

Humanity 1001

Chapter 1001 The Master Appears

"Just taking a relaxed walk," Lu Ye casually said.

The mysterious woman clearly wouldn't easily believe his excuse, but merely smiled enigmatically.

Lu Ye was obviously searching for a way to leave this secret realm, but the only exit was guarded by Dao Thirteen, destined for his efforts to be futile.

"Let's exchange some battlefield markings," Lu Ye suddenly suggested.

The woman was somewhat surprised but looked at him with a teasing expression: "You want to exchange battlefield markings with me?"

"Is there a problem?"

"What are you trying to do?" The woman eyed him warily.

"Forget it if you're not interested," Lu Ye didn't insist, and turned to leave.

"Wait," the woman stopped him, then raised her hand and brushed over her battlefield marking. A bit of blue light floated toward Lu Ye.

Lu Ye exclaimed in shock, "You're with the Haotian Alliance?"

He had always assumed she was part of the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, hence being captured, but didn't expect she was actually from the Haotian Alliance.

The woman smiled, saying nothing, exuding an air of mystery.

After calming himself, Lu Ye asked, "What's your name?"

"Looking to find out more about me?" The woman leaned by the window, arms crossed, appearing slightly lazy, which only added to her allure, especially with her arms hugging her chest, making the view even more grand.

Unlike her words, she revealed her name: "Yu Daiwei."

Lu Ye nodded slightly and turned to head back to his cabin.

As he walked, he inspected his battlefield marking, filled with numerous imprints exchanged since he embarked on his cultivation path. Most of these imprints were inaccessible now, except for the one belonging to Yu Daiwei, which could still be contacted.

Lu Ye wouldn't exchange imprints with such a mysterious Divine Sea Realm cultivator without reason; he simply wanted to confirm something.

Whether this secret realm was still within the Nine Provinces.

It seemed it was within the Nine Provinces, so under Heaven's Augury, Yu Daiwei's imprint marking could be reached. However, since the secret realm is an isolated world, external contact isn't possible.

This was similar to the secret realm of the Ten Thousand Beasts Domain he experienced before, where he could still contact Yiyi.

Another day passed, and Lu Ye was in his cabin harnessing the power of his Talent Tree to absorb fire spirit stone energy when suddenly the restriction on his cabin was triggered.

He promptly halted his work and opened the door.

Yu Daiwei stood outside, her demeanor somewhat solemn, "Come with me, someone wants to meet you."

Lu Ye raised an eyebrow, thinking that the real mastermind was finally showing themselves.

He had previously deduced that someone was behind Yu Daiwei and had instructed her to capture him, yet these days the only ones in the secret realm apart from Dao Thirteen guarding the exit were him and Yu Daiwei, with no sign of anyone else.

He speculated that the mastermind was perhaps delayed by something, hence hadn't shown up yet.

But inevitably, they would appear, and Lu Ye was eager to know why they had Yu Daiwei bring him here.

"Let's go," Lu Ye said, stepping out of the cabin.

Yu Daiwei turned and led the way.

Last time when following her, she walked gracefully with swaying hips like a water snake, but this time she was much more composed, her seductive air replaced by quiet meekness.

Lu Ye increasingly felt the powerful presence of the mastermind; someone who could make a strong figure like Yu Daiwei so reverent was certainly no ordinary person.

The mastermind was not far away, in front of Yu Daiwei's cabin, sitting in a chair and fishing with a rod.

As they approached, Yu Daiwei bowed respectfully, "Venerable Lord, I've brought him."

Venerable Lord...

Lu Ye frowned slightly, such a title was not one for ordinary people.

The Venerable Lord didn't look imposing nor did he stand out in any special way. If he were amidst a crowd, Lu Ye might not have given him a second glance.

Yet with Yu Daiwei's respectful demeanor as contrast, Lu Ye knew this person couldn't be underestimated.

The Venerable Lord turned his head to look toward him, his gaze profound as the sea, carrying an analytical glint, then suddenly laughed heartily, seemingly in great delight.

Even Yu Daiwei was puzzled for a moment, not knowing why the Venerable Lord was so joyous, and Lu Ye was even more bewildered by his reaction.

"Sit down!" After a while, the Venerable Lord collected his smile and said to Lu Ye.

There was a chair next to him, obviously prepared for Lu Ye.

Lu Ye pondered for a moment, then sat down boldly, glancing at the float in the lake, and said, "There are no fish in this lake."

When he first arrived a few days ago, he had investigated this lake. It's just a dead lake. Besides the water being relatively clear, there were only some weeds and insects; no fish could possibly live here.

The Venerable Lord smiled gently, his smile warm and infectious: "Whether there are fish or not, fishing is about the mood."

Lu Ye couldn't help but think to himself that this person might have something wrong with his mind, unable to fathom the actions of such a powerful figure.

The Venerable Lord continued, "Moreover, just because you can't see them doesn't mean they're not there."

The float suddenly moved, the Venerable Lord raised his hand, and a lively carp was hooked.

Lu Ye's eyes widened. He truly couldn't understand why. When he had checked the lake before, he hadn't seen any fish; where did this carp come from that the Venerable Lord fished up?

Settling his mind, he suddenly spoke, "Is Chen Tianchui your man?"

He hadn't thought of this before, but when Yu Daiwei referred to this person as the Venerable Lord, Lu Ye suddenly remembered the gibberish Chen Tianchui said before he died.

No wonder... someone valued.

Lu Ye couldn't hear clearly then, but there were too many doubts about the events at the Chen family that day, many things he couldn't understand. But if what Chen Tianchui said before his death was "No wonder you are valued by the Venerable Lord," it would make sense.

The topic shifted too quickly. Even someone like the Venerable Lord didn't react immediately, but he still admitted calmly, "That's right, Chen Tianchui is my man. Your insight is quite sharp. Can you tell me how you discovered it?"

"I guessed." Lu Ye shook his head, not intending to explain much, "Since you want to harm me, why capture me?"

Beside him, Yu Daiwei had already helped the Venerable Lord remove the fishhook and reattach the bait. The Venerable Lord cast the bait into the water before speaking, "Although Chen Tianchui is my man, what happened on the Chen family side has nothing to do with me. Chen Tianchui acted on his own, so he is not worth pitying. I never had any intention to harm you. Let's put it this way, if there is still one person under the sky who is unwilling to harm you, it is definitely me."

Lu Ye thought he was talking nonsense. How could he believe such words meant to coax children: "So why did the Venerable Lord bring me here?"

The Venerable Lord was silent for a long while, then suddenly turned to Lu Ye and asked, "What do you think of the world's current situation?"

This topic also shifted too quickly. Lu Ye was caught off guard and frowned, "I'm just one of the countless ordinary souls, going with the flow."

"You underestimate yourself." The Venerable Lord smiled slightly as he lifted the fishing rod but caught nothing this time; the bait on the hook had disappeared.

He put down the fishing rod, losing his desire to continue fishing, and said slowly, "The world is bustling with two large factions constantly at odds. Since records began, this has been going on for over two thousand years. Over such a long time, how many heroes have perished in the Nine Provinces, how many young talents died before achieving their goals, how many sects have collapsed into obscurity, and how many cultivators die each year because of this, it's hard to count."

This topic was too heavy, so heavy that Lu Ye found it hard to interrupt. Besides, he wasn't qualified to comment on this issue.

Since each cultivator's cultivation started, the Haotian Alliance has fought the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, and the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge has fought the Haotian Alliance. This concept is deeply ingrained and not easily shaken. Lu Ye is merely a member of the Nine Provinces cultivators and naturally cannot escape custom. To say nothing of the many Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators who have died at his hands over the years and the deep hatred held against him by the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge.

"But why must the world be this way? Can't it be another way?"

Lu Ye frowned, "What does the Venerable Lord want it to be like?"

The Venerable Lord smiled slightly, showing a look of longing: "Without the Haotian Alliance, without the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, naturally there'd be no endless confrontation between the two great factions. Mortals could live and work in peace, cultivators could practice safely. The world would be at peace, without war and factional conflict, universal harmony!"

"It's a nice world, but the Venerable Lord is thinking too much."

He felt a chill in his heart; the Venerable Lord's ambitions were so grand, he actually wanted to unite the Nine Provinces and eliminate the divides between factions.

But such a thing is simply impossible!

"You also said the confrontation between the two great factions has been going on for over two thousand years, with bloody feuds between them. How could such enmity be easily dispelled and resolved?"

"Not easily dispelled doesn't mean it can't be resolved. Ultimately, it depends on human effort."

"I'd like to hear it in detail."

"Are you thinking that I want to unify the Nine Provinces?" The Venerable Lord didn't answer but asked in return.

His thoughts exposed, Lu Ye wasn't embarrassed, "Isn't that the case?"

The Venerable Lord shook his head, "Someone tried to do such a thing decades ago, and he almost succeeded, but ultimately he failed. That person was talented in managing affairs of the world, far beyond me. What he couldn't achieve, I naturally can't either."

Lu Ye understood who he was talking about; besides his senior brother, there was no one else. It seemed this Venerable Lord had some connection to his senior brother?

"However, that person relied on the Haotian Alliance faction back then. In the final battle, they faced a fierce counterattack from the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, and their failure was only to be expected. So trying to use either the Haotian Alliance or the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge to completely eliminate the other side won't work. The enmity between the two factions is as deep as the sea; who willingly wishes to be eliminated by whom? The more oppressive, the stronger the rebound. That person's failure was because of this reason."

"But if there could be an additional faction in this world, a brand-new faction, one that could embrace diversity, would you say, if such a faction emerged, would many people flock to it?"

Lu Ye frowned even more tightly, "That would depend on what the foundational principles of this faction are." He faintly felt that the next words from the Venerable Lord would be shocking.

Chapter 1002 I Need Your Help

"That's exactly the point," the Venerable Lord seemed invigorated. "Since it's a new faction, it must naturally differ from the Haotian Alliance and the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge. The foundation of this new faction is non-competition! I believe that if it truly becomes that way, it would certainly attract a large number of cultivators. In this world, there are not a few cultivators tired of the conflict between the two major factions."

Yu Daiwei stood behind the Venerable Lord, looking at the exuberant expression on his face, feeling quite incredulous.

Because after all these years following the Venerable Lord, she had never seen such an expression on his face, and what made it even more unbelievable was that the person who elicited this reaction from the Venerable Lord was actually a young man in the True Lake Level 5 realm!

She understood the Venerable Lord's high aspirations and pride. Even the Sect Masters of the top sects in the Nine Provinces might not catch his eye. In the Venerable Lord's view, those so-called Sect Masters were mostly corrupt beings, and summer insects cannot speak of ice.

Yet, in front of her now, the Venerable Lord was chatting happily with Lu Yiye, almost as if they were sitting and discussing the Dao. How could she not be astonished, and further realized how much the Venerable Lord valued this young man.

But even she did not understand why the Venerable Lord regarded Lu Yiye so highly.

"There should be," Lu Ye nodded.

If such a faction truly emerged in this world, it would likely attract many people to join, just as the Venerable Lord said, there were many who were tired of the conflict between the two major factions, only often caught in the momentum, unable to extricate themselves.

Most cultivators had no real grievance with each other, but simply because of factional rivalry, they found reasons to draw their swords.

Changing the topic, Lu Ye said, "Strictly speaking, the Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union is such a faction."

The Venerable Lord was momentarily taken aback, then chuckled, "That's different. The Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union is in the business of trading. They indeed do not compete with others, but business relies on harmony for wealth. How can they contend with others?"

"Is the Venerable Lord considering founding such a faction?" Lu Ye roughly grasped his meaning.

"Chaos!" the Venerable Lord uttered, "Haotian Alliance, Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, one is Yin, the other Yang. Yin and Yang do not coexist, harmonize Yin and Yang, and Yin and Yang together form Chaos!"

"So ultimately, the Venerable Lord still wants to unify the Nine Provinces!" Lu Ye incisively pointed out.

The Venerable Lord shook his head, "Uniting the Nine Provinces is not my goal. I just want to change the current structure of the Nine Provinces."

Lu Ye was silent for a while. One must admit that it was a good thing for this person to have such grand aspirations. If he could truly achieve such a feat, it would benefit the entire Nine Provinces. The confrontation between the two major factions would become history, and many lives could be spared.

