

Humanity 1211

Chapter 1211: Investigation

Everything Yueh Xin did was to quickly enhance the foundation of the Nine Provinces to a level that satisfied his needs. Therefore, throughout this process, he would try to avoid unnecessary waste, which might have been his original intention in setting up those nodes. Perhaps even without those nodes, the Formation of the Nine Provinces could directly reach the domain on the other side.

It must be said that Yueh Xin's proficiency in the Array Path indeed surpassed the Nine Provinces cultivators by a long shot.

Under the watchful eyes of the crowd, Jian Guhong reached the vortex at the center of the big array, collided into the vortex and then... was directly bounced back.

The scene was like an invisible beast had swallowed him and then spit him out.

Everyone was momentarily stunned.

Jian Guhong obviously did not expect this to happen, so he tried again, but the result was the same. After charging into the vortex, he was bounced back out again.

There was no need to try again. He turned with a flash of sword light and flew back.

The crowd gathered around him, and Wuchang asked, "What's going on?"

Jian Guhong shook his head, "There's an invisible barrier blocking my teleportation."

Everyone was dumbfounded. Yang Qing clearly said this was a teleportation big array, so why was there an invisible barrier? Was there a problem somewhere, or did Yang Qing not understand it either? Or perhaps he understood but didn't explain?

Considering Yang Qing's proficiency in the Array Path, it's highly likely that he doesn't understand either.

Jian Guhong continued, "Although it's a strange feeling, it seems related to my cultivation level. This big array can't teleport Constellation Realm; maybe Divine Sea Realm can try it."

The feeling was indescribable and could only be sensed by experiencing it firsthand, with no concrete evidence.

Here's the problem, it's because of the concern about the Heavenly Punishment power in the opposing domain that we wanted the Constellation Realm to explore it, a Divine Sea Realm's visit is not as secure.

But now, this big array's teleportation can't meet the Constellation Realm's needs, which is frustrating.

"Let me go take a look," a voice rang out; it was none other than Feng Wujiang.

If the Divine Sea Realm has to be deployed, he is undoubtedly the best candidate, as his strength is already the pinnacle within the Divine Sea Realm. Across the entire Nine Provinces, there is no one stronger than him.

He has long been qualified to advance to the Constellation Realm. If he wanted, the first person to set foot on stellar space from the Nine Provinces would not be Jian Guhong.

Just because he wanted to spend more time with his wife and daughter, he didn't participate in the previous scramble.

Everyone hesitated a bit. Jian Guhong thought for a moment and shook his head, "Let's take our time and plan carefully."

Someone suggested, "If it doesn't work, just destroy this Formation."

If we really need to explore the opposing domain's situation, there are other means. Now that there are so many Constellation Realm cultivators in Nine Provinces, even using the stupidest method of searching the stellar space, it shouldn't take long to find it.

Everyone was concerned that Feng Wujiang might not return, as such risks are truly unwise.

Wuchang shouted, "Lu Ye, you little rascal, got any bright ideas? What's your plan?" Actually, it wasn't really for Lu Ye to come up with a plan, just that everybody knew that Lu Ye is currently favored by Heaven's Augury, and the Nine Provinces Heaven's Augury is mysterious and unpredictable, so perhaps Heaven's Augury could provide some Insight.

So Lu Ye always seemed to know things that others didn't.

Turning their heads around, Lu Ye was nowhere to be seen, and Wuchang couldn't help but wonder, "Where did he go? He was here just now."

"Over there!" Someone pointed in a direction.

Right in front of the vortex at the center of the big array, Lu Ye had somehow already arrived there. Naturally, he couldn't have been so stealthy right under the eyes of Constellation Realm cultivators, but with Number Nine's concealment, it was possible.

If Senior Brother was the first choice to explore the opposing domain, then he was the second choice. So when he heard Jian Guhong say the teleportation matter was related to cultivation, he asked Number Nine to conceal his whereabouts and headed over here.

In the Blood Refinement World, Senior Brother had already done enough; not everything should be left to him. Now that this Junior Brother has grown, it is time to take on some responsibilities.

As for Heavenly Punishment... although he brought up this matter, he wasn't actually too worried about it.

Since Yang Qing had been to that domain, if there truly were a Heavenly Punishment, he couldn't have kept quiet and watched as the Nine Provinces cultivators went to their deaths.

Thus, since a Divine Sea Realm had to go and investigate, he wouldn't shy away, not to seek any limelight; he no longer needed to make a name for himself in Nine Provinces. It was just that, in this situation, he was the most suitable candidate.

Destroying the Formation is inappropriate, not to mention the massive resources spent on the early setup. This Formation can allow Number Nine to devour the foundation of the opposing domain, so it cannot be destroyed. Nine Provinces might even grow rapidly because of it.

Leaving it unattended is also not feasible, as teleportation is generally two-way. If someone from the Nine Provinces can go over, someone from the other side can come here, so it's necessary to explore the situation over there.

He headed straight for the vortex without the slightest hesitation and slammed into it.

The world spun, and heaven and earth inverted.

It was a memorable long-distance teleportation, making him recall the effects of the teleportation arrays he set up when his cultivation was not high, and this time it was far more intense than back then.

Furthermore, a powerful pressure from all directions compressed him, making Lu Ye feel like he was not in the midst of teleportation but rather entering the intestines of a being.

He instantly understood that the Formation Yueh Xin had the Nine Provinces set up was never meant for teleportation! Teleportation was just a side function; devouring was the true essence of the Formation.

Throughout the process, he couldn't unleash his spirit or see anything. Just from the teleportation experience, it was a world apart compared to teleportation with the Heaven's Augury Pillar.

No one knows how much time had passed before a faint light suddenly appeared in front of Lu Ye, just when he thought he would remain in this state forever.

The light rapidly expanded in his vision, and Lu Ye was involuntarily propelled forward.

Despite feeling dizzy and unwell, he still immediately mobilized his spirit force to protect himself, layering Defense Spirit Runes upon himself.

Even though he was certain that there was little risk of Heavenly Punishment in this domain, it was better to be safe than sorry.

Indeed, there was no Heavenly Punishment, as it would have descended immediately if there were any.

However, Lu Ye felt a clear and familiar suppression of his cultivation, a sensation he had experienced before!

Therefore, Lu Ye promptly realized his location.

He was deep underground, and what was suppressing him was the omnipresent origin magnetic field. However, since he wasn't too deep, his cultivation was still able to manifest the power of the Divine Sea Realm.

After calming his mind slightly, he had the time to survey the surrounding environment.

Indeed, he was underground, in a massive circular space. The surrounding rock walls were smooth and flat, with faint remnants of powerful energy.

This was... man-made!

It surely had to be Yueh Xin's handiwork.

He was careful by nature, knowing to hide his arrangements, thus creating such a space deep underground.

The surrounding light came from a peculiar type of stone, resembling stars sprinkled on the dome of the circle, casting a hazy glow over the entire space.

Lu Ye descended, inspecting the arrays in this place.

He discovered that this array was the same as the one the Nine Provinces cultivator had set up in Liyuan, only much smaller in scale. Perhaps it was a testament to Yueh Xin's profound skill in the Array Path, or perhaps it was intentionally designed.

He slightly calmed his disordered spirit force and began to place Spirit Stones onto the array.

Previously, Yang Qing had directly used his own formidable power to activate the array in Liyuan by injecting his strength into it. Although Lu Ye could do the same, it was better to conserve energy in this unfamiliar place.

He needed to first test whether this array could function for teleportation, in order to determine his subsequent actions.

If it was easy to come here, but impossible to return, it would be a tragedy, and he might have to wait for the Nine Provinces Constellation Realm cultivators to search the stellar space for him.

By all accounts, there should be no problem.

A moment later, Lu Ye activated the array with his spirit force, focusing intently.

He didn't need to fully activate it, nor did he really need to teleport back. During this process, he could already make a clear judgment.

In a while, Lu Ye had a clear understanding.

The array could operate, and teleporting back to Nine Provinces wouldn't be an issue.

Next, he needed to conduct a simple exploration of this domain's situation.

What could be confirmed was that there were living beings in this domain. It was just unclear which race they belonged to because a domain could only be called a domain if a large number of living beings inhabited it. Otherwise, it was usually referred to as a dead star or desolate planet.

Until now, Lu Ye had encountered several races, with the Blood Race and Insect Race being the ones he interacted with the most besides the human race.

The stellar space was vast, and different domains varied greatly, resulting in different beings evolving accordingly. Not every place was a haven for the human race.

There was a passage leading upward, which should be the way out of here.

Lu Ye leaped upwards, heading straight up.

The passage was straight, without any turns. He flew for quite a while before he saw a distant light.

Heading toward that light, he soon rushed out, immediately activating Concealment and Breath-concealing Spirit Runes upon himself.

Then he discovered that the end of the passage was actually an ancient, long-dry well!

Turning his head to look around, he saw a wasteland before his eyes.

Extending his Mental Consciousness quietly, he found no trace of any living beings within dozens of miles around.

This was expected, considering Yueh Xin's cautious nature. He had placed the array deep underground, and the entrance within an ancient well in a location that was certainly remote and rarely visited by living beings.

Thus, Lu Ye couldn't detect the presence of any living beings.

He jumped into the air, looking down as he did so, his brows slightly furrowing.

Within the ruins, there were remnants of walls and numerous dilapidated pavilions, long abandoned over the years.

Chapter 1212: Unparalleled Continent?

From what he could see, it appeared that this place had once been inhabited by living beings a long time ago, and it seemed to be a large gathering point. The number of inhabitants here would not have been small, but Lu Ye could not determine if they were of the human race.

Why it had fallen into such ruin, he naturally did not know.

He could only explore slowly.

Just as he was about to do so, the corner of his eye suddenly caught something unusual.

Momentarily stunned, he turned and darted in that direction, quickly coming upon a scene of broken walls and ruins, beneath which something seemed to be trapped.

He cleared a bit away, revealing a dried corpse buried in the ruins for who knew how many years.

It was a human corpse!

From this, it could be seen that there truly were humans living in this domain, and perhaps this was once a place similar to a sect, though it wasn't clear what calamity had befallen that led to the sect's destruction and the disciples' extinction.

Judging from surface features, the deceased was a male in his prime; his flesh was shriveled and gray in color.

The body showed no obvious external injuries, and although it had been dead for many years, the flesh had been preserved remarkably intact, though it had become withered and shriveled.

Suddenly, Lu Ye realized this thing seemed somewhat familiar...

He moved closer, focusing intently on the corpse.

Without warning, the corpse's eyes opened, staring directly at him in an unexpected gaze from mere inches away!

The eyes of the dead lose their luster, becoming filthy, yet these were different, not at all cloudy, overflowing instead with cruelty and malice.

This sudden scene would startle even those accustomed to seeing death if they weren't prepared.

Almost the moment the eyes opened, the corpse opened its mouth, spewing a turbid, earthy-yellow breath directly at Lu Ye's head.

Simultaneously, it reached out one hand, sharp, gleaming fingernails aiming to stab into Lu Ye's chest.

It was hard to believe this lifeless corpse would react with such an explosive move.

Yet this lightning-fast strike was firmly blocked by the Defense Spirit Runes on Lu Ye's chest, and with a flash of the saber, its blade sliced straight through the corpse's neck.

The motion of the corpse ceased; the cruelty and malice in its eyes quickly dissipated before it collapsed to the ground with its head severed.

Perhaps it was because Lu Ye activated his spirit force, or maybe attracted by the aura he exuded. As soon as he decapitated this reanimated corpse, a rustling sound came from beneath the surrounding ruins.

Accompanied by low growls like wounded beasts, lifeless figures sprang forth from various places.

Like sharks scenting blood, they swarmed towards Lu Ye.

Lu Ye remained calm, wielding the Boulder Mountain Saber. Instantly a flurry of saber light erupted from where he stood, sending severed limbs and broken corpses flying.

Attacking him were shriveled zombies and decayed corpses. The difference was that zombies mostly fought alone while the decayed corpses banded together, with thick corpse Qi connecting them, quickly enveloping the vast ruins in a cloud of corpse Qi.

