend.

“Is it because the timing makes it harder to notice their disappearance?” Ming Shi asked.

“That is definitely one reason. People will think that they have left for the two continents.” The schoolmaster said.

For example, this certainly applied to Phenomena Conqueror. Most assumed that he was in the upper continents now, the exception being Bloodsea Blade.

“Hmm, are there any other explanations?” Yunyun wondered.

“The fruits are ripe so it is time to pluck.” Li Qiye smiled.

“!!” The schoolmaster’s expression darkened after hearing this: “That’s a bold speculation.”

“What fruits?” Ming Shi was innocent and didn’t understand the implication.

“Someone is trying to rob their... A supreme existence in on the hunt?” Yunyun didn’t finish the sentence while thinking back about her sect’s broken bone. This made her feel an ominous chill.

“You think too highly of whatever is going on here.” Li Qiye shook his head: “A supreme overlord does not need to hunt conquerors and dragon lords. They can just open their mouth and devour all three continents.”

“Impossible!” Ming Shi said: “These are continents we’re talking about, not a piece of meat.”

On the other hand, the schoolmaster was aware of these dark matters and felt fear.

“You’re right, someone is hunting them.” He eventually said, taking his time thinking about the possibilities.

“We can deduce it down a bit. This won’t be a supreme overlord since they do not care about weak conquerors and dragon lords. Whoever this is, they have the power to capture a six-fruit dragon lord or a four-fruit conqueror, perhaps in total secrecy.”

“So it should be a five-fruit conqueror or a seven or eight-fruit dragon lord.” Yunyun said. The only person matching this description and the timeline was Stone Ox.

“It can’t be our ancestor, he never left Untethered before.” Ming Shi vehemently denied.

Stone Ox was unique in that his original form was a rock demon. He had taken roots with the earth and couldn't leave Untethered.

Therefore, the possibility of him hunting them was rather low. First, he would need to bait them into Untethered. Getting one could be plausible but all four?

He couldn't lure so many big shots there and capture them without being noticed by others.

"Hmm, let's think about the timeline again. Phenomena Conqueror and the others have been missing for around ten thousand years now. Did anyone else disappear more recently?" Yunyun suggested.

"Hard to say." The schoolmaster responded.

Chapter 4973: There's A Clue

"What does it mean if the disappearances have stopped recently?" Yunyun asked.

"Perhaps it is because this hunter was afraid of Conceal Conqueror and Eight-stallion Dao Lord." Ming Shi said.

"That's plausible." The schoolmaster said.

If no other top masters disappeared during the reign of Eight-stallion and Conceal Conqueror, then this suspicion was possible.

These two were unstoppable. Conceal was merciless and precise, even surpassing Eight-stallion. Nonetheless, Eight-stallion had the immortal shield on his side.

Thus, if such a hunter was looming in the shadow, they wouldn't dare to provoke these two powerful existences. A failed ambush would leave them exposed; the hunter would become the hunted then.

"Maybe this person left for the upper continents already." Ming Shi speculated: "They might be bored of the lower continents and want stronger prey."

"Who knows?" Li Qiye smiled while shaking his head.

"You disagree?" She stared challengingly at him.

"Are they confident in hunting conquerors with twelve dao fruits? It would be suicidal otherwise." Li Qiye said.

"Right." She agreed right away: "It would have to be legendary supreme existences or conquerors and dao lords with anima."

There existed a phrase describing the apex - twelve fruits to craft the perfect vessel for anima on the route to immortality.

In essence, after proving themselves worthy of twelve dao fruits, they would be able to form a perfect vessel for the creation of an anima tree. Once this tree became large enough, they could start thinking about immortality.

This applied similarly to dragon lords as well. Their twelve sacred fruits also served as a base of a sacred tree.

The upper continents absolutely had characters of this level. Thus, the risk of hunting in a place filled with these monsters was immense.

"It's almost certain that there is a clear line drawn in terms of cultivation, not anything above six dao fruits. The lower continents are perfect for this." Li Qiye smiled.

"So that's why the targets were chosen right away. Have to pick the fruits when they're ripe." Yunyun said.

"That's scary, does that mean the lower continents won't be able to produce powerful conquerors and dragon lords? People will live in fear once they find out." Ming Shi shuddered.

"This is an interesting scenario but it seems unlikely that it has been going on for too long. If one or many of these hunters were around in the ancient past, they would have been exposed by brilliant characters such as Demon or Luminous Conqueror." The schoolmaster said.