But while some intentions are good, the process may not be so pleasant. Lu Ye could foresee that if a faction called Chaos did suddenly rise, the state of the Nine Provinces would only become more chaotic.

"Then why did the Venerable Lord apprehend me?" Lu Ye voiced his inner doubt.

Even after the Venerable Lord spoke so much with him, Lu Ye still couldn't understand why he had been captured.

"I need your help!" The Venerable Lord looked at him, his eyes full of sincerity.

Lu Ye met his gaze for a moment and said lightly, "The Venerable Lord overestimates me. I am but a small True Lake realm cultivator, how can I assist the Venerable Lord in achieving such great ambitions?"

"I told you not to underestimate yourself. You possess energy that is yours alone, energy that I do not have," the Venerable Lord smiled as he spoke, then took out a palm-sized round disc from his robe and handed it to Lu Ye.

Lu Ye hesitated for a moment, then reached out to take it, examining it closely.

This disc appeared stone-like, with numerous intricate patterns on its surface that dazzled the eye. After looking at it for more than a few moments, it gave one a sense of dizziness, as if one's entire spirit was being sucked into it.

This was clearly no ordinary stone disc, though exactly what it was, Lu Ye couldn't discern.

As Lu Ye was observing the disc, the Venerable Lord was observing him. With a top-tier expert scrutinizing him at close range, Lu Ye's slightest reaction couldn't be hidden. But after watching for a while, the Venerable Lord couldn't help frowning, because some things were not quite as he had imagined.

"What is this?" Lu Ye asked.

"You can't tell?" the Venerable Lord countered.

Lu Ye shook his head.

The Venerable Lord smiled slightly, without offering further explanation, took the peculiar stone disc back from Lu Ye's hand, "That's all. You can go back now."

The conversation ended abruptly, even though they had been talking nicely just moments before.

Lu Ye thought nothing of it, stood up, and headed towards his cabin.

After he left, Yu Daiwei finally spoke, "Venerable Lord, isn't he the one you were looking for?"

"He is."

"Then why..."

"The time isn't right," the Venerable Lord leaned back in his chair, frowning, with a slightly disappointed look.

"What is this stone disc?" Yu Daiwei couldn't suppress her curiosity any longer.

The Venerable Lord played with the stone disc in his hand, silent for a long time before speaking, "A token to establish a new faction!"

Yu Daiwei's pupils contracted...

Having followed the Venerable Lord for so long, she naturally knew some secrets unknown to ordinary people.

Establishing a faction was not as simple as it sounded, nor could it be done just by raising a banner; it had to be acknowledged by Heaven's Augury.

Just like the current Haotian Alliance and Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, both were factions acknowledged by Heaven's Augury, so the battlefield marking of Haotian Alliance cultivators glowed blue, while that of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge was red.

The vast land of the Nine Provinces is shrouded in Heaven's Mandate, and nothing can escape its mysterious influence.

If one cannot gain the recognition of Heaven's Mandate, even if they raise the banner of a new faction, it will ultimately be difficult to sustain. To say nothing of the fact that if one gains Heaven's Mandate's recognition, they can change their battlefield marking, allowing cultivators of the same faction to quickly discern friend from foe.

"Since there is such an item, why does the Venerable Lord not use it?" Yu Daiwei asked, puzzled.

For so many years, the Venerable Lord had been preparing for the matter of the new faction, and now with such an item, establishing the new faction would be merely a matter of moments.

The Venerable Lord shook his head: "I cannot use it, and neither can you; only those favored by Heaven's Mandate can use this item!"

Decades ago, there was someone qualified to use this item, but he chose to hide it away, because at that time, he bore too many blood feuds, and even if he used this item, he could not win the hearts of the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge.

And now, decades later, the only one qualified to use this item seems to be Lu Yiye.

But judging by his reaction just now, he cannot use it either; otherwise, once he obtained it, he would have known its use.

The time is not yet ripe... the Venerable Lord sighed inwardly.

"Then... how do we deal with him?"

Only here did Yu Daiwei understand why the Venerable Lord wanted her to capture Lu Ye and bring him here; obviously, it was for this stone disc. Now that Lu Ye cannot use the stone disc, its value is greatly diminished.

Killing him is definitely not an option. The time is not ripe now, but that doesn't mean Lu Ye won't be able to use the stone disc in the future.

But he cannot be simply let go either.

"Do not worry about him; he will leave by himself."

The Venerable Lord said this as he slowly stood up.

Yu Daiwei couldn't help but feel astonished: "Does the Venerable Lord believe he can leave here?"

This is a split-off secret realm with Dao Thirteen guarding the exit. Without her or the Venerable Lord's order, Dao Thirteen would not let anyone pass. How could Lu Yiye, who is only in the True Lake Realm, possibly escape from here?

"One favored by Heaven's Mandate can always do what others cannot. If he cannot leave, then he is not the one I am looking for. If he is not the one I am looking for, then let him live here until he dies of old age." The Venerable Lord walked towards the exit.

There was one more thing he did not tell Yu Daiwei, and that is from observing Lu Ye up close, he found that Lu Ye had not been manipulated!

But Yu Daiwei clearly reported before that Chen Tianchui had already used manipulation techniques on Lu Ye, a means that ordinary people could not resist.

Yu Daiwei's report must be accurate. In other words, Chen Tianchui indeed used manipulation techniques on Lu Ye, but somehow, those means failed on Lu Ye.

This was also why he laughed heartily when he first saw Lu Ye, because he needed a Lu Ye who could maintain his self, not a puppet after manipulation.

Capable of what others cannot do, favored by Heaven's Mandate, this further confirmed to him that Lu Ye was the one he was looking for!

A short while later, Yu Daiwei respectfully escorted the Venerable Lord out of the secret realm. She stood in place and pondered for a moment, then walked towards the wooden cabin where Lu Ye was located.

Moments later, Lu Ye pushed the door open and looked at her, perplexed: "What is it?"

Yu Daiwei pointed to Dao Thirteen, whom she had summoned here: "From now on, he will follow you closely, so do not even think about attempting to escape."

Saying this, she turned her head and instructed Dao Thirteen: "If this kid tries anything to open the secret realm's exit, kill him without mercy!"

"Yes!" Dao Thirteen replied.

The Venerable Lord said that those favored by Heaven's Mandate can always do what others cannot. She was curious to see how Lu Yiye could leave this secret realm under such circumstances!

Being followed like this by Dao Thirteen and still managing to escape would be truly astonishing.

Lu Ye's eye twitched: "Are you seriously ill or something?"

Yu Daiwei pouted with a coquettish smile: "Before you act so rudely, you'd best consider the gap in our strengths."

Lu Ye immediately adjusted his expression: "Why do you do this?"

"To guard against you, of course."

Lu Ye mused: "Are you leaving?"

He looked towards the lake, but the Venerable Lord's figure was already out of sight. The other party had evidently left.

Once Yu Daiwei left, wouldn't that leave only Dao Thirteen here?

"Don't ask what you shouldn't ask."

"If that's the case, let's discuss a bit." Lu Ye looked at Dao Thirteen beside her, "I understand your intention of having him watch over me, but there's no need for him to stick so close, right? I need to have some privacy."

"A prisoner under surveillance, what talk of privacy?" Yu Daiwei sneered.

Lu Ye growled in anger: "Even if you captured me, I'm still a person. Don't overdo it. Your Venerable Lord seems to need something from me, so be careful, next time I see him, I'll tell him how you wronged me."

Chapter 1003 Soul Taming

Hearing Lu Ye say so, Yu Daiwei thought for a moment, then turned to instruct Dao Thirteen, "Don't enter this house. At any other time, as long as he shows up, you must follow him and never leave his side!"

"Yes." Dao Thirteen replied woodenly.

"Stay well!" Yu Daiwei glanced at him teasingly and turned towards the secret realm exit, seemingly intent on leaving.

Lu Ye stepped forward to follow.

Yu Daiwei naturally understood his intention and did not stop him.

Moments later, the secret realm exit opened, Yu Daiwei darted out and disappeared from sight, and once she was gone, the exit quickly closed again.

Lu Ye turned to look at Dao Thirteen beside him, silently calculating how likely he was to kill him if he utilized the Dragon Throne.

Though he didn't know what level of Divine Sea Realm Dao Thirteen was, he was certain he was weaker than Yu Daiwei.

But after looking at the sturdy body of Dao Thirteen, Lu Ye abandoned the idea.

Facing such a Divine Sea Realm opponent head-on was too challenging for him, and even if he managed to kill Dao Thirteen by luck, it wouldn't greatly aid his plan to escape from this secret realm.

But now the Venerable Lord had left, Yu Daiwei had left, leaving only Dao Thirteen, who didn't seem very clever.

The long-awaited opportunity had finally come!

Previously, with Yu Daiwei constantly in this Nameless Secret Realm, Lu Ye was unable to do many things, but how could he resign himself to this fate?

During these days of captivity, he had not been idle and had devised a clear plan for escaping.

He initially thought this plan wouldn't be feasible in the short term, but the opportunity had unexpectedly arrived quickly.

He walked leisurely back to his wooden cabin, with Dao Thirteen closely following, just as Yu Daiwei had instructed, staying by his side.

Lu Ye tried conversing with him, but Dao Thirteen didn't respond at all, so he stopped trying.

Inside the cabin, Lu Ye sat cross-legged, his spirit immersed, observing the Talent Tree.

During these days, he activated the Talent Tree's power, consuming all the fire spirit stones he had accumulated, and many leaves on the tree were ignited again.

Most of these leaves didn't bear any spirit runes, yet Lu Ye acquired two new spirit runes.

Lu Ye hadn't examined these new spirit runes, as he held a hope in his heart to activate more spirit runes, seeking the one he desired most.

But now, with the fire spirit stones exhausted and Yu Daiwei gone, he couldn't afford to wait any longer.

He faintly felt the more he wanted something, the harder it was to obtain.

With his spirit immersed, the intricate patterns on the leaves magnified sharply in his field of vision, followed by a flood of information into his mind.

Fortunately, he now had Mental Consciousness, granting him great resistance to such spirit shocks, and besides a slight ache in his mind, he was unharmed.

A multitude of information erupted and surged within his mind, and Lu Ye slowly comprehended the profoundness of the new spirit runes.

As-Close-As-Siblings...

It wasn't the spirit rune he had hoped for.

After careful understanding, Lu Ye showed a slight change in expression.

This spirit rune, strictly speaking, is somewhat similar to Twin Flying Phoenixes, both used for borrowing strength.

But compared to Twin Flying Phoenixes, it seems to have broader applicability.

Twin Flying Phoenixes only affect two people, allowing mutual borrowing of all body foundation.

As-Close-As-Siblings also involves borrowing strength but isn't limited to just two people. Everyone within its spirit rune range can borrow from each other, though the effectiveness of such borrowing, Lu Ye hadn't tested and couldn't deduce.

In comparison, both spirit runes have their strengths and weaknesses, and As-Close-As-Siblings is more suitable for forming an array.

Forming an array among different cultivators is a challenging task, considering differences in aura, cultivation, and temperament, all hindrances in forming an array.

Only those who have spent years together, with intimate relations, or have carefully coordinated and trained together have a chance to form an array. Once formed, the aura among cultivators becomes tightly linked, often unleashing far greater strength than individual capacities.

Thus, in this aspect, As-Close-As-Siblings goes beyond merely borrowing strength but combines different cultivators' forces in one place, allowing them to exert strength beyond their own.

This is indeed a good spirit rune, but it's of little use for Lu Ye's current situation.

He checked the other spirit rune.

Soul Taming...

This is a divine rune that must be activated by Mental Consciousness!

Lu Ye immediately thought of his other divine rune, Bewitchment, as they evidently share many common attributes.

Previously in Tianyuan City's secret realm, relying on Bewitchment Divine Runes, he controlled an Insect Race team, slaughtering greatly, earning much battle merit and exchanging for lots of Soul Cleansing Water.

However, Bewitchment Divine Runes act more like enticing; under the influence of these divine runes, only the spiritually unintelligent Insect Race follow his orders.

In contrast, the effect of Soul Taming is more thorough.