Lu Ye's saber light was sharp, without a single opponent able to withstand even a stroke. With his current strength, in a typical mid-class world, he was almost unstoppable without a match.

But he quickly discovered a problem: the more he killed, the more bodies gathered.

Originally, these corpses had lain dormant within the ruins, motionless for countless years, but his arrival was like dropping a grain of salt into boiling oil, creating a fierce reaction.

Not only did the corpses within the ruins fling themselves fearlessly at him, but the commotion from their struggle attracted corpses from even further away, and this chain reaction continued to ripple outward.

It seemed unending!

Lu Ye realized that continuing to fight like this wasn't a solution. With a flourish of his saber, he no longer stood still but soared into the air, cutting his way out.

A multitude of zombies and decayed corpses pursued relentlessly, yet how could they catch him?

Lu Ye did not fly high, as he needed to test some theories in his mind, and thus had to make some commotion; the powerful aura he emitted was the best bait.

Sure enough, wherever he passed, seemingly calm areas erupted into chaos; dormant corpses, hidden for God knows how many years, were startled awake and joined the pursuit, forming an ever-increasing trail of followers in his wake. The more commotion he caused, the more pursuers were roused.

Everywhere he went, it was the same situation.

Lu Ye felt heavy-hearted!

The Corpse Race! They were not unfamiliar to him, as he had dealt with this race on the shattered Unparalleled Continent.

However, the Corpse Race he had encountered before, the strongest Corpse King, was merely at the peak of the Cloud River Realm, yet in this domain, those with power comparable to True Lake and Divine Sea were everywhere!

Clearly, this was a result of the world's different levels.

What weighed heavily on his mind was that the Corpse Race was not born naturally; unlike the Blood Race, they generally originated from the human race after death.

The number of Corpse Races he encountered now corresponded to the number of human deaths that had occurred.

Undoubtedly, this domain was once dominated by the human race, but it now belonged to the Corpse Race, because during Lu Ye's flight, he hadn't seen even a shadow of a living person, only endless hordes of Corpse Races.

This was undoubtedly a very sorrowful situation.

If there was still a possibility of reconciling the conflict between the human race and the Blood Race, then between the Corpse Race and the human race, or indeed any living thing, there was an irreconcilable conflict.

The transformation of the Corpse Race required the sacrifice of other living beings.

Take, for example, the once-shattered Unparalleled Continent. If Lu Ye and others had not descended like divine weapons, and had they not eventually received considerable support from the Nine Provinces cultivators, one day, the humans there would have been completely exterminated and entirely converted into the Corpse Race.

The Corpse Race chasing Lu Ye had never ceased; there were those transformed from the human race after death and those from demon beasts after they died.

They had been slumbering in this domain for countless ages and Lu Ye's arrival had completely shattered the tranquility here.

Only when there was no conflict would the Corpse Race lie dormant and hibernate; in other words, many years had passed here without any conflict.

This was no doubt a very poor outcome because no conflict meant no resistance, implying that the creatures of this world were likely already extinct!

At the very least, in the area Lu Ye explored, the living had been extinct for many years.

This place... could very well be another fragment of the Unparalleled Continent, or even the main body of the Unparalleled Continent.

The reason for this conjecture naturally stemmed from the presence of the Corpse Race. The shattered Unparalleled Continent that Lu Ye once visited had Corpse Races, and here had them too, suggesting a likely connection between the two.

That fragment of the shattered Unparalleled Continent was merely a domain fragment; it could only nurture cultivators of the Cloud River Realm. With fragments, there naturally was a main body.

The distance could also corroborate this assumption.

Initially, after the Nine Provinces cultivators had rescued the shattered Unparalleled Continent, that domain fragment, after some time, integrated into the Cloud River battlefield. In other words, that fragment was quite close to the Nine Provinces back then.

Now, the domain Lu Ye was in wasn't far from the Nine Provinces either. That made it easily found by Yueh Xin, who left some arrangements here.

It seemed the Unparalleled Continent had suffered some unknown catastrophe and shattered, with the fragment being the place Pang Huanyin hailed from, drifting through stellar space, discovered by Number Nine, and subsequently captured, while the main body remained here.

There was no way to confirm this hypothesis unless the entire domain was explored.

Lu Ye spent a good half day investigating an area of a hundred thousand miles but still hadn't seen a single living creature; it was always the relentless Corpse Race.

There was no need to investigate further; perhaps life still existed in this domain, but certainly not here. Judging from the larger environment he explored, even if there were survivors, living would be incredibly arduous.

Lu Ye ascended, swiftly increasing his speed.

The pursuing Corpse Race behind him quickly lost track of him.

He certainly had the ability to eliminate all the pursuers, but it was meaningless and would only waste time and effort.

His mission on this journey was only to scout this domain. Now that he had a general understanding, there was no point in delaying further, lest he worried those back in the Nine Provinces.

After shaking off the pursuers, he immediately activated Concealment and Breath-concealing, bolstering himself, and silently returned the way he came.

More than two hours later, he returned to the previous ruins. Most of the Corpse Races here had been lured out by him, with only a sparse few left wandering aimlessly, occasionally letting out low growls and roars.

Without drawing those few Corpse Races' attention, he slipped into a dried well, heading downward and soon arrived in an underground circular space.

There was no need for any cover, because underground there was interference from the origin magnetic field, so as long as there was no excessive commotion, there was no concern about being noticed outside.

The formation was activated, the Spirit Stone's power placed in the formation was drained, and that feeling of the world turning upside down and swirling in a vortex enveloped him once more.

Lu Ye couldn't help but tense; even when being chased by the overwhelming Corpse Race, he hadn't been this nervous before...

After revisiting that familiar sensation, once Lu Ye regained his composure, he found himself back on the Liyuan of the Nine Provinces.

Many pairs of eyes looked his way, and upon seeing him return safe and sound, everyone finally relaxed. Frankly speaking, if Lu Ye hadn't returned, the Constellation Realm cultivators would truly have to search the stellar space for him, though they surely would find him, it would invariably consume a lot of time.

"It must've been tiring for you; what's the situation over there?" Jian Guhong asked.

"Possibly the Unparalleled Continent, the Corpse Race roams unchecked, devoid of life."

"Unparalleled Continent?"

"Corpse Race?"

A group of Constellation Realm cultivators were all astonished.

Chapter 1213: I Have an Idea

While Lu Ye and others were busy on the shattered Unparalleled Continent, Jian Guhong and his group were still in the Righteous Blood Sacred Land of the Blood Refinement World, unaware of any "Corpse Race."

However, Ying Wuji and some True Lake Realm cultivators were amazed to learn of this. Like Lu Ye, they had once participated in the siege against the Corpse Race of the Unparalleled Continent and had vivid memories of the place.

Currently, a large area of the Cloud River battlefield belongs to the shattered Unparalleled Continent, with the terrain largely unchanged.

Facing the puzzled looks of the Constellation Realm cultivators, Lu Ye briefly explained the actions taken at that time.

Everyone understood.

Feng Wujiang said, "If Junior Brother's speculation is correct, then the opposite domain should be the body of the Unparalleled Continent, which is why the Corpse Race is rampant and no living beings are seen?"

"If the speculation is correct, naturally, it's like that, but it's uncertain whether it's the Unparalleled Continent. Anyway, within the range I explored, I found no traces of living beings."

The news isn't good since the human race in the opposite domain might have been wiped out.

But it's not bad either. If that's the case, Number Nine can devour the foundations of the opposite domain without restraint and strengthen itself.

Of course, this should happen after it has devoured the foundations of the Blood Refinement World; there is no reason to ignore the bounty at one's doorstep and instead focus on another domain thousands of miles away.

As the foundations of the Nine Provinces gradually strengthen, the speed of devouring will become faster and more efficient.

"What arrangements does Yueh Xin have over there?" Feng Wujiang asked.

Lu Ye recounted his observations over there, particularly Yueh Xin's cautious arrangements.

Everyone understood, Jian Guhong said, "From this perspective, it's unlikely the Corpse Race will discover the arrangements over there. So, even if we don't tend to it, the opposite domain won't pose a significant threat to the Nine Provinces?"

The exploration of the opposite domain aimed to prevent any unpredictable disasters Yueh Xin's arrangements might bring to the Nine Provinces. Now, knowing there are no living beings there, only a group of the Corpse Race, there's naturally no need to worry too much.

Even if the Corpse Race inadvertently discovered Yueh Xin's arrangements, they likely couldn't activate the Formation to teleport to the Nine Provinces. The most they would do is unwittingly damage the Formation, disrupting the teleportation channel between the two domains.

If so, it would completely sever the possibility of the Corpse Race reaching the Nine Provinces.

"I have an idea!" Pang Zhen suddenly spoke.

Long Bai smiled, "What a coincidence, I also have an idea!"

More than just the two of them had ideas; most of the cultivators present did.

"Old Pang, what idea? Let's hear it," Long Bai looked at Pang Zhen. Having competed and cooperated for so many years, they understood each other very well, so he was sure his idea was the same as Pang Zhen's.

Pang Zhen didn't refuse, saying, "After the battle in the Blood Refinement World, the original pattern of the Nine Provinces was broken. The large-scale confrontation between the two major factions is no more, which has benefits and drawbacks. The benefit is there's no longer direct hostility, and fewer deaths, but the drawback is that cultivators above the True Lake Realm, besides their monthly stipend, have no more channels to earn battle merit!"

Spirit Stream Realm cultivators have the Spirit Stream battlefield to go, and Cloud River Realm have the Cloud River battlefield, but True Lake and Divine Sea Realm have no suitable small spaces.

Several months have passed since the battle in the Blood Refinement World. They have transformed the battle merit obtained there into their own strength.

But now the situation is a bit awkward. True Lake Realm and some battle merit-hungry Divine Sea Realm cultivators have become somewhat idle. Before, with the two major factions facing off, fighting fiercely at various checkpoint passes, such confrontations were less likely to occur now.

People cannot be idle; idleness breeds problems, especially for cultivators pursuing higher cultivation and greater strength. Recently, some True Lake and Divine Sea cultivators have deliberately created conflicts, but the scope is small, so it's still manageable.

But if left unchecked, eventually, moral decay and chaos will ensue, and the Nine Provinces might revert to the large-scale confrontation between the two factions.

The key issue is that it can't be controlled; it's all about obtaining more battle merit for cultivation. How can it be controlled? Just because the Constellation Realm cultivators don't need battle merit, doesn't mean others' actions and thoughts can be restricted.

The cultivator group is never content; while it's unknown what the situation is like for cultivators in other domains, the Nine Provinces cultivators have always been fiercely competitive.

"The battle in the Blood Refinement World, though exhilarating, ended all too quickly."

There was no choice but to end it quickly because the Blood Refinement World was colliding with the Nine Provinces, so it had to be resolved swiftly, and prolonging the war between the two domains would also be a torment for the mortal population of the Blood Refinement World.

The wounded blood race, needing Blood Food, would surely target them.

Various reasons have led to the current state in the Nine Provinces, where most True Lake and Divine Sea Realm cultivators have nowhere to vent their energy. They need more battle merit for cultivation, but the monthly stipends are trivial, and the Heaven's Augury cultivation method exclusive to the True Lake Realm isn't efficient enough.

So if there's a place allowing cultivators above the True Lake Realm to vent excess energy while earning battle merit, it would undoubtedly be the solution everyone's been hoping for.

The emergence of a domain resembling the Unparalleled Continent is timely!

From this point of view, the Nine Provinces really should thank Yueh Xin properly, maybe even erect a monument for him!

It is only at this moment that Lu Ye suddenly realizes what Yang Qing meant when he said Yueh Xin delivered a great gift to the Nine Provinces.

Yang Qing's attainment in the Array Path isn't high, so he didn't realize that the main purpose of Yueh Xin's arrangement was to allow the Nine Provinces to devour the foundation of the Unparalleled Continent.

But being suppressed for ten thousand years in the Nine Provinces, he is well aware of the Nine Provinces cultivators' methods of cultivation and survival, naturally understanding the choices they would make once the Unparalleled Continent entered their sight!

