

## Humanity 1101

### Chapter 1101: Warning Lu Yiye

If he hadn't personally ventured into the Great Secret Realm of the Insect Race, merely investigating the image message stone wouldn't have allowed him to guess where this place was. He would simply think it's an insect gathering spot.

Because the view in this image message stone is not high enough, naturally it can't provide a glimpse of the overall appearance of the Great Secret Realm of the Insect Race.

Unlike his own image message stone, when the sect master got it, they immediately realized it was the source of the insect disaster.

A storage sack, a piece of image message stone that only lasted for over ten seconds, and nothing else to investigate further, leaving Lu Ye in bewilderment.

He didn't know who the owner of the image message stone was, nor did he understand why the other party would send him this item.

Logically speaking, making such a discovery should be reported and would undoubtedly be credited as a great achievement. The sect master might even want to claim this achievement personally to prevent Lu Ye from taking the spotlight, which he understood. However, he was perplexed about the owner of the image message stone, wondering why they would give him the credit.

Another point, having just returned from the Great Secret Realm of the Insect Race, he discovered this image message stone—is it a coincidence in timing? If he hadn't ventured into the ground fissure to investigate, would this image message stone have still been delivered to him? Did the other party know he had already gone to the Great Secret Realm of the Insect Race?

There are many things of which he doesn't know the answers.

But Lu Ye vaguely felt that this should just be a coincidence because he only reported the events of the Great Secret Realm of the Insect Race to the sect master yesterday. Regardless of how fast the sect master moved, the information dissemination should be limited to the high-level members of the Haotian Alliance in Bingzhou.

Therefore, the owner of the image message stone surely didn't know he had already been to the Great Secret Realm of the Insect Race, and the scenes within the stone held no appeal for him.

Considering this, Lu Ye felt a faint sense of realization.

No matter what the other party was planning, it was evidently meant to attract him and achieve some hidden motives behind the scenes.

Under normal circumstances, such a thing would indeed be very attractive to him, but after personally visiting the Great Secret Realm of the Insect Race, this item was rendered useless to him.

However, regardless of the covert intentions, this is undoubtedly just the beginning.

Casually collecting this piece of image message stone, Lu Ye sat cross-legged alongside, carefully focusing his mind, and entered into a cultivation state.

His guess was right. That one piece of image message stone with only over ten seconds of scene was indeed just the beginning. In the following months, almost every half month, a storage sack was secretly delivered.

Each time, it was a piece of image message stone with only over ten seconds of scene.

Over four months, a total of eight image message stones, piecing together the scenes within these eight stones, presented a complete view, allowing a glimpse of more aspects of the Great Secret Realm of the Insect Race.

The timing chosen by the other party was very clever, each time during Lu Ye's period supporting the fissure, leaving no trace.

Lu Ye then realized he was being monitored; perhaps someone was hiding and watching him, or possibly there was someone else's spy within the pass, otherwise there was no reason for each timing to be so precisely captured.

He didn't mind, over months of time, regarding the source of these image message stones, he already had a speculation.

The other party perhaps thought they could pique his interest this way, but in the end, it was just an exercise in futility. Furthermore, it could be inferred that the reach of the person behind this wasn't high enough.

If it were high enough, they would surely know "the sect master of the Righteous Blood Sect had already entered the Great Secret Realm of the Insect Race, having probed the Great Secret Realm of the Insect Race," and wouldn't waste efforts with him.

Currently, this intelligence is limited to the highest-level cultivators within the Nine Provincial States and has not spread out because the timing isn't ripe.

He continued to do what he was supposed to do, diligently cultivating daily, refining Explosive Fire Spirit Stones and array discs.

At the Dark Moon Forest Pass, Li Taibai received an urgent summon from Lin Yue and hurriedly returned.

Ever since the cooperation between the two passes began, there would always be a Divine Sea Realm stationed at the fissure. However, it was not mandatory, if there's any danger over there, the soldiers could completely send messages back. With the Teleportation Array in place, whether it's Lin Yue or Lu Ye, or his doppelganger Li Taibai, they could all rush over immediately to save the scene.

So even without leaving a Divine Sea Realm there, it wasn't a big problem.

In the grand hall, Lin Yue handed a jade slip to Li Taibai: "Take a look at this."

The doppelganger accepted it, immersing his Mental Consciousness within to investigate, and raised an eyebrow: "Yu Huajin... who is this?" Though unsure of who this person was, the intelligence revealed within the jade slip was extraordinary, confirming that this person was a formidable figure from the Haotian Alliance side, at least having some notoriety.

"A veteran elder of the Tianyuan Sect and also the Recruitment Department Chief at the Haotian Alliance's Sky Gate Checkpoint, possessing cultivation of Divine Sea Level 9!" Lin Yue explained, "You don't recognize Yu Huajin, but you remember Liew Yuemei and Tan Shu, don't you?"

The doppelganger nodded, "Of course I remember." These two unlucky ghosts both died by his hand, how could he forget.

"Yu Huajin is Tan Shu's grandmother, she is Liew Yuemei's mother-in-law."

The doppelganger understood, "If that's the case, why doesn't she stay with the Haotian Alliance and instead choose to defect to our Ten Thousand Demons Ridge?"

The information revealed in the jade slip mentioned only one thing: Yu Huajin intended to defect to Ten Thousand Demons Ridge.

Lu Ye initially didn't understand the deeper implications. Historically, the two major camps have opposed each other and there have been precedents for voluntary or passive defections, but it shouldn't happen in these times of insect plague ravaging the land.

When Lin Yue mentioned Liew Yuemei and Tan Shu, Lu Ye vaguely responded.

"If she is defecting, there should be a pledge of allegiance and sincerity, right? What are her pledge and sincerity?" asked the doppelganger.

Lin Yue slowly uttered three words, "Lu Yiye!"

"She's planning to kill Lu Yiye?"

Lin Yue nodded, "Exactly! She knows the major sects on our side view Lu Yiye as a thorn in the flesh, but due to the current circumstances, they are reluctant to act personally, fearing arising tumult, so she intends to use Lu Yiye's head as a pledge to join Ten Thousand Demons Ridge for protection, after all, historically, traitors have never been spared by either camp."

The doppelganger understood and spoke, "If that's the case, she should proceed directly, and by the time she offers Lu Yiye's head, wouldn't it demonstrate more sincerity? She is a Divine Sea Level 9 cultivator, our side has no reason not to accept her, right?"

"So, she needs a suitable battleground, which is why Ten Thousand Demons City conveyed the information to us, because we've been close to Lu Yiye recently, and he personally visited Dark Moon Forest Pass, so he won't be too cautious with us."

Even for Yu Huajin, it's impossible to act at Jinglan Lake Pass, nor at the ground fissure; to kill Lu Ye, she must lure him away from his defenses and into Dark Moon Forest Pass, where she would have the geographical advantage, coupled with coordination from Lin Yue and Li Taibai, making it difficult for Lu Ye to escape.

The doppelganger appeared calm externally, but coldly sneered inside, secretly noting down Yu Huajin's name.

The placement of the doppelganger at Dark Moon Forest Pass initially was a passive strategy move, unexpectedly playing a significant role.

Yu Huajin planned to deal with him, not hesitating to use the power of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge. If not for the doppelganger here, Lu Ye would be completely in the dark, and recklessly arriving at Dark Moon Forest Pass would definitely result in a dire situation, but now that he's aware, the situation is naturally different.

"Everything mentioned above is Yu Huajin's request, and the action plan was proposed by her. Although simple, it's indeed effective. Now, I believe Lu Yiye isn't too guarded against us."

The doppelganger thought, if you hadn't informed me, I might not have been as cautious, but now that you've told me, all the schemes will ultimately come to nothing.

If it comes to that, he simply won't go to Dark Moon Forest Pass.

"What instructions came from Ten Thousand Demons City?" Compared to Yu Huajin's schemes, he was more concerned about the attitude of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge.

Lin Yue smiled slightly, "Warn Lu Yiye!"

The doppelganger was somewhat astonished; he hadn't expected Ten Thousand Demons Ridge to make such a decision. Logically speaking, if Ten Thousand Demons Ridge agreed to Yu Huajin's request and cooperated with her actions, Lu Ye wouldn't be surprised, since initially many big sects over there indeed regarded him as a thorn in their flesh, eager to get rid of him.

Cooperating with Yu Huajin would not only avenge the past grievances but also gain the allegiance of a Divine Sea Level 9 cultivator, achieving two goals at once, so why not?

"Why is that?" The doppelganger was puzzled.

Lin Yue replied, "Let's set aside Lu Yiye for a moment and talk about Yu Huajin; this old fellow is definitely not a good person. She really wants to kill Lu Yiye, but clearly concealed some matters. According to our knowledge, the As-Close-As-Siblings array disc, this divine object, comes from Lu Yiye."

Back at the Grand Conference, Pang Zhen imposed a gag order, but over such a long time, some information inevitably spread out. Although these pieces of information may not be completely reliable, the ones with intent will deduce some truths with careful observation.

Not to mention, the Military Supplies Department sends someone to Jinglan Lake Pass every month, which is highly suspicious.

Moreover, Lu Ye initially gave Lin Yue a hundred array discs.

"The As-Close-As-Siblings array disc is extremely mysterious. We have organized artifact refiners on our side to replicate it, but with little success. In contrast, the Haotian Alliance has equipped it on a large scale, indicating it can be mass-produced, which is probably Lu Yiye's capability. With the information we know, wouldn't Yu Huajin know it? In the current situation, this array disc greatly enhances cultivators' capabilities. If Lu Yiye dies, who will refine the array discs? Our side is coveting this divine object eagerly. So she definitely concealed this matter, because once revealed, our side wouldn't

possibly cooperate with her actions. Now that the two camps are collaborating to overcome difficulties together, the death of one Lu Yiye would greatly influence the situation and could potentially rupture relations between the two camps again, which no one can afford."

The doppelganger nodded slightly, feeling somewhat bewildered. Never imagined that his life and death might one day influence the interaction between the two camps; unsure whether to feel honored or fearful.

"By merely concealing this matter, Yu Huajin deserves condemnation, and moreover, her intent to kill Lu Yiye is personal revenge, because she suspects that Liew Yuemei died by Lu Yiye's hand! However, this matter lacks solid evidence; in contrast, you killing Tan Shu was witnessed by many. An old fellow like her, fabricating baseless speculations, harbors murderous intent towards Lu Yiye; doesn't she have any thoughts about you? She not only wants to kill Lu Yiye but probably also wants you dead, after all, Liew Yuemei was just a daughter-in-law, but Tan Shu was her direct grandson, clearly a greater grudge ensues without further explanation."

#### Chapter 1102: Keep It Simple

"Therefore, Yu Huajin definitely harbors murderous intent towards you. Aligning with the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge might just be a pretense. If she can take the opportunity to eliminate Lu Yiye, she will certainly make a move against you as well."

Lin Yue's analysis made a lot of sense. Compared to Lu Yiye, Yu Huajin undoubtedly wanted to kill Li Taibai even more.

Just as Lin Yue said, that old thing only had baseless suspicions about Lu Yiye, but Li Taibai's killing of Tan Shu was witnessed by many, with both factions of cultivators seeing it firsthand.

"Even now as she betrays the Haotian Alliance and worsens relations with our Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, where in the vast Nine Provinces can she possibly find a place?" the doppelganger was somewhat confused.

Lin Yue sighed, "Someone like her, an old grudge-holder, probably has the mindset of seeking revenge even at the cost of her life. Why would she care about the future? As long as she can kill either you or Lu Yiye, for her, it's a gain. Hatred can twist a person beyond recognition and make their actions illogical. She's likely not planning to continue living."

A person filled with hatred is not so frightening; what's terrifying is someone who is filled with hatred and also has a death wish. No one knows what kind of crazy things such a person might do.

"In the past, the upper echelons might not have accepted her proposal. For us, Yu Huajin's actions were just a meaningless conflict, having little to do with us. But now the situation is different; Lu Yiye must stay alive. If he dies, the relationship between the two factions will surely break again, which is not beneficial to the current situation. Moreover, Lu Yiye is the only one who can refine 'As-Close-As-Siblings' Array Discs. If we can use this opportunity to save his life, the upper echelons might have a chance to procure a batch of array discs from the Haotian Alliance. Of course, the most crucial factor is that we have you."

"Me?" The doppelganger was taken aback.

