

Humanity 1231

Chapter 1231: Stingy Lu Ye

This was quite an intriguing matter; Lu Ye quietly observed for a moment and came up with some guesses.

The power consumed by the teleportation couldn't have come from nowhere. Since it wasn't supported by his spirit force, then someone else must have been secretly providing some unseen and intangible assistance.

Here in the Tree World, who else could provide such help?

It must undoubtedly be the Reincarnation Tree.

Previously, when learning about the situation in the Tree World, Lu Ye felt that the Reincarnation Tree was too rigid. The Tree World was a place that should provide refuge for displaced races, supposed to be peaceful and serene. However, the Insect Race brought war here. Lu Ye didn't know the status of other invaded tree worlds, having never visited them, but just looking at the Fairy Tree World, if it weren't for the fairies' special abilities to completely conceal the area for hundreds of miles around, they wouldn't have been able to establish themselves in the Tree World and would have long been ransacked by the Insect Race.

But Yuk Yaorao said this was the basis of the Reincarnation Tree's existence. It neither rejects nor refuses any race seeking refuge and doesn't meddle in the disputes among different races. What it can do is merely provide a Tree World for each race.

It is an absolutely neutral existence!

But now, even being so neutral, it still has its preferences.

Regarding the actions of the Insect Race, the Reincarnation Tree has probably long been unable to tolerate them. Bound by certain principles, it couldn't personally expel them, but at critical moments, it doesn't mind providing some indirect assistance.

Just like now!

Lu Ye thought so, and to see whether this was correct, a test would reveal the truth.

He once again infused spirit force into the core in his hand, linking it with another mark, quickly creating a passageway to another tree world.

He took a quick glance and asked, "Someone needs to go and convince the race on the other side to act with us. Who is willing to go?"

"I'll go!" Under Lü Yingying's surprised note, Hong Dandan bravely stepped forward, fluttering her small wings as she dove into the passage.

As she entered the passage, Lu Ye decisively stopped transmitting his spirit force, but the passage remained, and Hong Dandan's figure disappeared.

That's it, indeed there was an invisible force supporting the passage's teleportation, and it must only be the Reincarnation Tree!

This makes things simpler now.

Without any more hesitation, Lu Ye continuously activated the power of the core, opening all the passages to the dozen or so tree worlds.

He didn't have to say anything more; Lü Yingying and a snow-white exotic beast each found a passage and entered, Mu Kui also led some of his tribe members into other passages.

Lu Ye, recovering his spirit force on one hand, waited on the other.

In just a moment, odd and peculiar figures began stepping out from the dozen or so passages one after another. Lü Yingying completed her task and returned, sitting on Lu Ye's shoulder, whispering introductions of these races to him.

They were races Lu Ye had never even heard of.

There was the Water Spirit Race, of the same Five Elements Spirit Race, each shrouded in misty vapor, making it hard to discern their features.

There were the Elven Race, men handsome, women beautiful, all with an air of nobility, who had pointed ears.

There was the Feathered Creatures Race, identical to the human race in appearance but with a pair of snow-white wings on their backs.

There was the Stone Race, which seemed like stones turned into spirits.

And there was the Flame Race, engulfed and burning fiercely in flames...

Each stellar space race was bizarre, making Lu Ye marvel. The dozen tree worlds brought a dozen different races.

Yet there was no trace of the human race. According to Yuk Yaorao, there are human races living in the Tree Worlds by the Reincarnation Tree, but the Insect Race's goal targeted these rare races. Naturally, they showed little interest in the human race. Even if accidentally opening a passage to a human tree world, they would probably find a way to obliterate it, since capturing a few humans would be pointless for the Insect Race.

The multitude of diverse races rushing from their respective tree worlds varied in number, with some only a few hundred strong, while others had thousands.

These were clearly not all the forces of their respective tree worlds, as those able to travel through the tree world passages here were all relatively powerful individuals, since those lacking strength would not have been of much use even if they came.

Lu Ye, as a human, seemed quite prominent among so many rare races.

However, each race that came through the tree world passage would come to express their gratitude to him. Everyone had suffered from the Insect Race's invasion but had no means to resolve it. Until today, it was Lu Ye, the human, who provided them with this opportunity.

Gathering nearly ten thousand troops from more than a dozen races, with Divine Sea Realm and True Lake Realm experts everywhere, such a force was enough to sweep away this Insect Race tree world.

There were no rigid procedures or hierarchy on who listens to whom. Once the elite units of each race were fully through the tree world passages, they independently sought directions and dispersed.

In the upcoming days, they would wage battles across this tree world, exterminating all the Insect Race they encountered!

But before departing, Lu Ye made an agreement with them, once the Insect Race tree world was dealt with, they would return here, and he would once again open the passages, sending them back to their respective tree worlds.

Even though the Reincarnation Tree provided some covert assistance, it was ultimately not suitable for stepping into the spotlight, so it was left to Lu Ye to handle the connecting of the tree world passages.

The mystery of the whole matter could only be understood by Lu Ye himself; even the two fairies who were with him all the time were completely unaware.

They probably never expected that the Reincarnation Tree, which has always stood for fairness and justice, would have a day when it leaned to one side.

There's no absolute fairness and justice in this world, just like Number Nine; once she'd gotten familiar with Lu Ye, as long as the requests from Lu Ye weren't too unreasonable, they would generally be accommodated.

The insects of the Insect Race Tree World started to have bad luck.

For tens of thousands of years, they had only ever invaded other Tree Worlds; never before had they been invaded like this, and it wasn't just one race but an alliance of more than a dozen races.

Every day saw a large number of insects being killed. If the insect hive were still around, they could replenish their numbers, but Lu Ye had already destroyed the hive, leaving the insects with one less each time one died.

The forces from more than a dozen races spread out in more than a dozen directions, like over ten large nets crisscrossing through the pool of the Insect Race Tree World for a thorough sweep.

Although the Insect Race Tree World is not small, it couldn't withstand such torment.

What's more, Lu Ye was not idle; he too roamed around, hunting down insects.

After nearly ten days, the insects were almost wiped out. The entire Insect Race Tree World was nothing but desolation; no traces of insects could be seen anymore.

The Allied Forces, victorious in their battles, returned one after another, taking the path through the Tree World opened by Lu Ye on their journey back.

Before parting, the leaders of each race sincerely expressed their deepest gratitude to Lu Ye because they understood that with this episode over, their suffering of tens of thousands of years had come to an end. In the future, they no longer had to worry about the vile Insect Race invading their homeland.

Such grace certainly deserved a hearty thank you.

Some hospitable races even invited Lu Ye to visit their Tree World as guests, but Lu Ye declined them all. He had serious matters to attend to, the specifics of which he was still unsure, but what he was doing now was merely an extension of the early-stage trials...

He had already spent a lot of time, and couldn't afford further delay.

Along with verbal gratitude came gifts beyond words; Lu Ye received many local specialties from various races, which was an unexpected bounty.

Busy and occupied, he sent off the last group, and the Tree World passage before him gradually vanished.

Only three figures remained in the entire Insect Race Tree World: Lu Ye and two little fairies!

The two little fairies chirped beside him, chattering away in delight. Naturally, they couldn't help but be happy; they had joined Lu Ye in achieving such a remarkable deed this time, and upon returning to the Fairy Tree World, they would surely receive worship-like adoration from their kin. They could already foresee the bewildered and admiring eyes of their kin, and this brought them great anticipation.

The other groups had all departed, leaving only the two of them, who also needed to return to the Fairy Tree World.

Hong Dandan suddenly looked up: "Lu Yiye, what are you looking at?"

Lu Ye was turned to the side, his hands clasped together, peeking through a gap to examine something, which aroused the fairies' curiosity.

The Fairy Race is naturally curious, it's in their nature! It's also the reason why their numbers are so few, because whenever something makes them feel strange, they always want to understand it, often leading them down risky paths.

Lu Ye hurriedly turned his back on them, continuously shaking his head: "Nothing, nothing."

If he didn't say so, it might genuinely amount to nothing, but this statement ignited the fairies' curiosity like a fire, and they flapped their wings, flying over to take a look.

Lu Ye, however, turned a bit more, still with his back to them, maintaining his squinting posture.

The two little fairies were not to be denied, continuously changing direction to catch a glimpse.

Lu Ye turned again...