Having cultivated for so many years, everyone was a crafty old fox, and many things didn't need to be spelled out. When Pang Zhen started talking, everyone immediately knew what he was implying.

It aligned with most people's thinking.

"If that's the case, then the Unparalleled Continent is indeed a treasure land!"

The Unparalleled Continent is filled with the Corpse Race, each one a walking battle merit, eagerly sought after by the Nine Provinces cultivators.

The war in the Blood Refinement World was fought too hastily, and in just a few short months, the Blood Race was exterminated. Although the Nine Provinces cultivators who participated in the war had reaped huge rewards, it was ultimately a one-time deal.

A place like the Unparalleled Continent, undeveloped, might offer Nine Provinces cultivators somewhere to venture and explore.

"Although it's a treasure land, it's not one where resources can be continuously extracted. As Lu Ye said, the Corpse Race is converted from other living beings; they have no reproductive capability, so once one is killed, there is one less. Eventually, they will be annihilated."

"That's true, but it should last quite a long time, perhaps decades, maybe over a hundred years, or even longer."

The victory in the Blood Refinement World was mainly due to Lu Ye restraining all the Sacred Seeds and with Jian Guhong and a large group of Divine Sea Level 9 contributing substantially.

However, these people don't need battle merits, so if things are really going to happen on the Unparalleled Continent, they won't be involved. The only ones to be dispatched will be those in the True Lake Realm, and some of the Divine Sea Realm who need battle merits.

Moreover, during the Blood Refinement World war, many Cloud River Realm participated, but on the Unparalleled Continent side, they won't participate as they have the Cloud River battlefield to keep themselves occupied.

This way, in terms of numbers and strength comparison, it's far inferior to when the Blood Refinement World was invaded. Relying on this group to clean up the entire Unparalleled Continent indeed requires a lot of time.

At least during this period, the internal conflicts in the Nine Provinces above the True Lake Realm will shift externally, leaving no problems internally.

As for decades or a hundred years later... perhaps by then the foundation of the Nine Provinces will have greatly increased, making cultivation easier and changing the cultivators' desire for battle merits?

It's impossible to predict what will happen that far into the future. For now, they can only proceed step by step.

"It requires the cooperation of the Nine Provinces Heaven's Augury!" Long Bai spoke as he looked at Lu Ye, grinning, "Is there a problem?"

The overall calculation of battle merits had always been operated by the Heaven's Augury. The Unparalleled Continent is not the Nine Provinces, so to really treat it as a target for conquest, Heaven's Augury's cooperation is essential.

Lu Yeye paused for a moment, nodding, "No problem."

It's just a matter of sending over a few Heaven's Augury Pillars. As long as they're within the pillar's radiation range, cultivators can obtain the corresponding battle merits by slaying Corpse Races.

"So we've settled on this plan?" Jian Guhong looked around, and everyone was in agreement.

Even though they had all advanced to the Constellation Realm, they were ultimately from the Nine Provinces, and couldn't possibly be indifferent to its future. If they were truly indifferent, they wouldn't have rushed back upon learning of a strong invader in the Nine Provinces.

With their current ability to traverse stellar space, they could have easily escaped far away, and Yueh Xin would unlikely hunt them down one by one.

It was precisely because they were concerned about the Nine Provinces that they returned immediately upon receiving the news, without exception.

Having reached a decision, preparations began at once on this side.

If the Corpse Races of the Unparalleled Continent are to be treated as a source of battle merits, then the first step, naturally, is to establish a stronghold on that side of the Unparalleled Continent, to facilitate the comings and goings of Nine Provinces cultivators.

The location of the stronghold cannot be chosen but has to be in the ruins where the passageway's exit lies. This is reasonable, for the stronghold must not only ensure the safe travel of the Nine Provinces cultivators but also guard the teleportation passageway, preventing the Corpse Race from inadvertently discovering and damaging it.

Therefore, the first group of cultivators to go there must have formidable combat power, to withstand the Corpse Race attacks before the stronghold is established.

Lu Ye was undoubtedly selected, having explored the situation over there and having a bit more understanding of it.

Furthermore, for the coordination of Heavenly Mechanism, it must be him stepping forward.

Feng Wujiang was also among the selected. Not advancing to the Constellation Realm just yet, he has enough prestige and strength. If there's a need for a strong person to sit in the Central Hub of the stronghold over there, he's the one fit for the task.

Chapter 1214: Leading the Charge

Lu Ye never expected that he would have to endure another round of that terrible transmission experience so soon. Watching a group of cultivators eager for battle merits, their morale high and ready to set off, he couldn't help but think maliciously about what their expressions would be like once they experienced it themselves.

Originally, because they were setting up a big array, many skilled individuals had gathered here at Liyuan, mostly those who were well-versed or adept in the Array Path.

The advance team was still this group of people, because in order to establish a reliable stronghold, it required numerous big arrays to cover and protect it. Of course, this task was entirely voluntary, with no one being forced.

As expected, nobody backed down at this time; everyone wanted to participate in this endeavor.

All have experienced the battle in the Blood Refinement World and gained substantial benefits there. Now, with another chance for an alien expedition, naturally no one wanted to miss out, especially those in the True Lake Realm and the Divine Sea Realm, as the Unparalleled Continent would be their battlefield for a long time. Moreover, every Corpse Race member killed is one less threat, so whoever arrives first gets the first kill.

Lu Ye was at the forefront. Before departure, people from the Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union had been instructed, secretly by Number Nine, to send several Heaven's Augury Pillars.

Lu Ye's task was to find suitable positions to place these Heaven's Augury Pillars. Within the radius covered by these pillars, cultivators would gain records of their battle merits when they kill the Corpse Race.

Under everyone's watchful eyes, Lu Ye again leaped into the vortex, followed by Feng Wujiang, and then a group of Divine Sea Realm array cultivators. Once the Divine Sea Realm cultivators had all passed through, it was time for the True Lake Realm, the Cloud River Realm array cultivators...

In the circular underground space, silhouettes appeared one after another. Apart from Lu Ye, who was prepared and looked calm, even the senior brother's face turned slightly pale. Others stumbled and swayed embarrassingly after their arrival.

For cultivators of the Nine Provinces, the most customary way of transmission was through the Heaven's Augury, a process that was smooth and seamless. Even the initial transmission from the Nine Provinces to the Blood Refinement World was such that there was no uncomfortable experience.

However, this time's transmission was definitely not smooth and seamless. The whole process felt not only lengthy but also like being swallowed by some exotic beast, traversing through its intestines.

Many Divine Sea Realm cultivators struggled uncomfortably, stealing glances at Lu Ye, thinking how this fellow was too conniving for not forewarning others about this miserable experience beforehand. It was clearly the mindset of someone who, after getting drenched in the rain, wants to rip others' umbrellas.

But soon, their discomfort subsided as those in the True Lake Realm fared even worse.

Each one appeared and immediately ran aside to retch violently...

The old folks quietly watched this spectacle, feeling significantly balanced at heart.

Lu Ye had already flown upward through the tunnel, followed closely by everyone else, soon emerging from the dry ancient well onto the ruins above.

Divine Sea Realm's Mental Consciousness spread out, and immediately discovered something, one figure darting off in a direction. When returning, they held a clawing zombie.

The zombie's strength was quite strong, aligned with True Lake Realm levels. Yet under the Divine Sea Realm's containment, it was like a furious rabid dog, unable to break free despite its struggle.

"So this is the Corpse Race!" Several Divine Sea Realm cultivators clicked their tongues in amazement, feeling that this vast stellar space was indeed full of wonders.

The Blood Race in the Blood Refinement World had already opened their eyes. But at least the Blood Race were living beings, they yelled when cut, and bled when killed. These Corpse Race members were clearly deceased, yet they could move like living people. Quite strange indeed.

Honestly, had Lu Ye not mentioned the characteristics of this race, seeing such beings sprawled on the ground, even after discovering them, they wouldn't have cared much, simply assuming they were long-dead corpses.

A large group of Divine Sea Realm observers enjoyed watching intently; those unable to squeeze in started capturing their zombies to study.

The remaining Corpse Race in the ruins had been mostly lured away by Lu Ye. Only a few scattered ones remained, soon all captured.

The True Lake Realm cultivators who arrived later looked completely puzzled, not knowing what these Divine Sea Realm cultivators were doing, observing and discussing in clusters, occasionally unleashing guttural roars from within.

Feng Wujiang was somewhat helpless, speaking to Lu Ye: "Junior brother, if you have the time, it would be best to brand the Corpse Race characteristics and information onto jade slips, later providing the Nine Provinces cultivators coming here information about the Corpse Race to better guard themselves."

Lu Ye nodded: "That's not a problem." He had thought of this too; the Nine Provinces cultivators came here to kill the Corpse Race and earn battle merits. If someone is genuinely killed by the Corpse Race due to inferior ability, there's hardly any recourse—skills not matching up, conceding defeat. But if it's due to lack of information that leads to casualties, that would be unnecessary loss.

There are many things to pay attention to when dealing with the Corpse Race. First is the issue of corpse poison. Every Corpse Race member has corpse poison. Once this poison infiltrates a cultivator's body, it becomes quite troublesome to expel. Only with special Detoxification Pills or help from a healing cultivator can it be eradicated. It's hard to handle effectively with a cultivator's own strength.

If corpse poison accumulates excessively in the body, the cultivator will inevitably transform into a Corpse Race member.

Moreover, in terms of categories, the Corpse Race is further divided into zombies and rotting corpses. The former is basically equivalent to the physique cultivators of the human race, generally the type that fights alone. Rotting corpses are more troublesome; they show traces of magic cultivators and beast-taming factions. However, what they tame is not demon beasts, but their fellow Corpse Race members.

Furthermore, most of the Corpse Race lack spiritual intelligence and act only on instinct. However, some Corpse Race have spiritual intelligence. Besides their physical characteristics differing from the human race, there are not many significant differences between them.

Lu Ye had discovered this earlier while surveying the surrounding area. Among the horde of corpses pursuing him, many of the Corpse Race exhibited quite high spiritual intelligence. If not for his speed, he would have truly been surrounded and intercepted.

All of these are things that cultivators must be mindful of when dealing with the Corpse Race. Nine Provinces cultivators come here to slay the Corpse Race, not to bolster their numbers.

A group of Divine Sea Realm cultivators studied the Corpse Race for a while, finally not forgetting their main objective. The captured Corpse Race members, besides two that were killed experimentally, were all restrained in place by various means.

This wasn't for viewing pleasure, but mainly to leave them here for later Nine Provinces cultivators to see firsthand what the Corpse Race looks like.

A group of True Lake Realm and Divine Sea Realm cultivators began clearing the ruins to establish the first stronghold for the Nine Provinces here.

Thanks to the commotion Lu Ye caused when he came by earlier, the nearby Corpse Race were drawn away, so the entire process proceeded with minimal interference. Occasionally, some stray Corpse Race mistakenly intruded, only to be swiftly slain.

While they were busy here, news about the Unparalleled Continent and the Corpse Race quickly spread across the Nine Provinces. True Lake and Divine Sea Realm cultivators, who had long been impatient, began heading toward Liyuan, and even some Cloud River Realm cultivators who heard the commotion were eager to move.

However, they were unceremoniously blocked by True Lake Realm members of their sect.

According to the True Lake Realms, the Cloud River Realms should be causing a stir on the Cloud River battlefield. Now that the Nine Provinces finally have a place suitable for True Lake and Divine Sea Realms to showcase their skills, who knows how long it will last. What are the Cloud River Realms coming to take away? The piece of fat isn't that large; every bite the Cloud River Realm takes means one less for the others.

On this matter, every sect in the Nine Provinces that received actual news reacted the same: strictly prohibiting Cloud River Realm cultivators from setting foot in Liyuan, let alone entering the Unparalleled Continent!

It must be said that in certain matters of perception and handling, the cultivator community shares a natural commonality.

At the same time, in the Nine Provinces, the heavenly spirit light, which had paused for over two months, resumed. Previously, Number Nine was hiding from Yueh Xin, not daring to show himself easily, so this opportunity for Divine Sea Level 9 to break through its shackles had to be paused.