Lin Yue smiled, "A few years ago, Lu Yiye was just in the Spirit Stream Realm or Cloud River Realm, yet the top sects of the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge viewed him as a scourge. It's not that they were overreacting; rather, they couldn't afford neglecting the past traumas, especially since Lu Yiye came from the Righteous Blood Sect, the same sect as Feng Wujiang, who frightened the top sects with his antics. They feared the Righteous Blood Sect would produce someone similar again, hence issuing large bounties for his head. But times have changed; the Haotian Alliance has Lu Yiye, and we, Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, have you, Li Taibai. Though your reputation is not as widespread as his, your potential is on par. Thus, someone can now counterbalance him, preventing a repeat of the tragedy from decades ago."

The doppelganger lowered his gaze in silence, very curious about the potential reaction from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge should one day his identity be exposed...

Would they be enraged, consumed by fury?

"Therefore, the higher-ups have decided to warn Lu Yiye to be vigilant and cautious. Junior Brother Taibai, you and he are of similar age and temperament; you must take the lead on this endeavor."

The doppelganger nodded, "I will bear this responsibility, but Senior Sister, based on what I know of him, with Yu Huajin's murderous intent, he certainly won't let things rest. He might very well use a strategy against a strategy. If that's the case, how should we respond?"

Lin Yue said, "The Ten Thousand Demons City has anticipated this. If it really comes to that, then you should negotiate terms with him. Use the 'As-Close-As-Siblings' Array Disc as leverage, and we can assist him in eliminating Yu Huajin! Junior Brother, I know you two share some camaraderie, but you must distinguish public matters from personal ones. If this task is completed well, it will be a significant achievement, aiding your standing in the Ten Thousand Demons City in the future."

"I understand."

The doppelganger quickly set out, teleporting through the array to the ground fissure, then traveling from there to Jinglan Lake Pass.

Though his true self saw through everything, he still had to go through this procedure.

Yu Huajin had to be killed. Though they were total strangers, since she would rather betray the Haotian Alliance and join the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge just to kill him, he naturally saw no need to show her any mercy.

One could only hope that after this instance, there would be no more similar incidents.

After killing Tan Shu, emerged Liew Yuemei; after Liew Yuemei was killed, Yu Huajin appeared. Could it go on endlessly?

As for Lin Yue's proposal, it was not a big deal. The 'As-Close-As-Siblings' Array Discs could be provided as long as the quantity wasn't too large.

A thought came to mind, and he suddenly got up and rushed out the door. The Boulder Mountain Saber unsheathed, a crescent blade light violently slashed out.

In the Void ahead, a silhouette flickered and disappeared, followed by a soft cry, vanishing in an instant.

Lu Ye used his Mental Consciousness to scan the area but could not trace the individual's aura; they ran fast and were very cautious!

Yet the quick glimpse he had was enough for him to roughly identify who it was.

Some cultivators guarding the pass heard the commotion and rushed over. Lu Ye waved them off, indicating that nothing was wrong, and the soldiers retreated.

Yiyi and Amber also came out, confused and uncertain. Yiyi asked, "Lu Ye, what happened?"

"An old friend came to visit me," Lu Ye replied, sheathing his saber.

Seeing this, Yiyi realized that this 'old friend' was probably not a genuine friend.

Amber picked up a storage sack from the ground with its mouth and leapt onto Lu Ye's shoulder. The storage sack was evidently left by the visitor earlier.

Opening the storage sack, he took out an image message stone and a jade slip. After inspecting them, the image message stone contained scenes from the Insect Race's Great Secret Realm, lasting only a few breaths, and the jade slip contained a single sentence.

"Someone intends to harm you; don't roam unnecessarily for the time being."

Secretly astonished, their information was impressively timely. He had just learned about Yu Huajin from his doppelganger when the other party came to warn him. Although it was vague, it was indeed a warning.

This suggested that there were insiders in Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, otherwise they wouldn't be aware of Yu Huajin's situation. But the person's access level was evidently not high enough; otherwise, they would have known Ten Thousand Demons City's actual plans and wouldn't have specially come to warn him.

Lu Ye raised his hand and touched his battlefield marking, sending out a message: "You've come all this way, why run off so quickly?"

The other party took a while to reply: "What are you talking about?" An attitude of not admitting the truth even if exposed, knowing you can't do anything about it.

Lu Ye didn't think much of this kind of evasive behavior. Since the other party didn't admit it, he couldn't be bothered to say more.

He raised his hand and patted Yiyi's little head: "Go cultivate, it's fine now."

Yiyi nodded and led Amber inside the house.

Lu Ye leaped onto the city wall at the mountain pass, and moments later, his doppelganger, Li Taibai, rushed over and landed beside Lu Ye.

Under the watchful eyes of the remaining soldiers, their own Mountain Pass Chief stood shoulder to shoulder with Li Taibai, the young Mountain Pass Chief of the Dark Moon Forest Pass, chatting and laughing for a while, before Li Taibai controlled his sword to leave, quickly disappearing from sight.

The doppelganger returned to the Dark Moon Forest Pass and informed Lin Yue of the results of this visit.

"Lu Yiye promised two thousand array discs as a reward after completion."

"Two thousand?" Lin Yue frowned slightly, "That number seems a bit small."

Although Ten Thousand Demons City didn't specify the number required for array discs, obviously, the more the better.

Two thousand array discs can equip fewer than twenty thousand cultivators, which is rather inadequate compared to the vast entirety of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge.

But Ten Thousand Demons City knows that even if Lu Ye made them, there's not much autonomy in their distribution, especially if they're being provided to Ten Thousand Demons Ridge.

Before, this would definitely be seen as aiding the enemy, which would surely be held accountable, but now the situation is different, giving both sides some room for maneuver.

However, the number still cannot be too large.

The doppelganger shook his head and said, "This is the maximum number Lu Yiye can provide; any more is beyond his capability."

Lin Yue sighed: "Two thousand is two thousand. It's better than nothing," she believed Li Taibai's talent and future achievements wouldn't fall short of Lu Yiye's, yet in less conventional paths, Lu Yiye clearly had the edge.

This isn't something that can be changed. After all, Lu Yiye has the background of a spirit runes master, while Li Taibai, a sword cultivator, knows nothing beyond flying swords.

In today's world, it's already a stroke of luck for Ten Thousand Demons Ridge to produce someone like Li Taibai, so there's no need to demand too much.

Moreover, with this cooperation, there will be other opportunities in the future.

"Have you discussed how to proceed?" Lin Yue asked.

The doppelganger replied: "His idea is to avoid too much scheming and simply go straightforward. When the time comes, he needs me to cooperate with him, while Senior Sister supports from the side."

Lin Yue roughly understood: "That's not a problem, but can the two of you kill Yu Huajin? After all, he is a Divine Sea Level 9 cultivator."

The Twin Heroes of Bingzhou indeed cooperate flawlessly, almost like one entity, but their cultivation realm is ultimately a flaw. Facing a Divine Sea Level 9 cultivator, it's hard to predict their chances.

However, with Lin Yue supporting from the side, the odds are favorable if three fight against one.

The doppelganger smiled proudly: "Whether we can kill him will only be known after the fight."

Time passed, and half a month later, an unexpected guest suddenly arrived at the Dark Moon Forest Pass, completely wrapped in a black robe, concealing her aura.

Lin Yue took responsibility for receiving her, leading her into the secret room, talked for a while, and settled her in before leaving.

She hastily found the doppelganger, and bluntly said: "Yu Huajin is here."

The doppelganger nodded: "I'll send a message to Brother Ye, asking him to come."

Lin Yue said: "Yu Huajin's condition is not right. I observed her blood Qi dropping significantly, her cultivation may have declined, and she seems to have a death wish. She didn't intend to leave here alive, so you must be careful."

It must be said that Lin Yue's judgment was sharp. Although Yu Huajin tried hard to restrain her aura, not wanting to expose any flaws, Lin Yue, being a Divine Sea Level 7 cultivator, could see through her authenticity at a glance.

More than half a year ago, she was ambushed by Nian Yuexian on her way to Jinglan Lake Pass and was severely wounded on the spot. Her already weak body was further depleted. Now, although her injuries have healed, her cultivation has indeed declined. Currently, she can no longer be considered a true Divine Sea Level 9 cultivator.

#### Chapter 1103: Helper

This is also the reason why Yu Huajin was so impatient; she couldn't wait any longer. According to the information she gathered, whether it was Lu Yiye or Li Taibai, their cultivation was progressing rapidly.

In contrast, she was old and frail, her strength diminishing day by day. If this delay continued, the difference in their cultivation levels would only grow smaller. How would she be able to exact her grand revenge then?

She had already negotiated with Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, and Dark Moon Forest Pass would assist her in killing Lu Yiye. She would then disclose information about the crafter of the As-Close-As-Siblings Array Disc to Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, which was the matter that Ten Thousand Demons Ridge was most eager to figure out now.

Of course, Ten Thousand Demons Ridge couldn't possibly know that this crafter was Lu Yiye; otherwise, her plan would be impossible to implement.

She wanted to use others to kill him, and as for what happens afterward, she wouldn't live much longer anyway, so why worry about that? Before her death, she planned to kill all those who deserved to die, and she could smile in the nine springs!

A few days later, at a certain location in Dark Moon Forest Pass, Yu Huajin was wrapped entirely in a black robe, quietly waiting.

This was the location of the teleportation array, according to the plan, Lu Yiye would receive an invitation from Li Taibai and then teleport from the ground fissure's teleportation array.

At the end of the teleportation, there would be a brief lapse; that was her best opportunity to strike. Even though her cultivation had declined, she had once been at Divine Sea Level 9, confident she could achieve a one-hit kill!

The plan was simple, yet effective.

Lin Yue and Li Taibai stood not far away, Yu Huajin, cloaked in a black robe, hunched over, desperately concealing her murderous intent.

Lu Yiye had to die, Li Taibai also had to die! Comparatively, her murderous intent towards Li Taibai was even greater, but she couldn't show any sign of it now, or everything would fall apart. Since arriving at

Dark Moon Forest Pass these days, in her interactions with Lin Yue, she had carefully shown a desire to survive, thus earning Lin Yue's trust.

But in fact, she knew that once she made her move this time, there would be no way for her to survive, having betrayed the Haotian Alliance and angered Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, the vast Nine Provinces had no place for her anymore.

In this treacherous farce, Ten Thousand Demons Ridge had its own plans, and Yu Huajin similarly had her own schemes.

Lu Ye, on the other hand, had another plan.

For this, he needed to find a helper, and this helper was already available; he believed the other party wouldn't refuse his request.

About 30 miles outside Jinglan Lake Pass, Lu Ye waited quietly, under the moonlight, a figure slowly approached and stopped at a hundred meters distance. The figure was graceful, with a beautiful face, but the expression showed some caution.

"What do you want?" Yu Daiwei asked.

Lu Ye looked at her calmly, "I need your help with something."

Yu Daiwei couldn't help but snicker, "What relationship do we have? Why should I help you?"

"These past few months, you've been sending image messages my way constantly, trying to pique my curiosity and make me come to you. I'm here now as you wished, so why hesitate?"

Judging this was simple.

In the current situation, the various discoveries in the secret realm of the Insect Race were undoubtedly a significant achievement, but the discoverer hadn't reported it to the Haotian Alliance or Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, and instead sent image message stones to him, clearly aiming to intrigue him.

This obviously intended to credit him for the achievements.

Because Mount Tai wanted him to help create a third-party faction, such accomplishments could earn Lu Ye considerable fame. From Mount Tai's standpoint, the greater fame Lu Ye gathered, the greater the benefits after establishing the third-party faction.

Therefore, he wanted to help Lu Ye build his reputation, and once Lu Ye's fame and influence reached a certain level, he could raise the banner and call for support.

Yu Daiwei snorted lightly, "Knowing it was sent by me, you endured this long; aren't you curious about what's in those image message stones?"

"The source of the insect disaster, that's all."

Yu Daiwei frowned, "You talk as if you've been there."

Lu Ye remained silent; he had indeed been there, but there was no need for Yu Daiwei to know that.

Yu Daiwei impatiently asked, "Since you didn't intend to contact us, what did you summon me for? As for the favor you need, don't even mention it. I absolutely won't help you! And haven't I told you, don't wander around recently, someone is going to..."

"Help me with this favor, and I'll go with you to meet Mount Tai!"