That's absolute control over the psyche!

One is deception and trickery, the other is domination and enslavement, naturally, they are different.

This spirit rune...

Lu Ye's eyes slowly brightened, he stood up, and pushed open the wooden house's door.

Dao Thirteen stood outside like a wooden stake, his stout body looking loose, yet containing astonishing explosive power.

"Lift your head," Lu Ye instructed him.

Dao Thirteen seemed not to have heard.

Lu Ye was helpless, and could only quietly surge his Mental Consciousness, urging the Soul Taming Spirit Runes towards Dao Thirteen.

From several interactions, Lu Ye had discovered Dao Thirteen's spiritual intelligence had obvious deficiencies. His strength was indeed formidable, but his mind wasn't very bright.

So Lu Ye wanted to see if he could employ the Soul Taming Divine Runes on Dao Thirteen. If successful, he could easily control Dao Thirteen.

Then he could have him open the secret realm entrance, and leave on his own. Wouldn't that be wonderful?

Under the surge of Mental Consciousness, Lu Ye clearly felt a massive barrier obstructing his Mental Consciousness, like an invisible wall.

That was Dao Thirteen's psyche defense!

Though this guy wasn't bright, at the end of the day, he was a Divine Sea Realm cultivator, and his psyche defense wasn't easy to break through.

Instead, Lu Ye's head buzzed for a moment, experiencing the feeling of hitting a solid wall, causing dizziness and blurred vision.

This was also a contest of psyches, though Dao Thirteen was clearly a notch higher!

Shaking his head, Lu Ye's vision slowly recovered, only to see Dao Thirteen looking at him with eyes raised, brows tightly furrowed, seemingly angry...

Lu Ye ignored him, calmed himself slightly, and once again activated the Soul Taming Spirit Runes.

With a boom, the sensation of hitting a solid wall returned, causing Lu Ye's body to stagger, with a stronger reaction than before.

It took quite an effort to recover, feeling parched with thirst and nauseous, unmistakably signs of excessive depletion of Mental Consciousness.

Simple activation of the Soul Taming Divine Runes wouldn't elicit such a strong reaction. It's just that failing to break through Dao Thirteen's psyche defense caused significant backlash to Lu Ye.

Quickly, he took out Soul Cleansing Water and swallowed a drop to recover.

Looking up, Dao Thirteen now seemed even angrier, fists clenched tight, knuckles cracking, eyes glaring like copper bells, nostrils flaring hot air, with a stance clearly ready to punch.

Lu Ye's eye twitched slightly, feeling somewhat guilty, as if bullying an honest man.

Determined, he tried the Soul Taming Divine Runes on Dao Thirteen for the third time.

They say three is the charm, if it doesn't work this time, then it's completely hopeless, Lu Ye was mentally prepared for this. Though coincidentally born with Mental Consciousness, nurturing a soul body, he ultimately wasn't a genuine Divine Sea Realm.

At the True Lake Realm level, his soul might be strong, but against a real Divine Sea Realm, it was nothing. Breaking Dao Thirteen's psyche defense was very difficult.

Again, a violent impact came, leaving Lu Ye dizzy, vision blurring, and within sight, a fist rapidly enlarged, followed by falling unconscious.

Who knows how much time had passed before Lu Ye gradually awakened, thanks to the Soul Cleansing Water consumed earlier, he didn't feel too uncomfortable, though the power of his Mental Consciousness within the Divine Pool was greatly depleted.

He slowly got up from the ground, shaking his head, vaguely feeling something was wrong, wiping his mouth and nose, his hand was covered in blood.

Memories before passing out flooded back, he looked up angrily at Dao Thirteen, "You hit me?"

Prior to the disturbance of the psyche, he faintly saw a fist enlarging rapidly in view, now realizing he was punched by Dao Thirteen!

Dao Thirteen kept his head down, unmoving. Though not bright, he knew the previous action was wrong, mainly acting on instinct without restraint.

Lu Ye was more furious, "Your Family Head told you to watch me, who told you to hit me?"

With that, he kicked straight at Dao Thirteen's chest.

Dao Thirteen's body slightly shook, remained composed, while Lu Ye's expression changed, slowly lowering the kicking foot, visibly trembled below the calf.

This guy's body was seemingly cast from copper and iron, that kick left Dao Thirteen unscathed, while Lu Ye's leg felt numb.

Kicked, Dao Thirteen's stout body shrunk back; already hunched, now appeared even more stooped, looking like he did something wrong.

Lu Ye fiercely glared at him, "No next time!" Slammed the door shut, squat down, massaging his cramped calf muscle.

Confirmed, Soul Taming doesn't work on Dao Thirteen!

At least not until his psyche strength exceeds Dao Thirteen's; unable to breach his psyche defense, how could he control him?

Inside the wood house, Lu Ye recovered for a while, activated the Split Shadow Spirit Runes.

A moment later, a shadow formed from his own spirit force and blood Qi energy, he then employed the Single-Stalk Twin Lotus on his shadow.

The Talent Tree's roots extended into the shadow, gradually solidifying it, soon forming a doppelganger identical to the main body.

Chapter 1004 The Way of Leaving

In the wooden cabin, Lu Ye conjured his doppelganger and then took out clothes to throw to the doppelganger, instructing him to dress properly. After carefully checking to ensure there were no anomalies, he constructed Concealment and Breath-concealing Spirit Runes over himself, and vanished from the spot.

The doppelganger pushed the door open, and Dao Thirteen, standing outside, immediately looked up.

The doppelganger ignored him and leapt forward, flying into the distance, while Dao Thirteen shadowed him closely, not leaving even an inch of space.

Only when the doppelganger, with Dao Thirteen in tow, reached the boundary of this Nameless Secret Realm, did Lu Ye's real body start to move back at the wooden cabin.

He quietly sneaked out of the cabin, heading directly toward the entrance's direction.

The entrance was some distance away from the lake, and as long as he was careful enough, Dao Thirteen shouldn't notice anything amiss.

Reaching the entrance, Lu Ye's real body revealed itself. Mimicking Yu Daiwei, he raised his hand and pressed into the void, prompting his spirit force.

Strictly speaking, the opening of the secret realm's entrance is akin to opening the restriction lock of a storage sack; if the secret realm is viewed as a storage sack, then the realm's portal is the restriction lock, though the restriction lock on the secret realm's side is far more complex than that of a storage sack.

Lu Ye had many insights on opening restriction locks of storage sacks, having purposely trained in it back then, so given enough time, he was confident in being able to open the exit of the secret realm.

However, after merely attempting a few times, Lu Ye abandoned the effort.

For no other reason than that such actions, with spirit force surging, created too much commotion, making it highly likely for Dao Thirteen to discover, especially since this secret realm wasn't large and Dao Thirteen was at the Divine Sea Realm.

Once Dao Thirteen detected movement here, the secrecy of the doppelganger would be a minor issue; Dao Thirteen would surely follow Yu Daiwei's orders to eliminate him without mercy.

Setting up a formation here to cover things up was an option, but Lu Ye couldn't guarantee during this action, Yu Daiwei or that Venerable Lord wouldn't come bursting in. Should Yu Daiwei or the Venerable Lord intrude during this process and catch him red-handed, it would be embarrassing.

The risk was too great! This approach wouldn't work.

With this in mind, he realized there was only one last option, the only way to escape this place.

Yu Daiwei thought Lu Ye had no chance of leaving this secret realm given his abilities and Dao Thirteen's strict guard. However, Lu Ye truly found it not difficult to leave; it might just take some time.

The real body returned to the wooden cabin, continuing to hide.

The doppelganger, on the other hand, moved with Dao Thirteen to the entrance and sat there in meditation.

The distance between the real body and the doppelganger was widened, thus reducing the likelihood of Dao Thirteen discovering the real body.

Once certain that Dao Thirteen's attention was fully on the doppelganger, the real body then left the wooden cabin, flying straight in one direction.

In no time, he reached the location.

Not in a hurry to act, he first set up some formations to obscure this area, then rummaged through the storage space, quickly finding a pickaxe-shaped Spiritual Artifact.

Digging, excavating a pit!

With the big array as a cover and ample distance, plus the doppelganger distracting Dao Thirteen at the entrance, Lu Ye wasn't worried about exposure risks here, working diligently.

The efficiency was quite high, and in no time he had dug a deep pit, delving deep downward.

Over the next two days, Lu Ye was busy here, directly creating a hole over a hundred zhang deep.

With the last pickaxe swing, as if something got pierced, dense nature's spiritual energy suddenly spilled out, enveloping Lu Ye's surroundings.

Lu Ye felt a surge of joy, knowing he had found the Spirit Vein of this secret realm.

And this was his key to leaving this place.

Having had experiences on the Unparalleled Continent before, Lu Ye naturally knew that such small secret realms, detached from the larger world, needed to rely on a Spirit Vein or Earth Vein to sustain themselves year after year.

Back on the Unparalleled Continent, he had planted the Heaven's Augury Pillars in several secret realms, and these pillars drained their Earth Veins dry, causing the secret realms' portals to be revealed.

The same was true in the Sword Weapon Sect secret realm, where the Earth Core Fire maintained the realm's existence. He spent two months back then, continually drawing the power from the Earth Core Fire with the Talent Tree, causing the Sword Weapon Sect secret realm to collapse entirely.

Having such experiences, Lu Ye naturally knew that once the Spirit Vein that this secret realm relied on became fragile to a critical point, the realm could no longer be sustained.

Therefore, to leave this secret realm, he didn't need to open its portal; he only needed to find a way to siphon the power of the Spirit Vein it depended on, causing it to dry out swiftly.

This method surely takes a considerable amount of time, but it's safe and discreet.

Previously, during the few days Yu Daiwei spent here, Lu Ye would spend some time walking around each day, but it was not merely a simple stroll.

He was searching for the convergence point of the Spirit Vein here.

Through his mental consciousness, this location was where the Spirit Vein was the shallowest, so he chose to dig the pit here.

Now that the Spirit Vein was revealed, his task became simple, to activate the Talent Tree's power, and siphon the Power of the Spirit Vein!

It took some time, but it was his only way out at the moment.

Without rushing to activate the power of the Talent Tree, he flew out of the cave entrance to examine the surrounding formation layout. Once he confirmed that the Concealment big array was operating well, ensuring no risk of exposure unless intentionally probed, he descended back to the cave bottom and sat cross-legged.

Activating the power of the Talent Tree, in an instant, root-like tendrils invisible to the naked eye extended, reaching out in all directions.

As his cultivation improved, the range the tree's roots could extend clearly increased, which in turn enhanced the efficiency of their absorption.

The roots penetrated the Spirit Vein, and under Lu Ye's technique, an unstoppable devouring force emanated from the root tendrils of the Talent Tree, absorbing the power within the Spirit Vein.

Immersing his mind to observe, a faint gray mist rose from the Talent Tree, evidently a sign of the tree burning away impurities.

Though the power from the Spirit Vein was abundant, it was not pure. This was different from using the spirit fortune stick for cultivation, where the Talent Tree barely reacted, indicating the high purity of spirit force absorbed during those times.

However, even with such absorption, the burning by the Talent Tree could ensure the purity of its own spirit force.

Silently operating the Black rank skill, he maintained a calm mind.

Such practice was undoubtedly extremely tedious, but aside from this, Lu Ye found no better way to escape.

At the entrance, his doppelganger also sat cross-legged, appearing utterly bored, while Dao Thirteen stood like a wooden stake beside him, unmoving, barely noticeable except for his faint breathing, making him almost indistinguishable from a dead person.

Days passed one after another.

The secret realm remained calm and undisturbed.

At a certain moment, the exit of the secret realm opened, Yu Daiwei flashed in, immediately noticing Lu Ye sitting there, seemingly cultivating.

The eyebrows furrowed: "What are you up to?"

These days, she came to the secret realm every ten days or so, mainly to check if there was anything unusual with Lu Ye. Every time she came, Lu Ye was sitting cross-legged at the entrance.

She didn't believe Lu Ye had resigned to his fate, as the Venerable Lord had already said Lu Yiye surely had a way to leave this secret realm.

Could sitting in meditation alone allow him to leave? Yu Daiwei vaguely felt that the Venerable Lord might have misjudged this time.