Now that Yueh Xin is dead, the opportunity naturally must continue.

The number of Constellation Realms born in the Nine Provinces is gradually increasing. Most have set out again to explore the stellar space, seeking spirit jade for cultivation and also searching for the Unparalleled Continent's position in the stellar space.

The Constellation Realms cannot enter the Unparalleled Continent through the transmission passage, so they can only rely on flying. Although the stellar space is vast and their search lacks a target, finding it this way will be difficult, but maybe they'll stumble upon it?

It's not that they want to do anything to the Corpse Race of the Unparalleled Continent. Even if they did, the True Lake Realm and Divine Sea Realm of the Nine Provinces would not agree.

Not even Cloud River Realms are allowed to set foot in Liyuan, let alone worry about what they might take. How could Constellation Realms, whose cultivation is above the Divine Sea, expect anything?

At the very least, they need to understand the specific location of the Unparalleled Continent, and this search is merely an accompaniment to finding spirit jade and is not a waste of time or effort.

Only a few Constellation Realms, led by Jian Guhong, stayed behind.

They had no choice but to stay because there is still a Yang Qing within the Nine Provinces. Before fully understanding Yang Qing's attitude toward the Nine Provinces, the Constellation Realms are not at ease to leave entirely.

Even though their staying wouldn't make much difference in the face of an absolute power gap, at the very least, they can pledge to live and die with the Nine Provinces!

Of the Constellation Realms staying behind, only five or six remain. They are trying to find Yang Qing's whereabouts, preparing to have an open and honest conversation with him. However, despite their efforts, Yang Qing remains elusive, as if that mighty figure vanished into thin air.

Thus, it became apparent that Yang Qing does not wish to see them. Otherwise, with his abilities, any stir in the Nine Provinces would hardly escape his perception.

This is quite helpless.

Thinking it over, the matter might still need Lu Ye to step forward to have a chance.

No matter what, Lu Ye and Yang Qing share a bond of gratitude for freeing him from trouble. The Formation on Liyuan was also revealed to Lu Ye through Yang Qing's audio transmission. If others can't find him, maybe Lu Ye can?

Chapter 1215: Then I Won't Be Polite

Lu Ye had long wanted to talk with Yang Qing again, but after Yueh Xin's death, he went to the Unparalleled Continent and had been too busy.

Now that the base over at the Unparalleled Continent has been set up, and the Heaven's Augury Pillars he brought have been placed in suitable positions, basically, there's nothing much for him to do there.

As for battle merit, while other cultivators might be in need, he isn't lacking at all.

His current accumulation of battle merit points has already exceeded seven figures. Even though he doesn't dare say there will be no successors, it's definitely unprecedented.

Therefore, upon receiving the message, he immediately returned to the Nine Provinces from the Unparalleled Continent.

Tianzhou, one of the Nine Provincial States of the Nine Provinces, though named after heaven, is actually not much different from the other states and is not the center of the Nine Provinces.

To those uninformed common folks, the theory of a round sky and square earth might be deeply entrenched, and even many cultivators with low cultivation believe so.

But actually, the Nine Provinces is a spherical shape, which Lu Ye has clearly seen from stellar space. Such a spheroid celestial body could have any spot as its center, thus there is no notion of a center.

Lu Ye arrived at a branch of the Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union in Tianzhou through teleportation via the Heaven's Augury Pillar, identified the direction slightly, and leaped forward, speeding all the way.

Even though he has returned from the Blood Refinement World, Number Nine still maintains the privilege for him to teleport using the Heaven's Augury Pillar, which is the only favor he can currently get from Number Nine.

After half a day, he reached a spirit mountaintop.

According to the ten-part map, this spirit mountaintop belongs to a sect called the Heavenly Cloud Sect, but it is not within the core industry of the sect; it barely counts as part of the sect's sphere of influence.

Just like Mount Ao for the Righteous Blood Sect.

Theoretically, the whole Mount Ao belongs to the Righteous Blood Sect, but in reality, the foundational industry of the Righteous Blood Sect, at present, consists of just a few spirit mountaintops, perhaps more, but they haven't yet managed to encompass the entire Mount Ao.

The spirit mountaintop is unnamed and compared to other nearby spirit mountaintops, doesn't stand out.

Originally, this place was sparsely populated, and even cultivators from the Heavenly Cloud Sect wouldn't specifically come here, at most just passing by.

But just a while ago, a passing Tianyuan Sect cultivator surprisingly discovered a small wooden cabin on this spirit mountaintop, with the presence of a cultivator moving in and out.

The Heavenly Cloud Sect naturally wouldn't ignore it and sent cultivators to inspect, confirming it was an independent Cloud River Realm cultivator settling here.

Regarding the group of independent cultivators, the Nine Provinces' various sects maintain a relatively lenient attitude. So the Heavenly Cloud Sect didn't trouble the person, as it's just a Cloud River Realm cultivator; there's no point in making it difficult. Seeing this unnamed spirit mountaintop, settling here is also a common occurrence, just advised not to cause trouble or disturb the life of nearby common folk.

The young man, of course, readily agreed and settled down here.

When Lu Ye arrived here, he immediately saw someone dressed in green, leisurely lying on a homemade recliner, shaded by a tree, enjoying the cool.

Beside was a snow-white rabbit, its eyes teary, looking aggrievedly at Lu Ye, who arrived late.

Beside his ears, the voice of Number Nine sounded: "Lu Ye, why did you take so long to come!"

With a look of 'I've been waiting for you for a long time'.

Lu Ye gave it a calm-down look and stepped forward respectfully with a bow: "Senior Yang!"

The cultivators of the Heavenly Cloud Sect knew this was just a Cloud River Realm independent cultivator, but they didn't know he was now the strongest force in the entire Nine Provinces, able to twist off the neck and head of a Sun Blaze Realm like Yueh Xin.

If they knew, they wouldn't know what to think.

Yang Qing, with closed eyes, was resting, as if not hearing a thing.

Lu Ye didn't mind, took out tables, chairs, and a set of tea brewing tools from the storage space, and sat down opposite him.

Others couldn't find Yang Qing because Yang Qing didn't want to see them. For someone with Yang Qing's powers, if he were unwilling, no one in the Nine Provinces could force him.

Lu Ye was able to find this place all thanks to Number Nine tipping him off. However, if the other didn't really want to see him, they could have just left. Since staying behind, that's a good start.

Brewed tea with meticulous care, Lu Ye's movements were precise.

Lu Ye was not proficient in the art of tea, just that such a time and place seemed unsuitable without some tea, so he went along with it.

Shortly after, presenting the tea, Lu Ye still respectfully said: "Senior, please drink."

Yang Qing opened his eyes, sat up, picked up the tea, and took a big sip.

Lu Ye couldn't help but grin inside, this fellow didn't look like he was knowledgeable in the art of tea. Someone truly understanding tea wouldn't drink it like alcohol.

"If you have something to say, say it. If you have to fart, fart. If not, get out, don't disturb me." Yang Qing showed no awareness of courtesy, his tone was utterly blunt.

This instead made Lu Ye feel a hint of closeness, as if the figure before him wasn't a Dragon Race with vast divine abilities, but rather a senior of considerable age.

Lu Ye attentively poured more tea for Yang Qing.

Yang Qing squinted and said, "Are you thinking, young man, that I don't understand a thing about tea ceremonies?"

Lu Ye was somewhat astonished, "What do you mean by that?"

Yang Qing snorted coldly, "It's commonly said that filling a glass of wine honors someone, but overfilling a cup of tea mocks them. You've poured so much tea that it's overflowing—is this your way of asking me to leave?"

Lu Ye looked aggrieved, "That's impossible! You just helped the Nine Provinces escape from disaster, we're beyond grateful! How could I be trying to send you away? I'm planning to suggest to the major sects to establish a longevity plaque for you, with an incense offering every morning and night, accompanied by three bows, eternally revered and worshipped by future generations."

Yang Qing gave him an amused look, "Do you know that my Dragon Race has an innate divine ability? It allows us to discern the truth and falsehood in people's words."

Lu Ye looked at him earnestly, "What I say comes from the heart, every word is sincere, each sentence is heartfelt without a hint of falsehood."

With some doubt, he asked, "The Dragon Race truly has such an innate divine ability?"

Yang Qing replied irritably, "That's the innate divine ability of the mythical creature Xiezhi."

Realizing he'd been fooled, Lu Ye couldn't really blame him. After all, he was young and inexperienced. This was the first time he heard about innate divine abilities, how was he supposed to know what the Dragon Race possessed?

He simply asked, "Then what is the Dragon Race's innate divine ability?"

Yang Qing leisurely replied, "Time."

"Time?" Lu Ye was perplexed; how could 'time' be an innate divine ability?

Then he saw Yang Qing raising his hand towards him, and suddenly, Lu Ye felt as if his entire thought process slowed down many times over. Although Yang Qing's movements were slow, Lu Ye found himself unable to evade in any way.

This was an utterly excruciating sensation. Imagine being affected by such an innate divine ability in combat—it would spell certain doom, regardless of the number of lives you had.

In what seemed like a moment or forever, Lu Ye abruptly came to his senses, his face showing a hint of lingering fear.

With a solemn expression, he said, "Senior's cultivation is truly astonishing; I am filled with admiration."

This was an honest statement, and Yang Qing's actions just now weren't merely a matter of cultivation; it was the Dragon Race's innate divine ability in action. Even if Yang Qing's cultivation were the same as his, Lu Ye would still have the same experience.

Switching his tone, he said, "Senior, being such a noble and powerful figure, isn't it a bit of an injustice to be confined to a small place like the Nine Provinces? After all, it's said dragons fly the Nine Heavens, while the Nine Provinces is just a small pond, suitable for raising fish and shrimp..."

Yang Qing interrupted him, "After all that talk, you're still trying to get rid of me!"

Lu Ye shamelessly replied, "No, absolutely not. Having senior oversee the Nine Provinces is truly our fortune; if anyone dares try to send you away, I'd personally deal with them! But senior, you should understand the concerns of us little shrimps. I came here not for anything else but to learn your actual stance towards the Nine Provinces."

Roundabout remarks were pointless; ultimately, it had to be laid bare, the plight of the weak.

"Senior, if you wish to vent your frustrations over being suppressed for thousands of years by destroying the Nine Provinces, then please proceed. It would save us the continued fear and anxiety. But if old ties compel you to protect the Nine Provinces, then billions of the human race here would be eternally grateful. In the end, we need your definitive answer."

The stance of the Nine Provinces wasn't truly to send Yang Qing away; with someone as strong as him, who could even try? They simply wanted to understand his position.

"Protect the Nine Provinces?" Yang Qing chuckled, "Wishful thinking! Why should I guard the Nine Provinces for you? Killing Yueh Xin earlier was simply reciprocation for you releasing me. The reason I'm still here is to recuperate. Once that's done, I'll naturally leave, rest assured; I won't cause any trouble for the Nine Provinces."

Upon hearing this, the heart that Lu Ye had held suspended finally eased. Although based on past interactions, Yang Qing held no real malice towards the current Nine Provinces, it was never certain.

Now that he said so, it must be true.

Indeed, the difference between Yang Qing and the Nine Provinces was akin to the gap between a Divine Sea Realm cultivator like Lu Ye and a regular person. Would he just bully regular people randomly now? Not to mention his lifelong principles wouldn't allow it; even if he did, there would be no sense of achievement.

"If senior needs to recuperate, and there's anything that the Nine Provinces can help with, please speak freely. I, along with other cultivators of the Nine Provinces, would gladly assist."

These were formalities, and Lu Ye knew he couldn't offer much help. If he could advance to the Constellation level, perhaps he could go to the stellar space to find spirit jade for Yang Qing. But currently, at the Divine Sea level, he couldn't even step into stellar space, let alone assist.

Saying a few flattering words wouldn't cause him any loss.

Yang Qing immediately responded, "If that's the case, then I won't hold back."

A bad feeling suddenly crept into Lu Ye's thoughts; he couldn't quite pinpoint what was about to happen, but he had an ominous sense of having fallen into a trap.