Yu Daiwei's voice abruptly stopped, suspiciously eyeing Lu Ye, "Really? Start with a Heaven's Augury oath, or I won't believe you."

Lu Ye then raised his hand, "Lu Ye from the Righteous Blood Sect, respectfully invoking Heaven's Augury to witness..."

Yu Daiwei immediately smiled, "You do have some conscience! So, what do you need help with? Bear in mind, if it's beyond my ability, don't mention it to avoid harming our rapport."

"It's simple, I need you to use the teleportation array once."

Yu Daiwei immediately became alert: "Where is the starting point? Where does it lead?"

"From here, it leads to the Dark Moon Forest Pass!"

Yu Daiwei was very cautious: "What do you want to do?"

"You don't need to worry about what I want to do. You just need to do me this favor. But rest assured, I will not do anything to harm you, and I will make sure everything is in order on the Dark Moon Forest Pass side as well."

Yu Daiwei tilted her head to look at him: "Do you know that Yu Huajin has already entered the Dark Moon Forest Pass? She is over there waiting for you... No, you want me to attract her attention, and you plan to ambush her?" Realizing the truth, Yu Daiwei looked surprised.

Lu Ye did not elaborate: "You can see this as a deal. Of course, it's up to you whether to agree or not. Whether you help or not, it's no big deal to me."

Even without Yu Daiwei, his plan could still go forward, though it would be a bit more troublesome. If Yu Daiwei could use the teleportation to distract Yu Huajin, his plan would be more assured.

"You really have guts!" Yu Daiwei exclaimed, surprised. Yu Huajin was such an elder that even she would not easily provoke her, but Lu Ye seemed unbothered, seeming to understand: "The other side of the Dark Moon Forest Pass is in cahoots with you?"

If not, Lu Ye could not possibly act this way. Yu Huajin, that old witch, was certainly sold out by the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge. This was truly unexpected, but thinking again, it was normal for the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge to make such a choice, especially under the current circumstances.

After a brief ponder, Yu Daiwei nodded: "Alright, I'll do this favor for you, but don't forget your promise."

Lu Ye immediately began setting up the teleportation array.

It was ready in no time. Leaving a message "Wait for my signal", he soared towards the direction of the Dark Moon Forest Pass.

At the Dark Moon Forest Pass, by the teleportation array, Yu Huajin waited somewhat impatiently and spoke in a cold voice: "Has anything changed?"

The agreed time had arrived, but the teleportation array still showed no sign of movement, which made her feel slightly uneasy.

Lin Yue looked at the doppelganger, who then said: "I'll send a message to check."

Pretending to fumble for a bit, the doppelganger spoke again: "It will arrive at any moment, Elder Yu, please be patient."

Yu Huajin remained silent, secretly mobilizing her spirit force to ensure she could unleash a thunderous attack at any time.

After waiting for a while, the teleportation array in front finally stirred, and the void began to twist, revealing a faint silhouette.

Prepared in advance, Yu Huajin instantly had lightning surging around her and raised her hand to blast a large bolt of thunder at the figure. At the same time, her eyes widened, as if to witness how the person would die.

Simultaneously, the sound of a sword hummed, as Sword Qi flew from Li Taibai's sword gourd. On another side, Lu Ye's ghostly figure suddenly emerged from about thirty feet away, his Boulder Mountain Saber unsheathed, spirit force surging wildly, the blade shining brilliantly, saber light flickering.

Their actions were swift because this was the best chance to ambush Yu Huajin, whose attention was almost entirely focused on the teleportation array; any external defenses would not be comprehensive.

However, Lu Ye's main body halted abruptly, and Li Taibai's doppelganger's gathered sword dragon also froze. Lin Yue, assisting from the side, changed expression and quickly flashed in front of Li Taibai, spirit force creating a barrier.

The change in everyone's actions was because another figure suddenly appeared on the scene.

A figure unnoticed by anyone.

She appeared just like a phantom, without warning, almost sticking to Yu Huajin's back.

Before she revealed herself, no breath was revealed, and after she appeared, there was no killing intent. Yet a glint of cold light appeared suddenly, and Yu Huajin's body immediately stiffened, the Thunder Power released from her front dissipated, with lightning flowing instantly through the surrounding space.

At the teleportation array, receiving Lu Ye's message, Yu Daiwei, who had reinforced herself with various protections beforehand, emerged. The anticipated violent attack did not arrive, only some faint Thunder Power scattered by her side.

She agreed to help Lu Ye because she had enough confidence in her strength. Her cultivation was just one level lower than Yu Huajin. As long as she prepared in advance, even if attacked by Yu Huajin at the end of the teleportation, her life wouldn't be in immediate danger.

But at this moment, she felt that Yu Huajin's attack... was incredibly weak.

Coming out of her daze, she immediately saw a sword tip extending from Yu Huajin's chest.

Her eyelids involuntarily narrowed. It was definitely a fatal wound because the sword tip emerged from the heart; Yu Huajin would not survive such an injury.

She couldn't see who attacked Yu Huajin, as the person was entirely hidden behind Yu Huajin, perfectly concealed.

She originally thought that even if Lu Ye ambushed when Yu Huajin launched a full-force attack, it would not necessarily succeed completely, and she might need to step in to assist. But now, it seemed that it was less trouble than anticipated.

But she quickly noticed with surprise that the ambusher was not Lu Yiye, for he was standing at a distance, holding a saber, looking at Yu Huajin's back with both astonishment and delight.

Chapter 1104: The Point of No Return

On the other side, Lin Yue was protecting a young man dressed in white like a chick under her wing. As far as she knew, that should be one of the Twin Heroes of Bingzhou, the sword cultivator Li Taibai, and the sword dragon swirling above his head undoubtedly confirmed his identity.

Who ambushed Yu Huajin?

Yu Daiwei was somewhat puzzled.

Until Yu Huajin let out a roar: "Nian Yuexian!"

What a familiar scene.

More than half a year ago, she was stopped by Zhao Cheng on her way to Jinglan Lake Pass, and while speaking to Zhao Cheng, she had once been ambushed by Nian Yuexian in a similar manner. That time, Nian Yuexian had spared her life.

But this time was different.

Yu Huajin could clearly feel her vitality rapidly slipping away!

Because of the pain, because of the anger, Yu Huajin's eyes shook violently, she simply couldn't believe Nian Yuexian would really kill her!

Indeed, after severely injuring her last time, Nian Yuexian had warned her not to come within about 30 miles of Lu Yiye, but how could such threatening words stay in her mind? For someone like her, she would certainly investigate Nian Yuexian's whereabouts before taking any action. Nian Yuexian couldn't possibly always secretly protect Lu Yiye, right?

As far as she knew, Nian Yuexian had been exploring the ground fissure and hadn't returned for quite some time, so she shouldn't appear here.

Yet she had already infiltrated this place long ago, remaining hidden and silent, waiting for the moment Yu Huajin acted to launch a deadly ambush!

The timing was perfect. Even though her condition had declined, she was still at Divine Sea Level 9. Last time she was ambushed because Zhao Cheng had distracted her. This time, she was ambushed because she let her guard down while taking action. Under normal circumstances, even Nian Yuexian couldn't pose such a deadly threat to a cultivator of the same tier so easily.

Ghost cultivators always lurk quietly, waiting to make a shocking move only once they strike.

In an instant, Yu Huajin realized one thing: her intelligence was wrong! And those who could disrupt her intelligence this way...

She dared not think further.

"I warned you, but it seems you didn't take it to heart!" Came Nian Yuexian's gentle voice beside her ear, yet it was like a sound that captured souls.

Yu Huajin's expression suddenly turned panicked, not because she was about to die. When executing this plan, she was prepared to die; even if she miraculously survived today, she would die sooner or later. Her panic arose because, near the teleportation array was a fully unfamiliar figure, not the expected Lu Yiye.

The figure was a woman whose spirit force fluctuations were extremely powerful, up to Divine Sea Level 8, and her body was covered with layers of defensive magic and spells, also surrounded by a magic artifact, showing a highly guarded stance.

She clearly knew that appearing would immediately result in an attack, so she protected herself in advance.

Lu Yiye knew someone was targeting him for assassination! This stranger was the body double he called for help, to distract Yu Huajin.

Yu Huajin, within an instant, realized the truth, feeling deeply miserable inside. She understood she had been betrayed.

Not only was she sold out by the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, but also by the person she trusted most.

No one to blame but herself, she ultimately chose a path intolerable to anyone.

In the last moment of her fading vitality, she suddenly turned her head, her sinister eyes fixed on Li Taibai protected by Lin Yue. In those ancient eyes, raging flames burned.

Not merely an outburst of anger, but true raging flames—pale-white fire—and then a poisonously sinister voice erupted: "Soul Flame Doomsday!"

As the violent psyche force roared wildly, flames swept over her entire body.

Detecting something amiss, Nian Yuexian's Willow Catkins Cutlass quivered, shattering her final moment of life.

Almost simultaneously, Li Taibai's doppelganger grunted, and the sword dragon swirling above his head disintegrated uncontrollably, his figure slightly shuddered, threatening to fall to the ground.

Lin Yue, protecting him from the front, was horribly shocked, swiftly turning to support him.

But someone moved even faster, and that was Lu Ye.

Nian Yuexian's sudden appearance was surprising; had he known she was here, so much preparation wouldn't have been necessary. He originally thought this trip would involve a life-and-death battle.

But since Nian Yuexian had taken action, it spared him the effort.

Yet he remained vigilant, for when someone finds themselves in a dead end, it's unsurprising if they carry out any crazy actions.

As the pale-white flames flickered out from Yu Huajin's eyes, the doppelganger was guarded, while his true self had already swiftly moved toward the doppelganger.

Thus, he could support the doppelganger before Lin Yue.

Sensing the change in the doppelganger, Lu Ye immediately understood the terror behind Yu Huajin's final counterattack. It should be a psyche secret technique, burning her own psyche force to violently erupt in desperation, not to protect herself, but to perish with the enemy.

Whether the enemy died or not after this move, Yu Huajin would have no chance of survival regardless.

What Lin Yue said earlier was true. Comparatively speaking, Yu Huajin had an even stronger intent to kill Li Taibai, because Tan Shu truly died under his sword. This was an undeniable fact, witnessed by many.

So when she realized she was about to die, she resolutely launched this secret technique at Li Taibai.

The reason the doppelganger could exist like a real person without any flaws was because a root of the Talent Tree took away part of Lu Ye's essence, including blood Qi, spirit force, and Divine Soul Power.

Of course, Lu Ye could restore this part at any time, so it wouldn't significantly affect his strength.

The explosion of a Divine Sea Level 9 cultivator burning their own psyche in a desperate situation was terrifying. The immense Divine Soul Shock instantly obliterated the doppelganger's portion of the psyche, causing Lu Ye to lose all connection with the doppelganger, unable to sense the Divine Soul Power from that side anymore.

He felt secretly relieved, grateful that the doppelganger had attracted Yu Huajin's hatred. Otherwise, if the secret technique were aimed at his true self, even with the Soul Suppressing Pagoda protecting his Divine Sea, his psyche might have been thrown into disarray, possibly even tearing apart the Divine Sea.

Currently, while the doppelganger's Divine Soul Power was annihilated, it hadn't completely vanished. After all, the root of the Talent Tree was still there, and the doppelganger's blood Qi and spirit force remained.

For Lu Ye, it was just a matter of replenishing the doppelganger's Divine Soul Power, which wasn't much trouble.

Lin Yue was unaware of these things; seeing Li Taibai faint, she was shocked: "Junior Brother Taibai."

This voice reached Yu Huajin's ears, and as her life force finally dissipated, a slight smile appeared on her face. No matter what, she had avenged her grandson. Not in vain!

The pale flames of the burning psyche disappeared, and Nian Yuexian drew her Willow Catkins Cutlass out. Yu Huajin's body fell limply.

She didn't bother with the chaos by Li Taibai's side. In her eyes, Li Taibai was from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge; his life or death had nothing to do with her. She was only here to support Lu Ye.

Having now killed Yu Huajin, the greatest threat was removed, and her task was considered complete.

With the Willow Catkins Cutlass in hand, she lifted her gaze towards Yu Daiwei in front of her. Her gaze was indifferent, causing Yu Daiwei to dare not move rashly, her expression conflicted.

Once the doppelganger received the Divine Soul Power from the true self, it immediately opened its eyes.