After several rounds of tugging back and forth, Hong Dandan puffed her cheeks angrily: "Stingy! What's the harm in letting us see?"

Lü Yingying chimed in: "Exactly, exactly, Lu Yiye is stingy!"

Lu Ye sternly reprimanded them: "You kids, don't be too curious!"

The two little fairies danced forward together, grabbing his arms from either side and shaking them: "Just a peek, just a peek! Don't worry, we won't tell anyone."

Lu Ye looked troubled: "You really want to see?"

The two little fairies nodded together.

Lu Ye let out a sigh: "What a bother. Fine, take a look!"

Saying so, he brought his clasped hands before the two little fairies and opened a small crack; the fairies, holding their breath with tension, imitated his earlier stance, squinting to see clearly.

What awaited them, however, was an open bag mouth!

Lu Ye quickly retrieved the spirit beast sack, tied the bag mouth shut, tucked it into his chest, his face not reddened nor his heartbeat quickened, looking completely composed.

Chapter 1232 Divine Sea Strife

The world is now peaceful!

The insects in the Insect Race Tree World have been exterminated, solving the Tree World's millennia-old problem in one fell swoop. Now, there's only one question before him.

How to get out of here?

The core of the Void Beast can open pathways to other Tree Worlds, yet it cannot send him to Yang Qing's side. Moreover, he doesn't even know where to find Yang Qing.

This matter is best left to the Reincarnation Tree.

His presence in the Tree World was the handiwork of the Reincarnation Tree in secret, and now that the trial is completed to perfection, it should naturally be the Reincarnation Tree that guides him out.

So, after a brief contemplation, Lu Ye spoke, "Let me out!"

There was a hint of trepidation; under normal circumstances, this request shouldn't be a problem. Other prodigies from various races who entered the Tree World likely left the same way, yet he still felt a bit guilty.

This is the Tree World, where the Reincarnation Tree could, if it desired, perceive everything. His little actions just now couldn't possibly escape the Reincarnation Tree's perception.

But not necessarily would it always pay attention to him unless he called out like this.

As soon as the words were spoken, the void ahead trembled slightly, and a portal appeared. Lu Ye realized he wasn't wrong. The Reincarnation Tree indeed wasn't continually watching him. It probably didn't notice his previous actions; otherwise, it wouldn't have opened a portal for him to leave.

Stepping through, he found himself on a massive platform upon reappearing.

The platform was vast, with no end in sight. Its smooth surface was entirely paved with pristine, flawless white jade, which held a mysterious power that Lu Ye could faintly sense.

This white jade... it was spirit jade!

Lu Ye was speechless. It's important to know that it takes the Constellation Realm practitioners of the Nine Provinces one or two months of searching in stellar space to collect at most a hundred pieces of spirit jade, and even those aren't large.

This result comes from the Nine Provinces' nearby stellar space being neglected for countless years. In a stellar space near a large domain where Constellation Realm beings are frequently born, the production of spirit jade is usually low because once they appear, they're collected by those of the Constellation Realm.

But here was a titanic platform entirely paved with spirit jade. How much spirit jade would that consume?

The Reincarnation Tree... is it truly this wealthy?

Without a doubt, this platform stood amidst the void, as when Lu Ye gazed upward, he saw the starry sky filled with celestial bodies and drifting meteorites slowly gliding by in the nearby stellar space, a scene unseen on the Nine Provinces' ground.

The platform was filled with figures of various shapes and sizes, bustling back and forth. Many resembled the human race in physique, while others were non-human, making the scene overwhelming at a glance.

Despite the numbers, the entire platform was devoid of any clamor, exuding a tranquil silence instead.

Those who arrived here had a minimum cultivation of the Divine Sea Realm, and all possessed the ability of audio transmission through mental consciousness. In such settings, who would shout loudly? Regardless of their nature before, everyone here had an awareness of self-restraint and dignity.

"Why did it take so long?" a familiar voice suddenly entered Lu Ye's ears.

Following the voice, Lu Ye saw Yang Qing at once.

The Reincarnation Tree was considerate, transporting him directly to Yang Qing's side when he emerged from the Insect Race Tree World.

"Was the trial difficult?" Yang Qing asked.

Lu Ye shook his head, "Not difficult, just a few twists and turns." If it weren't for his impulsive venture into the Insect Race Tree World, the trial in the Fairy Tree World would have been completed long ago. That Tree World wasn't large, and with the combined efforts of him and Yuk Yaorao, it would have been easy to cleanse the Tree World of the Insect Race after dealing with the insect hives.

Yang Qing nodded. He didn't doubt Lu Ye's ability to pass the trial, but there were always unforeseen circumstances. It wasn't unheard of for people to die in the past Reincarnation Tree World trials.

"Senior, what exactly are we here to vie for?" Lu Ye voiced the question that had lingered in his mind. Yuk Yaorao had mentioned a struggle called the Divine Sea Contention, which from the term seemed to indicate a contest among Divine Sea Realm cultivators, but Lu Ye was clueless about the details.

It wasn't suitable to ask Yuk Yaorao; in the Fairy Tree World, they were natural allies, but they might become rivals soon enough. Relying on someone else to explain critical matters was neither reliable nor trustworthy.

This matter can only be asked from Yang Qing.

Yang Qing answered with a question: "What is the key to advancing from the Divine Sea to the Constellation Realm?"

Lu Ye thought about it and said, "Is it to gain a power that connects oneself with the stellar space?"

"That's right, it is necessary to gain a power that connects oneself with the stellar space. Only then, after a cultivator advances to the Constellation Realm, can they have the ability to physically traverse the stellar space and explore it," Yang Qing nodded, "Generally speaking, large domains can naturally nurture such powers, allowing cultivators within the domain to benefit, much like how the Heaven's Augury Compass previously operated in the Nine Provinces. However, it does so consciously. In large domains where the Will of Heaven and Earth is not clear and strong, doing this is instinctive. It's Heaven's response to the expectations of the cultivators within the domain."

This was the first time Lu Ye had heard such a statement, and he couldn't help but feel that Yang Qing, who had lived for countless millennia as a Dragon Race member, indeed had vast knowledge and experience.

"Besides large domains that can nurture such power, there is a place in the Reincarnation Tree World that can also nurture such power. Moreover, compared to all the domains in this stellar space, the power it nurtures is stronger and more refined, offering greater benefits for the cultivator's future! It's like the growth of mortals; a child raised on coarse grains and pickled vegetables cannot compare physically to one raised on a diet of abundant seafood and meat. Of course, the gap isn't that exaggerated, but the power nurtured here by the Reincarnation Tree does benefit cultivators more. Generally speaking, cultivators who can gain the power nurtured by the Reincarnation Tree will have future achievements no less than those of the Moon Jade Realm. That is why so many people come rushing over."

Lu Ye's eyes brightened upon hearing this. He had always wondered what Yang Qing had brought him to compete for, and now he knew it was for the critical power needed for a cultivator to advance to the Constellation Realm!

Indeed, this power was worth fighting for, especially given his current stage of cultivation.

But he soon realized a problem: "Senior, I'm only in the Divine Sea Level 8 Realm. Even if I fight for it, I wouldn't be able to advance to the Constellation Realm anytime soon."

Even with his fast cultivation speed, advancing to Level 9 would take some time. It isn't about efficiency but about requiring significant accumulation to avoid unstable foundations. Even after advancing to Level 9, further accumulation would still be necessary!

Yang Qing glanced at him, "You don't have to worry about that. The power will be deeply hidden within your blood and flesh, and it will only be activated when you need it. Even those in the Divine Sea Level 9

Realm don't advance to the Constellation Realm immediately upon obtaining this power; they all need to return to their domains to advance."

Then it's not a problem.

Lu Ye looked up at the massive platform and exclaimed, "How many people are participating in this event? How many final spots are there going to be?"

This is a critical question that will determine how Lu Ye should exert his efforts in the upcoming Divine Sea competition.

The platform gathered a multitude of cultivators, at least tens of thousands of them. Excluding those above the Divine Sea Realm, even just the Divine Sea Realm cultivators numbered in the tens of thousands.

Since this is a Divine Sea competition, those above the Divine Sea Realm definitely aren't participating, which reduces the number by half. Yet even at half, it is still a massive number.

"Every large domain has one spot for participation. The top domains have two or three. I don't know exactly how many will participate, but I imagine there will be two or three thousand. As for the final number of spots..." Yang Qing's lips curled into a meaningful smile, "One hundred!"