This Dragon Race powerhouse, conversing loopily with him, might just have been waiting for this moment!

Words spoken are like water spilled—it can only be forced. "What can I do to help then, senior?"

Chapter 1216: Reincarnation Tree

It doesn't make sense, Jian Guhong and others might be able to help him a bit, but what can a Divine Sea like himself do? Engaging with such an old fellow who has lived for countless years, it's true that having a few more Mental Eyes isn't too much.

From now on, never casually promise someone anything! Lu Ye reminded himself secretly.

Yang Qing scanned him up and down: "Divine Sea Level 7... It's a bit lacking, I'll give you ten days, any issue with advancing to Level 8?"

Lu Ye really wanted to say there was an issue! But facing Yang Qing's seemingly smiling eyes, he knew in his heart, this matter couldn't be brushed off.

Although Yang Qing had always been in a trapped state, he wasn't completely ignorant of some matters within the Nine Provinces, perhaps not comprehensively, but he knew the general situation.

Especially Lu Ye, Yang Qing had paid attention to him since their first meeting, how could he not know about Lu Ye's cultivation speed?

Moreover, Yang Qing could easily discern Lu Ye's current state at a glance, giving ten days was already a generous amount.

"Senior, what exactly do you want me to do?" Lu Ye asked uneasily.

"Advance first, you'll naturally know when you return."

Yang Qing was too lazy to explain too much, wasting words.

Helplessly, Lu Ye could only fly to a distant spirit mountaintop to cultivate diligently. As for whether the existence of the Talent Tree would be exposed, it didn't matter. The Talent Tree was ultimately just a relatively powerful inheritance, and it might be highly attractive to cultivators with low cultivation, but to Yang Qing, it probably wasn't of any use.

Moreover, the cultivation of the Talent Tree had always been hidden, Yang Qing might truly not discover anything.

Lu Ye had advanced to the Divine Sea Level 7 during the expedition to the Blood Refinement World, and afterwards refined a large amount of Sacred Blood. Each drop of Sacred Blood contained enormous energy, and the process of refining Sacred Blood was actually equivalent to accumulating one's own foundation, just that the efficiency wasn't as convenient or rapid as in the Nine Provinces cultivation.

But there's no resisting the large quantity, before and after, he almost refined more than half of all the Sacred Seeds' Sacred Blood in the Blood Refinement World, and the small amount not refined was due to the doppelganger, partially giving it up.

So even after returning to the Nine Provinces without much cultivation, his cultivation had long since approached the Divine Sea Level 8.

It didn't take ten days, in a total of five days, he made the breakthrough.

The remaining five days were used to consolidate his own cultivation, stubbornly dragging it to the full ten days before returning to find Yang Qing.

He couldn't avoid it, whether he stretched his neck or retracted it, it would be a slash either way.

Yang Qing was waiting for him, hands behind his back, standing under the big tree where he previously cooled off. Seeing him return, he nodded in satisfaction: "Not bad!"

Lu Ye said, "What does Senior want me to help with? Can you tell me now?" The feeling of having something on his mind was very unpleasant.

Yang Qing gave him a meaningful look: "Rest assured, what I want you to do is surely something you can accomplish, I won't force you to do what you can't."

Pausing for a moment, he began to speak: "Do you know why I chose this place to recuperate?"

Lu Ye shook his head.

Yang Qing's eyes revealed a nostalgic expression: "Because this place, ten thousand years ago, was the foundation of the strongest sect in the Nine Provinces!"

In the period before the Nine Provinces, the Nine Provinces cultivation world had an abundance of powerful figures, it was an era where the name of the Nine Provinces shook the stellar space. The strength of the Nine Provinces, so strong that even after ten thousand years, there are still records of it in the major races and ancient domains of today's stellar space.

How strong was the strongest sect in such a powerful top-level domain?

Lu Ye couldn't imagine, nor did he understand why Yang Qing suddenly talked about this with him, but all he could do at this moment was listen quietly.

"Human Emperor Sect, remember this name, it is the sect name of that strongest sect."

Lu Ye nodded silently and suddenly recalled something: "During the pre-Nine Provinces period, wasn't there also a sect called the Sword Weapon Sect?"

His sword gourd and many Artifact Refining insights were brought out from the secret realm of the Sword Weapon Sect. Back then, he only knew it was an ancient sect, but didn't know from which specific period it came.

Now it seems very likely that the Sword Weapon Sect was also a legacy from the pre-Nine Provinces period.

"There seems to be such a sect, why, did you get the inheritance they left behind?" Yang Qing asked.

Lu Ye nodded: "Received some legacy."

"Having received the legacy, then you have the obligation to help propagate and enhance their inheritance." Yang Qing admonished.

"Yes." Lu Ye agreed, planning to look for an opportunity later to place the Artifact Refining insights brought from the Sword Weapon Sect into the Heaven's Augury treasure vault. In this way, all the Artifact Refiners across the Nine Provinces could exchange and explore, which would be considered helping the Sword Weapon Sect propagate the Artifact Refining part of their inheritance.

As for the part about Sword Dao... he was powerless there, so he could only rely on Nian Yuexian. Back in the Sword Weapon Sect, it was she who inherited the Sword Dao legacy.

"Ten thousand years have passed, the once glorious sect is long gone, but within the Human Emperor Sect, there still remains something very special," Yang Qing said, turning to look at the massive tree in front of them.

Lu Ye was expecting him to say what this special thing was, but after waiting for a long time without any further explanation, he suddenly realized, "This tree was left from ten thousand years ago?"

Yang Qing nodded.

Lu Ye clicked his tongue in amazement, looking the tree up and down, but he couldn't see anything special about it. Logically speaking, if left over from ten thousand years ago, this tree should be extremely old and weathered, and after ten thousand years, the Nine Provinces cultivators should have noticed something unusual about this tree.

In fact, in Lu Ye's perception, the tree's age wouldn't exceed a hundred years because it wasn't big enough, tall enough, nor grand and ancient enough.

It was precisely because there was nothing special about it that there was no anomaly, which is why the Nine Provinces cultivators didn't pay attention to it. Otherwise, this place would have long become the foundation of some top big sect.

Seeing Lu Ye's confusion, Yang Qing explained, "There are supreme treasures in the stellar space, born with the heavens and the earth, each one unique and possessing unfathomable powers. One such supreme treasure is called the Reincarnation Tree... don't overthink it, the tree in front of you is not that supreme treasure, it's just a doppelganger of it. Essentially, all domains in the stellar space that are powerful enough will have such a doppelganger of the Reincarnation Tree. It's not exclusive to the Nine Provinces. The tree in front of you was sought by your ancient Nine Provinces ancestors from the Reincarnation Tree."

"The real Reincarnation Tree goes through a reincarnation every ten thousand years, evolving from nothing to something, from small to large, interpreting the true meaning of the stellar space with infinite mysteries. However, its doppelganger is far inferior, going through a reincarnation every hundred years. This is the reason you couldn't see anything special about it, because in fact, it indeed only has a hundred years' age. After a hundred years, it will wither and die, and then regrow."

Lu Ye understood, feeling that his eyes had been opened wide. These supreme treasures and Reincarnation Trees, if not for Yang Qing speaking about them, he wouldn't have known about them for a long time.

Indeed, having an elder in the family is like having a treasure!

Feeling a bit eager, he asked, "So what are we going to do? Go and snatch that real Reincarnation Tree?"

Yang Qing couldn't help but twitch his eye corner, secretly thinking why are all Nine Provinces cultivators like this? Instinctively wanting to snatch anything they fancy?

Back then, the Human Emperor of the Human Emperor Sect wanted to snatch him, a member of the Dragon Race, upon seeing him in the stellar space, which resulted in them becoming acquainted through a fight.

To snatch a Reincarnation Tree, this kid really dares to think! Is that something that can be snatched? And for a mere Divine Sea Realm to boast so shamelessly, it truly amused him.

He replied crossly, "We are going to snatch something, but not the Reincarnation Tree!"

Saying this, he placed his hand on the tree trunk in front of him, and who knows what power he activated, but the tree suddenly shuddered slightly. Immediately after, the emerald green leaves of the tree began to turn yellow as if in an instant, the doppelganger of the Reincarnation Tree had gone through many years.

Soon after, the leaves withered and fell from the heavens, and the originally vibrant tree began to wither like an old man nearing the end of his life.

The falling leaves did not land on the ground, but instead transformed into a dense yellow halo, gathering and surging together.

Yang Qing's voice came, "There is a mystical connection between the doppelgangers and the true body of the Reincarnation Tree, and even separated by millions of miles, this connection will not diminish. Therefore, the doppelganger of the Nine Provinces' Reincarnation Tree has a special ability that when it withers and enters the next reincarnation, it can open a passage to the true body of the Reincarnation Tree!"

Lu Ye watched in amazement, transmitting audio to Number Nine, "Do you know about the Reincarnation Tree?"

Number Nine replied, "Of course I know. Although the strong ones from the pre-Nine Provinces era have all died out, much information was still left behind at the time."

This is also the reason Number Nine knows about the lower four realms, upper three realms, and spirit jade.

"Then why haven't you mentioned it before?" If not for Yang Qing demonstrating it in front of him this time, Lu Ye might never have known the mysteries of the Reincarnation Tree doppelganger.

Number Nine righteously said, "What use would it be to tell you? Going to the true body of the Reincarnation Tree requires a sufficiently powerful strong one to accompany you, and I can't accompany you there."

This reasoning was understandable.

The true body of the Reincarnation Tree is not something a Divine Sea Realm could casually approach.

However, Yang Qing's mention of the true body and doppelganger of the Reincarnation Tree inevitably reminded Lu Ye of his own Talent Tree.

When he condensed his doppelganger, a root tendril used to split out from the Talent Tree, and now, it seems like the entire Talent Tree has split into two. Does this count as the Talent Tree being able to doppelganger?

It seems like it does!

In this way, there are still some similarities between the Talent Tree and the Reincarnation Tree.

But comparatively speaking, there is still a significant gap between the two.

The doppelganger of the Reincarnation Tree, regardless of how far away, can open a passageway to the true body when the next reincarnation begins, but his doppelganger definitely can't achieve this level.

Within the Nine Provinces domain, even if his doppelganger is far apart, he can still sense it, but this sensing distance definitely has a limit, which Lu Ye has yet to ascertain at present.

Perhaps in the future, when he goes to the stellar space, he will have the opportunity to determine this, because the stellar space is vast enough.

Chapter 1217: The Robbery Begins Now

The thick yellow halo gathered and twisted, quickly condensing into a mass. Yang Qing reached out to grab Lu Ye and walked with him towards the light mass.

At the same time, he reminded him, "Once you're over there, never reveal you are from the Nine Provinces. If there's a need to disclose your origin, just say you're from the Nine Heavens World!"

The Nine Provinces have been concealed within the stellar space for thousands of years, long disappearing from the view of major races and the top domains. At this stage, the name of the Nine Provinces is no longer suitable to be mentioned.

If those races and domains that once united against the Nine Provinces learn about it, they will surely scour the stellar space to explore, and there might be a risk of exposure again by then.

The thick yellow halo dispersed, and atop the Nameless Peak, in front of the wooden cabin, a withered old tree suddenly appeared.

The figures of Yang Qing and Lu Ye had vanished. The eyes of Number Nine, in the form of a little white rabbit, rolled around, instantly transforming into a beam of spirit light and shooting skyward.

Not easy at all, finally rid of the Dragon Race's claws. Though aware the other side would return, Number Nine had made up his mind to never be so easily captured again!

In a distant part of stellar space, within a peculiar small space, Yang Qing's figure suddenly appeared. Even with his cultivation and skills, he couldn't quite understand the mechanism of this cross-domain teleportation spanning millions of miles. This was beyond human ability. It was a unique connection between the Reincarnation Tree's main body and its doppelganger, akin to his Innate Divine Ability. This could also be counted as an Innate Divine Ability of the Reincarnation Tree.

But the next moment, his face slightly darkened.

Because Lu Ye, who was supposed to appear beside him, was nowhere to be found!