Lin Yue hurriedly approached, anxiously asking, "Junior Brother Taibai, are you okay? Is your psyche injured?"

She also noticed the danger of Yu Huajin's final secret technique, logically thinking that Li Taibai, being suddenly attacked, would be in a bad state. But now, it seemed there was no major issue?

The doppelganger shook its head, "The psyche is unharmed, thank you for worrying, Senior Sister."

Lin Yue said, "Check carefully, don't leave any hidden dangers behind."

The doppelganger knew there was no need to check, but still complied.

Lu Ye stood silently by the side without speaking.

Suddenly, Yu Daiwei's voice came from not far away: "Lu Yiye, look over here!"

Lu Ye looked towards the sound and saw her standing on the Teleportation Array, locking eyes with Nian Yuexian. Though their expressions were completely different, Nian Yuexian's face was full of scrutiny, while Yu Daiwei's whole body was tense, as if facing a formidable enemy.

For an ordinary Ghost Cultivator, they wouldn't make Yu Daiwei this nervous.

It was well known that Ghost Cultivators were slightly weaker in direct combat compared to other factions, so even though her cultivation was a level lower, she had no problem safeguarding her life against a Ghost Cultivator.

The key issue was that standing before her wasn't a normal Ghost Cultivator, it was Nian Yuexian!

Besides being a Ghost Cultivator, she was also a sword cultivator!

Moreover, she had fought alongside Mount Tai in the same era. She had heard Mount Tai mention Nian Yuexian several times; she was definitely one of the strongest in the current sequence of the Nine Provinces.

She had no confidence in defeating her, especially given their proximity. If she acted foolishly, her fragile magic cultivator body wouldn't withstand several of the opponent's flying swords.

She mentally lamented her luck for running into Nian Yuexian here, had she known, she would never have agreed to Lu Ye's request. Now, here she was, doing someone a small favor only to trap herself, especially with Nian Yuexian's gaze making her uneasy, as if a sharp sword could stab down at any moment.

Pressured, she had no choice but to seek assistance from Lu Ye.

Seeing her in this state, Lu Ye felt a bit amused, but after all, she was someone he had invited, and she did help distract Yu Huajin's attention. He couldn't turn his back on her now.

"Yiye, she doesn't look like a good person, should we kill her?" Nian Yuexian asked.

Yu Daiwei held her breath, anxiously watching Lu Ye, afraid he would say the word "kill," which would be the end for her.

She inwardly griped, how did she seem like not a good person! But she dared not voice it aloud.

"Although she's not exactly a good person, she came at my request, and there are things later that will rely on her. Senior Sister Nian, spare her life." Lu Ye said softly.

Yu Daiwei shot him a fierce glare, clearly very dissatisfied with him.

## Chapter 1105 Meeting Mount Tai

Lu Ye stepped forward to vouch for her, and Nian Yuexian finally withdrew her killing intent, lightly spitting out a word: "Scram!"

Yu Daiwei felt as if she had been granted amnesty, and turned to flee, her voice trailing from afar: "Lu Yiye, don't forget your promise!"

The scent of blood permeated the air. Yu Huajin's corpse lay on the ground, while Lin Yue remained tense, guarding Li Taibai, her eyes fixed unblinkingly on Nian Yuexian.

Compared to the old and frail Yu Huajin, the sudden appearance of Nian Yuexian made her even more nervous.

She could allow Lu Ye to freely come and go through the Dark Moon Forest Pass because of a collaborative agreement, and no matter what, Li Taibai and Lu Yiye at least had some friendship.

But this didn't mean that anyone could trespass the mountain pass she guarded, especially not a formidable ghost cultivator like Nian Yuexian.

Yu Huajin had already been killed by one strike from her; if Nian Yuexian wanted, she couldn't ensure her own safety, making her feel a sense of crisis.

Fortunately, she also knew that Nian Yuexian would most likely not start another killing spree, just like the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge had to maintain the current fragile peace between the two camps, the Haotian Alliance had the same thoughts.

"Why is Senior Sister Nian here?" Lu Ye asked.

Nian Yuexian had a good relationship with Shui Yuan and had been a reliable assistant under the senior brother, so despite the age difference, it was still appropriate to call her senior sister, especially since Lu Ye was also already in the Divine Sea.

However, he could vaguely guess that Nian Yuexian's appearance here wasn't a coincidence; she must have received some sort of information and was secretly following Yu Huajin all along.

Otherwise, the timing of her intervention wouldn't have been so precise.

"Just passing by," Nian Yuexian replied airily. She naturally wouldn't explain her reasoning to Lu Ye, as there was no need. Now that Yu Huajin was dead, the greatest threat was removed, and no one would harbor murderous intentions against Lu Ye in secret anymore.

Lu Ye had nothing to say.

In Haotian City, in the sect master's small courtyard, the sect master and Zhao Cheng of the Tianyuan Sect sat across from each other, sipping tea. They had been sitting for several hours without speaking, though they had consumed several pots of tea.

Zhao Cheng suddenly looked sorrowful and slowly stood up: "Brother Thang, now that this affair is over, I bid you farewell."

The sect master nodded silently and did not see him off.

Zhao Cheng walked out of the house and looked up to see the sky full of stars, the night was dazzling, and he sighed deeply. Some past affections were just memories now.

Some things couldn't be stopped, and some people couldn't be persuaded. Since they couldn't be stopped or persuaded, the only option was to take preventive measures, even though it was unbearable and painful. But in the end, some sacrifices had to be made. At his stage of cultivation and position, the interests of the sect outweighed personal feelings; he had to plan for the entire Tianyuan Sect and could no longer just be someone's senior brother.

He had thought about continuing to try and prevent it, just like he had stepped in last time, but it was pointless. That junior sister had no more ties and was now filled with bitterness and hatred. At such a time, such obsession was dangerous.

He ultimately chose a path of no return.

At the Dark Moon Forest Pass, Nian Yuexian had already left with Yu Huajin's corpse. She didn't say much to Lu Ye before leaving, as if she was really just passing by and happened to kill a minor character who intended harm on Lu Ye.

Lin Yue breathed a long sigh of relief, a massive weight lifted from her heart.

Lu Ye also bid farewell and left, not using the Teleportation Array, but instead flying out of the Dark Moon Forest Pass.

After traveling about 30 miles, Yu Daiwei was waiting. Seeing Lu Ye arrive, she couldn't help but glance behind him and nervously used her Mental Consciousness to scan the surroundings.

Lu Ye looked at her: "What are you looking for?"

Yu Daiwei, cautious and sneaky in demeanor, asked, "Did Nian Yuexian follow?"

"Lead the way!" Lu Ye urged impatiently.

Yu Daiwei pouted, but she knew that if Nian Yuexian were truly following in secret, with her skills she wouldn't necessarily detect her, so there's no use in looking.

She glanced up and down at Lu Ye and clicked her tongue in wonder: "You're already at Divine Sea Level 4!"

She hadn't paid much attention before, but when Lu Ye's saber intent surged and spirit force erupted at the Dark Moon Forest Pass, she suddenly realized that Lu Ye's cultivation had already reached Divine Sea Level 4.

A little over a year ago, when the long-lost Lu Ye returned to the Nine Provinces from who knows where, he had just barely ascended to the Divine Sea.

In just over a year, he advanced four minor levels in cultivation, an incredibly terrifying pace of cultivation.

She faintly realized that it was precisely because he reached Divine Sea Level 4 that Lu Yiye offered to meet the Venerable One on his own initiative because he probably felt that he now had a chance to escape from the Venerable One's hands.

Thinking it over, this guy might truly have that capability. This guy's real strength always surpassed his actual realm by several levels. Back when he first ascended to the Divine Sea, he was already a challenge for her. Now his strength could only have grown stronger since then. Even if the Venerable One took action, how certain would it be that he could capture him alive?

Moreover, the Venerable One valued him greatly and might not necessarily want to antagonize him.

No wonder she's favored by Heaven's Augury. Yu Daiwei had never envied anyone in her life, but facing Lu Ye, there was inevitably some discontent in her heart.

"Lead the way!" Lu Ye urged once more.

Just as Yu Daiwei thought, now that he had ascended to the Divine Sea Level 4, he felt confident enough to escape from under Mount Tai's hand. Otherwise, he would not have proactively sought to meet Mount Tai.

Some matters need to be laid out before him.

For nothing else, given the current unstable situation of the Nine Provinces, the power controlled by Mount Tai is an unsettling factor. If mischief arises during such times, it will only worsen the already dire situation, so he needs to be placated.

Moreover, Lu Ye wanted to discuss with Mount Tai the possibility of borrowing his forces.

Eventually, he still had to return to the Blood Refinement World, and going alone was not an option, so he needed a large group of allies. Where could these allies come from? The forces under Mount Tai were the best and most readily available choice.

Of course, if it were someone else or another matter, Mount Tai might not care.

But this involves the senior brother, and Mount Tai could not be indifferent.

These two points were Lu Ye's intentions, and as for whether Mount Tai believed him or not, there was no need to worry. Lu Ye had his ways. Before returning from the Blood Refinement World, the senior brother had explained many things.

Yu Daiwei led the way ahead, with Lu Ye close behind.

This woman probably harbored some resentment, so while flying, she intentionally tried to embarrass Lu Ye, flying faster and faster, hoping Lu Ye would request her to slow down, thus she could regain some face.

Unexpectedly, no matter how fast she flew, Lu Ye could easily keep up, which greatly frustrated her.

Realizing her plan had failed, she had no choice but to slow down, as flying like before was also quite energy-consuming for her.

Flying from dusk till dawn, Lu Ye felt that this direction seemed somewhat off.

Because according to the ten-part map, this direction was clearly heading towards Mount Ao.

A thought occurred to him: "Is Mount Tai over there at Mount Ao?"

The area of Mount Ao is vast and sparsely populated, and apart from the Righteous Blood Sect, there's only the Ziwei Dao Palace. The spirit mountaintops are sparsely inhabited, with many independent

cultivators' cave residences. If Mount Tai were hiding in one of these caves disguised as an independent cultivator, it's unlikely anyone would notice.

Yu Daiwei said, "The Venerable One specifically chose that location to meet with you. Even I can't determine his whereabouts, so you shouldn't inquire further."

It's understandable since someone like Mount Tai would prefer not to show himself publicly. After years of hiding, he likely has refuge spots scattered all over the Nine Provinces.

Upon entering Mount Ao, Lu Ye glanced downwards, frowning.

Mount Ao, which was originally lush and vibrant, was now barren and lifeless. This was evidently the result of the Insect Race's infestation. Not just Mount Ao, but the majority of the Nine Provinces are in such a state now.

It wasn't until they reached a nameless peak that Yu Daiwei descended upon her fleeing light and flew towards it, with Lu Ye closely following behind.

Landing on the peak, Lu Ye immediately spotted a familiar figure awaiting his arrival, none other than Mount Tai.

A burly figure stood by Mount Tai's side, and judging by his dull expression, he should be a Dao soldier.

Lu Ye couldn't help but think of Dao Thirteen, who didn't return with them from the Blood Refinement World. It must have been that the long-distance teleportation consumed too much energy, so the Nine Provinces Heaven's Augury stopped Dao Thirteen's teleportation, leaving him in the Blood Refinement World.

"Sit," Mount Tai said with a warm smile, as refreshing as a spring breeze.

Lu Ye, not standing on ceremony, casually took a seat opposite him.

The first time he had met Mount Tai, he had felt enormous pressure, as back then he was only at True Lake Level 5. But now, being at Divine Sea Level 4, he has crossed an entire major realm in cultivation. Besides, he had met dozens of cultivators stronger than Mount Tai and had been trained by them for several months. Lu Ye now considered himself quite experienced.

He could say that within the Nine Provinces, there was no one whose mere presence could daunt him.

Moreover, Mount Tai was not an oppressive figure; he always gave people a warm feeling.

Yu Daiwei sat quietly to one side, kneeling while preparing tea with a tea set.

"What might you be looking for me for, my young friend?" Mount Tai asked with a smile as the fragrance of tea filled the air. To him, the fact that Lu Ye contacted him voluntarily was all he ever hoped for, regardless of the reason.

The last encounter left a deep impression on Mount Tai, and he somewhat understood Lu Ye's character. Therefore, he knew that coercion wouldn't work on Lu Ye; reasoning and emotional persuasion were the keys, with a long-term plan in mind.