"I agree." Yunyun said but didn't have any good input on the actual timeline.

"There are dragon lords with five sacred fruits now in every lineage. I don't think any of them is known to be missing, only the divine empress dowager's group from long ago." Ming Shi became curious.

"There is one possibility." Li Qiye said.

“What is it?” Yunyun asked.

“There could have been an incident or a failure, forcing them to stop. Next came Conceal and Eight-stallion and the suspect needed to lay low.” Li Qiye said.

“Mmm...” Ming Shi said. This sounded reasonable, at least given their current knowledge.

“So the trail goes cold.” Yunyun said. She needed the divine empress dowager’s help to obtain something for The Alliance.

“Is there no other way?” She asked, not wanting to give up.

“Perhaps.” The schoolmaster said.

“Please let us know, Schoolmaster.” Yunyun hurriedly said.

“This issue shakes me to the core.” the schoolmaster said: “I do want to find the answer as well and have been thinking about it. There might be someone who can give us more clues regarding this matter. After all, his identity is special.”

“Who is it?” Ming Shi asked.

“Shadowrider.” The schoolmaster said with a serious expression.

“The legendary assassin?” Ming Shi was surprised.

“Yes, the second-place member of the Ten Monsters.” The schoolmaster confirmed.

Though Wild Dragon was number one, people believed that he didn’t want to provoke Shadowrider either.

Three cultivators were feared the most in the lower continents. First was obviously Wild Dragon - a heinous butcher with a penchant for chaos.

Second was Bloodblade Sea who never gave up before killing a target. He would travel to the end of the world for this sake. Moreover, since he had no affiliations with anyone, there was no shackle tying him down.

However, he didn’t kill the innocent and always had a reason for drawing his blade. As for Wild Dragon, he didn’t mess with lineages he deemed troublesome. For example, Deity, Immortal Platform, Untethered...

This wasn’t the case for the third member of this list - Shadowrider, an assassin that could be bought with money.

There were no rules or criteria slowing this assassin down. The target could be a famous master or an unknown junior. The only thing certain was that they would be struck down during their most vulnerable moment.

The fact that this was a dragon lord with five sacred fruits only made it worse for the inhabitants of the lower continents.

Chapter 4974: Becoming Bait

“Could he be the one?” Ming Shi asked since Shadowrider was a prime suspect.

“I don’t think so since I remembered something important.” The schoolmaster shook his head.

“What is it?” Ming Shi was heavily invested in this topic.

“Long, long ago, someone named a high price at the black market for a helper. The price was high enough to make it memorable.” The schoolmaster said.

“A helper, for what?” Ming Shi said.

“There’s a reason why it was asked at the black market, very secretive. The participating members were interested in it but it didn’t last for too long.” The schoolmaster said.

“Why?” She didn’t know about this black market at all.

“Because someone had accepted the job.” Yunyun explained.

“Yes, due to the insane requirement and reward, few could have actually accepted and completed it. There were a few candidates with Shadowrider being one of them.” The schoolmaster said.

Because of his position, he had relationships with cultivators from all over the world.

“Maybe this was just a coincidence, but it is one clue to all the missing cultivators. Plus, Shadowrider is an expert in this matter as well.” The schoolmaster said.

“Let’s go find this Shadowrider then.” Li Qiye smiled.

“How?” Yunyun asked.

“This assassin is impossible to find, no one knows what this person looks like either.” Ming Shi nodded.

Rumor has it that this assassin came from an ancient organization. Others thought that the person was fortunate enough to obtain an immemorial legacy, becoming a master without needing guidance.

“There are two ways to find Shadowrider.” The schoolmaster said.

“Go on.” Yunyun asked right away. This might be the only clue to finding her ancestor.

“Let’s pretend that there is only one person in the lower continents who knows Shadowrider’s whereabouts, this person would be Wild Dragon.” He said.

“Wild Dragon? They associate with each other?” Ming Shi asked.

"It's just a guess stemming from a popular belief." The schoolmaster shook his head.

"A popular belief?" Yunyun didn't understand.

"Yes, that Wild Dragon doesn't dare to provoke Shadowrider, a way to envision how frightening this assassin is." The schoolmaster said.

"This implies that Wild Dragon knows where to find Shadowrider." Li Qiye smiled.

"Exactly." The schoolmaster nodded.

"Wild Dragon..." Yunyun couldn't help staring at Li Qiye.