The Divine Sea Realm cultivators who came here aren't all participating in the Divine Sea competition. Due to spot restrictions, most came with their elders to gain experience. The grand event around the Reincarnation Tree occurs once every century; missing it means waiting another hundred years.

Lu Ye's expression became solemn. Drawing a hundred from two to three thousand is no ordinary competition.

Moreover, this kind of participation and competition naturally favors top domains with extensive connections, as they have more spots and broader networks to easily form collective forces.

This is unfriendly to domains that don't interact much with others, as they can't even find temporary allies in such an environment.

Lu Ye, in particular, has no advantage!

The Nine Provinces just recently integrated into the stellar space with no close allies. Moreover, the term "Nine Provinces" isn't something to be casually exposed.

If he were to call out "Lu Ye of Nine Heavens," who would pay attention to him? Not to mention, he's only at Level 8! Among all the participating cultivators, he could be considered one-of-a-kind, like the only poppy among scorpions!

The Divine Sea Realm individuals qualified to participate in this grand event are all the most elite of their generation within their domains. Yuk Yaorao was like this, Loathsome Aphid, whom he killed, was like this, and so are the others.

In such an environment, even Lu Ye could feel a bit of pressure.

But he quickly realized another issue: "Senior, this kind of competitive method, doesn't it mean one could hide from start to finish? If someone finds a safe place, or has an Innate Divine Ability for Concealment, wouldn't they gain an advantage?"

Yang Qing chuckled, "Cultivators cultivate by competing against others and against heaven. If they don't even have the spirit to compete, what does it matter if they're in the top hundred? They're destined to achieve little in the future. Take you, for example. If you had such an Innate Divine Ability, would you be willing to hide all the time?"

Lu Ye thought carefully and shook his head, "I wouldn't."

This grand event is undoubtedly a great opportunity for the talents from various major domains to interact and clash with each other. Every prodigy would want to know their standing in this group, to see if there is anyone stronger, and no one who leads an era within a large domain would do something unsavory that would dishonor the prestige of their home domain, to avoid shaming their elders.

Chapter 1233 Rules

"Of course, there are always exceptions. In previous God Sea struggles, such situations have occurred before, so when the number of participants reduces to a certain point, the Reincarnation Tree will give you some revelations periodically," Yang Qing added.

The Reincarnation Tree has always upheld the principle of not participating in the struggles among the major domains. It merely provides a battleground for the top cultivators of the Divine Sea Realm from those domains and offers tangible benefits to the winners.

Initially, there were no such revelations. However, several God Sea struggles faced the unexpected situation mentioned by Yang Qing, where certain individuals were naturally adept at concealing themselves, allowing them to take advantage of opportunities.

Only a minority possesses such abilities, naturally causing dissatisfaction among the majority of races. Their strong cultivators fought intensely inside, gaining nothing, not even a hair, and instead becoming stepping stones for others. Understandably, this felt unbalanced, leading to strong demands and suggestions from various strong figures of different races for the Reincarnation Tree to modify some rules. While it still does not directly intervene in the conflicts at this level, it can provide some revelations at certain times.

"Revelations?" Lu Ye was puzzled.

"It will guide you to the exact locations of certain individuals ranked at the front and the back in your minds, making it impossible for anyone to hide!"

Lu Ye asked curiously, "There are rankings as well?"

Yang Qing smiled slightly, "Of course, there are rankings! The place where the God Sea struggle takes place is called the Taichu Realm, rumored to be a wild land at the beginning of the world, and also the ancestral land where the Reincarnation Tree was nurtured. Utilizing its own powers, the Reincarnation Tree integrated this ancestral land into itself. Every hundred years, it will produce a large amount of Spiritual Energy that can help those in the Divine Sea Realm advance to the Constellation stage. Sometimes more, sometimes less, but regardless, to those in the Divine Sea Realm, it's a big piece of meat. The more one eats, the higher their ranking!"

Lu Ye understood. Although there would eventually be a hundred positions available, this matter could not be evenly distributed like raindrops; determining by ranking makes sense.

However, the revelations from the Reincarnation Tree would be unfriendly to those ranked at the top and bottom.

Because if everyone wants a bigger piece of the pie, they must first eliminate those at the top, making higher rankings more likely to incur attacks.

As for those ranked at the bottom... that must mean they lack strength. Eliminating them means one fewer competitor, a calculation everyone understands.

No one would likely want to be marked by the Reincarnation Tree at that time.

"How are the rankings determined?" Lu Ye vaguely guessed but needed to ask to clarify.

"Naturally, it's based on defeating enemies—the more you defeat, the higher your ranking!"

Quite simple and straightforward.

"Besides the ranking, there is another rule to remember: every so often, the Taichu Realm's range will shrink until eventually, it becomes an area only ten thousand miles in circumference."

This rule also directly encourages battles and competition among cultivators.

The Taichu Realm is vast; if it always maintained such a large range, it would be hard to determine the top hundred spots, but continuously shrinking it increases the chances of cultivators encountering and competing with one another.

Until, eventually, within the ten thousand mile range, enemies would be everywhere!

"There are two standards to conclude the God Sea struggle: one is time, lasting three months. When the three-month timeframe is due, it ends. If there are still more than a hundred people alive, then they select the top hundred, and those beyond are eliminated. The other standard is the number of participants. If the timeframe hasn't ended but there are only a hundred participants left, it will also end immediately."

Lu Ye silently nodded, having these two standards seemed quite reasonable.

"The Taichu Realm is also rich in resources, like some exotic flowers and rare herbs useful for Alchemy. Because the environment there is the closest to the wild land at the beginning of the world, things growing inside are basically unavailable outside. If you have the chance, you can collect some; they might come in handy later. Of course, Spirit Jade and Spirit Crystals are also available. When you advance to Constellation, you'll need these things. If possible, gather some in the Taichu Realm for future preparation."

"I've noted it down." Lu Ye nodded.

With this exchange with Yang Qing, the truth of the God Sea struggle unfolded before Lu Ye, making him not fear but eager instead.

Most of the cultivators from various races intending to participate in the God Sea struggle have such a mindset. They are leading figures in their respective domains, gathering here as a true assembly of heroes, desiring to know if they are stronger than others and if there are others stronger than them.

True timidity, however, is rare.

From the information gathered so far, the God Sea struggle within the Taichu Realm presents a significant test for every Divine Sea Realm participant, yet simultaneously, it provides an opportunity.

Not to mention, the many exotic flowers and rare herbs found within the Taichu Realm are enticing, and obtaining Spirit Jade and Spirit Crystals—unattainable for those in the Divine Sea Realm outside—becomes possible here, allowing them to prepare ahead for the future.

The opening of the God Sea struggle is still several days away because the Taichu Realm has not yet activated. This is also why many cultivators from different domains have gathered here.

Opportunities like this, which assemble many strong individuals from across the stellar space, are rare. Strong cultivators from various major domains also take this opportunity to connect with each other and discuss potential collaborations.

Some set up stalls, with people from virtually every domain doing so. They bring local specialties from their domains to exchange for things unavailable in their own domains.

Lu Ye followed Yang Qing around, listening to him introduce different races and their characteristics, noting areas that need caution, and watching Yang Qing haggle with stall owners at each booth, feeling his horizons broadened.

Yang Qing probably also realized his prior missteps, so after Lu Ye completed his trials and returned, he intended to supplement his knowledge of the starry space with some common knowledge.

At this moment, he was just like a diligent elder taking a junior out for tempering and training.

Lu Ye felt an all-encompassing care and earnest advice...

Of course, it would be better if he didn't go bargaining with others.

Just like now, Yang Qing squatted in front of a vendor's stall, playing with a strange item that shimmered with a halo, and was seriously engaging in a war of words with the vendor.

Lu Ye stood in the distance, eyeing his nose, nose to heart, putting on a facade of not knowing Yang Qing.

"Fellow Daoist, this Glazed Righteous Heart Chalice is a masterpiece by the strongest Artifact Refiner in our domain. It has the effect of clearing the mind and understanding intentions. The price of five thousand spirit jades is really not high." The vendor was painstakingly persuasive.

"Three thousand!" Yang Qing retorted resolutely.

"How about this, goods are sold to those with fate. I can see Fellow Daoist really likes this item, so four thousand spirit jades, I can't go any lower. If I go lower, I can't explain it later. I'm just selling on behalf of someone else."