The doppelganger opened its eyes to glance at Yu Daiwei, then acted as if it hadn't seen her, continuing to sit quietly with closed eyes.

Yu Daiwei didn't get a response, but she wasn't concerned, turning her head to Dao Thirteen and instructed, "Keep an eye on him."

She then turned and left.

She never lingered here; mainly because the Venerable Lord wasn't around, staying here was pointless, and she had many other matters to attend to, leaving her no time to stay here idling.

If not for checking on Lu Ye's situation, she wouldn't have come to this secret realm easily.

After she left, the real body finally breathed a sigh of relief. Although the Concealment big array he set up might still keep Yu Daiwei from noticing anything even if she investigated the secret realm, nothing was guaranteed.

If Yu Daiwei were to detect any signs, implementing his plan would become difficult.

Fortunately, Yu Daiwei never imagined anyone could execute such a wondrous doppelganger technique that even a Divine Sea Realm could not discern any flaw. Seeing Lu Ye sitting quietly at the entrance, she saw no need to further investigate.

In a pit more than a hundred feet underground, Lu Ye continued to activate the Talent Tree's power to devour the power of the Spirit Vein.

Since falling into this place, it had been over a month, and during this time, the Talent Tree constantly absorbed and extracted energy, keeping him in a state of continuous cultivation.

Lu Ye had never cultivated for such an extended period before.

So even though the cultivation efficiency wasn't high compared to the theft of Heaven's Augury method, his cultivation had still broken through a minor level, now reaching the True Lake Level 6 stage.

But the power of the Spirit Vein remained abundant, and it was uncertain how much longer it would take to reach that critical point.

During this time, Lu Ye conceived a method to enhance the efficiency of absorbing the power of the Spirit Vein.

That was to condense another doppelganger to help with the absorption.

As the doppelganger possessed all the abilities of the main body, it could naturally cultivate, and Lu Ye had specially verified this a few days ago. The only issue was the doppelganger lacked sufficient Talent Tree fuel, making it difficult to maintain the purity of its spirit force once it started cultivating, as it couldn't burn away the minuscule impurities in the spirit force.

The main body was different, with an abundance of stored Talent Tree fuel. Apart from anything else, just from devouring two months' worth of Earth Core Fire in the Sword Weapon Sect secret realm, the fuel saved up was considerable.

Therefore, Lu Ye could freely devour and absorb the power within the Spirit Vein without worrying about affecting his foundation.

But that wasn't a significant problem; the doppelganger would eventually be absorbed by the main body, allowing the power within the doppelganger to be refined and made pure.

If he could successfully condense another doppelganger, the efficiency could be multiplied. If he could condense two doppelgangers, the efficiency could increase even further.

But after several attempts, Lu Ye was ultimately unsuccessful.

Chapter 1005 Farewell Until We Meet Again

The mystery of the doppelganger lies in that section of Talent Tree roots stored within the doppelganger's body. It makes the doppelganger lifelike, indistinguishable between true and false, and maintains a close connection with the original body regardless of distance.

The main body can propel the Split Shadow and construct the Single-Stalk Twin Lotus within the Split Shadow, but the Talent Tree cannot extend another root into the Split Shadow to further condense into a doppelganger.

Lu Ye faintly felt this related to the transformation degree of the Talent Tree.

The Talent Tree underwent one metamorphosis, hence it can split one root outward, but unable to split a second. If the Talent Tree undergoes several more metamorphoses, the number of doppelgangers Lu Ye can condense will undoubtedly increase.

This made him realize the preciousness of his current doppelganger.

Previously, he only subconsciously felt the doppelganger should not be casually lost. The loss of blood Qi, spirit force, and mental consciousness power were secondary. If the Talent Tree root stored within the doppelganger was lost, the loss would be significant.

But now it seems, if the doppelganger were truly to be lost, the loss could be far more serious than he imagined, possibly never again able to condense a new doppelganger.

Time passed.

When Lu Ye had been trapped in this secret realm for over two months, his cultivation had reached True Lake Level 7.

During this time, Yu Daiwei came once again, still seeing Lu Ye's doppelganger sitting at the entrance, Dao Thirteen quietly guarding beside. Since then, she never returned.

Presumably, she considered it as Lu Ye accepting his fate, with no possibility of escaping the secret realm, thus she saw no need to waste time paying much attention.

Another half month went by in the blink of an eye.

One day, as Lu Ye was activating the Talent Tree's power to absorb the Power of the Spirit Vein, he suddenly felt his form slightly sway, as if the sound of muffled thunder came from deep underground, followed by a series of tremors.

He quickly opened his eyes, expanded his mental consciousness, and meticulously sensed the surroundings.

After a while, he revealed a delighted expression.

Having struggled cultivating here for two and a half months, continuously absorbing the Power of the Spirit Vein, a sign of success finally appeared! The anomaly just now was the clearest sign.

At the secret realm's entrance, Dao Thirteen also noticed the anomaly, but his mind was not sharp. Though his expression showed some uncertainty, he did not understand what had happened.

If Yu Daiwei were here instead, she would definitely investigate all around, and even if Lu Ye had set up a covering big array above the pit, might not be able to elude her discerning eyes.

With the abnormal commotion subsiding, Dao Thirteen also calmed down, continuing to stand there like a stake.

Closely monitoring his movements, the doppelganger slightly sighed in relief. He had already decided that if Dao Thirteen showed any signs of movement, he would immediately do something to attract his attention.

The plan was showing initial success, indicating success was not far ahead.

Needless to say, the Power of the Spirit Vein in this secret realm was still very rich and ample. Lu Ye truly wanted to devour the Spirit Vein entirely, but it could not be done quickly. He only needed the Spirit Vein to reach a critical point, a point that could not sustain the secret realm.

If the secret realm was a house, then the Spirit Vein was its foundation. Lu Ye did not need to destroy all the foundation, only damage a part, and the house would collapse on its own.

In the following days, the frequency of anomalies in the secret realm grew more and more frequent, with humming sounds from deep underground echoing from time to time, causing tremors throughout the secret realm.

Even the perpetually murky sky of the secret realm began to show some unusual phenomena.

It was evidently a sign the secret realm was about to collapse.

Dao Thirteen was affected, showing some abnormal emotions. Being a Divine Sea Realm cultivator, he subconsciously sensed some danger, but had to follow Yu Daiwei's instructions to stay close to Lu Ye, making it difficult for him, as his dull mind had no idea how to handle the situation.

Every time the doppelganger opened its eyes to look at him, it saw an expression of impatience and unease on his face, with some sounds resembling beast roars occasionally coming from his throat.

Until a certain moment, when a great humming sound rang out, dramatic changes swept through the secret realm, and the murky sky shattered like a broken mirror, even the scenery within the entire secret realm started to distort and change.

The secret realm was about to collapse!

Having gone through a similar experience in the Sword Weapon Sect's secret realm, Lu Ye was naturally familiar with it.

Once the secret realm collapsed, both he and Dao Thirteen would leave this prison, and he merely needed to reclaim the doppelganger then escape Dao Thirteen.

At the same time, at the secret realm's exit, a portal faintly appeared.

Due to the imminent collapse of the secret realm, the once tightly sealed exit showed signs of opening. Through that exit, he could vaguely see some of the outside scenery.

Dao Thirteen watched with undisguised bewilderment, not understanding why this was happening.

The doppelganger sitting beside him suddenly opened its eyes, and Dao Thirteen immediately lowered his head to look at it.

The doppelganger smiled at him, "Farewell!"

As soon as the words fell, spirit force was activated throughout its body, pouring into the array beneath.

A teleportation array had already been set up beneath, only finalized yesterday, not daring to set it up too early, lest Yu Daiwei suddenly rush in and sees it.

The array setup process encountered no interference, Dao Thirteen merely observed, following Yu Daiwei's orders to prevent him from attempting to open the portal, caring little about array setups.

With the big array activated, light shone brilliantly, and in the distortion of space, the doppelganger vanished.

Dao Thirteen was stunned for a moment, and then he roared, a torrent of visible air waves spewed from his mouth, blasting out over ten zhang. He swiftly rushed to the spot where the doppelganger disappeared, clawing frantically with both hands, and in the blink of an eye, he dug a big pit, but there was no trace of Lu Ye.

Only then did he remember to urge his Mental Consciousness to search around for Lu Ye's whereabouts, but still found nothing.

The place where Lu Ye was had a big array concealing it, and at this chaotic moment within the secret realm, spirit force was surging. Even a Divine Sea Realm cultivator like Dao Thirteen couldn't hope to find any clues in a short time.

Over a hundred zhang underground, the doppelganger returned through the teleportation array, and Lu Ye raised his hand on the doppelganger, urging the Talent Tree's power to retrieve it.

Just after he finished all this, the secret realm suddenly collapsed.

A huge crack suddenly appeared in the sky, deep like an abyss.

Lu Ye shot skyward, darting towards the crack. As long as he rushed through, he could return to the Nine Provinces. As for how to shake off Dao Thirteen, he would have to improvise. No matter what, it was better than being trapped in this secret realm.

Just as his figure appeared, Dao Thirteen sensed it, roared angrily, and leapt from his spot, closely pursuing Lu Ye.

At this moment, Lu Ye had already rushed into the crack, but in the next instant, his expression changed.

Because the expectation that rushing into the crack would return him to the Nine Provinces was not realized. Instead, Lu Ye felt as if he was falling into a bottomless abyss, continuously plummeting downward.

This feeling... was a bit similar to teleportation, and it was a long-distance teleportation because the whole process brought a most unpleasant experience.

Dizzy and disoriented, Lu Ye only felt his consciousness ascending infinitely.

In a mysterious way, it was as if he was in a nameless void. In this special environment, neither the eyes could see nor the mind could sense, yet peculiar images imprinted themselves in his heart.

It was a giant gourd-shaped landmass, drifting in the void, arriving from nowhere and heading to nowhere.

Like a lonely boat sailing in an endless sea, it seemed desolate and forlorn.

Lu Ye initially couldn't react to what this was, but soon he was startled and became aware.

This giant gourd-shaped landmass was actually a world!

Was this the true appearance of the Nine Provinces?

He thought to himself.

Slightly amazed, how could the Nine Provinces be shaped like this? What puzzled him more was that he had merely tried to escape the collapsing Nameless Secret Realm, yet his consciousness elevated to perceive the whole Nine Provinces.

But he was quickly shocked because he suddenly realized this might not be the Nine Provinces.

He hadn't seen the ten-part map of the entire Nine Provinces, but he did possess the ten-part map of Bingzhou.

Comparing both, he couldn't discern any familiar signs from the giant landmass before him.

This was most likely not the Nine Provinces!

But if this wasn't the Nine Provinces World, then where was it?

Just as his mind wavered with doubt, that giant gourd-shaped landmass rapidly enlarged in his vision.

The mysteriously elevated consciousness suddenly returned to his body!

Only then did Lu Ye realize his situation, where he was plummeting towards that gourd-shaped world at an extremely fast speed, with meteors crashing down alongside him, blending into the falling meteors, appearing quite unremarkable.

What astonished him even more was that an inexplicable force shielded his body, so even though he was descending rapidly, he didn't feel any discomfort.

Lu Ye's eye twitched slightly, and he had some suspicions in his heart.

His current predicament was probably orchestrated by the Nine Provinces Heaven's Augury!

The inexplicable force protecting him was the most obvious evidence. This force couldn't appear out of thin air. He hadn't activated any spirit force, so besides the mysterious Heaven's Augury, who could silently place such a force on him?

With his past experience on the Unparalleled Continent, Lu Ye naturally knew that the Nine Provinces wasn't the only world, so that gourd-shaped massive landmass must be another world unknown to him.

What he couldn't understand was, what did Heaven's Augury want him to do here?

There was no indication beforehand. He merely wished to escape from the Nameless Secret Realm, but as a result, after leaving the Nameless Secret Realm, he didn't return to the Nine Provinces but came to such a place and arrived in this manner.

It was simply baffling.

However, considering everything before, Heaven's Augury wouldn't act without purpose. Sending him here was clearly because Heaven's Augury wanted him to accomplish something here.

When the cart reaches the mountain, there will be a road; thinking too much now is futile.