Alas, the villain had escaped back to the serpent throne after being pierced by A'zhui's flames. They would need to enter the Ten Mountains of Demon in order to find him. Plus, would a six-fruit dragon lord speak to them?

"I don't think Wild Dragon will reveal anything if the rumor about not wanting to provoke Shadowrider is true." Ming Shi said.

"Is there no other way?" Yunyun became disappointed.

"The other method is to hire Shadowrider to kill. As long as there is money, this assassin will show up." The schoolmaster said.

"This isn't a joke, Shadowrider doesn't fail." Ming Shi said.

"Right, we might be playing with fire." Yunyun agreed.

"A bit interesting." Li Qiye stroked his chin and smiled at the schoolmaster: "You can hire him to kill me."

"Are you crazy? You won't even realize your last seconds, Shadowrider is the ultimate assassin." Ming Shi became startled. Only a madman would hire such an effective killer in this manner.

"It's too risky." Yunyun disagreed as well.

The schoolmaster also shook his head: "This isn't a good idea. From my estimation, Shadowrider can assassinate a six-fruit dragon lord or a four-fruit conqueror."

"It would be fun to gather all Ten Monsters, no?" Li Qiye smirked.

Yunyun didn't know what to say. Li Qiye had killed four of them while Demoness had offered her service.

The only ones left were Flame-eater Child, Shadowrider, Wild Dragon, and Bloodsea Blade. Of course, Bloodsea was not on the list of targets.

"It's too dangerous, I don't want to trouble you over my own matter." Yunyun still refused.

In fact, she thought that he could actually kill Wild Dragon in a direct battle. The same couldn't be said about the elusive Shadowrider.

"Yes, don't gamble with your life, there must be another way." Ming Shi said.

"I'm not doing this for you, I'm merely interested and want to investigate." Li Qiye shook his head.

"Investigate what?" Ming Shi asked.

"Say, you have just hunted a deer, how will you cook it?" Li Qiye asked.

"There are many ways, roast, boil, steam, cure the meat..." Ming Shi reluctantly answered.

"When you were a baby, did you know how to answer this question?" He asked another question.

"What are you talking about?" She became confused.

"Let's put it this way, I'll give you a dragon lord. Do you know how to eat him and why?" Li Qiye smiled.

"That's disgusting." She instantly responded.

“What do you think happened to those missing dragon lords and conquerors? Were they killed just for their treasures? Who would take such a risk over some treasures?” Li Qiye smiled.

“They got eaten...?” She became creeped out.

“The stronger the cultivators, the more delicious and nutritious. Of course, you have to know how to eat first. Otherwise, it would just be a waste.” Li Qiye said.

“Young Noble, there is a proper method behind this madness? Maybe an ancient evil art passed down from long ago?” Yunyun shuddered.

“Hmm...” The schoolmaster agreed. He himself didn’t know the right way to eat a dragon lord. It couldn’t be as simple as just boiling or stewing.

Chapter 4975: Shadowrider

Eating a top cultivator was definitely a problem with a dao aspect. Firstly, the premise was virtually impossible to carry out in terms of capabilities. Secondly, this was absolutely evil. Anyone doing this would face persecution from the rest of the world.

Devouring others to increase strength was unforgivable. No one wanted to see a proliferation of such an art.

Thus, if this hunter actually had this ability, how did they learn it? This was the reason why Li Qiye was interested - wanting to find the source.

“Schoolmaster, hire Shadowrider.” Li Qiye said lazily.

“Well...” The schoolmaster found himself in quite a predicament. If something were to actually happen, he wouldn’t be able to solve the situation.

“It’s too dangerous.” Jian Yunyun and Ming Shi strongly opposed hiring Shadowrider - an assassin capable of killing even stronger cultivators.

“Not at all, an ant with sharp teeth is still only an ant.” Li Qiye smiled.

The schoolmaster stared at him before nodding: “If this is your wish, Young Noble, I will hire Shadowrider. However, I am not responsible for whatever happens next.”

He agreed because Li Qiye had killed five dragon lords recently. Although this was due to the dao controller, Li Qiye was obviously not a normal person.

Most importantly, he had the fortune of meeting their supreme existence. This alone proved his worth and made the risk acceptable.

“I’m counting on you.” Li Qiye smiled and stared at the horizon: “Let’s see if a blind cat will come across a dead mouse this time.”