"Three thousand!" Yang Qing stuck to his price firmly, with no intention of bargaining like a businessman.

"Three thousand five!" The vendor looked troubled.

"Just three thousand!"

The vendor sighed: "Fine, fine, since it's like this, then three thousand it is!"

Yang Qing tossed the Glazed Righteous Heart Chalice aside, patted his backside, and stood up: "Don't want it!"

The vendor was dumbstruck. If it weren't for this being the Reincarnation Tree, he would have grabbed Yang Qing for a proper debate.

Lu Ye, however, was not surprised, because along the way, Yang Qing had pulled this trick many times.

According to Yang Qing, he was just practicing his bargaining skills, with no real intention of buying or selling.

Moreover... he didn't have much spirit jade on him. He couldn't afford even three hundred, let alone three thousand.

So, never mind that he's of the Dragon Race; he's just a penniless dragon.

After reuniting with Lu Ye, Yang Qing didn't forget to admonish him: "In the future, when bargaining with others, you have to be bold and thick-skinned. Don't be stingy with haggling; otherwise, you'll be the one losing out!"

"Yes, yes, yes!" Lu Ye continuously nodded, putting on a demeanor of agreeing with whatever Yang Qing said.

On the platform, there were many strong cultivators like Yang Qing who wandered around with their juniors to broaden their horizons. Mostly they were just browsing, though some were genuinely doing business, for opportunities to trade with other domains were rare.

Lu Ye had some local specialties from various races in his possession, but those things were merely obtained from the Tree World before, so they couldn't stand out in such an environment, losing much of his interest.

Coming to another stall, Yang Qing squatted down once more while Lu Ye habitually distanced himself.

Being around such an elder didn't have many downsides, except you could easily earn people's grudges. The vendors couldn't do much to Yang Qing, but they could certainly instruct their juniors to target Lu Ye.

That stall had several treasures, each one glowing with vibrant colors, obviously extraordinary in quality. Yang Qing casually picked up the most dazzling one and said, "One piece of spirit jade!"

Even Lu Ye was shocked. Although Yang Qing's previous offers were somewhat reasonable, that single spirit jade... was a bit too much.

Lu Ye thought to himself if he were the vendor, he wouldn't even pay attention to Yang Qing.

But to his surprise, the vendor appeared troubled, and after Yang Qing shot him a fierce look, the vendor gritted his teeth and said, "Deal!"

Lu Ye was dumbfounded, utterly confused about what had happened in this world.

Even if he lacked worldly experience, he knew such a treasure couldn't be bought with just one spirit jade; this vendor... must have something seriously wrong with their head?

What left him more astounded came next. Yang Qing said, "I don't have any spirit jade. I'll owe it first!"

Saying this, he stood up and left with the item, yet the vendor made no attempt to stop him, only gazed at Yang Qing's retreating figure with immense resentment. Beside the vendor, a Divine Sea Realm junior also looked on in disbelief.

Meeting Lu Ye's extremely puzzled gaze, Yang Qing smiled slightly, "He had previously offended me. This is just a small lesson for him."

Lu Ye finally understood, but quickly noticed something amiss, because the Divine Sea Realm next to the vendor was glaring at him with eyes full of rage, as if trying to imprint his appearance into his soul.

Chapter 1234 The Gate Opens

As the days leisurely passed, time whisked by in a blur.

On this particular day, a mystical force suddenly spread from the void above the platform, and a light spot slowly emerged.

In an instant, everyone's attention was drawn to it. Even though Yang Qing hadn't uttered a word, Lu Ye understood that the Taichu Realm was likely about to open.

Indeed, as that light spot rapidly expanded and gradually turned into a portal, cultivators from the Divine Sea Realm of top domains leaped towards it, flying fearlessly, unconcerned about the potential implications of attracting everyone's attention on their subsequent competition or whether it would provoke group targeting by others.

That was absolute self-confidence in their own strength!

In the blink of an eye, hundreds of figures gathered around the light spot, appraising each other, since they all believed that those showing up at this time would be the strongest competitors in this contest.

More participants were still waiting. Naturally, some wished to stand out, while others preferred to lie low and bide their time. It's not to say that holding back at this time would make one inherently inferior.

The elders from various domains remained as composed as ever, having already given all necessary advice—anything said at this moment would be too late.

Only Yang Qing suddenly seemed to remember something and casually said, "Young man, my expectations for you are not high—just clinch a spot in the top ten. Is that doable?"

Lu Ye replied, "I will do my utmost, senior."

He was quite confident about securing a spot in the top hundred. Although he hadn't met many geniuses from other domains so far, only Yuk Yaorao and Loathesome Aphid, and they were both formidable, he was no less capable himself.

If it were merely a straightforward arena combat, he was confident about the top ten. However, the contest within the Taichu Realm wasn't as simple as arena combat. Especially with various rules in place, standing out excessively could easily make one a target. Thus, once inside, many unpredictable factors awaited.

Yang Qing said, "Don't think about hiding your light under a bushel or concealing your edge. The opportunities in the Taichu Realm are the greatest for those in the Divine Sea Realm under this stellar space. If you don't compete in such an opportunity, then what else is there to compete for in the future?"

Lu Ye truly had that idea—once inside, he would act discreetly and avoid doing anything too conspicuous. But hearing Yang Qing's words, he immediately realized the problem with that approach.

This was the greatest opportunity for the Divine Sea Realm. How fortunate he was to partake in it! If he didn't fight for such a good thing, then what else would he ever fight for!

Immediately, he pledged in a solemn voice, "I will strive to come back in the top three, senior!"

Yang Qing laughed heartily, "Ambitious, but don't be too ostentatious—it might incite outrage, and then it would all be for nothing."

As they conversed, the portal was already formed, and at the same time, two gigantic pillars appeared beside it, standing to the left and right, resembling the doorposts of the portal.

Hundreds of figures surrounding the portal rushed inside, vanishing instantly, and as they entered, a golden glow suddenly enveloped the pillar on the left.

Lu Ye focused his gaze and saw those golden glows quickly transformed into lines of text.

Yellow Dragon World, Gu Yulou.

Insect Emperor World, Zhige.

Five Colors Territory, Bao Shi.

Yaotian World, Nan Xiong.

Zixuan Demon Planet, Yiao Ruoli.

Ten Thousand Demons Continent, Mokeduo.

Northern Underworld Land of Specters, Youping.

...

Lu Ye realized with clarity that the left pillar had the ability to record these geniuses' origins and names. He couldn't help but worry, "Senior, my origin from the Nine Provinces..."

Yang Qing replied calmly, "Don't worry, the Reincarnation Tree is recording, and it won't note down your original origin. If you enter, it will only show that you're from the Nine Heavens. These details have already been reported in advance by us seniors."

Lu Ye understood and, curious, asked, "The left pillar records these... what does the right pillar do?"

Yang Qing explained, "A month from now, the names of the top hundred will appear on the right pillar and remain until the end. Whoever's name appears there will qualify to enjoy the fruits of victory."

So that's how it was.

Yang Qing added, "Remember these domains and people—they all hail from top domains and are your strongest competitors on this trip. Once you advance to the Constellation level and journey through stellar space, you may encounter some of them again."

Lu Ye nodded.

As they spoke, more figures flew from all directions towards the portal. Seeing the time was about right, Lu Ye said, "Senior, it's time for me to go."

Yang Qing nodded and couldn't resist reminding him again, "If you truly can't hold on, find a secluded, undisturbed place, look to the sky and shout 'I withdraw'—the Reincarnation Tree will release you. But saying this during a confrontation won't help."

Lu Ye felt warmth in his heart, touched by the elder dragon's care.

To be honest, Yang Qing's attitude towards the Nine Provinces made them anxious before, but now it seems he truly harbors no ill intentions. If he did, with the current meager strength of Nine Provinces, they couldn't possibly resist.

He even took me to participate in such a grand event; this is a great favor, and Lu Ye silently remembered it.

In this light, Yang Qing seemingly feels quite attached to Nine Provinces. Even after ten thousand years, he is willing to care for a successor from Nine Provinces.

He answered honestly, soared into the sky, and dashed into the portal. Instantly, a line of text appeared on the left column.

Nine Heavens World, Lu Yiye!