Below was the rapidly approaching ground, and around him were meteors burning fiercely.

Seeing that there were only about a hundred zhang left to the ground, Lu Ye was about to activate spirit force to travel through air, but just as he did so, he suddenly discovered that all his spirit force was confined within his body, unable to be activated.

Chapter 1006 Helper

Lu Ye was shocked out of his wits.

At this moment, he was in a state of free-falling from a height of ten thousand feet, like a meteorite plummeting from the sky. However, he was confident in his ability to fly through air, so he was not flustered in the slightest. But if he couldn't even activate his spirit force, how could he fly through air?

From such a great height, even with the foundation of the True Lake Realm, a real fall to the ground would likely result in a life-or-death situation.

The mysterious force covering his body surface disappeared at some unknown point, and Lu Ye clearly sensed that this force turned into some kind of imprisonment imprint that was burned into his body, causing his spirit force to stagnate.

The closer he got to the ground, the faster his speed became, with the wind whistling past his ears.

Numerous thoughts surged through his mind like lightning, seeking a way to break the predicament.

What could be confirmed was that his bizarre arrival in such an unfamiliar place was a handiwork of the Nine Provinces Heaven's Augury. Most likely, Heaven's Augury sent him here to accomplish something, and since that was the case, Heaven's Augury would not leave him without a survival route.

The mysterious force previously shrouding him seemed like a form of protection, more like a barrier, a concealment...

What was Heaven's Augury concealing?

The many meteorites falling together with him did not seem like a coincidence, more like a form of confusion tactic.

On the brink of life and death, Lu Ye's mind was unprecedentedly clear, quickly coming to an uncertain conclusion.

Heaven's Augury brought him here but was afraid of being discovered by someone, so it sent multiple meteorites to fall with him as a means of confusion, and the imprisonment of his power was probably to prevent his aura from leaking.

But if that was truly the case, it was a bitter experience for him.

He turned his head to look around. The nearest meteorite was still hundreds of feet away, and if he could reach the meteorite's side, he might slow down the falling speed, but in his current state, he couldn't manage it at all.

The ground was getting closer and closer. Lu Ye gritted his teeth and strained his ocular power to look downward, hoping to find a place with water, which might save his life.

However, as far as he could see, there was only a dense forest below, with no sign of any body of water.

He could only brace himself! His physique was strong. If he was lucky, he might not die.

Just as he was thinking this, the imprisoning force within him slightly relaxed, and the stalled spirit force began to flow, though still sluggishly, yet providing a glimmer of hope for survival.

He quickly tried to activate his spirit force to travel through air, but was unable to succeed.

At this moment, his cultivation was suppressed to the Spirit Stream Level 3, rendering him unable to travel through air.

Seeing the ground only dozens of feet away, Lu Ye hastily squeezed his remaining spirit force, constructing wings spirit runes on his back.

With a whoosh, a pair of fiery red wings spread out...

However, in the next instant, the wings shattered into nothingness, turning into shimmering starlight.

A cultivation of Spirit Stream Level 3 was simply insufficient to maintain the wings spirit runes.

But for that fleeting moment, the support of the wings dramatically reduced Lu Ye's falling speed. Almost at the instant when the wings dissipated, his body plummeted heavily to the ground.

He was shaken up and disoriented, his whole body wracked with pain.

Rumble, rumble, rumble...

Deafening noise resounded from all directions, accompanied by waves of scorching currents. These were caused by the meteorites falling with him, crashing to the ground with earth-shaking impact and startling birds into the sky.

A strong tremor transmitted from all sides, and Lu Ye lay on the ground, blood streaming from his mouth and nose, unable to get up for a while.

As expected, Heaven's Augury left him a path to survival, but being suppressed to only Spirit Stream Level 3 had certainly caused him much suffering.

His mind moved, checking himself over.

The injuries were not severe, and fortunately, he reacted swiftly at the last moment, immediately constructing the wings spirit runes upon sensing something amiss; otherwise, the outcome would have been dire.

What made Lu Ye even more relieved was that although his cultivation was imprisoned and suppressed, his mental consciousness was still usable.

This was somewhat good news.

After lying on the ground for a brief moment, Lu Ye got up.

This place was not suitable for a prolonged stay.

Regardless of why Heaven's Augury sent him here or what it wanted him to do, from the previous maneuvers of Heaven's Augury, it could be seen that this was not a benevolent place, otherwise, there wouldn't be such fuss.

Back when he and Ying Wuji and the others were sent to the Unparalleled Continent, they were directly transmitted there without so much trouble.

This world surely held great dangers, and the commotion of meteorites falling would likely attract many creatures of this realm to investigate.

Lu Ye knew nothing about this world, so he naturally dared not recklessly expose himself.

Choosing a direction at random, he limped forward.

He hadn't gone far when Lu Ye suddenly turned his head towards a direction, his expression filled with surprise and suspicion.

Under the perception of his mental consciousness, there was a faint sign of life in that direction, and this sign felt incredibly familiar to him.

After a brief hesitation, he headed in that direction.

Before long, he arrived at the spot, immediately spotting a sturdy figure lying in a crater.

Who else could it be but Dao Thirteen?

This guy actually came as well...

Lu Ye suddenly remembered that, when he rushed into the crack in the sky in the Nameless Secret Realm, he vaguely heard Dao Thirteen's angry roar. It seems he followed him and got swept into this place.

Who knows what he encountered that left him unconscious here.

Judging by the large pit beneath him, it seems the guy fell directly down, creating an indent in the ground.

Truly worthy of a physique cultivator of the Divine Sea Realm; even such a fall didn't kill him!

Looking at the unconscious Dao Thirteen, Lu Ye's face suddenly lit up with joy.

Dao Thirteen's entry into this place must have been an accident, but since Heaven's Augury has the means to send him here, it should also have the means to exclude Dao Thirteen.

Yet Dao Thirteen still followed him here, which means this is the result of Heaven's Augury's tacit approval.

It seems he is not alone; the Nine Provinces Heaven's Augury even sent a helper along.

Under normal circumstances, Lu Ye really had no way to deal with Dao Thirteen; his cultivation was not as strong as others, so what could he do?

But a Dao Thirteen who is unconscious... that could be something to work with.

Lu Ye hurriedly stepped forward and kicked Dao Thirteen's body, not only to confirm his unconscious state but also to get revenge for the punch received that day.

Dao Thirteen remained motionless.

Confirming he wouldn't wake easily, Lu Ye lifted a hand, extending his finger to tap on Dao Thirteen's forehead, activating the Soul Taming Divine Runes on him.

At this moment, undoubtedly, Dao Thirteen's psyche defense was at its weakest. If he succeeded in Soul Taming, he could enslave him, and in such an entirely unfamiliar world, a helper like Dao Thirteen could be extremely valuable.

Full of anticipation, which quickly turned into disappointment.

That feeling of crashing into a solid copper wall came back, though not as severe as before, even the unconscious Dao Thirteen's psyche defense was not something Lu Ye could easily break through.

Not daring to be negligent, nor delay, Lu Ye quickly took out soul water and swallowed a drop, swiftly replenishing his consumed Soul Power, attempting a second time.

Still ineffective, instead, the act made Dao Thirteen groan, with a barely noticeable look of pain on his face.

Lu Ye felt that if he continued this way, he might end up awakening Dao Thirteen.

Once he wakes up, the idea of enslaving him with the Soul Taming Divine Runes would be impossible to implement. In any other situation, someone at the Divine Sea Realm like Dao Thirteen wouldn't easily fall into unconsciousness.

In a flash of thought, Lu Ye had made his decision and took out the Mental Consciousness Destruction Sword from his storage space.

On the day Lu Ye attempted to enslave Dao Thirteen, he thought of using the Mental Consciousness Destruction Sword but decided against it after careful consideration. Using such a thing would certainly enrage Dao Thirteen, and he would definitely hammer him, which he couldn't withstand.

Now, however, was the perfect opportunity to use the Mental Consciousness Destruction Sword.

Mobilizing his meager spirit force, he continuously funneled it into the Mental Consciousness Destruction Sword...

Under normal circumstances, using this treasure would be a trivial matter, but at this moment, all of Lu Ye's cultivation was greatly suppressed, so he had to take it slowly.

Yet, this was exactly a most time-sensitive moment.

It took a full thirty breaths before Lu Ye felt it was ready, stabbing the small sword in his hand toward Dao Thirteen's forehead.

The Mental Consciousness Destruction Sword, only about a palm's length in size, didn't even pierce Dao Thirteen's skin, but a flash of spirit light from the sword disappeared into Dao Thirteen's forehead.

Even in unconsciousness, Dao Thirteen immediately revealed a look of pain, his eyes snapping open, glowing with blood-red as if he were an enraged bull.

And in that very moment, Lu Ye activated his Mental Consciousness against him.

Unlike in previous experiences, this time Lu Ye didn't feel any resistance at all; his Mental Consciousness easily broke through Dao Thirteen's psyche defense, engraving the Soul Taming upon his psyche.

Dao Thirteen's expression grew even more pained, emitting a low growl from his throat, as if wanting to resist, yet powerless to do so.

After a moment, Lu Ye drew back his Mental Consciousness with a slightly pale face, gasping for breath, as he examined Dao Thirteen before him.

The Soul Taming Divine Runes had been successfully constructed; he could clearly feel there was a mysterious connection between him and Dao Thirteen, similar to the connection with Amber, but the control was more absolute.

Perhaps because his psyche was torn by the Mental Consciousness Destruction Sword, Dao Thirteen shook his head vigorously, the spirit light in his eyes becoming more obscured.

His mind had not been particularly sharp to begin with, and now it seemed even duller.

Lu Ye took out another drop of soul water and fed it to him.

Visibly, the pained look on Dao Thirteen's face quickly subsided, and the obscurity in his eyes slowly dissipated.

"Go!" Lu Ye ordered, turning and running in one direction.

Dao Thirteen climbed up from the ground and closely followed.

While running, Lu Ye probed into Dao Thirteen's condition.

He soon discovered something: his cultivation was also suppressed! Because the spirit force fluctuations from Dao Thirteen were almost the same as his own, both at merely the Spirit Stream Level 3-4 stage.

This further confirmed Lu Ye's previous suspicion.

The Nine Provinces Heaven's Augury seemed to be employing this means to conceal their presence, avoiding detection by certain individuals of this realm.

Though their cultivation was suppressed to the Spirit Stream Realm level, the foundation of Dao Thirteen's Divine Sea Realm physique remained, especially since he was a physique cultivator, his body was much stronger than Lu Ye's.

After running a certain distance, Lu Ye decisively climbed onto Dao Thirteen's back, letting him carry him forward.

Dao Thirteen moved with flying speed!

Chapter 1007 Eerie Village

After a short moment, figures flew in from all directions, obviously coming to investigate the commotion of the meteor shower from the local entities.

For cultivators in any world, these meteors falling from the sky contain a vast amount of precious minerals that can be used for artifact refining, naturally making them highly coveted.

By this time, Lu Ye had already fled about 30 miles with Dao Thirteen carrying him.

During this escape, they encountered local entities flying overhead. Fortunately, Lu Ye was on alert due to his Mental Consciousness and thus didn't get exposed.

After running several hundred miles, Lu Ye found a cave and brought Dao Thirteen inside.

His cultivation was too severely suppressed to set up arrays, so he could only remain vigilant.

He didn't know what kind of world this was or what the entities of this realm were, nor did he understand why Heaven's Augury had sent him here.

As for how to return to the Nine Provinces, he had no clue whatsoever.

Therefore, the urgent task now was to gather intelligence on this realm, at least to figure out whether the entities here were of the human race or some other race.

Restoring cultivation was also a top priority. In such an unfamiliar environment, the cultivation of Spirit Stream Level 3 brought no sense of security to Lu Ye.

With this in mind, Lu Ye slowly began to form a plan.

Sitting cross-legged at the bottom of the cave, Lu Ye attempted to mobilize his spirit force to see if he could break through the mysterious suppression.

His cultivation was not fallen but suppressed, so if he could break through the mysterious suppression, he could restore it.

But after considerable effort, Lu Ye had to reluctantly give up, as he found that the mysterious force was extraordinarily solid and completely unshakeable for him.