His goal was to find Twilight Hunter - one of the most elusive beings in history. He thought that this was somehow related.

The two girls remained worried. What if Li Qiye couldn’t react in time during an ambush? Alas, they couldn’t change his mind.

“Please be careful.” The schoolmaster said despite trusting Li Qiye due to his fear of Shadowrider. With that, he left to carry out his mission.

As the night settled in at the academy, a sense of calm enveloped the surroundings, lending a peaceful and serene quality to the atmosphere. Above, the stars twinkled brilliantly, casting a mesmerizing spell on all gazers.

Li Qiye sat atop a peak, admiring the stars while swaying his feet. Yunyun came and sat down next to him.

“She left?” Li Qiye glanced at her and smiled.

It turned out that although Ming Shi worried about Li Qiye, Untethered has been calling for her return. She had no choice but to leave, not wanting to disobey her master.

“She told me to take good care of you, Young Noble.” Yunyun nodded.

“She’s exceptionally very kind, this grants her ample fortune so her future will be brighter than yours.” Li Qiye smiled.

Yunyun didn’t expect Li Qiye to be so blunt. Nonetheless, she wasn’t jealous of Ming Shi because her friend was indeed innocent and kind.

"She has always been like that." Yunyun said.

"It's not easy to stand straight all the time, it has a lot to do with one's background and upbringing. Those who live under the sunlight are filled with sunshine. Alas, few can keep this brightness forever."

"I see." Yunyun murmured.

"The academy is a great place. It might not be perfect but in terms of cultivation alone, it is far purer than many sects and kingdoms." Li Qiye commented.

"Right." Yunyun nodded in agreement.

This was the reason why students and alumni loved the academy. This included the geniuses from the great powers.

This was one of the last bastions of cultivation. Students from both The People and The Race appreciated this purity and usually gave back.

"You should know that even if you can obtain that thing again, it might not revitalize Primal." Li Qiye told her.

"I know, the reason why I want to get it back is so that you can take a look." Yunyun said.

“Why?” He asked.

“I don’t know. When I saw that throne back in Eight-stallion and how you controlled the flames, I suddenly felt that I was there to meet you.” She responded.

“This is fate.” He smiled and gazed at the sky.

“Could be, who knows?” She smiled wryly. Though this item was pivotal to Primal, she somehow wanted to show it to an outsider.

“I know, because I am connected to your progenitor.”

“To our progenitor?” Yunyun was surprised because they themselves had no idea who their progenitor was.

“A great and insightful figure, no one was wiser than your progenitor among the diviners.” Li Qiye said.

“So you do know our progenitor, Young Noble.” She became curious.

“Your progenitor-” Li Qiye noticed something and smirked.

“Bam!” A dark spear penetrated his chest and sent him off the cliff before she could react.

It pinned him into the base and caused her to stand up and scream in horror: “Young Noble!”

She saw a figure - a person riding a night beast.

The creature was mighty and large, yet it blended in with the darkness of the night, emitting no discernible aura. Its existence seemed to rhyme with invisibility.

Mounted on its back was a rider, shrouded in a black cloak that concealed even their gender. The rider's weapon of choice was a black spear, devoid of any glimmer or shine, making it the perfect instrument for carrying out assassinations.

“Shadowrider!” Yunyun instantly knew who this person was.

The assassin was efficient indeed, already carrying out the task after being hired by the schoolmaster.

She looked down at Li Qiye who was on the ground and shouted: “Young Noble, are you okay?!”

Shadowrider was surprised to see his victim sitting back up.

“Sigh, already stabbing before an introduction, how uncouth. An assassin should act properly and cool.”
Li Qiye patted his clothes and complained.

Chapter 4976: Smashed

Despite the fierce ambush, Li Qiye emerged unscathed, with only a few specks of dirt staining his robe. Nonchalantly, he brushed off the grime with a quick pat, unfazed by the feeble attempt to harm him.

Yunyun heaved a sigh of relief after seeing this.

Shadowrider, on the other hand, became serious. This capable assassin had killed numerous famous characters before, homing their intuition every time. Now, this felt rather ominous.

“Is this all the world-famous assassin can do?” Li Qiye waved his sleeve and said.

A terrible feeling gnawed at Shadowrider as they contemplated the situation. The earlier strike had felt just fine, and now even a five-fruit dragon lord would be finished. The assassin couldn't help but feel uneasy.

Now, it turned out that Li Qiye was completely untouched. Shadowrider naturally knew how sharp the strike was, and the same for the grim situation.