In a bizarre and compact stellar-space-like small area, Yang Qing spoke solemnly, "Tree Elder, what does this mean?"

Dragon Power emanated!

Completely different from the Dragon Power that spread when Lu Ye was adorned with the Dragon Throne, the Dragon Power of the genuine Dragon Race was incredibly intense and violent, nearly becoming tangible. Under such terrifying might, even the compact stellar space began to twist and tremble.

There was no problem with the teleportation. If there were, he wouldn't have appeared here.

Lu Ye, however, was missing, which could only mean one thing: during the teleportation, the Reincarnation Tree had done something unnoticed by him. This was unrelated to cultivation realms; this was the Reincarnation Tree's domain, and if it wanted to do something, no one could detect it.

Yang Qing was somewhat furious.

For whatever reason, taking the person he brought without notifying him was too unreasonable.

Moreover, to be strict, this was his first time bringing someone through the Reincarnation Tree's doppelganger to enter here.

Previously, matters on the Nine Provinces' side were handled by the Human Emperor Sect members, so he wasn't sure if he had broken any taboos or due to some other reason, that Lu Ye ended up missing.

But regardless, he needed an explanation!

An ethereal and aged voice suddenly echoed in this small space, "Dragon Monarch, do not worry. An old man just asked the little friend to do a small favor for me."

Yang Qing frowned, vaguely recalling something and became slightly enlightened, "Tree World?"

The voice of the Reincarnation Tree responded, "That's right, there's a slight problem with the Tree World."

Yang Qing sneered, "I've told you before, don't hold onto such senseless ideas of inclusivity; it's foolish. You should have long exterminated or expelled those with ulterior motives!"

Though it was his first time using the Reincarnation Tree's doppelganger to bring someone here, he had been here during his previous stellar space travels and had exchanged some words with the Reincarnation Tree. Thus, he knew quite a bit about it.

The Reincarnation Tree chuckled, "Gain something, lose something. The way of heaven is fair and just. I possess almost endless life and immense power, so naturally, there will be certain restrictions. Therefore, I also need to be fair and just."

"What a joke!" Yang Qing sneered, "There's nothing entirely fair and just. If that were true, you'd have been refined long ago, and wouldn't have been free for so many years. And you surely wouldn't take this time to ask someone for help. The moment you invited people to assist, fairness was already compromised."

The Reincarnation Tree remained unbothered, "The Dragon Monarch speaks rightly, hence the old man has been quite troubled lately."

An ancient tree that has lived for countless millennia saying it's troubled—how absurdly amusing that sounds.

Yang Qing, uninterested in idle talk, asked, "Why choose him? Don't tell me you know he's from the Nine Provinces."

In this vast stellar space, perhaps all the races that once conspired against the Nine Provinces were unsure of its fate, but the Reincarnation Tree surely knew, even knowing exactly where the Nine Provinces were.

Because he had a doppelganger in the Nine Provinces, through which he could clearly perceive the existence of the Nine Provinces. Similarly, when a Nine Provinces cultivator opened a channel through the doppelganger to come here, the Reincarnation Tree was perfectly aware.

"Naturally, that's not the only reason. It's just that lately, many Tree Worlds have been problematic, so we've invited quite a few helpers this time; he's just one among them."

Yang Qing understood, and if that's the case, then there's no issue.

Back when Human Emperor Sect cultivators brought juniors here, they would often encounter such matters, as problems frequently arose within the Reincarnation Tree's Tree Worlds due to its worldview.

After all, it's just providing a little help; there's really no issue. Moreover, since it's helping, there surely are benefits. For those little fellows with cultivation only at the Divine Sea Realm, it's also a pretty good opportunity.

"But Dragon Monarch, among all the juniors that have come this time, the little fellow you've brought has the lowest cultivation. Has the Nine Provinces fallen to such a state?"

Yang Qing sneered and said, "I think you're senile. Since when do cultivators care about cultivation realms when killing, especially those from the Nine Provinces."

The Reincarnation Tree chuckled, "Then, I shall wait and see!"

As soon as the words fell, a portal opened before him. Yang Qing, hands behind his back, stepped out and appeared directly in a somewhat broad corridor.

Behind him was a door with a number on it. Yang Qing silently noted it; he'd have to return to the Nine Provinces through here. If he got it wrong, who knows which domain he'd end up in.

His sudden appearance almost caused him to collide with a few figures passing by. One of them quickly dodged and then glared angrily at Yang Qing.

Yang Qing turned to look at him, his temper flaring, "What are you looking at? Look again and I'll twist your head off!"

The Reincarnation Tree whisking Lu Ye away without a word still bothered him a bit; the Dragon Race's pettiness isn't groundless.

Those who could come here were all from prestigious domains; if not from a prestigious domain, they had no qualification to be here. Regardless of current prominence, their ancestors must have been illustrious too, because if they weren't, it's impossible to request a doppelganger from the Reincarnation Tree.

Where would such creatures from these domains have a good temper?

The one Yang Qing stared at was about to get angry, but his companion quickly reached out to stop him, not recognizing Yang Qing's true form. In such a place, it's really not wise to create trouble.

The leader said, "We are in a hurry. If we offended you, please forgive us."

Their manner seemed quite knowledgeable and reasonable, which left Yang Qing with nothing much to say. He simply waved coldly and turned to leave.

After taking a few steps, he suddenly turned back to the guy who had glared at him, a sneer on his lips, "What did you say? Have the guts to say it again!"

He just happened to be in a bad mood with nowhere to vent it.

The man's expression was displeased, and he muttered something, speaking in some language Yang Qing didn't recognize. He thought Yang Qing wouldn't understand, but Yang Qing had traveled stellar space for years, what race hadn't he seen? What language couldn't he understand?

The leader's face changed, silently cursing the troublesome companion, but he could only mediate, "Fellow Daoist, don't mind it, my companion was just complaining a bit, not cursing."

"Damn you!" Yang Qing cursed angrily, "You really think I don't understand?"

The one who had cursed him no longer concealed it, taunting, "So what if I cursed you?"

The reason for his brazen confidence was that there were rules here at the Reincarnation Tree: all guests were prohibited from private altercations, otherwise, they would be banned from returning.

Just this one rule, and no one dared to break it.

Being able to enter the Reincarnation Tree, in a way, also serves as a standard to judge whether a domain is truly prestigious!

Take the present Nine Provinces for example; although they can now produce Constellation Realm cultivators, without the inheritances from the previous Nine Provinces era or the doppelganger of that Talent Tree, regardless of their size, they wouldn't be recognized by their peers in stellar space.

Looking across stellar space, there are many such domains. Not every domain capable of producing Constellation Realm cultivators has the qualification to come here.

"Then you're in trouble!" Yang Qing sneered menacingly, stepping forward.

They were all startled. The leader shouted, "What are you intending, Fellow Daoist?"

"To beat you up!" As his words fell, Yang Qing lunged at them.

Their strength was certainly not low, but how could they endure the fists of someone from the Dragon Race? Moreover, with concerns of the rules, they didn't dare to act recklessly here and were soon left bruised and battered, in utter disarray.

What shocked them even more was that despite such vile conduct happening within the Reincarnation Tree, the host of this domain had no intention of intervening.

Under normal circumstances, once a fight breaks out, the Reincarnation Tree could stop it immediately or teleport both parties to stellar space to resolve it.

But from start to finish, they never awaited the Reincarnation Tree to mediate justice.

This fact alone was terrifying, as it suggested the person in front of them might be a powerhouse even the Reincarnation Tree dared not easily offend!

"Now it's time for robbery!"

After venting his anger, Yang Qing looked down at the battered group from above.

He didn't seriously injure them, as the Reincarnation Tree tacitly allowed him to vent his anger here. He had to save some face for the Reincarnation Tree. If he actually killed someone, the Reincarnation Tree could not ignore it; it concerned its reputation built over countless millennia.

"Rob... Robbery?" The group was completely dumbfounded.

Such a powerful figure really intends to rob them? Is there no justice left?

Chapter 1218: 9th Mystic Yuk Yaorao

As the thick yellow color dissipated, Lu Ye suddenly found himself in a place of transparent spirit force, where the birds sang and flowers bloomed.

This is definitely not the Nine Provinces, the native nature's spiritual energy there isn't this dense, so... we've arrived?

This is the real transmission, the entire process felt almost like nothing, unlike the previous time traveling through the Liyuan Great Array to the Unparalleled Continent, that experience was truly unforgettable.

The scene before me, amidst green verdant hues were bursts of purple and pink, surrounding the tip of my nose were all kinds of subtle yet fragrant floral scents... seems there's another unique fragrance?

Just as Lu Ye was about to carefully observe his surroundings, he suddenly sensed something wrong, swiftly moved to the side, and pressed his hand on the handle of the Boulder Mountain Saber, his eyes steadily fixed on where he previously stood.

There was still a silhouette at that spot, but it wasn't Yang Qing who had brought him, rather a remarkably enchanting and alluring figure.

The fragrance that lingered at the tip of his nose moments ago, besides the unique floral scents of the place, was this woman's personal scent!

When Lu Ye looked over, what caught his eye was a dazzling snow-white, making him a bit dizzy.

Without a doubt, the woman was stunning, and possessed an indescribable graceful and seductive demeanor. Lu Ye had seen various beauties in the Nine Provinces, but in terms of allure, none could compare to this woman by eleven parts.

Plus, coupled with her alluring figure, she was the type with slender branches bearing abundant fruits, giving a strong visual impact, any male creature would find it hard to resist taking a few more glances.

Now Lu Ye only had one question on his mind.

Where did Yang Qing go?

And who is this woman?

In contrast to Lu Ye's baffled suspicion, the woman appeared much more composed, after a brief pause, she realized what had happened.

This is the benefit of having a reliable elder around, before coming here, her elder had already informed her of potential situations she might encounter, so she could readily adapt to whatever came.

In contrast, Yang Qing seemed less reliable, but you couldn't blame him, having been sealed for tens of thousands of years, and this being the first time taking a junior as an elder, where would he think to remind too much, and the Dragon Race naturally wasn't known for being meticulous.

This led Lu Ye to feel completely baffled at the moment.

When Lu Ye noticed the woman, she obviously noticed him too, tilted her head and glanced at him, upon seeing Lu Ye's attire, she immediately felt a bit overwhelmed: "Combat brute..."

In the stellar space, the major sects all have their own nicknames, so-called beefy savage brute, magic nerd, Sword Madman, combat brute, Spectral Shadow...

All relate greatly to their own combat styles.

It's not that anyone looks down on anyone particular, but inevitably some ideologies will conflict.

Of these, magic cultivators were most willing to cooperate with physique cultivators, because physique cultivators were tough enough to charge ahead and draw fire, giving them ample time and energy to wield all kinds of mighty spells.

The least willing to cooperate were Sword Madmen and combat brutes, strictly speaking, these two types of people were peas in a pod, killing with no sense of coordination whatsoever.

Even if Lu Ye were a Ghost Cultivator, this woman wouldn't be so perturbed, but one look at Lu Ye's attire and she knew he was a combat cultivator.

Once the words left her lips, she quickly raised a hand to cover her red lips, mouth slightly smiled: "This one's misspoke, Fellow Daoist please don't mind!"

Lu Ye merely stared at her, right now he didn't fully grasp what was happening, but there was one thing certain, the woman standing before him, who suddenly appeared, seemed not to harbor any hostility.

This made his previous actions seem a tad over-exaggerated.

The woman gathered her skirts in a salute: "Yuk Yaorao of Jiuxuan, greetings to this Fellow Daoist."

Is she introducing her origin?

Jiuxuan should be the name of the domain this lady is from, as for the specific location in the stellar space, that's unknown.

Since she's being courteous, Lu Ye naturally couldn't fall short, what's more, this close distance, it's she who should be more cautious.

Yuk Yaorao could see Lu Ye's combat cultivator background, so how could he not see thru Yuk Yaorao's magic cultivator path?

Lu Ye raised a hand in greeting, "Nine Heavens, Lu Ye."

One is Jiuxuan, the other Nine Heavens; they sound similar, yet Nine Heavens is false, while Jiuxuan is true.