Many powerful figures closely watching the portal showed a look of surprise, not because they've heard of the Nine Heavens World domain. The stellar space is vast with many domains, and even such powerful figures wouldn't dare claim familiarity with all domains—it's normal for one to suddenly appear unheard of or unknown.

What caught their attention was the cultivation level Lu Ye displayed when he activated his spirit force!

Only Divine Sea Level 8!

Among all Divine Sea Realm participants in the Divine Sea contest, this was the only one at Level 8.

For a moment there was silence, and they couldn't figure out what's happening with this Nine Heavens World—have they really dwindled to this extent, letting a Level 8 participate in such a major event?

They didn't pay much mind; to figures of their level, this Level 8 went inside, likely wouldn't survive past two days. He was merely accompanying the Crown Prince.

It's also a normal phenomenon—to select the top 100 from two to three thousand people, most are just there as accompaniment.

Soon, all Divine Sea Realm contestants flooded into the Taichu Realm portal, which then slowly closed, leaving only two huge columns standing. The right is blank, while the left displays over two thousand lines of text...

A dignified Sun Blaze Realm figure spoke: "Those who needed to enter have entered, and the Divine Sea contest has begun. Shall we proceed as usual?"

His words immediately sparked agreement from all sides: "As usual, as usual!"

The Sun Blaze Realm figure bowed: "I kindly ask Tree Elder to open the treasure pond!"

The voice of the Reincarnation Tree spoke for the first time: "Esteemed fellow Daoists from different domains, I reiterate: Small bets bring pleasure, large bets harm—please wager responsibly!"

Almost every time, the Reincarnation Tree offers this reminder, but it seldom has any effect, as it has become a tradition.

Divine Sea Realm eligible to enter Taichu Realm go inside to fight fiercely for supremacy.

These senior figures, with nothing else to do here, can't just watch passively. It'll be months before they have any results, and at some point, a betting game arose.

A game needing the Hostess—the Reincarnation Tree.

The betting method is simple—to wager on which Divine Sea Realm contestant will eventually win. Correct bets naturally yield rewards, while incorrect ones end in total loss!

Everyone can bet anything—they could wager a single hair if they wished. Of course, at their cultivation level, their items can't be shabby; each is of extremely high quality and rare.

The treasures vary, and so does their value, but this poses no problem for the Reincarnation Tree. With its long life and vast knowledge, it can instantly recognize the value of any treasure.

Moreover, for fairness, it denotes the value of each treasure on the betting line according to starlight measure!

Experts from various domains have previously assessed that a 1-star treasure labeled by the Reincarnation Tree is at least worth ten thousand spirit jade.

The more starlight, the greater the value naturally.

Every gathering here attracts powerful figures from two to three thousand domains. Even if only a small portion participates, the total sum of treasures amassed is enormous, leading eventually to the winner taking all.

Furthermore, due to historical accumulation, the treasure pond managed by the Reincarnation Tree retains a vast amount of treasures left from previous years' bets.

Not every Divine Sea Realm participant from top-tier domains will laugh last. Their seniors can favor them, stake valuable treasures, but if they die, those treasures remain in the treasure pond; such instances are frequent.

Thus, in this betting game, more treasures enter the pond every time, while fewer exit, with growing accumulation.

As the Reincarnation Tree, forced to become the house, it remains the biggest winner.

Yet this means nothing to it; it is itself a stellar space supreme treasure, unique in the universe—what treasure could outweigh it?

Everyone understands the principle, but human nature prevails, even at the Moon Jade, Sun Blaze level, it is inevitable.

For these powerful figures, joining such a betting game is an intriguing matter; winning brings joy, while losing doesn't anger—they are merely participating to relieve boredom.

With the Reincarnation Tree's words, a diffuse glow slowly unfurls in the air, resembling a large pond. The pool water is vapor with dazzling colors, amidst which treasures flickering starlight abound.

This is the betting treasure pond, and the floating, sinking treasures within likely amount to tens of thousands!

Such a colossal wealth would evoke envy even from the finest domains, yet everyone knows these items aren't to be snatched—unless one's life is thrown away.

Chapter 1235 Nine Stars

The treasure pond, with tens of thousands of treasures of varying quality, is a culmination of countless years of accumulation. It is foreseeable that the accumulation here will only grow because although many participate in the betting games, few manage to win. This results in more treasures going in than coming out.

The aura of treasures fills the treasure pond, which the powerful ones find normal, as many have seen it more than once. However, the Divine Sea Realm cultivators, who came with their elders to the Reincarnation Tree but are not qualified to participate in the Divine Sea competition, are dazzled.

A female cultivator unfamiliar with the world gasped, "So many good things—how much spirit jade would they sell for if one could take them out and sell them?"

Her senior brother chuckled, "Junior sister, you may not know, but the value of these treasures in the pond can generally be judged by the number of starlights they have. Look closely at those treasures—don't they each have a different amount of starlight?"

The female cultivator examined them and nodded, "Yes, there are ones with a single starlight, some with two, and others with three!"

"This is Tree Elder's classification of the treasure levels, which is slightly different from the current orthodox division in the cultivation world, but there's not much difference. A treasure with one starlight is a 1-star treasure, two starlights make it a 2-star, and so on... A 1-star treasure is worth approximately ten thousand spirit jade, a 2-star is three times that of a 1-star, and a 3-star is three times the 2-star."

The female cultivator exclaimed, "Then a 3-star treasure is worth ninety thousand spirit jade?"

"Theoretically, yes." The male cultivator nodded.

After a moment of deeper observation, the female cultivator excitedly said, "Brother, brother, look, there are even 4-star treasures inside!"

Indeed there were, albeit not many—just a few pieces. Among the tens of thousands of treasures in the pond, one wouldn't notice them without careful scrutiny.

The female cultivator calculated the price of the 4-star treasures on her fingers, ending up with a mind-boggling number. They hailed from an average large domain and had long heard of the arduous quests for spirit jade by those powerful ones stepping out into stellar space. Yet this was a necessary resource for cultivation above the Constellation Realm; every cultivator venturing into stellar space would experience it.

As it seems now, a single 4-star treasure here would wear down a strong one from their home world for decades or even a hundred years.

Only top-tier domain powerhouses could afford to use 4-star treasures as a stake.

As they spoke, the Sun Blaze Realm expert who first opened his mouth had already taken out a treasure, smiled slightly, and said, "The betting game begins now, and this old man will start things off. You may act as you please."

With those words, an ancient inkstone appeared in his hand and was directly cast into the treasure pond.

As soon as the ancient inkstone entered the treasure pond, starlights appeared on its body, surprisingly reaching four, which drew exclamations from many. The female cultivator marveled, "Brother, another 4-star treasure."

The male cultivator nodded, "The first to act will naturally not be stingy. Such powerful ones are always concerned with face. Moreover, this one should be a senior from the Yellow Dragon World. The Yellow Dragon World always considers itself the center of stellar space and is also the strongest domain controlled by our human race. Naturally, they must set a good example."

The female cultivator nodded thoughtfully.

Laughter rang out, "Fellow Daoist Fong, what a grand gesture, opening with a 4-star treasure—this old one cannot compare and can only modestly follow suit."

With the laughter, another treasure fell into the treasure pond, shining with the light of a 3-star.

Subsequently, various treasures flew into the pool from all directions, making the starlight brilliant for a time. Yet, most were just 1-star or 2-star treasures; few were 3-star, and as for 4-star, only the initial one appeared.

To most of the powerful ones present, the process of participating in this betting game was more for amusement rather than to win anything specific. Naturally, they wouldn't wager heavily. After all, at their level of cultivation, even winning something wouldn't yield much benefit, while losing it could be quite a setback.

Of course, there are always exceptions to everything; there were also those who came with the mentality of winning, as winning could bring them many benefits.

Everyone could observe the characteristics of the treasures through the treasure pond and investigate clearly which Divine Sea Realm the owner of a treasure wagered on.

For example, the first Sun Blaze Realm of the Yellow Dragon World would certainly bet on the victory of their home world's successors. With their status and position, he would not wager on others.

Gradually, the number of treasures falling into the treasure pond became scarce; those interested had basically all participated.

Until, at some moment, an unassuming bead from among the crowd flew into the treasure pond. In an instant, the glowing treasure pond experienced a tumult; wherever the bead passed, numerous treasures seemed to have a mind of their own and retreated.

This extraordinary phenomenon left everyone astonished, unable to comprehend what was happening.