“Come, try again, do your best this time now.” Li Qiye smiled.

Yunyun was left speechless since the famous assassin was not taken seriously by a junior. Keep in mind that even dragon lords feared Shadowrider. Alas, Li Qiye was treating the assassin like a child.

This was a first for Shadowrider - being treated in such a trivial manner. Only one or two cultivators in the lower continents could act this way.

“Clank!” Shadowrider summoned a different weapon with their left hand, resembling a meteor hammer with spikes.

These spikes seemed sharp like needles in the night, always ready to pierce the heart. The night beast raised its hooves, looking like a roaring stallion.

Alas, there was no sound coming from this powerful dragon lord.

The beast's roar didn't make any sound but still released a mighty shockwave. At the same time, Shadowrider swung the hammer, wanting to reduce Li Qiye's head to mincemeat.

The spikes also shot out with a speed ten times greater than lightning. Each aimed for a weak spot.

The entire process was soundless and virtually indiscernible, akin to a viper striking from the shadow.

This was enough to kill a dragon lord but it didn't stop there. Shadowrider let go of the hammer and let momentum take over.

The assassin then appeared behind Li Qiye as if they had been there the entire time, undetected. Another spear thrust was the choice.

Shadowrider didn't hold back at all, utilizing all of their strength and speed.

"Ahh!" Jian Yunyun couldn't follow the steps. The only thing she saw was a hammer hitting Li Qiye's forehead while the spear was inches from his back.

This consisted of four separate points of attack - Shadowrider's hammer and spear, the night beast's stomp, and the needle-like spikes.

As Shadowrider launched the attack, confidence surged through the assassin's veins. Surely, this would be enough to injure even a six-fruit dragon lord. But then Li Qiye's casual voice cut through the air, sending chills down Shadowrider's spine: "Eh, not as bad this time."

The assassin's heart sank, realizing that their best efforts had been effortlessly brushed aside. It sounded like the voice of a devil to Shadowrider. This move had never failed to kill or cause serious injuries before until now.

Failing twice as an assassin was an utter disaster. Shadowrider didn't waste any time and dispersed into smoke, desperately trying to escape. Their movement technique was flawless. Even the mightiest cultivators couldn't break the spell or catch up in time.

However, in the next blink of an eye, something akin to an invisible hand caught Shadowrider.

Illumination Empress Dowager had suffered the same fate - being smashed repeatedly, leaving deep holes in the ground and vomiting blood.

Jian Yunyun caught up and couldn't believe what she was seeing. The last time she had been captured by the empress dowager and didn't know it was Li Qiye who had intervened.

Now, even though she couldn't see Li Qiye, she knew it was him behind Shadowrider's defeat. The second-ranked member of the Ten Monsters looked helpless before Li Qiye, not worth a single coin.

Shadowrider couldn't believe it either. They had believed they could exchange numerous moves with Conceal Conqueror despite the power gap. Being proven weak like this was horrifying.

Chapter 4977: Curiosity Piqued

Meanwhile, Li Qiye leaped up into the air and grabbed the dark spear, throwing it straight at the fleeing night beast.

It finally let out an audible roar before death, being pinned to the ground by its master's weapon. It then dispersed into smoke and was blown away by the wind.

Shadowrider initially thought that this was a profitable venture, not expecting to meet such a terrifying cultivator.

Killing a five-fruit dragon lord was easy; there was a high chance of winning against a six-fruit dragon lord as well. Now, the target was completely unscathed.

"Poof!" The decisive Shadowrider performed the same movement technique, dispersing into smoke once more.

Alas, the smoke suddenly came together again to form Shadowrider. Something prevented this escape technique from working properly.

"Poof!" Shadowrider tried once more only to have the same outcome.

Space and time around Shadowrider have been caught by an invisible hand. This became an inescapable prison.

Shadowrider felt as if his target was one with heaven and earth, possessing full control over the various affinities.

This was something surpassing the power of a dao domain, capable of exerting absolute control.

“Clank!” In this moment between life and death, Shadowrider became furious and loud like a Buddha attempting to slay evil demons.

A gigantic Buddhist avatar emerged and roared thunderously. Behind the avatar came thousands of swords imbued with the Buddhist affinity.

They gathered together into a single radiant sword that illuminate the night. Its slash cut through three thousand worlds, all desires and attachments. Everything returned to dust.