However, he felt slightly comforted by the fact that the force suppressing his cultivation was dissipating at an extremely slow pace.

This meant that even if he did nothing, his cultivation could gradually recover, though the timeline for this process was uncertain.

With no immediate way to restore cultivation, he couldn't cultivate, nor could he leave hastily, rendering Lu Ye somewhat bored for the moment.

With an idea rising in his heart, he glanced at Dao Thirteen standing like a wooden stake beside him: "Sit down."

Dao Thirteen, having been implanted with the Soul Taming Divine Runes by him, was naturally obedient to his commands, and sat cross-legged.

"What kind of person is your Venerable Lord?" Lu Ye asked, having nothing else to do, hoping to gather information about the Venerable Lord from Dao Thirteen.

Though trapped in this unknown world, he knew he would return to Nine Provinces someday. Based on his brief interaction with the Venerable Lord, it was clear that this person harbored grand ambitions and had miraculous methods, potentially stirring up turmoil in Nine Provinces in the future.

Having more knowledge about the Venerable Lord would help him respond better once he returned to Nine Provinces.

Dao Thirteen shook his head, indicating he didn't know.

Lu Ye frowned: "What's his name?"

Dao Thirteen shook his head again.

Lu Ye continued to ask several questions, but Dao Thirteen either remained silent or shook his head, leaving Lu Ye rather helpless.

He had long noticed Dao Thirteen wasn't very smart; now, he realized this guy wasn't a fool but not far from one.

"Dao Thirteen is a Dao soldier!" Dao Thirteen suddenly uttered an inexplicable sentence.

"Dao soldier?" Lu Ye was puzzled.

"Yes." Dao Thirteen nodded.

What is a Dao soldier? Lu Ye had never heard of this term, but he vaguely sensed a few things.

Dao Thirteen was likely cultivated and refined by the Venerable Lord using some mysterious method, so despite having a strong cultivation, his spiritual intelligence was unclear. With a thought, Lu Ye asked, "Your name is Dao Thirteen, is there Dao Twelve, Dao Fourteen, and others like you?"

Dao Thirteen shook his head again.

Lu Ye suddenly lost interest in conversing.

In truth, it wouldn't be difficult to investigate the information Dao Thirteen knew; Lu Ye only needed to deploy a little telepathy. Once this divine rune was employed, any secrets in Dao Thirteen's mind could be probed by Lu Ye.

However, if he did that, Lu Ye's secrets would also be exposed to Dao Thirteen, so he was unwilling to use this method.

Even though Dao Thirteen had dim spiritual intelligence, Lu Ye still had to be cautious.

Abandoning the idea of gathering information from Dao Thirteen, the cave fell silent, with master and servant sitting wordlessly across from each other.

Time flew by, and three days later.

Lu Ye frowned deeply; in three days, his cultivation recovered a bit, but it was still only at Spirit Stream Level 3!

At this rate, restoring his original True Lake Realm cultivation could take forever, and without breaking the mysterious suppression, no matter how much he cultivated, it would be pointless.

He truly couldn't understand why Heaven's Augury was suppressing his cultivation or what it was masking.

Originally, he planned to leave this place once his cultivation recovered, to explore what kind of world this was, but now this plan was unfeasible.

He couldn't possibly stay here for a decade or two.

With no other choice, Lu Ye could only leave the hideout cave with Dao Thirteen.

In unfamiliar territory, Lu Ye didn't know which way to go, so he randomly chose a direction.

The master and servant traveled along the road, occasionally encountering some beasts, which they easily dealt with.

Although their cultivation was lacking, their Mental Consciousness was intact, so minor beasts posed no threat to them.

Fortunately, in just half a day, they exited the dense forest and saw a village at the edge.

The village seemed to have a large population because there were many houses. Lu Ye didn't rush in but instead explored the area for a long time from the outside.

Using his Mental Consciousness, he sensed that there were about a hundred households in the village, with a population approaching a thousand.

Lu Ye was relieved to find that the inhabitants were humans rather than some strange race. With his prior secret realm experiences, Lu Ye knew that in this vast Universe, not only is there one Nine Provinces World, but there isn't just the human race either.

However, there were some aspects that puzzled Lu Ye.

This village didn't look impressive, yet each household seemed quite affluent, and there were many children. The people here seemed particularly fecund. Each family had at least two or three children, some had six or seven.

Outside the village were large spirit fields, growing something similar to Spirit Rice. Lu Ye casually picked some and tasted them. The spirit force contained within was not strong, but if consumed for years, it could not only enhance one's cultivation level but also prolong life.

If true, then there should be many long-lived individuals in this world.

However, there were no notably elderly people in the village; those over forty were rare, and most appeared to be in their twenties or thirties.

There were cultivators in the village, numbering over a hundred. Strangely, they were all at the Spirit Stream Realm level. However, they didn't have the aura of cultivators; they seemed like ordinary farmers working in the fields just like other common people.

Logically, in such a well-off village, its people should be living freely. Yet, in Lu Ye's observations, everyone seemed to be in a state of constant anxiety, as if a danger could arise at any moment.

Even the children, who should have been carefree and smiling, seldom appeared as such.

These oddities left Lu Ye perplexed.

After observing for half a day, Lu Ye decided to enter the village.

No matter what, only by contacting the human race of this world could they gather information. Hiding in the mountains with Dao Thirteen wouldn't accomplish anything.

Before revealing himself, Lu Ye put away the Boulder Mountain Saber and even stuffed the storage sack into his clothes, leading Dao Thirteen into the village from one end.

The people working in the fields glanced at them but didn't pay further attention.

This puzzled Lu Ye even more. Normally, the arrival of strangers would cause some vigilance, but these people acted as if they hadn't seen them at all.

However, the children playing at the village entrance, upon seeing him and Dao Thirteen, ran towards the village's depths, with one older child shouting, "Village Chief, some escapees have arrived."

Escapees...

It seemed this world wasn't as peaceful as it appeared. Some unknown danger must be hanging like a mountain over these humans, causing their unrest.

Moreover, this danger seemed like it could descend at any time.

What exactly was this danger?

Lu Ye pondered uncertainly.

Perhaps the child's shout had alarmed the villagers, as people gradually opened their doors to observe but did not approach.

Until a middle-aged man in his forties approached from the front.

Lu Ye scrutinized him and found that he also had cultivation, but since the man didn't activate his spirit force, his realm couldn't be determined.

The middle-aged man was probably the village chief. Though possessing cultivation, he dressed as a farmer, which left Lu Ye bewildered.

In the Nine Provinces, anyone capable of cultivation wouldn't do fieldwork, as each sect and family sheltered numerous commoners who provided the mundane necessities.

But in this unknown world, such a setup seemed common.

The village chief looked somewhat pitiful, likely troubled, with reddened eyes indicating poor rest. He sized up Lu Ye and then Dao Thirteen behind him, and spoke, "Escapees?"

Lu Ye nodded silently and frowned deeply, portraying a look of considerable anguish.

Having no understanding of this world, he naturally adhered to the principle of saying less to make fewer mistakes. If they mistook him for an escapee, he might as well go along with it. Given his presumed status as an escapee, an expression of sorrow and resentment was fitting.

"Do you have cultivation?" the village chief asked again.

Lu Ye nodded once more, activating his own spirit force, revealing the meager fluctuations of his Spirit Stream Level 3 realm.

The village chief sighed, "You're quite lucky. Since you're here, stay. Whether it's fortune or disaster depends on your fate."

With that, he beckoned to Lu Ye.

Lu Ye then followed with Dao Thirteen.

Before long, under the village chief's guidance, the three arrived at a small courtyard.

Chapter 1008 Methods to Restore Cultivation

The village was full of small courtyard-style buildings, each household was like this, not too close to each other, with a bit of distance in between.

In terms of living environment, it was undoubtedly quite good.

"You two will stay here from now on. Since it's your first day, take a rest," the village chief instructed.

"Thank you, village chief," Lu Ye expressed his gratitude.

The village chief nodded, turned around, and left.

Lu Ye watched him leave and then led Dao Thirteen into the courtyard.

He hadn't expected to be assigned a place to live immediately upon arrival.

But as soon as he stepped into the courtyard, Lu Ye frowned.

The courtyard was in complete disarray, with a lot of bloodstains that hadn't dried, suggesting someone had died here. Judging by the scattered bloodstains, it wasn't just one person; at least five or six had died.

When the village chief assigned this courtyard to Lu Ye, he wondered where the original occupants had gone.

Now he finally understood.

The original occupants had met with misfortune, and the entire family had been wiped out!

Judging by the dryness of the bloodstains, it seemed to have happened in the last two days. Lu Ye was increasingly puzzled about what hidden dangers lurked in this seemingly prosperous village.

Or perhaps the villagers themselves were the danger?

If so, Lu Ye wasn't afraid. Although his and Dao Thirteen's cultivation was suppressed to the Spirit Stream Level 3, their mental consciousness remained intact, and Dao Thirteen's body was at the Divine Sea Realm. Even a True Lake Realm couldn't stir trouble before him.

If the villagers truly meant harm, they would surely hit a hard wall.

He worked with Dao Thirteen to tidy up the messy house and settled down.

After a while, Lu Ye took Dao Thirteen out of the courtyard, intending to find the village chief to gather some information.

However, they found the village eerily silent. Even the children who had been playing outside were nowhere to be seen, and every household had shut its doors tightly.

Lu Ye looked up at the sky; the sun hadn't even set...

Speechless for a moment, he didn't know what the villagers were hiding from.

He walked forward and stopped in front of a courtyard about a hundred yards away. Earlier, he saw the village chief enter this courtyard, which should be the village chief's residence.

The courtyard door was tightly closed, and Lu Ye knocked on it.

Inside, there was a flurry of activity, and he could faintly hear a child's scream briefly before it was muffled.

Soon after, the village chief's trembling voice sounded, "Who is it?"

"Village chief, it's me," Lu Ye said.

"Who are you!"

"The one who escaped here today."

As soon as Lu Ye finished speaking, there was a long exhalation from inside, and the village chief's voice became calmer, "Let's talk tomorrow. It's already late today. Go and rest quickly."

The sun hadn't even set; rest for what reason?

Since the village chief said so, Lu Ye couldn't insist and had to take Dao Thirteen back the same way.

The village remained silent like a spectral domain, with the occasional sound of a child crying from homes quickly silenced by adults who didn't dare to make a sound. Lu Ye frowned, increasingly unable to comprehend the ways of this world.

The night passed without words.

The next day, as light flooded the sky, the villagers gradually emerged, and children playing around could be seen all over the village.

Before Lu Ye could seek out the village chief, the village chief found him.

His eyes still red, suggesting inadequate rest, he looked at Lu Ye with some displeasure, "Don't wander around at night. You're a grown man; how can you not understand such a simple rule?"

Lu Ye wanted to ask why, but doing so would reveal his ignorance, so he could only nod and say, "I understand, thank you for your concern, village chief."

The village chief's expression finally relaxed a bit, and he said, "No matter where you're from before, now that you're in Cangnan Village, you're one of us. What did you do in your previous village?"

Lu Ye tentatively asked, "What can we do here?"

"Plant spirit fields, hunt in the mountains. The world is as it is, but we still have to survive."

He appeared to express the hardships and difficulties of life.

Lu Ye immediately understood that the village chief was here to assign them work. After all, now that they were in Cangnan Village, they couldn't live idle here without contributing.

"Then... hunting in the mountains?"

He had never done spirit field farming, and hunting in the mountains seemed easier. Along the way with Dao Thirteen, they had killed several beasts.

The village chief nodded, "You two have cultivation; planting spirit fields would waste your talents. You should join Brother Zhang Wu's team to go into the mountains today."

He waved them over, "Follow me."

Following the village chief to the village entrance, several teams were gathering, all intending to hunt in the mountains. The village chief led them to a team, whose leader was Brother Zhang Wu, whom he'd mentioned.

Brother Zhang Wu was a dark-skinned man, looking quite young, not yet thirty.

"Brother Zhang Wu, from now on, these two will be with you," the village chief said.

Brother Zhang Wu did not refuse and nodded, "Alright!"

"It's getting late, everyone go now. Make sure to return before the sun sets," the village chief advised.