Upon taking a closer look, they were stunned because the seemingly unremarkable bead emitted one, two, three... a total of nine starlights!

Even the knowledgeable powerful ones couldn't help but widen their eyes, let alone the Divine Sea Realm observers, who burst into exclamations.

In the vast treasure pond with tens of thousands of treasures, the presence of only a few 4-star ones was already minuscule, let alone a sudden intrusion of a 9-star level one, which was an intensely powerful visual impact.

If the treasure pond was a pond and the treasures were fish and shrimp swimming in it, then the suddenly appeared bead was like a giant shark barging in.

In an instant, two incredible thoughts crossed everyone's mind.

What is this thing?

And who placed the bet?

No one doubts whether the Reincarnation Tree has made a mistake. As a supreme treasure of stellar space, it's impossible for it to make an error in marking the value of treasures. Since it's labeled as nine stars, then it certainly is nine stars.

Meanwhile, the voice of the Reincarnation Tree reached Yang Qing's ears: "Dragon Monarch, this gamble is merely a pastime, why do you need to be so serious?"

Yang Qing, with a lazy demeanor, responded, "I'm a bit strapped for resources lately and need a large amount urgently. The only thing I can offer is this, so I had to bet it. Otherwise, Tree Elder, could you lend me a few good items? I'll return them once I'm better off."

This was the real reason he brought Lu Ye here, and of course, it was timely as well.

If it had not been for this very moment, he wouldn't have been able to bring Lu Ye here even if he had wanted to.

After being sealed for ten thousand years, he urgently needed vast resources to restore himself. Relying solely on searching the stellar space himself would waste an unknown amount of time. Here was a ready-made opportunity, a chance to make a fortune.

It can be said that with the nine-star quality of the bead, if Yang Qing won the bet, the treasures in the treasure pond would likely decrease by several tenths instantly. Then, casually selling them elsewhere would provide him with the resources needed for his restoration.

Hearing this, the Reincarnation Tree remained silent.

Can the Dragon Race borrow something and return it? These words could only be taken lightly, moreover, it had nothing to lend. Although there were many treasures in the treasure pond, technically they did not belong to it. They were shared possessions of all races in this stellar space, merely kept under its custody.

"Dragon Monarch, I must urge you to reconsider. This item is significant and cannot be lost!"

Yang Qing impatiently replied, "I will decide what to do with my own belongings, old fellow, stop worrying about it!"

The Reincarnation Tree sighed. It certainly knew what Yang Qing intended. If he won, he would certainly make a huge profit, and if he lost, with so many powerful beings present, who would be capable of taking the item from him? At that point, the Dragon Race would certainly resort to unscrupulous means.

At that time, as the symbol of fairness and justice, should it step forward to uphold justice?

If it did, it would only offend Yang Qing. If not, its credibility would suffer. This bet placed by the Dragon Race on its valuable treasure posed a great dilemma.

But upon further thinking, even if Yang Qing lost, it seemed no one would have the right to take this bead from the treasure pond, as one needed to offer a bet of equivalent value to take it away.

Currently, apart from this bead, the most valuable bet item was a four-star treasure from the Yellow Dragon World. Even with a hundred more, they wouldn't equate in value to the bead.

Thus, Yang Qing was fearless. When his wager reached a certain high value, no one could take it away.

Even if he wagered this bead, should he lose, it would merely remain in the treasure pond.

The Reincarnation Tree almost foresaw what Yang Qing would do then, definitely asking to "borrow" the bead from it.

This guy came to make a cost-free trade.

Understanding Yang Qing's intentions, the Reincarnation Tree no longer tried to dissuade him.

Over there, some discerning experts had vaguely recognized the bead's true nature.

"Could it be the legendary Dragon Ball?"

In the stellar space, there were numerous treasures resembling this bead, but those of such value could only be a Dragon Ball!

With this thought, the many powerful individuals present broke into a cold sweat.

To be able to produce a Dragon Ball as a bet, doesn't it mean the person is a Dragon Race member? Or had once slain a True Dragon?

Either way, it was not something these people could afford to provoke.

Although Yang Qing had always been extraordinary, among the powerful beings present, whose aura wasn't? He was merely one among the crowd, but once he revealed the item suspected to be a Dragon Ball, he instantly became the center of attention, and many figures around him subtly distanced themselves.

Just like the Dragon Ball's position in the treasure pond, it occupied the center while numerous treasures floated around it, like stars surrounding the moon.

No one dared to entertain any ideas, as the Reincarnation Tree had thought, when a wager's value reached a certain level, it was absolutely safe. Because no one had the ability to place a bet of equivalent value, there would be no possibility of it being taken away.

But there was still one thing that piqued the curiosity of the crowd. Which Divine Sea Realm cultivator was this suspected Dragon Ball item betting on?

Generally speaking, the bets were placed on juniors from one's own domain, with rare exceptions. The ones who came here cared about reputation and wouldn't lower themselves to bet on juniors from other domains just for the sake of winning the wager, as it would boost others' morale while diminishing their own.

Upon close examination, the information on the bet showed through the Dragon Ball.

Nine Heavens World, Lu Yiye!

The entire audience was in an uproar.

Chapter 1236 Taichu Realm

The vastness, an ancient aura lingered around him, as if he was instantly transported to an ancient time in the stellar space, this was Lu Ye's first impression after barging through the portal.

In his heart, he understood that he was already in the Taichu Realm.

According to Yang Qing, this was the ancestral land of the Reincarnation Tree, a piece of earth belonging to the primordial era, which the Reincarnation Tree had integrated into itself, preserving its original appearance. Thus, compared to other domains in the stellar space, this place retained various incredible abilities.

Its biggest feature is that every hundred years, it gives birth to some magical spiritual energy, capable of transforming the physique of cultivators, enabling them to connect with the power of the stellar space. This is precisely the key to advancing from the Divine Sea Realm to the Constellation Realm.

Lu Ye wasn't clear on the exact size of the Taichu Realm, but he imagined it wouldn't be small, entirely viewable as a domain.

Two or three thousand people weren't few, but if scattered into a domain, they would seem quite insignificant.

The moment he appeared in the Taichu Realm, he immediately activated his power to guard himself, cautiously surveying his surroundings. If not for Yang Qing's previous advice, he would have immediately activated the Concealment and Breath-concealing Spirit Runes to hide his presence.

Yet, since he had an agreement with Yang Qing, keeping a low profile was not suitable.

Not only was it unsuitable to act low-key, but instead, he had to be flamboyant.

The Divine Sea competition had rankings, with the key to ranking being acquisition.

In his view, in the early stages, many geniuses from various domains would likely each stand on their own. First, because the Taichu Realm is too large to easily convene, second, everyone needs their own acquisitions. If they acted jointly, to whom would the acquisitions belong?

Moreover, these are the top geniuses from various domains, the figures leading an era, who didn't have some confidence? If one started by planning for alliances with others, it would only weaken their imposing manner for no reason.

It should only be in the later stages, as the Taichu Realm shrinks and more cultivators start to gather, that situations of alliances would occur.

Several major races undoubtedly have an advantage in such struggles because there's a natural feasibility of alliances among the same race, such as the human race, Demon Race, Insect Race...

Of course, those domains with amicable and connected relations are naturally allies.

In this regard, the Nine Provinces don't have the slightest advantage. Although the Nine Provinces have reconnected with the stellar space, they are still in a state of dormancy, and even those in the Constellation Realm wouldn't rashly declare themselves as from the Nine Provinces.

Of course, Lu Ye wasn't foolish enough to think all humans were trustworthy.

This time, among the cultivators participating in the Divine Sea competition, humans accounted for nearly forty percent, but only a hundred would ultimately win, so even among fellow humans, conflicts and frictions were inevitable.

In such an environment, only one principle holds: in a narrow path, the brave win!

His mental consciousness spread out, probing in all directions, and in the next instant, Lu Ye felt a mental consciousness spreading out from another direction, and as the two consciousnesses touched, they instantly withdrew!

Lu Ye immediately elevated his form, darting in that direction.

Since he was to compete, he decided to boldly go all out. He hadn't expected his luck to be so good, that in such a vast Taichu Realm, someone appeared near him.

Yet, he didn't know which race the person belonged to. What if it was a human? It wouldn't be appropriate to go for the kill since there was no deep-seated enmity, they were just here competing for opportunities. Perhaps, they would just exchange blows and make the other retreat with difficulty.