The rage of Buddha empowered this attack, resulting in immense destruction and mercilessness. It could split the world but not Li Qiye who caught the blade between two fingers.[freewebnovel.com](http://www.freewebnovel.com)

This was as risky as can be for Shadowrider. The slash could kill mighty cultivators but lost the stealth factor. This gamble turned out to be the incorrect move.

“Interesting, this seems familiar.” Li Qiye nonchalantly said.

Shadowrider shuddered after seeing this and immediately tried to run again, melding into the night and crossing through the dimensions.

"He's running!" Yunyun shouted and looked over, only to see Li Qiye still patting his robe to get rid of the dust.

She was overwhelmed with emotion after witnessing true invincibility. She has been with a master standing at the apex all this time but didn't realize it. Her ignorance and shallow vision left her ashamed.

She had even tried to protect him during their time together, not realizing that it was unnecessary.

She walked over and got on her knees, wanting to drill a hole into the ground and hide from everyone.

"Stand up, we're giving chase." He said.

"Young Noble, why did you let Shadowrider get away?" She got up and asked. It seemed that it was not difficult for Li Qiye to kill Shadowrider in the slightest.

"I'm feeling amused. Normally, when a beast is frightened, the first reaction is to run back to its lair." He said.

"Do you wish to wipe them out?" Yunyun asked.

"I don't have that much heroism in me. This is not about getting rid of evil-doers or whatever, I only want to see the lair." He smiled.

The initial goal was to capture Shadowrider. Alas, after seeing the slash, he became interested because it was familiar. Thus, he wanted to trace it back to the source.

Though Shadowrider has made it to the wilderness far away, it was impossible to truly escape Li Qiye.

Under ordinary circumstances, Shadowrider's assassination and stealth arts were second to none. Others couldn't pursue or trace this assassin at all due to a lack of traces.

Unfortunately, Li Qiye had locked the target and distance didn't matter. Shadowrider could leap out of this world's cycles and it would still be useless. Only supreme overlords had the ability to hide from Li Qiye's eyes.

Li Qiye wasn't in a rush either since he wanted to wait for the assassin to return to the hideout. He took his time with Yunyun accompanying him.

After journeying for some time, they finally arrived at what appeared to be a primeval world. The landscape stretched out before them, vast and boundless, while the air remained pure and untouched. Everywhere she looked, all she could see were rugged mountains and towering trees

Chapter 4978: Majestic Wilderness

Despite not entering the region yet, the duo felt the auras of beasts as if millions of them were howling.

Wonderful sceneries could be found everywhere, whether it be towering trees or unbroken valleys extending forever into the distance...

The creatures here benefited from favorable circumstances and as time passed, some turned into demons. Over the eras, numerous demons occupied this land and made it rather dangerous.

Some were old enough to gain the ability to devour the sun and moon. Others considered themselves kings of beasts and reigned over their brethren.

A few took on human form, a gift from the dao. They left their home in order to pursue a greater height...

Yunyun shuddered with instinctive fear, aware that this journey would be rather dangerous.

“The Ten Grand Mountains.” She said: “Young Noble, we are about to enter Demon.”

This was the largest region in the lower continents, known for its treacherous nature. Many have entered; only a few were lucky enough to leave.

Chaos might be the most chaotic continent but the Ten Mountains were certainly the most dangerous.

Cultivators commented that a five-fruit dragon lord could travel untethered anywhere but here - a place where they could turn into prey.

Colossal beasts and demons lived here; their intelligence wasn't unlocked. After growing old enough, they possessed enough power to rival the demon deities.

These deities were in charge of the region. Any intruder would instantly be noticed by these great beings.

Thus, top cultivators always acted with caution here. Big shots have also fallen in this place.

“Demon.” Li Qiye closed his eyes and took a deep breath to sense the primeval aura.

“We will be entering the six deities’ domains soon.” Yunyun said solemnly.

She was strong enough to fight cultivators from the last generation. Alas, this place far exceeded her current abilities.

“The six deities?” Li Qiye smiled.

“Wild Dragon is from one of the six, Serpent.” Yunyun said.

These special entities have taken root in the Ten Grand Mountains, gathering the power of all the living beings here. The birds and beasts worshipped the deities and offered them the power of faith.

Serpent was the oldest among them, rumored to have been around since the very formation of the mountains.

However, the most famous one was Wood due to its founder - Demon Conqueror. After earning the respect of the demon kings, he managed to unify Demon. The other deities also supported Wood to be their leader.