The current situation in the Nine Provinces is a great opportunity for him. If he can solve the problem of the insect infestation, it will spark a new wave of momentum, spreading the name of Chaos throughout the Nine Provinces and attracting followers.

He had prepared everything for this, and now he just needed a nod from Lu Ye. Then the third-party faction, Chaos, could emerge and cleanse the Nine Provinces of catastrophe. At that time, both Chaos and Lu Ye would become saviors of the Nine Provinces. With such a foundation of gratitude, there would be no worry about Chaos not thriving and expanding.

#### Chapter 1106 Secrets

At that time, Lu Ye stood at the forefront, while he remained hidden in the background. Together, they gradually eroded the power of the Haotian Alliance and the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge. One day, there would only be one faction left in the Nine Provinces.

By then, there would be no more confrontation between the two major factions, nor endless fighting and slaughter.

For this goal, he had hidden his identity and prepared for decades. Now, with the arrival of Lu Ye, a person blessed by Heaven's Augury, it could be said that the timing, location, and unity of people were all aligned; everything was ready, only lacking the eastern wind.

While Mount Tai was imagining this, Lu Ye was also pondering.

He was thinking about how to reveal things to Mount Tai. He didn't have much patience nor much time. Intrigue and plots weren't his strong suit. The experiences and insights from the Blood Refinement World were his unique advantage, so some matters were better addressed directly.

Just like the strategy used to deal with Yu Huajin.

So he spoke up, "Senior Brother Tai Shan, apologies!"

Mount Tai looked at him puzzled, not knowing why Lu Ye suddenly addressed him as Senior Brother. Such a title wasn't casually used, especially when Yu Daiwei under his command had once captured Lu Ye alive, detaining him in a small secret realm for several months.

Lu Ye looked at him intently, speaking calmly, "On the position near your left buttock close to the waist, there is a birthmark the size of a fingernail, with three hairs — one long and two short. The long one is a deeper color."

The smile on Mount Tai's face suddenly became stiff, and there was a visible twitch at the corner of his eye.

Yu Daiwei, who was quietly brewing tea on the side, couldn't help but look up, her eyes widening as she looked at Lu Ye. Instinctively, she felt he was spouting nonsense, but it was unusually detailed.

Turning her head to gaze at Mount Tai with a look of inquiry, had she not had enough composure, she might have asked if it was true.

Mount Tai sensed her gaze, turned to stare at her once, and Yu Daiwei hastily lowered her head, continuing to brew tea, keeping her eyes down, while in reality, her ears were almost perked up.

Curiosity burned intensely...

"What is the little friend talking about?" Mount Tai frowned. This conversation was unfolding completely differently from what he'd imagined. He thought Lu Ye might come to inquire about some secret matters or ask about the mysteries of that round disc. He had prepared many answers, not intending to keep much from Lu Ye because he felt the current Lu Ye was already qualified. But when Lu Ye spoke, it was indeed secretive, but it was his own secrets...

Lu Ye continued to expose his secrets, "Under the third rib there is a sword scar, which you received at the age of thirty from a Divine Sea Level 8 sword cultivator. It was just an inch away from being fatal. At that time, Senior Brother still sustained other injuries and remained unconscious for a full day and night before waking up."

"Senior Brother once liked a girl named Mei'er, but she found him too plain-looking and ordinary, so she didn't fancy him. She ended up with a handsome and well-esteemed disciple of a big sect. They both perished in a great battle, leaving Senior Brother heartbroken for a long time, even shedding tears."

"Since then, Senior Brother has not been keen on young girls. He prefers more mature women, something with more charm."

Yu Daiwei, who had been listening intently, suddenly sat up straight, her chest puffed out; she inadvertently revealed all sorts of charms.

"Also, Senior Brother can't hold his liquor. Without using spirit force to dispel the effects, he'd get drunk from one pot. Every time he drank too much, he liked to brag and then find someone to fight. After the fight, he'd strip naked and lay down anywhere. Once, Senior Brother somehow stumbled into a farmhouse and was picked up by a widow..."

"Enough!" Mount Tai hurriedly interrupted Lu Ye, his eye twitching uncontrollably, not daring to let him continue. If he did, how could he maintain any shred of authority in front of his subordinates?

Huffing coldly, "I never knew that Nian Yuexian was such a gossip who likes to talk behind people's backs!"

Lu Ye looked at him calmly, "Do you really think these things were told to me by Senior Sister Nian?"

"If not?"

"Does Senior Brother truly believe that Senior Sister Nian could know so many secret matters?"

"We have worked together for many years and share a bond like siblings. What could she not know?"  
Though he said this, there was still doubt.

It's not surprising for Nian Yuexian to know ordinary secrets, given how long they've been together. But how could she know about the few hairs on his birthmark? Besides himself, only one other person knew about that. He recalled a great battle, washing off the blood in a river when that person had plucked those three hairs...

At this thought, his heart shook. He looked at Lu Ye in disbelief.

Lu Ye said blandly, "It seems Senior Brother has some guesses."

Mount Tai's expression changed, his breath became volatile, and Yu Daiwei's face turned grave as she'd never seen her Venerable One like this before.

"Impossible!" Mount Tai focused and shouted quietly.

"Everyone who knew you thought you'd been dead for years, but in fact, you're alive and well. If Senior Brother could feign death, why couldn't others?"

"I personally buried his bones," Mount Tai stared sharply at Lu Ye.

Lu Ye said, "Then does Senior Brother know how I became acquainted with your name? I never mentioned you in front of Senior Sister Nian." Saying this, he slowly stood up, walked to the Dao soldier, and touched the soldier's chest.

Yu Daiwei cautioned, "What are you doing?"

Lu Ye said, "The method to refine these Dao soldiers is flawed, so the soldiers have very low spiritual intelligence. And if there's a special method, it's quite easy to make them... like this!"

With a nudge of spirit force, the Dao soldier suddenly closed its eyes, and sat down softly on the ground, snoring, instantly falling into a deep sleep.

Mount Tai quietly watched, and even with his calm demeanor, his mind was in extreme turmoil because he was shocked to discover that what seemed impossible to him was actually the truth.

This was truly hard for him to believe.

"If Senior Brother still doesn't believe me, I can make a promise oath to Heaven's Augury!" Lu Ye sat back down.

Mount Tai said nothing, working hard to calm the chaos in his heart. After a long while, he said, "Do you think, does a promise oath still have a binding effect on you?"

Lu Ye frowned, "What do you mean by this, Senior Brother?"

"Heaven's Augury is known as fair and just, but in reality, it can be biased, especially towards someone like you who is favored by Heaven's Augury, always showing a lenient side. If you don't believe it, just try it."

Lu Ye hadn't paid much attention before, but now that it was mentioned, he remembered that when he made a promise oath in front of Yu Daiwei before, he didn't feel the constraint of Heaven's Augury.

He turned to Yu Daiwei and said, "Lu Ye of the Righteous Blood Sect, humbly asks Heaven's Augury to witness, I am deeply fond of this woman, if I have any dislike, let lightning strike me."

He waited for a moment, and nothing happened.

Yu Daiwei shot him a glance.

Lu Ye showed a troubled expression, "I initially wanted to take a promise oath to gain Senior Brother's trust, but it seems this method doesn't work now. What does Senior Brother suggest for me to earn your trust?"

"I believe!"

Lu Ye raised his eyebrows, looking at him with some surprise.

Mount Tai said, "The method to refine Dao soldiers in this world is known only by me and him."

"Isn't it possible that I obtained some hand-written notes or something passed down?"

Mount Tai slowly shook his head, "He wouldn't be so bored as to record such things." Looking up at Lu Ye, "Is he really still alive?"

Lu Ye seriously nodded, "Very much alive."

Mount Tai showed a puzzled expression, "A person like him, if he is still alive, how can the Righteous Blood Sect fall into decline, and how has he not stirred up any storms all these years?"

"Because he is no longer in the Nine Provinces."

"Not in the Nine Provinces? Then where is he?"

"In a domain called the Blood Refinement World." Lu Ye took a sip of the tea in front of him, "Senior Brother, have you ever wondered why after I was detained in that little secret realm, I lost contact for over two years? Where did I go during that time?"

"You went to the Blood Refinement World?" Mount Tai sensed something.

Lu Ye nodded, "That day I was detained in the small secret realm, Dao Thirteen was guarding its exit. I had no way to escape, so I figured out a way to break the foundation of the small secret realm. I originally thought that after the small secret realm collapsed, I could escape, but who knew, instead of returning to the Nine Provinces when it collapsed, I was sent to the Blood Refinement World..."

The situation of the Blood Refinement World unfolded before Mount Tai with Lu Ye's narration.

Upon hearing that Feng Wujiang was raising a flag over there, creating the only Pure Land for the human race, and that many long-established elders were following his orders, Mount Tai couldn't help but laugh heartily, showing a relieved expression as if it was to be expected, and even a hint of yearning.

Then he heard how difficult the human race's survival was in the Blood Refinement World, and how the Righteous Blood Sacred Land had to endure a Blood Race siege every few years, and his expression became grim.

Yu Daiwei, listening on the side, was dumbfounded.

Her cultivation was indeed higher than Lu Ye's, and she had seen more of the world, but Lu Ye's peculiar experiences were something she had truly never encountered.

She finally understood why the Venerable One was so set on Lu Yiye; someone who is favored by Heaven's Augury has experiences that are unimaginable to ordinary people.

When all the various pieces of information about the domain were laid out before Mount Tai, the last bit of doubt in his heart dissipated.

What Lu Ye said was bizarre beyond belief, but upon careful investigation, there were no flaws, and Lu Ye wouldn't make up a domain like this to deceive him. Without personal experience, these things can't be fabricated.

It was only after a long while that Lu Ye finished talking about all matters related to the Blood Refinement World.

Mount Tai sharply identified the issue, "As you said, the Blood Race's sieges will continue, but the defense line of the Righteous Blood Sacred Land has already been breached. Wouldn't it be very dangerous when the Blood Race attacks next time?"

"Exactly. That's why I have to return before the Blood Race besieges the Righteous Blood Sacred Land, and I need to take a group of people back. The Righteous Blood Sacred Land lacks top-level combat power, but what they lack more is numbers. So, Brother Mount Tai, if you still remember your old friendship with my senior brother, I want to ask you to do me this favor."

#### Chapter 1107 Meeting Gift

Lu Ye once considered whether to report the matter of the Blood Refinement World to Haotian City and let Haotian City organize people to handle it. If that were the case, it would save him a lot of trouble.

But ultimately this is the affair of another domain, and the Haotian Alliance may not be willing to get involved. Launching an army from one domain to another is fraught with dangers, and might not bring much benefit. It would be hard to form a large-scale organization.

This is different from the last time when Nine Provinces cultivators invaded the Unparalleled Continent. At that time, the Unparalleled Continent was already shrouded by the Nine Provinces Heaven's Augury. Cultivators could earn battle merit by killing enemies within it, and the conflicts were limited to the Cloud River Realm level, so cultivators were very enthusiastic.

So if Lu Ye really wants to bring help over, he can only think of a way himself. Mount Tai is doubtlessly a very good option.

Lu Ye does not know how strong Mount Tai's forces are, but from the few contacts he has had, it seems that the reach of Mount Tai does not extend into the upper levels of the two large camps. However, the forces he secretly controls are definitely not weak, otherwise he would not have the notion to create a third faction.

He has the determination and courage to do so, so he should have the corresponding foundation. If he agrees to this matter, then when the time comes, he will secretly mobilize people, and the number of people he can bring over won't be small.

"When?" Mount Tai asked.

Lu Ye shook his head: "Not sure, but I know I will definitely be summoned by Heaven's Augury again." This is a feeling from the void.

It can't be that Heaven's Augury sent him inexplicably to the Blood Refinement World, letting him see the suffering there, and the shaky state of the Righteous Blood Sacred Land, and then leave it alone.

If that were the case, his last trip to the Blood Refinement World would just be a joke, and Heaven's Augury wouldn't do such a futile act.

He believes that the last time Heaven's Augury sent him there was with deeper meaning, so at the right time, he will surely have the chance to return to the Blood Refinement World.

Since Lu Ye returned from the Blood Refinement World, he has firmly believed in this.

"I can agree to this matter, but you also have to promise me one thing."