Expelling someone from the Taichu Realm would count as a kind of acquisition, so it wasn't necessary to determine life and death.

With this thought set in his heart, he quickly felt an aura approaching from ahead.

Like Lu Ye's choice, the other party was also coming towards him, clearly seeking a promising start.

As Lu Ye exercised his Ocular Power to observe that side, the figure approaching revealed a look of joy.

Lu Ye considered himself lucky to encounter an opponent just upon arriving in the Taichu Realm, and the opponent felt equally fortunate, as the displayed cultivation of this opponent was only at Divine Sea Level 8!

He never expected someone at Divine Sea Level 8 would participate in such an opportunity competition.

However, since the opponent dared to come, they must have some reliance. Perhaps their strength wasn't as simple as it appeared, able to kill enemies beyond their level, but among the geniuses from various domains gathered here, which one couldn't kill enemies beyond their level?

The gap of a single level in cultivation was destined to be insurmountable.

As the distance closed, they each got a clear view of the other's appearance.

The characteristics of Lu Ye as a human were obvious, and seeing his attire as a combat cultivator made the newcomer even happier because his own racial traits excelled in dealing with human combat and physique cultivators, whereas magic cultivators would have been more troublesome.

Lu Ye was similarly pleased because the opponent had pointy ears, blood-red skin, and a tall, slender physique...

If the opponent had been human, Lu Ye would have had to consider whether to go for the kill, but since the opponent was of the Blood Race, there was no need for such considerations.

When they were only a hundred feet apart, Lu Ye suddenly halted, folded his hands politely, and said, "Lu Yiye of Nine Heavens, greets this Fellow Daoist!"

The Blood Race was taken aback. He had come with a fierce momentum, not to exchange pleasantries with Lu Ye. His body surged forward, a glow of blood behind him as he sneered, "It's too late to beg for mercy now!"

The Blood River soared to the sky, transforming into a massive wave that engulfed the motionless Lu Ye. In the next moment, Lu Ye, whose body was floating and sinking in the Blood River, faced a torrential assault from the Blood Race, becoming extremely embarrassed and hard-pressed.

Never engage with the Blood Race in a Blood Sea. This is common knowledge among all the extraterrestrial races because once you fall into the Blood Sea, your strength will be contained, whereas the Blood Race thrives in it. Under such circumstances, even if your strength is slightly superior to theirs, you might still be defeated.

The Blood Race could not understand why Lu Ye seemed so foolish, not avoiding his Blood River. Initially, he was cautious, fearing that Lu Ye might be extraordinary. But after some engagement, he realized that there was nothing special about this guy, cautioning him to be even more wary.

His strength is indeed formidable. An ordinary Divine Sea Level 8 cultivator could not withstand his fierce attacks for long. Though this person was in disarray, he still managed to hold on.

In the midst of the intense battle, Lu Ye's voice rang out again, "Fellow Daoist, since my soul returns here, shouldn't I know by whose hand I fall?"

Resigned to fate? The Blood Race was amused, his attack undiminished, and his voice drifted from all directions of the Blood River, "Blood Malice World, Zhou Sifang. In your next life, remember to stay away from me!"

Lu Ye nodded slightly, "Thank you, Fellow Daoist, for the information." With a flick of his long saber, he changed his tone, "Now, please, Fellow Daoist, be on your way!"

"What?" Zhou Sifang was momentarily stunned, then his eyes widened at the shocking scene that followed.

In his Blood River, a Blood Sea roared into existence, rapidly encompassing his Blood River. In terms of size, his Blood River was utterly incomparable.

What horrified him even more was the terrifying aura emanating from the Blood Sea, causing his very psyche to tremble and his body to quiver.

The feeling was familiar, unmistakably the suppression of saintliness among the Blood Race!

"You're a Blood Race?" Zhou Sifang exclaimed in horror.

Only a Blood Race could display such a pure Blood River Technique, only a Blood Race could possess such saintliness. Honestly, such potent and thick saintliness was unprecedented for him. Even the Blood Race elders with the strongest saintliness in the Blood Malice World could not compare.

But if he is a Blood Race, why does he appear as a human? Why didn't he reveal his identity earlier?

Unable to comprehend, as the saintliness suppression began, Zhou Sifang became a pushover. His strength plummeted instantly, and yet earlier he recklessly engaged in close combat with Lu Ye.

The Boulder Mountain Saber swung out a blade light that sliced through Zhou Sifang's neck like cutting through tofu, and his body went rigid immediately.

The Blood Sea dissipated, and Zhou Sifang's corpse fell from midair.

The Boulder Mountain Saber returned to its sheath as Lu Ye chased the falling corpse. Having slain the enemy, the next step was to loot the body. There might not be much to gain, but the procedure must be followed.

This victory was easily achieved, all thanks to the suppression of saintliness.

Lu Ye didn't expect that his frenzied refining of Sacred Blood in the Blood Refinement World would plant the seeds for today's events.

Looking at it now, any Blood Race would likely be suppressed by saintliness. The specific location of this Blood Malice World is unclear to him, but thinking about it, it must be related to the Blood Refinement World. Possibly it is another domain formed from parts of the gigantic female creature's body?

The Blood Refinement World is the torso part of that female creature, and there is still the head, and the limbs... Moreover, considering Lu Ye's final battle with that Blood Spirit in the Blood Refinement World, that female creature might not only have four limbs, but could have six, even eight.

If each part could form a domain, then the number of domains controlled by the Blood Race would not be few, and they seem to be invading other domains.

The number of Blood Race participants in this Divine Sea battle seems to be considerable. How many there are is unknown, but perhaps there could be some intrigue among these Blood Race members.

Shortly after, Lu Ye finished looting the corpse, only gaining a storage sack.

He set Zhou Sifang's body ablaze until it was reduced to ashes, and then he headed off confidently in one direction.

With no concealment, he traveled openly through the air, his cultivation of Divine Sea Level 8 visible to all.

As Lu Ye thought before, the Taichu Realm is vast. Now, at the beginning, the chances of encounters among prodigies from different domains are scarce.

But there are always exceptions, such as Lu Ye and Zhou Sifang, and some other places.

When the prodigies at these places meet, there are no racial divisions, and almost invariably a battle ensues. To any cultivator arriving here, others are merely stepping stones for their own ascent. Therefore, unless there were pre-existing relationships between them, or the domains have good relations, peaceful coexistence is not an option.

After numerous battles, less than one hour after the Taichu Realm opened, several individuals had already been eliminated.

No one exited voluntarily, all died on spot!

Chapter 1237 Admirable Courage, Lu Yiye

Although many demonic prodigies at the Divine Sea Realm are all at the Divine Sea Level 9, due to different backgrounds, their foundations vary greatly. Within their own domains, they might be unparalleled, but when compared to demonic prodigies from other domains in the vast starry sky, the gap becomes apparent.

In the Taichu Realm, if two parties encounter each other with similar strength, it's difficult to distinguish life and death. As a result, they will typically choose to mutually cease conflict to avoid letting a third party benefit from their strife.

Thus, at the early stage of the Divine Sea battle, wherever there was a victory, there was essentially also a decision of life and death.

The names of those demonic prodigies from various domains that were eliminated dimmed and disappeared on the golden pillar to the left of the portal, causing the seasoned experts monitoring the changes here to sigh. In their heart of hearts, they didn't think their successors were worse than others, but they held hope much like every parent believes their child is not inferior to the neighbor's child. Looking at things now, it seems like a bit of self-deception.

In the Taichu Realm, Lu Ye celebrated a successful beginning, killing and looting, destroying the corpses and traces, all seamlessly, then swaggered away through the air.

He flew around foolishly for half a day without encountering even a Spectral Shadow. With his current capabilities, even flying leisurely for half a day covers a considerable distance, yet he discovered nothing.

This confirmed that the Taichu Realm was indeed vast, and with thousands scattered in it, they ended up dispersed unless particularly lucky. At this early stage, it's hard to encounter others.

There wasn't any good way to quickly attract others' attention, so one could only go with the flow.

However, he could still slightly improve search efficiency. Thinking so, Lu Ye descended, found a concealed spot, activated the power of the Talent Tree, and condensed his doppelganger, then dressed the doppelganger in the Crimson Dragon Battle Suit and equipped it with the sword gourd.

Sword Cultivator Li Taibai was once again stepping into the world.