In this lineage, any demon was free to worship a chosen branch. However, a relationship was formed at this moment, combining their power with the deity. They gained power but lost the freedom to leave the mountains.

Of course, if a beast didn't choose any of this, they could still cultivate the dao and become a demon normally, free to leave whenever. Alas, these were rare circumstances since this world belonged to the six deities. Creatures would find it virtually impossible to become demons without the deities' involvement. Being weak here often meant death.

"We're entering." Li Qiye walked forward with a smile.

Yunyun took a deep breath and followed right behind him. She would have hesitated to do so if it wasn't for his presence. She believed that he could deal with any demon or colossal creature.

Once they were inside, the sky was blocked by the towering trees. They saw large peaks ahead, some with celestials floating around them.

They saw many powerful beasts and birds as well, most had an unreasonable size. The atmosphere here was perfect for their growth.

A gigantic serpent - the king of this area - immediately greeted them. It spewed out miasma and corroded the trees nearby. Other creatures fled right away. It lunged for the two, excited to enjoy a feast.

However, Yunyun was a Supreme Sovereign and easily killed the serpent in just two moves. She led the way, saving Li Qiye the trouble.

She eventually killed too many to count - a tiger as large as a peak, a serpent as long as a river, an eagle with sky-blotting wings...

They were ferocious but still didn't become demons yet. She had no problem taking them down.

"Is Shadowrider staying here? Is he from Demon?" She asked.

From what she saw that night, Shadowrider resembled a human more than a demon.

"I'm sure there's a reason for this." Li Qiye smiled.

Chapter 4979: Large Rooster

Putting the danger of demons and beasts aside, just the disorienting landscape alone could make people lost.

However, Li Qiye knew where Shadowrider ran off to so he had a clear destination in mind. He wanted to find a few things and was patient enough to take his time.

"Rumble!" They heard loud explosions from a fierce battle along the way.

In reality, this was not a rare sight. The creatures here competed over territory repeatedly, fighting to the death.

They once witnessed a serpent monarch fighting against a bull monarch, destroying the land in the process.

Today, the combatants included a group of demon cultivators. They became demons through cultivation, not with the natural pathway from heaven and earth. Many of them have taken humanoid forms.

"Kill them!" This was a brutal carnage.

One side primarily consisted of birds while the other had land roamers such as tigers and leopards. If they were in the lower continents, they would be added to the list of first-rate powers.

"Rumble!" The avian alliance was swift and precise with their movements, darting in and out of the battlefield. The land walkers relied on power and destruction instead.

Shockwaves crushed one peak after another. Frightening demonic energies surged into the air.

"Boom!" A majestic figure descended from the sky and unleashed a devastating blow. It was a colossal tiger demon, standing the size of a mountain, with four razor-sharp blade wings that could slice through anything.

The sight of the demonic tiger caused terror to grip the avian soldiers. The non-demon birds were grounded, unable to move.

But then, its formidable opponent arrived - a magnificent phoenix-like bird with pure white feathers that dwarfed the tiger monarch in size. Its wings could blot out the sun, and it radiated a bright, awe-inspiring white light.

The two started battling in the air before falling to the ground. As the battle raged on, blood began to rain down.

Soldiers stopped fighting and merely watched the battle between the two monarchs.

“Such power, they are comparable to dragon lords.” Yunyun trembled while sensing the demonic shockwaves.

In the end, it became clear that the bird monarch was no match for the tiger monarch, and the bird was sent crashing to the ground, creating a deep pit upon impact right in front of Li Qiye and Yunyun.

The bloodied bird made the two look like ants in comparison.

“Boom!” The tiger monarch landed and stomped on the bird, causing more blood to spill.

“Brat, hand over the god source or I will kill you and flatten your city.” The monarch said menacingly.

“In your dream!” The white bird shouted.

“Young Noble, isn’t this voice familiar?” Yunyun was surprised to hear this.

“Indeed.” Li Qiye nodded in agreement.

The two beast monarchs finally noticed the two humans. The bird couldn't believe its own eyes and shouted: "Miss Jian, Young Noble Li!"

This was enough to let Yunyun know who he was - Goldcrest Young Noble.

However, he looked like a large rooster back in Abroad, not this majestic creature. Connecting the two was impossible. If Princess Ming Shi were here, she would start laughing due to the ridiculous discrepancy.