Lu Ye sighed and said: "The matter mentioned by Brother Mount Tai was also instructed by my master brother. A third faction is unreliable. Since ancient times, the Nine Provinces Haotian Alliance and Ten Thousand Demons Ridge have been opposed to each other for thousands of years. Such a pattern is deeply rooted in people's minds. Even if Brother Mount Tai really creates a third faction, it will only make the situation more chaotic. My master brother had once thought about this but eventually gave up, so he handed that item to someone else for safekeeping. My master brother said he understands your pains and intentions but still hopes you can give up this idea temporarily. The situation in Nine

Provinces is already tense enough, but at least it's clear right now. He doesn't want it to become more chaotic. If you still have this desire, wait until you have visited the Blood Refinement World and discuss it with him in detail before deciding. After visiting the Blood Refinement World, if you still have this desire, he will not stop you and will even help you!"

Mount Tai suddenly laughed: "Seems like he is really still alive."

"Hmm?" Lu Ye frowned and looked at him, then quickly understood. Mount Tai had never completely believed him, but now that he mentioned the seal of the creation of a third faction, he finally truly trusted him.

Because even the master brother's wife who keeps the seal doesn't understand its function, nor does Nian Yuexian.

As for Lu Ye, if my master brother had not personally explained it, Lu Ye wouldn't believe that there is such a marvelous thing in this world.

"My main reason for coming today is to tell Brother Mount Tai these things. Brother can think quietly. If you have a decision, just let Senior Sister Yu send me a message at any time."

Yu Daiwei was lost in thought.

Originally, she was asked by Lu Ye to take him to see the Venerable One. She thought that no matter what, the Venerable One would achieve his wish this time. Who would have thought that after a conversation, there would seem to be some intention to turn hostility into friendship?

She was even called Senior Sister Yu... making her feel quite embarrassed.

"Additionally, the situation in Nine Provinces is unstable now, and the sentient beings are suffering. Please, Brother Mount Tai, show mercy and don't easily stir up turmoil."

Mount Tai laughed: "In your view, what kind of person am I?"

Lu Ye spoke honestly: "Someone who is somewhat unscrupulous in achieving their goals."

Mount Tai seemed surprised that Lu Ye would evaluate him like this. After a moment of thought, he nodded: "It doesn't sound wrong, but to be honest, I hate schemes and plots the most, and I'm most annoyed by those who hide in the shadows, manipulating things. When I was with your master brother before, I didn't need to care about anything; I just needed to fight. Your master brother pointed where to go, and I'd lead the army to attack there. But people, they always change, different environments require different responses. I never thought that such days would return! Lu Yiye, you underestimated me. The thing I wanted you to agree to was not the creation of chaos, but that when you return to the Blood Refinement World, I want to go with you! I want to see with my own eyes if what you said is true or false. If it's true, I'll thank you. If it's false, I'll kill you, even though you are nominally Wujiang's junior brother, I won't show mercy."

Lu Ye nodded: "No problem, at that time, Brother will find it hard to take it easy."

Mount Tai extended a hand towards him, looking at him intently: "Heaven's Augury vows are useless to you, so I won't make you swear. I look forward to that day!"

Lu Ye raised his hand and slapped it on, the two palms clasped together, voice steady and determined: "That day will come, and it won't be too long!"

Yu Daiwei quietly watched from the side. Even though she was a strong cultivator at Divine Sea Level 8, and not young herself, she still couldn't fully understand the interactions between men. However, she did comprehend one thing: Lu Yiye coming here seemed to have won over their Venerable One, and the Venerable One was more than willing to be won over, even with a sense of anticipation.

What kind of personal charm did this person, who once stirred great tumult in the Nine Provinces, possess to make even the Venerable One captivated and convinced?

She suddenly felt a bit of anticipation herself.

"Since you call me Senior Brother, I don't have much to give you, take this as a meeting gift." Mount Tai suddenly raised his hand and tossed something towards Lu Ye.

Lu Ye caught it and discovered it was a wine jar.

Yet he wasn't naive enough to believe it was just a jar of fine wine.

While he was puzzled, Mount Tai threw him a jade slip and said slowly, "In the current situation in the Nine Provinces, the biggest challenge is how to solve the problem of the origin magnetic field's suppression on the cultivators' power deep underground. If this problem can be solved, then the Nine Provinces cultivators can attack the Insect Path, go deep underground, and take down the Yellow Dragon, thus addressing the insect disaster at its source. Currently, the elite healing cultivators and alchemy cultivators from each provincial state in the Nine Provinces are conducting research on this issue and have made some discoveries. For instance, the Insect Race's insect blood can slightly block the suppression from the origin magnetic field, but the effect is not significant. The jade slip records a special method for refining the insect blood from the Insect Race. The jar contains refined insect blood, and applying this insect blood when going deep underground shows a significant effect in blocking the origin magnetic field. I had someone try it, and even when reaching the end of the Insect Path, about sixty percent of their strength remains after applying the insect blood."

Lu Ye was shocked: "Sixty percent?"

Mount Tai nodded: "Sixty percent!"

This was an astonishing proportion.

Having had the experience of going deep into the Insect Path, Lu Ye was well aware of how terrifying such suppression could be. His Divine Sea Level 3 cultivation would be reduced to Spirit Stream Realm strength once he reached the end of the Insect Path.

So, even someone as strong as the sect master could not exert much more power than he could in such an environment.

But if sixty percent of the strength could be retained, the sect master could at least wield Divine Sea Realm power, greatly enhancing self-preservation abilities.

If more strong cultivators at the sect master's level could be gathered to collaborate, there would be an opportunity to fight through the Insect Path, break into the Insect Race's Great Secret Realm, and once the entrance was blocked and held firm, the Nine Provinces army could follow continuously without end!

Lu Ye immediately understood the importance of this jar of insect blood and the refining method recorded in the jade slip. It could be said that under today's circumstances, these two items are practically the savior of the Nine Provinces!

This was an unexpected delight; he had come to see Mount Tai simply to lay some things on the table and seek some assistance in fighting back against the Blood Refinement World.

Who would have thought Mount Tai would turn around and give him such a generous gift!

He obviously realized that the current situation in the Nine Provinces was unfavorable for the plan to rescue the Blood Refinement World, which was why he was urgently trying to solve the problem in the Nine Provinces.

Otherwise, he couldn't have so easily taken out such a thing.

What puzzled Lu Ye was the origin of this special refining method.

As if detecting this point, Mount Tai smiled slightly: "Do not underestimate the foundation of the Nine Provinces. This refining method I acquired was researched by a group of alchemy cultivators and healing cultivators over in Wuzhou, although the most crucial results were intercepted by my people. So, their research is now at a bottleneck, but I believe that it won't take long for them to rediscover this refining method on their own."

The implications hidden in those words made Lu Ye feel alarmed, as it suggested that Mount Tai's forces had already reached Wuzhou, and if this was true for Wuzhou, what about the other provincial states?

"Previously, I had Daiwei send you an image message stone, which recorded the scene of the insect disaster's source. I have the complete scene here, and I'll give it to you later."

Lu Ye seemed a bit sheepish: "To be honest, Senior Brother, I've actually been to that Great Secret Realm."

Mount Tai looked at him in surprise but soon felt at ease: "No wonder you have no interest in those influences; you've already been there."

Having already gone to that secret realm personally, naturally, he wouldn't be interested in the images within.

If someone else said that, Mount Tai wouldn't easily believe it. But since it came from Lu Ye's mouth, it was beyond doubt. This generation, favored by Heaven's Augury, always managed to achieve what others could not, and in doing so, could receive protection from the auguries hidden within the chaos.

Take today's event, for example, Lu Ye chose this time to approach him, discussing many secrets, and being gifted the method of refining insect blood. This was also guided by Heaven's Augury itself.

#### Chapter 1108 Uniting Forces Across the Board

Initially, Lu Ye planned to make a detour to the sect headquarters after meeting with Mount Tai, since it was nearby. He missed his Second Senior Sister and Master, having not seen them for a long time.

However, after acquiring the jar of insect blood and the jade slip containing the special extraction method, he reluctantly abandoned the idea. He bid farewell to Mount Tai and hurried towards Haotian City.

The sooner he submitted these items, the sooner the Nine Provinces could organize a team to assault the Great Secret Realm of the Insect Race and resolve the insect plague.

The situation in the Nine Provinces was already dire, affecting not only cultivators but also ordinary people. Years of rampant insect plagues had prevented people from farming. Even with surplus grain stored in previous years, it was nearly depleted. Every human settlement was tightening its belt to get by.

If this situation continued, a large number of ordinary people would inevitably starve, threatening the foundation of the cultivation world.

On the way, he sent a message to the sect master, providing a brief explanation.

More than half a day later, he arrived in Haotian City and went straight to the sect master's courtyard.

The sect master was waiting, and Lu Ye presented the insect blood and jade slip, which the sect master scrutinized carefully.

A moment later, the sect master asked, "Did Mount Tai give you these?"

"Yes."

"How strange, he's suddenly changed his ways." The sect master was puzzled. Ever since Lu Ye had told him about Mount Tai, the sect master had been secretly investigating Mount Tai and the Chaos Organization, but because they were well-hidden, there hadn't been any substantial discoveries. The sect master knew that under the current circumstances in the Nine Provinces, such a hidden force was extremely unstable. If Mount Tai continued to lie low, it was fine, but if he suddenly rose up, it would only further destabilize the Nine Provinces' situation.

Moreover, for Mount Tai's schemes, the more chaotic the Nine Provinces became, the more advantageous it was for him, because only in chaos would people seek change.

Unexpectedly, he voluntarily handed over such important things to Lu Ye.

Given the current circumstances, these two items were truly crucial.

"I told him about the Blood Refinement World and Senior Brother's situation. In fact, when I returned from the Blood Refinement World, Senior Brother had some instructions for Mount Tai. I had a detailed discussion with him, and I suppose I managed to persuade him temporarily."

The sect master understood: "He holds your Senior Brother in high regard; he probably listens to what your Senior Brother says, which makes sense."

"Sect master, Mount Tai does not wish to expose his presence, so the origin of these two items will probably have to fall on my shoulders." This was also what Mount Tai specifically instructed Lu Ye before he left.

Lu Ye understood Mount Tai's instruction.

Regarding all that Lu Ye had mentioned earlier, he believed it but not entirely, so he also had to prepare for any contingency. That is, if Lu Ye deceived him and there was no Blood Refinement World, and Feng Wujiang had already died.

If that were truly the case, he would still have to execute the original plan, which meant setting the stage for Lu Ye in advance.

The special extraction method of the insect blood was like a lifeline for the current Nine Provinces. At such a critical moment, whoever provided this would be seen as a benefactor of the entire Nine Provinces, gaining immense reputation.

Of course, from Lu Ye's perspective, Mount Tai's move seemed pointless; the Blood Refinement World indeed existed, and Senior Brother was alive. But since it was Mount Tai's request, it didn't hurt to agree.

The sect master pondered briefly: "That would be good."

Compared to the previous great contribution of infiltrating the Great Secret Realm of the Insect Race, this achievement was undeniably greater. Last time, the sect master took the credit to protect Lu Ye, considering many top experts had failed to penetrate the Great Secret Realm, yet Lu Ye, a newly advanced cultivator, had entered it. Some people might harbor hostility towards him.

However, this time the situation was different. This was both a considerable contribution and a great favor. If the insects refined through the special method were truly effective and could help resolve the insect plague in the Nine Provinces, every cultivator and even ordinary people in the Nine Provinces would owe Lu Ye a debt of gratitude. At that point, who would dare to harm him? It would be going against the world's moral standards, inciting the entire Nine Provinces human race's condemnation.

One incense stick's time later, Lu Ye left Haotian City, leisurely flying towards Jinglan Lake Pass.

This proactive engagement and thorough discussion with Mount Tai was undoubtedly a wise decision, and it significantly relieved a heavy burden from his mind.

Now all that was left to do was wait.

Whether the insect blood was actually useful or not, the sect master needed to try it firsthand. After all, without practical application, there would be no convincing argument. If it truly worked, the sect master would convene a grand council to discuss the subsequent plan of action.

In such high-level discussions, Lu Ye temporarily abstained from participating and wasn't interested in doing so. In some aspects, his attitude was somewhat similar to Mount Tai's, preferring to follow orders or indulge in his own way rather than making decisions. It was mentally tiring and stressful.

The following days passed uneventfully.