Yuk Yaorao pondered briefly, realizing she hadn't heard of a domain called Nine Heavens. However, the stellar space was vast, and it was normal for someone at the Divine Sea Realm like her to have limited knowledge. The fact that he could come here indicated it was a large domain, so she didn't pay it much mind.

"Junior Brother Lu seems somewhat perplexed about his own situation?" Yuk Yaorao was undoubtedly the type to become easily acquainted. She had just addressed him as a Fellow Daoist, and now she called him Junior Brother, because when Lu Ye had placed his hand on his saber earlier, his spirit force fluctuations were unmistakably clear, indicating his cultivation was one level lower than hers.

This inevitably surprised Yuk Yaorao somewhat because, as far as she knew, those eligible to be brought here by the elders were all at Divine Sea Level 9, just a step away from taking that final leap.

Apparently, there had never been a precedent of someone at Divine Sea Level 8 coming here.

After all, which large domain wouldn't have a Divine Sea Level 9? It made no sense to forgo a Level 9 and instead bring a Level 8.

"I was just about to ask this Senior Sister about it. I came here with an elder from my family, but after arriving, the elder disappeared and I saw you instead. What's happening here? Where is this place?" Since she was willing to be friendly, Lu Ye naturally went along with it.

"Didn't that elder explain anything to you?"

Lu Ye replied, "He only said he would bring me to the Reincarnation Tree, but from what I can see, there doesn't appear to be a Reincarnation Tree here." It was more a place of birdsong and fragrant flowers, lush with greenery, possessing an otherworldly transcendence, but beyond that, nothing appeared worth particular notice.

Yuk Yaorao laughed softly, "That elder of yours is really unreliable."

She straightened her expression and began, "This is indeed the Reincarnation Tree. To be precise, it's a Tree World. A Tree World is a series of miniature worlds inside the Reincarnation Tree. There are so many, they're innumerable; one could say they're nearly infinite. I don't know which specific Tree World this is, but as for why we're here..."

She paused slightly, seemingly organizing her words, then continued, "The Reincarnation Tree is a supreme treasure of the stellar space. It's existed for countless millennia. It embraces all, making no distinctions. Therefore, in this vast stellar space, many lost domains or those who must wander for various reasons come to the Reincarnation Tree to find a place to stay. For this, the Reincarnation Tree never refuses. After all, it has many Tree Worlds, ample to house those tribes and races roaming without homes. Of course, many come attracted by its reputation as well."

"Therefore, you can entirely view the Reincarnation Tree as a microcosm of the stellar space. The species in the stellar space are mostly present here too, including us humans, who have claimed many Tree Worlds here. However, many races cannot coexist peacefully, leading to frequent skirmishes and disputes. Since everyone is here to survive, they generally restrain themselves. Except in one situation!"

"What situation?" Lu Ye asked timely.

"Not all who come to seek refuge with the Reincarnation Tree hope simply for a place to stay. Some harbor malicious intentions! They arrive with the aim of plundering rare species because some rare species in the stellar space possess very special abilities. Most of the disputes and skirmishes among the Tree Worlds of the Reincarnation Tree stem from this."

Lu Ye was somewhat surprised, "If that's the case, couldn't the Reincarnation Tree just expel them? It should have the ability to discern good from evil, right?"

Yuk Yaorao smiled, her expression charming and full of grace. How a woman in her twenties could possess such poise was unknown.

"The Reincarnation Tree indeed has this ability, but its guiding principle is to embrace all phenomena. When species and tribes come, it accepts them but won't expel them! Nor will it actively do anything for them."

Lu Ye appeared thoughtful, "It won't act proactively, so it can act passively?"

Yuk Yaorao cast him an amazed look, "Junior Brother, you're quite perceptive, exactly right! Take this domain, for example. It must have encountered some disturbances, so no matter which species survives in this domain, they can request the Reincarnation Tree for help, asking it to send someone to assist them. That's why we're here; the Reincarnation Tree sent us, and what we need to do is help the beings of this Tree World deal with some issues! You can think of this as a test. If you pass, you qualify to participate in the next Divine Sea contest. If not, you might just have to return whence you came."

Lu Ye was tempted to ask what this upcoming Divine Sea contest entailed, but decided against it, planning to ask Yang Qing later; asking here would only show his ignorance.

Up till now, he hadn't known why Yang Qing brought him here, as Yang Qing had only mentioned coming to snatch something, without specifying what.

However, based on the current information, it seemed he and Yuk Yaorao shared a natural ally relationship since their experiences in this Tree World would determine their subsequent travel qualifications.

This being the case, there was no need to guard against her anymore.

Lu Ye glanced around, "Then, what species does Senior Sister think lives in this Tree World?"

Yuk Yaorao replied, "In any case, it won't be humans!"

If it were humans, there would be traces of human activity. Though unaware of the size of this Tree World, neither of them sensed any living creature within their Mental Consciousness range.

"As for which species, they will naturally come find us."

As soon as Yuk Yaorao finished speaking, the surrounding trees suddenly radiated a faint brilliance, followed by points of light drifting out from the woods, converging in front of the two.

Within the enveloping light, an ethereal figure appeared, bowing slightly, "Thank you for your patience, esteemed guests, and first of all, thank you for coming."

Chapter 1219: Almost Got Fooled

Lu Ye focused his gaze and saw that the phantom figure was extremely tall, about several zhang in height, with arms and legs, but both the hands and feet seemed to be gnarled branches of trees. Atop the head was a circle of emerald green saplings, full of vitality, with a trunk straight as an arrow, and clear facial features were present at the head position.

What kind of race is this? Lu Ye was puzzled, at first glance, it seemed the wood had become a spirit.

"Wood Spirit Race?" Yuk Yaorao immediately recognized the identity of the figure.

Lu Ye didn't recognize any Wood Spirit Race, but he had seen the Fire Spirit Race!

Back then, under a volcano located between Cangyan Mountain Pass and Gushan City Pass, a group of Fire Spirit Race members was trapped. Lu accidentally broke their seal, causing quite a commotion at the time.

Seemingly realizing Lu Ye's ignorance, Yuk Yaorao communicated via audio transmission: "In the stellar space, there are Five Elements Spirit Races corresponding to gold, wood, water, fire, and earth, all extremely rare races. Since a Wood Spirit has appeared before us, this must be the Wood Spirit Tree World. The Wood Spirit Race is gentle by nature, leading a life detached from worldly struggles, yet each one is a natural healing cultivator, skilled in various healing techniques, and inherently powerful. It's said that the Wood Spirit's Crystal Core has the power to resurrect, so they are often targeted by stronger races."

Lu Ye silently nodded. A race possessing unique abilities, with precious treasures within, that doesn't seem very strong, is naturally going to attract attention.

"However..."

"However, what?" Lu Ye asked.

Yuk Yaorao shook her head: "It's nothing." It wasn't anything unspeakable, but while she recognized the being before them as a Wood Spirit, it didn't quite match the legendary descriptions?

She's only at the Divine Sea stage, and her knowledge of the myriad stellar races is limited to the accounts from the journeys of her sect elders, never having personally interacted before.

"Indeed!" The voice of the Wood Spirit was incredibly loud, like rumbling thunder, "I am Kin... no, Mu Shanshan, the clan leader of the Wood Spirit Race. Thank you both for coming. Recently, our Wood Spirit Race's Tree World has been encountering some trouble and we hope you two can help resolve it!"

Yuk Yaorao bowed: "That is the very purpose of our presence here. Please, Clan Leader, tell us what we need to do."

Since the Reincarnation Tree had sent both her and Lu Ye into this realm, the qualification test had already begun. How they would ultimately pass this test depended on their actions from here on and the judgment of the Reincarnation Tree.

Clan Leader Mu Shanshan said, "The Wood Spirit Tree World has long suffered from invasions by the Insect Race. Those detestable insects have been encroaching from the Insect Race Tree World and have already built a massive insect hive in our Wood Spirit Tree World. In recent years, the living space of the Wood Spirit Race has been severely compressed, and the children's safety heavily threatened. Therefore, I wish for you two to help us eradicate that insect hive and eliminate all those despicable insects!"

Lu Ye listened from the side, frowning. Why are there Insect Races everywhere? It seems the Insect Race is indeed a great scourge throughout the stellar space.

However, recalling Yuk Yaorao's earlier descriptions of the Reincarnation Tree's embracing of all highlights, he was somewhat relieved.

The Reincarnation Tree here is akin to a miniature stellar space, gathering many races, many of which are extremely rare, yet they naturally possess peculiar powers. Given this, they easily attract malice.

Insect Races, being notorious marauders in the universe, appearing here doesn't seem so surprising.

"We need detailed intelligence!" Yuk Yaorao spoke. With only the two of them, they were quite vulnerable, and even if they could garner support from the Wood Spirit Race, it was uncertain how much aid that would provide, so intelligence was crucial.

She had confidence in her own strength but not so much in Lu Ye's, given his Divine Sea Level 8 cultivation, which, though significant, had its limits. No disregard intended, just the simple truth.

"This is no issue, I will provide you with comprehensive details shortly," Clan Leader Mu Shanshan nodded, "If you two can help us solve our current trouble, the Wood Spirit Race will confer rich rewards."

Yuk Yaorao smiled slightly, without committing, while Lu Ye got interested: "What kind of rich rewards?"

Clan Leader Mu Shanshan scratched his head in embarrassment. It was just mentioned casually as, until now, humans he'd interacted with displayed noble dispositions, regardless of their inner thoughts, at least outwardly they wouldn't ask directly. Normally, trivial things could settle matters post-action.

Who knew someone would actually ask him directly, and this was indeed a first.

After a rolling eye motion: "Crystal Core! The most precious Crystal Core of our Wood Spirit Race! With it, no matter how severe your injuries in the future, even if you are left with just a breath, it can bring you back to life. With this, it's equivalent to having an extra life! The Crystal Core of the Wood Spirit Race, both of you deserve it!"

Lu Ye nodded slightly; if this is the kind of rich reward, it certainly is satisfying. Cultivators out in the world always face danger, and if life is truly hanging by a thread, a Crystal Core from the Wood Spirit Race can genuinely save lives.

Yuk Yaorao was momentarily stunned, then her bright eyes slightly narrowed.

The Clan Leader Mu Shanshan seemed about to say something else when Yuk Yaorao suddenly raised her hand with a quick gesture. Although it was unclear what treasure she activated, strands of fine lines instantly appeared in the space before them, visible to the naked eye, crisscrossing to tightly encircle Clan Leader Mu Shanshan.

Lu Ye raised his hand to grip the handle of the Boulder Mountain Saber, his aura concentrated but unleashing nothing.

Clan Leader Mu Shanshan was paralyzed with fear, trembling as he stood in place, looking around at the countless shimmering lines with terror and apprehension: "What... what is this for?"

Lu Ye turned his head to look at Yuk Yaorao.

Yuk Yaorao let out a light hum: "He's not a wood spirit; we were nearly deceived by him!"

"What do you mean?" Lu Ye asked.

"The Wood Spirit Race would never give away their crystal core, because it is the source of life for the Wood Spirit Race. Even if a wood spirit dies, as long as the crystal core remains, a new wood spirit can be born. Therefore, the crystal core is a taboo that outsiders cannot touch, and the Wood Spirit Race holds it in extremely high regard. How could a true member of the Wood Spirit Race give away their crystal core? That would be like sending away their own kin! Also, although I told you earlier that the crystal core of the Wood Spirit Race has the effect of resurrection, in truth I was exaggerating. Perhaps it has some healing effect, but it absolutely cannot achieve resurrection. He claims to be the Clan Leader of the Wood Spirit Race, how could he not understand the difference?"

"So he's an impostor?" Lu Ye clicked his tongue in wonder, raising his eyes to look at Mu Shanshan, his gaze enhanced with Insight Spirit Runes, but no matter how he looked, he found no flaws.

"Fortunately, Junior Brother Lu asked one more question, otherwise we would truly have been deceived!"