He didn't expect to see the two in Demon, especially not when he was being beaten down.

Nonetheless, he put on a smile in front of his crush and said: "Friends, why are you two here?"

"I am tagging along with the young noble." Yunyun said.

"I apologize for the lack of reception, I hope you will understand from seeing my circumstances." He was still polite despite the situation.

"Worms, stand aside." The tiger monarch said. Though Yunyun was a sovereign, the tiger was comparable to a dragon lord.

"Bladewing Tiger, this is only between you and me!" Goldcrest shouted.

"Hehehe, just hand over the god source and everything will be easy. Otherwise, I'll kill you and eat your friends. No one can stop me now that the old man is dead." The tiger laughed.

"Leave, my friends, I cannot even protect myself right now." Goldcrest smiled wryly and told the two.

"It's too late for that. Although this is not much of a meal, I suppose you two will be an okay appetizer." The tiger stared at the two humans and reached for them with his sharp claw.

"Watch it!" Goldcrest bellowed.

"Boom!" Li Qiye easily stopped it.

The scene looked like an ant somehow managing to stop the claw of a dragon.

Chapter 4980: Goldcrest Young Noble's Identity

How could an ant ever stop a dragon? The result should have been obliteration.

Alas, Li Qiye easily stopped the claw with his bare hand. The tiger monarch tried to break free but this was proven to be impossible.

"How dare you! Activate!" The tiger monarch's voice thundered across the land. With a mighty roar, he sent out shockwaves that devastated forests and crumbled mountains.

This was a power comparable to a dragon lord, enough to reduce a sovereign such as Yunyun to blood.

However, he still couldn't break free from Li Qiye.

"Who's the worm here?" Li Qiye smiled and smashed the tiger monarch repeatedly. The mountains nearby were replaced by large pits as a result.

"Boom!" At last, he released the tiger monarch, who was now only a shadow of his former self. The once mighty beast was on the brink of death, gasping for his last breaths.

Goldcrest didn't know what to say along with members from both armies. He had seen what Li Qiye could do with the dao controller before. However, he didn't have the invincible artifact and used his bare hand this time.

The demon soldiers wondered how this puny human managed to reduce their demon monarch to this state?

"See ya." Li Qiye smirked and raised his foot.

"Bam!" The tiger's scream echoed across the region.

"Crack!" Li Qiye somehow managed to crush the tiger's gigantic head with just one stomp.

Suddenly, a totem appeared on the corpse. A primordial aura engulfed the battlefield and made everything tremble. It protected the tiger's true fate, allowing it to escape.

"Tiger Deity!" The crowd bellowed.

This was one of the six prime powers of Demon. Alas, it was still not enough because Li Qiye managed to seize the tiger's true fate.

"There's no escaping." Li Qiye said.

"Nooo!" The tiger bellowed but it was too late.

The power of worship coming from the tiger totem couldn't stop Li Qiye.

"Pop!" He crushed the true fate along with the totem.

This power dispersed back to the source while the true fate fell to the ground. Its remnant forces melted into the ground and returned to Demon.

This shocked the crowd more than when he crushed the tiger monarch's head. Remember, they were protected by the six deities in Demon. This granted them protection, making them rather difficult to slay.

In fact, given a similar cultivation level, they might be harder to kill than dragon lords or conquerors.

Goldcrest shuddered because he didn't know anyone else in the lower continents capable of this.

Crushing the power of a deity in Demon? Right now, perhaps only Conceal Conqueror could do this.

"Kill them!" Goldcrest's commanders shouted and rushed toward the land walkers.

After losing their leader, the tigers and leopards lost their morale and were in total collapse. Their defeat became inevitable.

Meanwhile, Goldcrest returned to his prior form - a large rooster as Ming Shi put it.

"Thank you for saving me, Young Noble." He tidied his robe before bowing.

"You wouldn't have died anyway with the deity totem saving you." Li Qiye smiled.

"It would have been the same miserable end, my Phoenix City would have been destroyed as well." He said.

"I didn't know you were a demon monarch, looks like I have underestimated you." Yunyun smiled, not realizing that he was from Demon.

"You're too kind, it's just a blessing from the ancestors, not my own merit." He said.

"I thought worshippers couldn't leave the Ten Great Mountains." She continued.

Of course, there were exceptions such as Demon Conqueror. However, he was too strong and couldn't be considered part of the norm.

Wild Dragon was also able to leave. However, this was due to obtaining a peerless fortune.