At Jinglan Lake Pass, Lu Ye secluded himself for cultivation, while simultaneously refining Explosive Fire Spirit Stones and the As-Close-As-Siblings Array Disc.

It had been a month since he advanced to Level 4. With the cultivation environment in the Nine Provinces and assisted by his unique cultivation method, his cultivation progressed rapidly, roughly able to increase a level of realm every few months.

With the cultivation level increased, the efficiency of refining also improved. Coupled with the fact that both his real and doppelganger were refining together, the output of both the Explosive Fire Spirit Stones and the array discs had greatly increased compared to the beginning.

Half a month later, the sect master sent news.

The insect blood was useful, and as Mount Tai had said, even when delving into the deepest part of the Insect Path, it could still allow cultivators to maintain sixty percent of their combat strength.

This time, the sect master fought to the end of the Insect Path and saw the portal that Lu Ye had once encountered.

However, he did not rashly venture inside, as there were countless insects in the Insect Race's Great Secret Realm. To rush in alone would be difficult to accomplish anything and would likely trap oneself in danger.

Therefore, upon reaching the end of the Insect Path and seeing the portal of the Insect Race's Great Secret Realm, the sect master immediately turned back.

He urgently summoned personnel and convened a major assembly. At the assembly, he presented the remaining half jar of insect blood and a jade slip recording the special refining method, which greatly shook the minds of the high-level members of the Haotian Alliance in Bingzhou.

With his personal experience and trials, all his statements were undoubtedly very convincing. Everyone realized that this was an important turning point in the Nine Provinces' fight against the insect disaster.

Bingzhou had already shared this refining method with the other Eight Great Provincial States without any reservation and even informed the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge side.

This was not just a matter of the Haotian Alliance alone; it was an issue that the entire Nine Provinces needed to face, so the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge also had to contribute.

What the Nine Provinces cultivation world needs to do now is to refine as much insect blood as possible. Once there is enough reserve, they can mobilize all forces and charge into the Insect Race's Great Secret Realm!

As for the source of the special refining method, the sect master, as Lu Ye had requested, attributed it all to him. Such a great feat coming from Bingzhou also made the high-level members of Bingzhou glow with pride.

Some were puzzled at how Lu Yiye, a newly advanced Divine Sea Realm combat cultivator, had developed such a refining method. But compared to the emergence of the method itself, these were

trivial matters not worth delving into. Everyone has their own opportunities, and Lu Yiye was a person favored by Heaven's Augury. Even if he claimed he found it by the roadside, who could verify it?

It was precisely from this moment that the two great camps officially entered into a period of large-scale cooperation. This was a significant change, of epoch-making significance. Since the two great camps emerged, it had been two to three thousand years of relentless confrontation and constant disputes. This was the first time of sincere cooperation, destined to leave a bold and colorful mark in the history of the Nine Provinces.

Since it was a joint cooperation, there should naturally be no secrets or reservations.

Thus, the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge smoothly proposed a request to the Haotian Alliance to share the As-Close-As-Siblings Array Disc.

The Ten Thousand Demons Ridge had long coveted this item.

Although they had previously found ways to obtain some array discs from the Haotian Alliance for research, they embarrassingly discovered that no one could mass-produce them.

Currently, the Nine Provinces cultivation world is intensively preparing for the counterattack into the Insect Race's Great Secret Realm. For cultivators living in the Nine Provinces, no matter which camp they come from, fighting against the Insect Race is an unshirkable responsibility.

The intent of the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge is clear. They can contribute, and they can cooperate sincerely with the Haotian Alliance, as it is all for maintaining the stability of the Nine Provinces. However, to make the horse run, the horse must be well-fed. How many array discs the Haotian Alliance can provide is how many personnel the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge will mobilize!

If the Haotian Alliance can provide a sufficiently large number of array discs, the entire Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, from the Divine Sea Realm to the Spirit Stream Realm, will be fully mobilized without any objection!

The Ten Thousand Demons Ridge's request was reasonable.

Because everyone knows that once the issue of the insect disaster in the Nine Provinces is resolved, the relationship between the two camps will return to its previous state. At that time, the Haotian Alliance with array discs to assist will undoubtedly have the upper hand while the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge will suffer.

The current opportunity is rare. If they don't seize some benefits from the Haotian Alliance now, they may never have another chance.

To obtain this strategic material in large quantities, this is the only opportunity.

The Haotian Alliance side also realizes that the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge's request is hard to refuse. They absolutely cannot let only the Haotian Alliance handle the insect disaster; that would be unreasonable. The Nine Provinces belong to everyone, not just the Haotian Alliance.

How to give, and how much to give, is the issue the Haotian Alliance needs to face now.

Of course, the pressure is mainly on Bingzhou, because the array discs originate from Bingzhou.

Currently, the high-level members of the two camps are in a dispute, but it can be foreseen that once the early-stage preparations for the counterattack against the Insect Race's Great Secret Realm end, this dispute will instantly reach a result that satisfies both parties to a basic extent.

In today's Nine Provinces, all kinds of news are flying everywhere, and along with it, the great name of Lu Yiye from the Righteous Blood Sect resounds throughout the Nine Provinces.

The crafter of the As-Close-As-Siblings Array Disc, the preliminary investigator of the Insect Race's Great Secret Realm, the discoverer of the insect blood refining method...

Any of these three achievements alone would be enough to make a person renowned worldwide, and having all three in one, even though Lu Ye was only in the Spirit Stream Realm, would be enough to make him the most brilliant and dazzling person in the world.

Not to mention, he is now in the Divine Sea Realm.

## Chapter 1109 Stars

The sect master sent a message this time, mainly to inquire what reward Lu Ye wants.

After achieving such great merits, the Haotian Alliance must express appreciation in some way. If there's no display of gratitude, it could chill the hearts of people.

"Reward?" Lu Ye pondered, is there anything he's still lacking?

For ordinary cultivators, they lack battle merit and merit points, but he truly doesn't lack these two. His accumulation of battle merit has already reached millions and is steadily heading toward tens of millions.

If he were to mention this, no one would probably believe it.

With his current accumulation of battle merit, if he were to go to the Department of Appointments for a military rank promotion, not just a Brigadier General, even a Major General position might be possible. However, Lu Ye currently doesn't have high demands for military rank, so he is lazy to bother. With military rank promotion, only his monthly salary slightly increases.

"Then Spirit Stones it is, and the demonic pills of demon beasts, especially poison pills." Lu Ye listed his demands.

Even though he can obtain them in a certain proportion by refining Explosive Fire Spirit Stones, the Talent Tree is a bottomless pit that can devour as many Spirit Stones as possible. It's always good to stock up more.

Moreover, he feels that his Talent Tree is showing signs of undergoing metamorphosis again, because during this period, the Talent Tree has devoured many Spirit Stones, yet shows no signs of unlocking new spirit runes.

As for the demonic pills, they are mainly for Amber. The poison pills are for Hua Ci, who, after leaving the Cloud River battlefield, lacks a suitable cultivation environment. Having more poison pills could help her grow faster.

Having just finished communicating with the sect master, the guard token reacted again.

Lu Ye investigated and found that the command came from the Sky Gate Checkpoint.

They are instructed to collect insect blood from True Lake Realm and above as much as possible.

This is evidently to prepare raw materials for refining insect blood, which is not a troublesome task. Over at the ground fissure, the cultivators at the two mountain passes have been continuously killing insects, and collecting some Insect Race blood is feasible.

Moreover, this command isn't solely communicated to them; presumably, all major mountain passes at the frontline received the command.

However, the collection of insect blood has requirements. Ordinary insect blood is not very useful due to low quality and cannot be refined into anything valuable. Only insect blood from True Lake Realm and above can serve as raw material for refinement, and insect blood of Divine Sea Realm Insect Race is naturally more effective.

Lu Ye conveyed the command to the ground fissure side and did not intervene further.

He continued cultivating.

The entire Nine Provinces have entered a state of intense preparation. All cultivators are waiting for the arrival of that critical moment. Under such circumstances, a distinctive demeanor appears within the Nine Provinces, even common people unfamiliar with cultivation sense some subtle changes.

The insect plague has swept across the Nine Provinces for over three years, leaving the land in distress. Though cultivators protect common people, avoiding significant casualties, throughout these over three years, no one sees hope, and no one knows when such days will end.

But now things are different. The cultivators understand that the counter-offensive against the Insect Race's Great Secret Realm has been scheduled. It won't be long before this suffering ends, and the Nine Provinces will return to its previous state.

The night breeze gently blows as Lu Ye walks outside his cultivation spot.

Tonight is moonless, with a sky full of stars.

He is not someone who can sit in prolonged closed-door cultivation, still too young, unable to bear such temperament. Hence, after a period of seclusion, he would casually go out to stroll and relax his mind.

Cultivation is about maintaining a rhythm of relaxation and tension. His cultivation improvement rate is already fast; having a more pleasant and comfortable mindset can also enhance cultivation.

Not far away, a conversation can be heard. It's the cultivators responsible for guarding the mountain pass city wall, seemingly debating something.

Normally, there are only over fifty cultivators stationed here. However, because Lu Ye leads a mostly secluded life and travels via the Teleportation Array, he doesn't interact much with his subordinates. Those he is familiar with, there are only a few like Yooi Huang.

With a flicker, he flew over to the two individuals beside him.

The two cultivators were startled and quickly saluted after seeing Lu Ye's figure: "Sir."

Lu Ye responded with hands behind his back and curiously asked, "What are you debating?"

One of them answered: "Sir, it's like this. Lowe said there's an extra star in the sky. I claimed that with so many stars in the sky, how can he be certain there's an extra one or a missing one? So, he started arguing with me."

"An extra star?" Lu Ye looked up to the sky.

The younger cultivator, Lowe, blushed and said, "There is indeed one more star, sir. I often guard here at night, and when I have nothing to do, I watch the stars. I might not know how many stars there are exactly in the sky, but I can tell when there's an extra or missing one."

"Where?" Lu Ye asked curiously.

Lowe pointed them in a direction: "Sir, look over here. There should originally be seventeen stars here, but now, there's an extra one. I noticed it faintly a few days ago but wasn't too sure at the time. Observing today, the additional star appears brighter."

Lu Ye looked in the direction he pointed and indeed saw eighteen stars there. However, he wasn't certain which one was extra.

Such matters are tricky for him to comment on, and the number of stars can also link to observational environment factors. Perhaps Lowe hadn't noticed before, or maybe the star was obscured by clouds earlier; both are possible.

The guards were simply bored and looking for something to do.

Without much hesitation, he spoke, "Argue all you want, just don't harm the camaraderie."

"Rest assured, sir. We are like brothers, used to bickering, so please forgive us," said the elder cultivator.

Lu Ye nodded slightly and moved towards Heaven's Augury Hall to use the Teleportation Array to investigate the ground fissure.

He returned after more than two hours, stretched his muscles within the ground fissure, killed some Insect Race creatures, and resumed cultivation.

The preparatory work for the Nine Provinces took a full three months.

There was no other choice because collecting a sufficient amount of insect blood couldn't be done in a short time.

Once the insect blood reserves met the requirements, the counterattack on the Insect Race Great Secret Realm was immediately put on the agenda.

Lu Ye received the summons and hurried from Jinglan Lake Pass to Haotian City.

Upon arriving at the sect master's courtyard, the sect master was waiting.

Lu Ye was puzzled, "With my cultivation level, why am I being asked to attend the Grand Council?"

On the way, he had asked the sect master and learned that it was Pang Zhen who wanted him to attend the Grand Council. It must be known that the Grand Council had always been a meeting for the top echelons of the Haotian Alliance in Bingzhou, attended only by members like the sect master who were part of the Elder Council, or by Qian Wudang, a head of a department.

Ordinary Divine Sea Realm Level 8-9 cultivators did not have the right to attend, yet Lu Ye, a Divine Sea Level 4 cultivator, had been specifically named, which made him feel a bit flattered.

While leading him towards Harmony Light Hall, the sect master explained, "Because you've previously ventured into the Insect Race Great Secret Realm and are most familiar with the situation inside. Although you brought back images from inside, it's ultimately not as clear as seeing it firsthand, so you're needed to provide explanations. Additionally, you might need to act as a vanguard. Of course, no one will force you; you can consider whether to accept."

"A vanguard?" Lu Ye frowned. It's never easy to be the vanguard, especially in a large-scale operation like this. "What do you think, sect master?"