When Lu Ye asked that question earlier, Yuk Yaorao had thought this cultivator from the Nine Heavens was a bit greedy. He hadn't even done any work and was already thinking about benefits. Truly realistic! But now, it seems they owe him thanks.

"Speak, why are you trying to deceive us!" Yuk Yaorao stared at Mu Shanshan, and as she pushed her spirit force, the sharp lines surrounding him contracted inward slightly.

Mu Shanshan continued to argue, looking dejected as he said: "I'm not deceiving you, I truly am the Clan Leader of the Wood Spirit Race, you have to believe me!" As he shouted his grievances, he watched the expressions of the two humans before him but saw they were completely unmoved.

Especially the combat cultivator, who not only remained unmoved but seemed eager to try, fingers tracing the handle of his saber, as if he might a moment later perform a Drawn Saber Slash.

"I swear, I swear before the Reincarnation Tree, I'm not deceiving you!"

The combat cultivator really unsheathed his saber, stepping forward toward him, and Mu Shanshan grew instantly flustered, his eyes darting even more frequently than before, as if contemplating how to convince the two humans before him, but such a short time with preconceived notions made it much harder to persuade them.

"Hold on, Junior Brother!" At the critical moment, it was Yuk Yaorao who called out.

Lu Ye halted.

Yuk Yaorao wore a faint smile at the corner of her mouth: "To dare play such tricks under the nose of the Reincarnation Tree, and with countless mistakes full of contradictions, and not only possessing such amazing shape-changing abilities that leave us unable to spot any flaws, but talking nonsense and refusing to reveal your true form... I have a rough idea of what race you belong to."

Mu Shanshan still stubbornly claimed: "I am the Clan Leader... of the Wood Spirit Race!"

But the conviction in his voice had weakened considerably.

"A group of fairies! Reveal your true form quickly!" Yuk Yaorao called out sharply as the lines encircling Mu Shanshan swiftly contracted.

These seemingly unremarkable lines were actually extremely sharp, crafted from treasures taken from a dire place in Jiuxuan World, and their quality was already at the limit of spirit treasures. Even when she advances to the Constellation Realm, this spirit treasure will suffice for her combat needs.

The lines crisscrossed, and Clan Leader Mu Shanshan let out a cry of pain: "I'm dying!"

As he shouted, green blood spurted from his body, the whole form shattered into pieces, scattering upon the ground.

Lu Ye was astounded by Yuk Yaorao's divine-like actions. This was the Tree World of the Reincarnation Tree, and they had come to assist, yet they had slain the primary figure? What kind of situation was this?

Although he had drawn his saber earlier, he had merely intended it as a gesture and didn't truly plan to strike anyone.

Yuk Yaorao, however, showed not a hint of panic for having killed the wrong person, instead appearing perfectly composed: "Junior Brother Lu, you probably don't know this world houses a very rare race, even rarer than the Five Elements Spirit Race, called the Fairy Race. They are born with a very peculiar shape-changing ability, able to transform into any form they desire, and it appears so naturally that even if one's cultivation surpasses them by one or two realms, it may not be possible to see through it."

Chapter 1220: Fairy

"So the wood spirit isn't actually a wood spirit, just an illusionary form!" Lu Ye realized. If this is a natural talent of theirs, it explains why even his Insight Spirit Runes couldn't detect any flaw.

The stellar space is vast with many races, and among them, aside from the human race having no special traits, almost every other race has one or two unique skills.

Ironically, in this stellar space, it is the human race, the least distinctive, that occupies most of the domains, making them the undisputed overlord among all races.

A great figure once asserted that if the human race in the stellar space didn't have internal conflicts, there would be no living space for other races. At that time, all races would become vassals of the human race.

But such internal strife within the human race is impossible to stop or change.

"The Fairy Race has many strange characteristics, not just the ability to shape-change, but if there's any race in the Tree World of the Reincarnation Tree that can change shape this realistically, it's the Fairy Race!" As Yuk Yaorao spoke, she retracted her fine thread-like spirit treasure, stood in front of Clan Leader Mu Shanshan's corpse, and a bright flame flickered in her hand. Staring at the corpse pieces on the ground, she said, "Why don't you show yourselves? Do I really have to burn you out?"

When her fine-thread spirit treasure cut through Mu Shanshan's body, it seemed to dismember Mu Shanshan, but in truth, she felt no resistance throughout the process. In other words, as the thread cut through, Mu Shanshan's entire body scattered, even the spurting green blood was merely an external manifestation of a trick.

A surprising scene unfolded before Lu Ye. After Yuk Yaorao issued her threat, every piece of flesh on the ground suddenly came to life, twisting and transforming into beings about one foot tall!

At first glance, they resembled a shrunken version of the human race. However, unlike the human race, each of them had a pair of wings on their back— not flesh wings, but something akin to semi-transparent dragonfly wings.

They wore brightly colored clothes, with different hues swirling around each fairy, turning the vista into a vibrant display like blossoms in full bloom.

In appearance, the males were exceedingly handsome, and the females were extraordinarily beautiful, each looking youthful and full of vitality.

Only the fairy transformed from Mu Shanshan's head had a full head of white hair, an elder's appearance, but was clad in overtly flashy attire. Unlike the colorful clothes of the other fairies, this old fellow was dressed in dazzling gold, the most eye-catching among all the fairies.

Recalling Mu Shanshan's initial self-introduction, Lu Ye suddenly understood. This guy wasn't Mu Shanshan at all; he was clearly Jin Shanshan! He had almost slipped up when introducing himself.

This is what fairies are! Lu Ye observed with great interest.

In the Nine Provinces, such wonders could never be seen. There, aside from the human race, only ugly and loathsome insects existed. Later, he encountered the Blood Race and Corpse Race, but none of them could compare to the Fairy Race.

The fairies revealed their true forms, numbering over a hundred. They flapped their wings, and under the stunned gaze of Lu Ye and Yuk Yaorao, they began stacking themselves one atop another.

Clearly, they were well-versed in this act, having likely done it more than once. In the blink of an eye, they formed a pyramid.

The sole white-haired Jin Shanshan stood proudly at the pinnacle of the pyramid, assuming a commanding "golden rooster standing alone" pose, glaring fiercely at the two humans.

Then, the fairies began to speak.

"Since you've discovered us!"

"We won't hide anymore!"

"Indeed, we are in this stellar space, embodying both wisdom and beauty!"

"Talents coexisting with virtue!"

"The greatest, most wise, and most divine!"

"Fairy Race!"

The fairies spoke in an orderly fashion; the bottom layer began, each layer following suit, with the topmost Jin Shanshan concluding!

Lu Ye's eye twitched.

Yuk Yaorao also raised her hand to cover her face. Even though she had read some accounts of fairies in her elders' travel journals and knew what kind of personalities fairies had, she still found it a bit of an eyesore at the moment.

She quietly transmitted to Lu Ye, "Fairies, no matter their age, are innately childlike. They're just like human children."

Lu Ye wholeheartedly agreed, "I can tell!"

"Oh my..." Jin Shanshan suddenly exclaimed.

No reason, the pyramid... collapsed!

A group of fairies toppled over, despite having wings, each fairy fell in a complete disarray.

They immediately began arguing, one fairy accusing another of not standing firmly, that fairy blaming another for dragging him down...

And this wasn't ordinary quarreling; every fairy was arguing, making the scene extraordinarily lively and chaotic in no time.

Lu Ye just felt as if hundreds of ducks were quacking noisily by his ears.

The issue of the pyramid collapsing hadn't reached a conclusion, and the topic somehow bizarrely shifted as the fairies started arguing about why things got exposed.

Some said Jin Shanshan was too stupid, others argued it was wrong to transform into a wood spirit; the various topics of disagreement were endless.

"Forgot to tell Junior Brother Lu, fairies... talkative!" Yuk Yaorao transmitted to Lu Ye, "But that doesn't mean they're not united; it's just their characteristic."

Lu Ye also noticed this, because although the fairies were arguing, none appeared to have any intention of fighting, especially Jin Shanshan, who was clearly the Clan Leader of the Fairy Race, yet was being completely lambasted by other clan members, red in the face and neck, lacking any of the imposing presence or majesty a Clan Leader should have.

The fairies continued to argue while the two humans stood quietly aside observing.

Suddenly, a moment came where the noise abruptly quieted down without warning, and then all the fairies were eagerly looking at Yuk Yaorao and Lu Ye.

Jin Shanshan pushed through the crowd, fluttered his little wings forward, and pretentiously cleared his throat before speaking: "Firstly, I represent the Fairy Race to apologize to our two esteemed guests, for we deceived you. To our upright and kind nature, this is an unforgivable mistake, but we hope the two esteemed guests will understand, considering our Fairy Race is really not suited to be exposed to the public."

Yuk Yaorao smiled slightly: "Understood, the Fairy Race holds great appeal to any race, which is indeed the way the Fairy Race protects itself!"

Jin Shanshan nodded with an air of maturity and steadiness: "It's best that our esteemed guests understand, but if not, it's no matter. Let's let the brief unpleasantness dissipate like smoke and discuss serious matters!"

Yuk Yaorao said: "As I said, if you want us to help, it's not a problem, we came here for this purpose, but we need detailed information."

Clan Leader Jin Shanshan said: "I will inform both of you."

Then, he narrated the current situation of the Fairy Tree World at length.

In fact, the situation wasn't too complicated, it was the Insect Race invading and setting up a large insect hive in their Fairy Tree World, intending to occupy it and capture members of their Demon Race.

What Yuk Yaorao and Lu Ye needed to do was to eradicate the insect hive and wipe out all the Insect Race, restoring the Fairy Tree World to brightness.

Lu Ye noticed an issue: "Are your clan members this few? Or have they been killed by the Insect Race?"

Jin Shanshan looked proud: "Our clan members are indeed this few, which is why we're the rarest species in the stellar space!" It seemed like this was something worth boasting.

Lu Ye raised his eyebrows: "So, dealing with the Insect Race involves only these people?"

Jin Shanshan's expression grew solemn: "This little friend is mistaken, it's not us, but you!"

Lu Ye was stunned: "What about you?"

"We will cheer for you!" Jin Shanshan replied earnestly, all the other fairies nodding together.

Lu Ye suddenly felt that the reason why this race had few members was not without cause. Their homeland was invaded, yet they had no intention to resist, instead relying on outsiders.

Such a mindset is truly hard to agree with. Frankly, if it wasn't for the test of the Reincarnation Tree, Lu Ye wouldn't possibly lend a hand.

People must strengthen themselves to have the value of being saved. If they can't even manage that, extinction might as well be the outcome. Over countless years in stellar space, there had been more than just a couple of extinct races.

Yuk Yaorao said: "We can contribute, but you can't just cheer, we need your blessing!"

Lu Ye didn't know what the blessing was, but since Yuk Yaorao mentioned it, she must have her reasons. It seemed this so-called blessing was capable of providing some sort of assistance.

"This... that..." Jin Shanshan rubbed his hands, looking a bit troubled.

Yuk Yaorao's expression was firm: "If your esteemed race can't even provide blessings, I must respectfully decline to assist!"

"We need to discuss!" Jin Shanshan quickly said.

"Then hurry up, time waits for no one!"

A group of fairies immediately clustered together, heads pointing inward, backs facing outward, forming a large circle, chattering away in discussion. Lu Ye couldn't understand because they were speaking the Fairy Race's language, turning his gaze towards Yuk Yaorao.

Yuk Yaorao smiled bitterly: "I don't understand the Fairy Race's language either."

"What is the blessing?" Lu Ye asked.

Yuk Yaorao explained: "The Fairy Race inherently doesn't have strong combat power and isn't accustomed to fighting with others, so when facing the Insect Race's invasion, they actually lack much ability to resist. In this, Junior Brother Lu might have wrongly accused them, not because they're not self-reliant, but because their nature is like this. Although they're not fond of conflict, each of them has innate support capacities, which are their blessings. Any cultivator, if accompanied by a fairy, can increase their strength by at least twenty percent; they can bestow cultivators with some special blessings across different domains."

"Such a strange thing?" Lu Ye's eyes sparkled, looking at the group of fairies huddled together in front of him, as if seeing a group of treasures!