The teams immediately dispersed, entering the mountain from different directions.

Lu Ye and Dao Thirteen were in Brother Zhang Wu's team.

There were about ten people in the team, each with some level of cultivation, but all were at the Spirit Stream Realm, with Brother Zhang Wu having the highest, just at Spirit Stream Level 5.

The others in the team were silent, their expressions solemn, as if hunting in the mountains was dangerous work.

Only Brother Zhang Wu, as the captain, took care of the newcomer Lu Ye, speaking a few more words to him: "Our hunting team needs to enter the mountain every five days. Not counting today, in five days, you'll gather again at the village entrance."

"Got it," Lu Ye nodded.

There were still many beasts in the mountains, occasionally even some low-level demon beasts appeared. The team's hunting went smoothly, and by the afternoon, they returned with full loads.

During this time, Lu Ye quietly reminded Dao Thirteen not to stand out too much, as he was currently only Spirit Stream Level 3. If he suddenly displayed the physique strength comparable to the Divine Sea Realm, it would be too shocking.

Before the sun set, everyone returned to the village with various sizes of prey, where the village chief waited at the entrance. Seeing the team's return, he finally showed a hint of a smile, appearing somewhat relieved.

Other teams also returned one after another, and soon, the village entrance was filled with various beasts.

The village chief oversaw the distribution. Lu Ye and Dao Thirteen were also given over twenty pounds of beast meat, which they carried back to their dwelling.

Dao Thirteen set up a bonfire in the courtyard to roast the meat.

Lu Ye lay on a Taishi Chair nearby, lost in thought.

Suddenly, a knock at the door was heard. Lu Ye looked up to see the village chief holding a bag. With just a sweep of his Mental Consciousness, Lu Ye knew it contained Spirit Rice grown in the village.

It seemed that they had worked today, so they received this reward.

The village chief handed the Spirit Rice to Lu Ye and left. As the sun started to set, the bustling village became quiet again.

The aroma of roasting meat wafted over. Lu Ye glanced over to see Dao Thirteen staring fixedly at the roasting meat.

He walked over, took a piece of roasted beast meat, and started eating it voraciously.

Dao Thirteen looked on eagerly, feeling somewhat at a loss. If it were before, he would have greeted him with a punch, but now, with the Soul Taming Divine Runes planted by Lu Ye, he dared not offend Lu Ye.

Helplessly, he could only place the remaining beast meat on the fire to roast.

Lu Ye leisurely continued eating the beast meat. It must be said, although Dao Thirteen was a bit dull, his meat-roasting skills were quite good, and the food was delicious.

As he ate, he suddenly moved, sitting upright, and sensed his own body.

He wasn't sure if it was an illusion, but he clearly felt the confinement force within him dissipating slightly faster.

This confinement force from the Nine Provinces Heaven's Augury would slowly dissipate on its own, but at a very slow pace. Relying solely on its natural dissipation, Lu Ye had no idea how long it would take to restore his cultivation.

For the past two days, he had been pondering how to dissolve this confinement force, but he had no clues.

Until now.

He quickly finished the remaining beast meat in his hand, activated the Bestial Gluttony Feast, and a humming sound arose from within his stomach. Upon sensing, it felt like his stomach had turned into a grindstone, grinding the consumed beast meat.

The confinement force dissipated faster...

But soon returned to its original state, as the essence of the consumed beast meat was depleted.

Eating meat can accelerate the dissipation of the confinement force? Lu Ye was unsure of the principles behind this, but from the current experience, it seemed to be true.

He immediately looked at another piece of roasting beast meat on the fire.

Dao Thirteen tensed up, meeting Lu Ye's gaze. In his muddled understanding, he sensed an unpleasant feeling.

And then he watched as Lu Ye grabbed the not-yet-fully-cooked beast meat and devoured it ravenously.

Within moments, Lu Ye had eaten it all.

Staring at the empty grill, Dao Thirteen frowned, uncertain where the issue lay...

But Lu Ye showed a look of joy because he found things were indeed as he thought—they could accelerate the dissipation of the confinement force by eating meat.

He immediately took out a large quantity of beast meat from his storage sack.

Because of raising Amber, and due to his own appetite, he always had a lot of beast meat in his storage sack.

These beast meats were undoubtedly of much better quality than those hunted from the mountain during the day.

Since eating meat can accelerate the dissipation of the confinement force, the matter becomes simple.

Upon seeing Lu Ye take out so much beast meat, Dao Thirteen immediately relaxed his frown and joined Lu Ye in placing the meat on the fire to roast.

Moments later, both master and servant ate with juice running down their chins.

But Lu Ye frowned.

Because this time, the confinement force within him had no reaction at all.

Just now, eating meat had indeed accelerated the dissipation a lot, so why was there no reaction this time?

Unconvinced, he ate a few more pieces, and found indeed still no reaction.

For now, he didn't understand why.

Chapter 1009 Blood World?

After pondering for a moment, Lu Ye had a vague suspicion.

But whether things were as he thought still needed verification.

He turned his head to look, and Dao Thirteen immediately turned around, using his body to block the roasted meat in his hand... he was afraid it would be snatched by Lu Ye again.

Lu Ye wasn't going to take it from him; he got up and walked to the side, took the bag of Spirit Rice previously given by the village chief, opened the bag, grabbed a handful of Spirit Rice, and stuffed it into his mouth.

Although the Spirit Rice was uncooked and hard to swallow, it was no problem for Lu Ye.

He casually chewed a few times and swallowed it, simultaneously activating the Bestial Gluttony Feast to expedite digestion, quietly sensing.

The mysterious force that confined his cultivation was noticeably dissipating faster.

Lu Ye raised an eyebrow; things were just as he thought.

It wasn't the meat that accelerated the dissipation of the confinement force; it was necessary to consume the native products of this realm, be it meat or Spirit Rice...

As for why this was the case, Lu Ye wasn't quite sure.

He subconsciously felt there might be some special power hidden in the food of this realm that could dissolve his confinement force.

But on second thought, he felt it was unlikely, because none of the meat or Spirit Rice he ate was special in any way. If they contained some special power, he would surely be able to detect it.

Moreover, the mysterious confinement force was a means left by Heaven's Augury on him, and Heaven's Augury did this to conceal him from being discovered. If so, why would eating native products of this realm accelerate the dissolution of the confinement force?

While eating the Spirit Rice, Lu Ye pondered deeply.

What exactly was Nine Provinces Heaven's Augury guarding against? Who in this realm could be worth such precautions by Nine Provinces Heaven's Augury, even sending him here using the Meteorite rain for concealment, and sealing ninety-nine percent of his cultivation, rendering him almost like an ordinary man?

Suddenly, Lu Ye thought of a possibility.

What Nine Provinces Heaven's Augury was guarding against... might not be a person, but this entire realm?

The realm has a consciousness.

Though no one had ever told Lu Ye anything, he always felt that the mysterious and omnipresent Heaven's Augury was indeed the will of the Nine Provinces World.

That's why it could have so many profound aspects.

The Soaring Dragon World he once visited also had a will, which manifested as Ye Liuli accompanying him, eventually giving him the broken origin of the Soaring Dragon World.

If so, it was highly likely this unknown world also had a consciousness.

Being sent to this realm through the means of Nine Provinces Heaven's Augury is equivalent to an invasion, easily detectable by the realm's consciousness. That's why Nine Provinces Heaven's Augury confined his cultivation and used the Meteorite rain's concealment to bring him here.

By eating the beast meat and Spirit Rice of this realm, he was essentially imprinting this realm's information onto himself, assimilating his existence with it... this way, the realm's consciousness would find it hard to perceive him as an intruder.

Thus, the confinement force dissipated faster.

The more he thought, the more it seemed like this hypothesis was correct.

Many doubts were solved in the process.

Take, for example, how he arrived in this realm; when he and Ying Wuji went to the shattered Unparalleled Continent before, Nine Provinces Heaven's Augury directly transported them there, with no upheaval as they appeared all over the Unparalleled Continent.

But this time, they relied on the concealment of the Meteorite rain.

Because only by doing so could he fool the consciousness under the nose of this realm.

If this were true, then this realm's consciousness is certainly not as refined as Nine Provinces Heaven's Augury; otherwise, it would have already noticed him, the outsider, and wouldn't have been deceived by various means of Nine Provinces Heaven's Augury.

It's very likely that this realm's consciousness is in a hazy state, not as perfected as Nine Provinces Heaven's Augury.

If he were to compare himself to Nine Provinces Heaven's Augury, then Dao Thirteen's spiritual intelligence would be analogous to this realm's consciousness.

A large piece of half-eaten beast meat suddenly appeared in front of Lu Ye's eyes. He came back to his senses from pondering and looked up to see Dao Thirteen with a reluctant expression, but resolutely handing over his piece of beast meat, probably seeing Lu Ye eating Spirit Rice, he felt compassion...

Lu Ye chuckled, patted his shoulder, "Follow me, I'll take you to find more delicious things."

Since consuming the products of this realm could accelerate the dissipation of the confinement force, then it was very simple.

The mountain was full of roaming demon beasts, which he and Dao Thirteen had previously killed some of; they just hadn't eaten them, and thus hadn't discovered this mystery until today.

The whole village was silent; everyone had their doors and windows shut tight. Lu Ye and Dao Thirteen's departure didn't disturb anyone.

Venturing deeper into the mountains, master and servant soon had a fruitful hunt, made a fire on the spot, simply roasted their catch, and feasted heartily.

All along, Lu Ye had a significant appetite, and with the aid of the Bestial Gluttony Feast, he could digest as much as he ate.

Dao Thirteen was even more formidable, as he had a Divine Sea Realm physique, eating at a much faster pace than Lu Ye.

So, in less than two hours, the harvest of half the night was gobbled up completely by the two.

The confinement force within dissipated somewhat, and Lu Ye's cultivation restored to the level of Spirit Stream Level 4, the same for Dao Thirteen.

Instead of continuing, they returned to the village with Dao Thirteen.

During the day, hunting teams like theirs didn't need to do farm work. They only needed to venture into the mountains every five days to hunt some game to bring back, which saved Lu Ye quite a bit of trouble.

He would spend the day chatting idly with people, gathering information about this realm, and at night, he would lead Dao Thirteen into the mountains to forage.

Gathering information was not going smoothly; Lu Ye hadn't even figured out the name of this realm, and the villagers had never left the village since birth.

He only knew that this world was inhabited not only by the human race but also by another race called the Sacred Race by the villagers.

As for what kind of race the Sacred Race was, Lu Ye was unsure, and the villagers couldn't clearly explain either.

What weighed on his mind was the seemingly inviolable status that the Sacred Race held in the hearts of the villagers. Whenever Lu Ye tried to gather more about them, the villagers were deeply apprehensive, leaving him quite helpless.

On the fifth night since arriving in the village, Lu Ye still led Dao Thirteen trekking in the mountains hunting. Over the days, their cultivation had restored to Spirit Stream Level 6. Although not much compared to their original cultivation, it was still a good start.

Moreover, Lu Ye noticed something: consuming demon beast flesh and blood was far more effective than eating beast meat.

Perhaps it was due to the rich essence contained within demon beasts' flesh and blood, so he had been seeking powerful demon beasts, but unfortunately, with little success.

By now, it was late in the night. Lu Ye was leading Dao Thirteen back towards the village, aiming to make it back before dawn; otherwise, if villagers saw them, the village head would surely scold them for not understanding the rules.

Exiting the forest, as the village scene appeared in the distance, Lu Ye's steps halted. A blood-red light swept from the village direction, with faint screams emanating from within.

The screams sounded familiar, and a woman's image flashed in Lu Ye's mind.

After interacting for a few days, Lu Ye had become acquainted with many Cangnan Village residents.

He had exchanged a few words with this woman; she was about twenty years old, had a Spirit Stream Level 3 cultivation, and was a member of the hunting team.

The scream was hers, but the blood light wasn't because the spirit force fluctuation in the light was distinctly of a Cloud River Realm level!

Cangnan Village had no Cloud River Realm cultivators!

Lu Ye did not know who she had encountered to be captured like that. Now wasn't the time to spectate. As he was about to go rescue her, her screams abruptly ceased.