The sect master hesitated for a moment, "If you can ensure your safety, you can accept it, but if not, simply refuse. There's no reason to let a young person like you bear too much."

Lu Ye nodded slightly.

Following the sect master to Harmony Light Hall, they stepped inside, and all eyes turned to them.

It was known that those seated here were all top figures of the Haotian Alliance in Bingzhou, each in the Divine Sea Level 9. There were only about ten of them altogether. They were the leaders of the Haotian Alliance in Bingzhou, and their words and actions determined the overall direction of the alliance.

Some observed him, some showed interest, and others clearly held him in esteem...

Lu Ye followed behind the sect master step by step to the side of the table. The sect master sat down and motioned, "You sit too."

Lu Ye obediently sat beside him.

The battlefield marking suddenly stirred, and Lu Ye discreetly checked to find a message from Qian Wudang, "Don't be so tense. One day you'll enter here on your own; just get familiar for now."

Looking up, he saw Qian Wudang smiling at him from across the table.

Lu Ye pretended not to see and didn't reply.

At the head of the table, Pang Zhen tapped it, "Everyone is here, so I'll make an announcement. After discussions among the high-levels of the two major camps, in three days, we will launch a full-scale counterattack on the Insect Race Great Secret Realm!"

The group evidently had already received this news from various sources, so there wasn't much reaction. The gathering was to discuss the concrete action plan.

This was an enormous operation involving the joint efforts of the entire Nine Provinces. Deciding who qualified to participate, how many people each side would deploy, and how to distribute the personnel all required meticulous consideration.

A simple command to charge in would only result in chaos and disorder.

"Due to the limited scale of the Insect Path, this counterattack will only allow True Lake Realm and above cultivators to participate. Those below True Lake Realm should not get involved."

This was not only due to the scale limitation of the Insect Path but also a consideration of strength.

The Insect Race Great Secret Realm was fraught with danger; weaker cultivators would only add to the confusion and casualties. In such an environment, only those at or above the True Lake Realm could play a role.

With only this one requirement, ninety percent of the Nine Provinces cultivators would be excluded, yet the sheer number of Nine Provinces cultivators was vast. Even limiting participation to True Lake Realm and above would still gather an enormously large number, enough to deal with the Insect Race Great Secret Realm.

Though the timing was set, maintaining unified action was also a concern.

Thus, cultivators from the Nine Provincial States would need to enter through different ground fissures, maintain contact at all times, advance in sync, and continuously converge until reaching the entrance at the end of the Insect Path.

They would then wait for reinforcement outside the nine entrances, launching a combined assault into the Insect Race Great Secret Realm, sweeping it clean in one go.

#### Chapter 1110 The Proposal

The main topics discussed at this great council are these matters.

Lu Ye sat beside the sect master, listening to various department chiefs and members of the Elder Council express their opinions and views, with final decisions being made by Pang Zhen.

He noticed that everyone spoke very concisely, and decisions were made promptly, which is probably the style of cultivators. Of course, it could also be due to limited time.

The day for the counterattack is set for three days later, so this great council cannot be dragged on for too long.

Through listening, Lu Ye gained a general understanding of the plan for this action.

Now, the Nine Provinces have sufficient reserves of insect blood refined through special means, and although the origin magnetic field still suppresses cultivators, it can no longer stop the Nine Provinces cultivators from striking back.

This counterattack on the Insect Race's Great Secret Realm is divided into three stages.

The first stage involves breaking into the Insect Path from the ground fissure, advancing all the way to the gate at the end of the Insect Path.

This stage is not difficult. Even if advancing to the end and cultivators can only utilize sixty percent of their strength, as long as there are enough of them and they cooperate well, they can still hold their ground at the gate.

Moreover, since this stage is executed by the most elite strong cultivators of the Divine Sea Realm, casualties should not be many. With good luck, it might even achieve zero casualties.

This stage is expected to last about ten days. After all, the journey from the ground fissure to the gate is long and cannot be accomplished in one go.

Back when Lu Ye hid on the back of a Sacred Beetle and delved into the Insect Race's Great Secret Realm, it took him a month for a round trip.

Once the first stage's target is completed, preparations for the second stage must begin.

The timing is marked when the vanguard strong cultivators of the Nine Provincial States have gathered before the Nine Great Portals; at that time, the strong cultivators of the Nine Provincial States will charge into the Insect Race's Great Secret Realm simultaneously, aiming to capture the Nine Great Portals.

The goal is singular: to hold their ground before the gate!

The vanguard of the Nine Provincial States alone cannot wipe out the Insect Race's Great Secret Realm, no matter how strong they are; their numbers are ultimately limited. Their task is to build a defensive line before the gate, withstanding the Insect Race's backlash.

The reinforcements following closely behind can then continuously move into the Insect Race's Great Secret Realm.

The time required for this stage cannot be estimated, but it is undoubtedly the most dangerous stage, because once inside, the vanguard has no choice but to keep fighting. They cannot retreat, as the reinforcement portal is behind them, leaving no room for retreat; they also cannot flee, for the Insect Race fills every corner inside the Great Secret Realm, where would they escape to?

They can only stand firm.

Hold fast and live, falter and die!

Once the Nine Provinces army passes through all Nine Great Portals, fully entering the Insect Race's Great Secret Realm, the third stage can commence. The nine armies will split from nine directions to encircle and annihilate the Insect Race, determining the fate of the battle.

The plan is straightforward and clear without any strategic trickery. After all, the opponent is the Insect Race with low spiritual intelligence, so there is no need for sophisticated strategies. Moreover, the environmental constraints leave no room for subterfuge.

The confidence of the Nine Provinces lies in their vast number of cultivators and an endless supply of strong cultivators, confident that they won't lose in such a confrontation.

"The internal scene of the Insect Race's Great Secret Realm, everyone has seen and studied before, gaining a certain level of understanding of the internal environment. But seeing does not equate to personal experience. Currently, in Bingzhou, only one person has personally delved into the Insect Race's Great Secret Realm," Pang Zhen said as he turned his gaze to Lu Ye.

All other eyes also turned to him.

"Lu Yiye, the reason for summoning you here this time is because you have ventured into the Insect Race's Great Secret Realm. We hope you can explain in detail the situation inside based on the image message," Pang Zhen continued.

This matter had already been mentioned by the sect master on the way here, so Lu Ye stood up and gave a formal bow: "Lu Ye greets the esteemed ones. As Deputy Alliance Leader Pang instructed, I shall naturally comply. I will then take a bit of everyone's time."

The sect master handed over an image message stone. Lu Ye picked it up, infused it with spirit force, and immediately, the scene within the image message stone unfolded before everyone.

Lu Ye glanced at the scene, confirming it was his own initial position upon entering the Insect Race's Great Secret Realm, and then began, "Please look, everyone. This Great Secret Realm largely hasn't deviated from the spatial characteristics of a secret realm, meaning there are border areas. The position of each portal is at the edge, which is greatly beneficial to our action because if we hold our ground before the gate, there is no need to fear threats from behind; we only need to deal with dangers from above, ahead, and on both sides..."

Although everyone had seen the image message stone's scene many times, as Lu Ye explained, the audience listened attentively, with some even asking questions.

Lu Ye provided explanations to each query.

The image message stone's scene allowed everyone to understand the general situation inside the Insect Race's Great Secret Realm. Being Divine Sea Level 9 cultivators, they could visualize the real scene in their minds after viewing the images.

It took about one incense stick's time for Lu Ye to finish his explanation.

Pang Zhen opened his mouth: "If you are willing to join the vanguard camp and serve as a pioneer to pave the way for the army, would you agree?"

This matter was previously arranged by the sect master, so Lu Ye immediately nodded: "I am willing to go!"

The cultivation at the Divine Sea Level 4 is not weak, plus he has many trump cards, with a more solid foundation than ordinary cultivators, it's not a problem to serve as a pioneer.

Moreover, he wouldn't be alone in the vanguard camp, he would need to act together with other pioneer experts from Bingzhou, so there wouldn't be too much danger.

The sect master obviously understood this point, so he didn't make a definitive statement, only letting him act according to his own will. The disciple under his sect is indeed young, but since he's in the Divine Sea Realm, he should have the responsibility of the Divine Sea. If he retreats when facing challenges, he wouldn't achieve much in the future.

In history, only those cultivators who face difficulties head-on can go further than others.

"Good, then you shall join the vanguard camp!" Pang Zhen nodded with gratification.

Lu Ye then said: "Yet I have a proposal that I wish for the esteemed leaders to decide upon."

Everyone looked over with interest, and Pang Zhen smiled slightly: "What proposal, let's hear it."

"I was just listening to the three phases of the operation and deeply felt the danger at the beginning of the second phase. Establishing a footing in front of the portal and building defensive lines is no simple task; in the event of spirit force fluctuations, countless insects will swarm in attacks. I was thinking, what if we distract the Insect Race at that moment? It might alleviate the pressure in front of the portal."

Pang Zhen nodded: "This problem has also been considered previously, but there's no clear solution. In fact, deploying those creations by the cover armor faction would be the best choice. Unfortunately, within the Nine Provinces, the cover armor faction is declining, with very few cultivators at the Divine Sea Level, making them of little use. As for utilizing demon beasts from the beast-taming faction, it's simply impossible." Firstly, demon beasts are creatures of flesh; once they appear in the Insect Race's great secret realm, they become targets for attack, unable to distract the Insect Race's attention.

Lu Ye said: "What if we manipulate the Insects?"

"Insects?" Pang Zhen raised his brows slightly.

"I have the means to control the Insects. Last time, infiltrating the Insect Race's great secret realm was thanks to this method. So I think, if I can manipulate enough Insects to carry some Explosive Fire Spirit Stones, enter the great secret realm ahead of the vanguard camp, and place them at various locations, once those stones are triggered, they would surely attract a lot of Insects' attention, allowing the vanguard camp to seize the chance to break in. It might not secure much time, but any time gained is beneficial, and it would make it easier for the vanguard to consolidate the lines."

Pang Zhen's expression lit up: "You can control the Insects? How many?"

"One or two hundred should be no problem," Lu Ye casually reported a number. Of course, in reality, it should have no limit, but if this plan were to be carried out, it wouldn't be possible for him to control too many Insects; there wouldn't be enough time, and the space in the Insect Path isn't large enough for deployment."

Everyone listened as their eyes lit up; just imagine, one or two hundred Insects carrying Explosive Fire Spirit Stones, dispersed throughout the Insect Race's great secret realm, once triggered, it would surely cause chaotic scenes.

The Insect Race is extremely sensitive to spirit force fluctuations; feeling spirit force fluctuations, they would certainly be drawn in. This way, the pressure in front of the portal could be reduced.

It's uncertain how much time would be gained, but even if it's just a brief moment, it could avoid a certain degree of casualties! If they can hold out for a few moments, it's already a big help!

This matter surely has potential.

"What do you all think?" Pang Zhen turned to look at the sides.

Everyone had no objections, as such a scenario was to their liking; naturally, they wouldn't obstruct it but instead would vigorously promote it.

It was quickly settled, and Lu Ye's proposal was approved.

"Then it's decided. I've already discussed with Ten Thousand Demons City; the vanguard camp gathering location is set between Jinglan Lake Pass and Dark Moon Forest Pass at the ground fissure. Please deliver the message; those listed in the vanguard camp must gather at the designated location within three days. This is the first large-scale cooperative action between Bingzhou's two major camps, and also the first in the history of the Nine Provinces. It's about the reputation of our Bingzhou Haotian Alliance; I hope everyone will handle this matter prudently!"

The grand council dispersed, Lu Ye followed the sect master out of Harmony Light Hall, the sect master spoke: "With the battle imminent, anything you need to prepare, if there is, try to prepare in advance."

Lu Ye shook his head: "Nothing needs preparation." Various supplies are readily available, and there's no need to purchase anything.

"Then just prepare at the mountain pass. The gathering location is chosen on that side, and you are close by."

"Yes."

Lu Ye soared into the air, heading towards the direction of the mountain pass.

The vanguard camp gathering location was set between Jinglan Lake Pass and Dark Moon Forest Pass at the ground fissure. Whether by coincidence or design, it's logical for Bingzhou's two major camps, as Jinglan Lake Pass and Dark Moon Forest Pass were the first passes to unite, making it representative, and choosing here is also reasonable.