Perhaps his movement attracted the blood light owner's attention; after a glance, the figure within the blood light flew straight towards them.

In a short while, the figure landed before Lu Ye.

The blood light receded, revealing a figure.

The newcomer was tall and wearing a long robe, taller than Lu Ye by at least a head, with skin as red as blood, resembling a boiled lobster. Furthermore, he possessed pointed ears, and sharp, gleaming fingernails.

The woman Lu Ye recognized was carried like a rag doll in his hand, silent, with two bloody holes on her white slender neck, but no fresh blood flowed from them.

Her entire being had turned extremely pale, as if all blood had been drained.

Lu Ye quietly observed the eerie figure before him, eyelids lowering slightly.

He finally understood what the Sacred Race mentioned by the villagers was.

Blood Race!

He had encountered many Blood Races in the Soaring Dragon World and personally killed quite a few, so how could he be unfamiliar with them?

Moreover, during his honing within the Mirage Realm using the Breath Fruit Core, the figures rushing out of the mist often included Blood Races.

The downfall of the Soaring Dragon World had a direct connection with the Blood Race, their invasion and the Blood World's siphoning led to Soaring Dragon's destruction.

He had entered the Soaring Dragon World for training, bringing another possible future for it, and despite that future being impossible now, he still received the Soaring Dragon's final Origin gift.

So, is this the Blood World?

"Where did this Blood Food pop up from?" The unfamiliar Blood Race examined Lu Ye and Dao Thirteen, eyes brightening. "Quality is quite good!"

Saying this, he tossed the woman's corpse aside and reached out to grab Dao Thirteen.

To a Blood Race, someone like Dao Thirteen with abundant blood Qi was undoubtedly more attractive, so he struck straight at Dao Thirteen.

But this time, he hit a tough wall.

With a hand clutched onto Dao Thirteen's shoulder, the sharp nails didn't break through Dao Thirteen's body. After all, it was a strong cultivator's body from the Divine Sea Realm; how could a Cloud River Realm Blood Race breach it?

The unfamiliar Blood Race's expression changed.

Dao Thirteen turned his head towards Lu Ye.

"Take him down!" Lu Ye's deep voice sounded.

Chapter 1010 Blood Crystal

Almost at the same time Lu Ye finished speaking, Dao Thirteen had already acted. He grabbed the unfamiliar Blood Race member's wrist, and with just a slight exertion, twisted the opponent's arm into a pretzel shape.

The unfamiliar Blood Race member screamed in agony, their spirit force surged wildly, and a dense blood-red color poured out from within, desperately trying to break free from Dao Thirteen's grip.

Although Dao Thirteen's cultivation was indeed lacking, his Divine Sea Realm physique was still there, how could that unfamiliar Blood Race member escape?

A look of anger and horror appeared on his face, and he shouted sharply, "You audacious Blood Food, release me at once!"

Never before had he experienced such a bizarre event, a mere Blood Food not only didn't fear him but also dared to attack him.

His struggles made Dao Thirteen very irritated, so he pulled hard, dragging the Blood Race member in front of him, and head-butted him.

With a loud bang, Dao Thirteen was safe and sound, but the unfamiliar Blood Race member was left dizzy and seeing stars.

He finally realized something was wrong, the two Blood Foods in front of him were not the type to follow his every command but were rebellious, and the blood glow around him grew denser, suddenly transforming into a pool of Blood Water.

Such a strange secret technique Dao Thirteen had never seen before, and being caught off guard, his hand lightened as the unfamiliar Blood Race member had already broken free of his constraint.

The blood glow shifted, ready to flee into the distance.

However, Lu Ye had been prepared, and with a surge of his Mental Consciousness, he launched an invisible impact towards the blood glow.

A scream rang out as the blood glow twisted, revealing the figure of the unfamiliar Blood Race member.

Seeing this, Dao Thirteen also activated his Mental Consciousness and added a strike.

The unfamiliar Blood Race member immediately lay on the ground, convulsing uncontrollably...

He was just a Cloud River Realm and couldn't withstand the successive Mental Consciousness attacks from Lu Ye and Dao Thirteen. At this moment, his mind was in complete disarray, even if he recovered, he would likely be left stupefied.

Lu Ye stepped forward, raised his hand, and pointed at his forehead, hesitating for a moment before finally urging a bit of telepathy on him!

To gather intelligence about this domain, starting from this Blood Race member was undoubtedly the most suitable.

This was the first time Lu Ye used some telepathy, because this divine rune was related to the psyche, so he was very cautious.

Amidst the surge of Mental Consciousness, he easily broke through the unfamiliar Blood Race member's psyche defense. The moment the divine rune was constructed successfully, Lu Ye frowned as unfamiliar scenes and numerous pieces of information inexplicably flooded into his mind like a tidal wave.

The feeling was very strange and uncomfortable.

While he was feeling unwell, the unfamiliar Blood Race member also didn't fare well. The Blood Race who was almost unconscious suddenly widened his eyes, trembling violently, his eyes full of shock and disbelief, evidently having probed into some of Lu Ye's secrets.

After a long moment, Lu Ye finally withdrew his finger and stepped aside, his face visibly pale, and his forehead covered in sweat.

The many unfamiliar images and information mixed in his mind, impacting his spirit, so Lu Ye quickly took out a drop of Soul Cleansing Water and swallowed it, which made him feel somewhat better.

He secretly decided never to use a bit of telepathy easily unless absolutely necessary in the future. Although this divine rune was marvelous, it was a torment for both himself and others.

Perhaps it would be better when his psyche became stronger in the future, but for now, the experience brought by activating this psyche was by no means pleasant.

Fortunately, he had gleaned much information about this domain.

"Keep an eye on him!" Lu Ye instructed Dao Thirteen, sitting down cross-legged to silently digest the various pieces of intelligence he had just acquired.

It was somewhat different from what he imagined, as this place should not be the Blood World that had once destroyed the Soaring Dragon World, but rather a domain called the Blood Refinement World.

This domain is vast, comparable to the Nine Provinces, with the Blood Race being the dominant force.

It also hosts a large number of the human race, but the humans are merely Blood Food reared by the Blood Race, much like livestock.

In the Blood Refinement World, the status of the Blood Race is paramount, and they can take from or kill the human race at will. This deeply ingrained ideology over countless years has left most humans without any rebellious thoughts against the Blood Race, and many don't even know what the Blood Race is.

They only know of the Sacred Race!

Take the nearby village, for instance; from the village chief down to the village children, none have seen the Blood Race. All who have seen them are dead.

Many things that puzzled Lu Ye became clear now.

Previously, Lu Ye found it strange why the villagers seemed well-fed and clothed but were perpetually worried and shut their doors tightly at night.

Now he understood; death could come at any moment. In such a stifling atmosphere, how could the villagers be at ease? Closing their doors at night was an instinctive defense against the Blood Race, but what use was it?

When the Blood Race came to the village, they could take whoever they wanted, and the flimsy doors were no barrier to their invasion.

There were many people in the village because the Blood Race kept the humans as livestock. As livestock, naturally, they encouraged breeding, so each household tried to have as many children as possible.

The Blood Race even allowed the humans to cultivate, because to the Blood Race, the blood of some cultivators with cultivation was more useful than that of ordinary people.

But the Blood Race did not allow humans to have overly powerful cultivators, so any human with cultivation exceeding a certain level would disappear without a trace during a certain period.

This is also why there are no old or highly cultivated humans in the village.

Once they grow old, they are of no use to the Blood Race and only serve as Blood Food.

In the Blood Refinement World, humans live a life worse than pigs or dogs, as they seldom live past forty years under the rule of the Blood Race.

Someone like the village chief is already considered a long-lived member of the human race.

After organizing the complex information in his mind, Lu Ye slowly stood up and walked over to the Blood Race member.

Having been successively assaulted by Lu Ye's and Dao Thirteen's Mental Consciousness, and also experiencing a touch of telepathy from Lu Ye, this Blood Race member was now in a deep coma.

Lu Ye drew out the Boulder Mountain Saber and stabbed it into his chest.

The comatose Blood Race member suddenly opened his eyes, body straightening, looking horrified and furious into Lu Ye's close eyes.

Lu Ye's gaze was cold and stern.

With a twist of the long saber, a blood-red dragon-eye-sized orb was gouged out from the chest.

The orb was entirely crimson, seemingly forged from fresh blood, resembling a Crystal Stone at first glance, appearing extremely solid.

This is the heart of the Blood Race, the culmination of their entire cultivation, similar to the demonic pill of a demon beast.

The Blood Race calls it a Blood Crystal!

It was the first time Lu Ye knew about Blood Crystals; in the past, when he was slaughtering Blood Race in the Soaring Dragon World, he wore the Dragon Throne and killed wantonly, paying no attention to these details.

If not for using a bit of telepathy this time to gather intelligence, he might have overlooked this matter.

Once the Blood Crystal was taken out, the Blood Race member's head tilted, and he lost all breath.

Holding the Blood Crystal in his hand, Lu Ye scrutinized it for a moment, feeling quite conflicted.

To eat or not to eat, that is the question...

To dissolve the confinement force within him and restore his original cultivation, he must imprint as much information from this world within himself as possible, to assimilate with it, and the specific method is to consume things from this world.

This is what he has been doing these past few days, progressing slowly. At the current pace, it will take at least two months to fully restore his cultivation; Dao Thirteen's pace will surely be slower because his cultivation is higher.

The main issue is they couldn't hunt any valuable demon beasts; what he and Dao Thirteen hunted were mostly ordinary beasts.

In comparison, this Blood Crystal in his hand is undoubtedly much more valuable.

If he truly refined the power within this Blood Crystal, Lu Ye believed he could dissolve a lot of the confinement force within him, possibly restoring part of his strength.

The Blood Race isn't the human race, but they do look somewhat similar; this object was taken from the Blood Race's body...

On second thought, since the Blood Race keeps humans as livestock for feeding, what's the harm in him eating a Blood Crystal? It's not like he hasn't eaten a demon beast's demonic pill before; just consider it a demonic pill.

This isn't the Nine Provinces; no matter what, the most important thing is to restore his cultivation as soon as possible.

With this thought, Lu Ye no longer hesitated, took out clean water to wash the Blood Crystal thoroughly, and then, under Dao Thirteen's astonished gaze, put it into his mouth.

It crunched crisply...

There wasn't any particularly distinct taste, not even much of a bloody taste; it wasn't hard to eat.

While eating, suddenly there was a sound of something moving through the air from not far away, Lu Ye calmly looked up to see a streak of blood light flying straight toward the village.

It was clear that another Blood Race member was heading to the village to grab Blood Food.

Lu Ye then slightly mobilized his spirit force.

Sure enough, it immediately attracted the Blood Race member's attention, the direction of the blood light changed, flying over to this side, and soon landed close, revealing its figure.

Like the previous Blood Race member, this one was tall and slender, with reddish skin and pointed ears.

The Blood Race's physique is generally taller than that of the human race.

Looking at his face, a scene immediately surged into Lu Ye's mind.

This scene was from the dead Blood Race member on the ground.

Because just one incense stick's time ago, these two Blood Race members were still fighting.

In the Nine Provinces World, the human race is split into two major factions, constantly battling, year after year.

In this Blood Refinement World, the Blood Race is not a monolith either; their conflicts are even fiercer and more chaotic.

All of it is due to the existence of Blood Crystals.

When one Blood Race member kills another, they can take the other's Blood Crystal, enhancing their cultivation, similar to how demon beasts can enhance themselves by devouring demon pills of the same element sign.

For this reason, the Blood Race grows faster than the human race, as they can devour each other's Blood Crystals to speed up their growth without significant risks.

This is an advantage the human race does not have, which is also why the Blood Race rules this domain.

One incense stick's time ago, two Blood Race members battled, and the weaker one fled in disarray, came to the village to supplement himself with Blood Food, and ended up being eliminated by Lu Ye and Dao Thirteen together.

One incense stick's time later, the other Blood Race member tracked this place, probably intending to enter the village for a bite, and got lured here by Lu Ye again.

The Blood Race member landed and immediately saw the tribe member lying on the ground, then looked at Lu Ye and Dao Thirteen, unsure of the situation, and asked sternly, "How did he die?"