He didn't change the appearance of the doppelganger this time, like he had to in the Nine Provinces. Here, there was no need; among two or three thousand Divine Sea Realm cultivators, who would recognize him, Lu Yiye?

Compared to before, the doppelganger now seemed unchanged at first glance, but after the second metamorphosis of the Talent Tree, it gained more abilities. At the very least, if the doppelganger exhausted its strength, it could, like the main self, unabashedly consume elixir pills to replenish itself, no longer worrying about causing spirit force sloth leading to a decline in power.

Previously, the doppelganger had to rely on Spirit Stones to slowly recover after consuming energy, but now there's no such concern, undoubtedly granting the doppelganger stronger endurance.

However, gained advantages come with drawbacks. Previously, the doppelganger only contained a root of the Talent Tree; now the Talent Tree is split in two. So if the doppelganger falls, the loss to Lu Ye would be immeasurable.

The main self and the doppelganger split and flew in different directions, continuing the search.

After another half day, the main self finally made a discovery.

Currently, in the Taichu Realm, prodigies from various domains are likely doing the same as him, searching for others everywhere, so as long as luck isn't too bad, there will be something to find.

This time, I wonder which race it is!

Flying forward, Lu Ye was thinking, and sure enough, the opponent approached without any fear.

Anyone detecting Lu Ye's movement wouldn't fear, because within a certain range, once spirit force is activated, cultivation level can't be concealed. Of course, he could activate Pseudo-Might Spirit Runes to disguise as a Divine Sea Level 9, which wasn't difficult for him.

But there was no point in doing so.

When close enough, Lu Ye noticed this time it was a human.

Very normal, as the human race is large, traces of humans are everywhere in the starry sky. In this Divine Sea battle alone, human prodigies hold significant proportions; not meeting them would be odd.

Without knowing the other's origin and being uninterested in finding out.

The person was a man in his early twenties, plump, with a slightly chubby face showing an apparently honest smile; though young, he wore flowing sleeves with an aura of immortality.

From afar, the plump man shouted, "Fellow Daoist, at Divine Sea Level 8, you dare to participate in such a grand event, your courage is admirable and respectable."

Though his words said as such, there wasn't a hint of admiration on his face, only excitement, as if seeing a potential prey. As he flew, a treasure already shielded his head, clearly a small tower-shaped spirit treasure, divided into nine levels, each level shimmering with a different hue, dazzling in beauty. Strands of light cascaded from the top of the tower layer by layer, eventually forming a protective aura on the man.

Seeing the opponent's posture, Lu Ye knew this was a magic cultivator, for only a magic cultivator would offer treasures before the fight. The strength of a magic cultivator is intricately linked to their treasure, especially defensive treasures, being of utmost importance.

Moreover, the opponent was a highly experienced magic cultivator, not underestimating Lu Ye's cultivation at Level 8, prompting immediate activation of his protective spirit treasure.

Such a person is generally not easy to deal with.

First, he fortified himself with protection. Only then did the magic cultivator, the chubby man, raise his hand. A tattered fan appeared in his hand. At first glance, it looked like one of those fans handed down in a farming family for decades, used to cool off during summer. But this was clearly no ordinary fan. Both sides of the shabby fan bore extremely intricate and complex patterns, resembling natural spirit runes. One side was blue, and the other was red; it was unclear what it signified.

Lu Ye quickly realized what was special about this fan because the magic cultivator, the chubby man, lightly fanned in Lu Ye's direction. A torrent of azure Wind Blades abruptly formed, slicing through the air with numerous and swift speed.

Lu Ye hastily maneuvered to dodge.

Even as he barely dodged the incoming Wind Blades, the chubby man shook the fan again, and following the wind blades, enormous Fireballs came roaring, blazing fiercely, like meteors boasting an intimidating power.

The chubby man waved the fan casually, but Lu Ye's dodging appeared quite frantic, the scene looked incredibly perilous.

"Oh?" The magic cultivator was visibly startled seeing that despite Lu Ye's frantic dodging, he remained unscathed. Achieving this at the Divine Sea Level 8 was indeed extraordinary. He felt fortunate that he was cautious and never underestimated his opponent; otherwise, he might have faced a disastrous upset.

Reading between the lines, even though they had just begun exchanging blows, based on Lu Ye's reactions, he knew Lu Ye's strength was not as simple as it appeared. Otherwise, he wouldn't have qualified to participate in the Divine Sea competition.

Throughout his cultivation journey, he adhered to a principle of exerting full effort against his enemies, regardless of their weakness, like a lion hunting a rabbit.

This mindset allowed him to stand out in his domain and follow his elders here.

Unlike in Nine Provinces, where Yang Qing took Lu Ye to the Reincarnation Tree without a prior warning, only explaining it once there.

In domains like those participating in the Divine Sea competition every hundred years, candidates had to be selected through a series of battles.

In a domain, it's common to have multiple sects. The prodigious disciples of these sects compete within their own domain, and only the strongest are chosen to go to the Reincarnation Tree. In a sense, they represent the face of their domain; lacking strength would only bring humiliation.

The magic cultivator, the chubby man, was usually reserved and careful, usually amiable, but he showed his edge in this grand competition within the domain by defeating several candidates favored by his elders. All this to come to the Taichu Realm and secure a spot among the top hundred, aiming for the Constellation promotion.

To claim with absolute confidence to be among the top hundred would be self-deception. All who come here are prodigies, some undoubtedly stronger than him.

Therefore, when encountering opponents weaker than himself, he couldn't afford to let any chance slip, as it directly impacts subsequent rankings!

In cultivation, indecision and kindness are the worst; especially in the Taichu Realm, he would not hold back just because everyone is from the human race.

Seeing Lu Ye still having some strength left, the magic cultivator smiled gently. Holding the fan with one hand, he fanned leisurely as Wind Blades and Fireballs swept across the sky, creating a lively scene. He steadied his position and with the other hand formed a seal, pointing it distantly toward Lu Ye.

A thread-like Thunderbolt burst out, like a swift bolt cutting through the air, aimed straight at Lu Ye.

The reason he could defeat all his opponents in his home domain to earn a place in the Divine Sea competition wasn't due to his displayed spirit treasure. A magic cultivator's spirit treasure always serves only as an aid, not the deciding factor.

It's his deep understanding of magic and spells that forms his true foundation.

And he specialized in lightning type techniques, perhaps not as violent as fire type, but renowned for their speed and lethality.

This took Lu Ye completely by surprise. Among all the spells, the speed of lightning attacks is the fastest, to the extent that even he couldn't quite react.

At the moment he felt the crisis, Lu Ye activated the Defense Spirit Runes, which spread layer upon layer across his chest.

With a boom, the layers of defense shattered, yet couldn't fully withstand the attack. Lu Ye instantly felt a pain in his chest as the fierce force erupted, involuntarily sending him blasting back dozens of yards.

During the process, he had to keep dodging the ceaseless Wind Blades and Fireballs, looking extremely distressed.

Magic cultivators and combat cultivators in the cultivation world are two factions forever intertwined because the core idea of their duels is distance!

If a magic cultivator can keep a distance, there are a hundred ways to torment a combat cultivator.

But if a combat cultivator closes the distance, with the fragile physique of a magic cultivator, it's hard to say how many blows they could withstand.

From the start, Lu Ye was pressing towards him, but hindered by the interference of that treasure fan, his advance was slow. Getting struck by the lightning reverted all previous efforts to naught.

Chapter 1238 Whetstone

Seeing Lu Ye withstand his lightning strike with no major harm, the magic cultivator slightly furrowed his brow. He saw clearly that, at the instant his Thunder Power attacked, this combat cultivator did something to form a thick layer of defense where the attack landed, neutralizing most of the lightning strike's power. This was the key.

He didn't mind much; the duel had just begun. If he could gain some advantage, he could quickly turn that advantage into victory!

Watching the combat cultivator relentlessly charging at him again, the magic cultivator remained calm, gently waving his magic fan to unleash another lightning strike.

Lu Ye charged fiercely, swinging his long saber to slash out streams of saber light toward the Wind Blades and Fireballs, maneuvering and advancing steadily toward his opponent.

The continuous booming was the collision of the saber light with the Wind Blades and Fireballs, causing a momentary disruption in spirit force.

However, every time he got close to the magic cultivator's range, a lightning strike would unexpectedly strike from the front, forcing him back and making his efforts in vain.

The scene seemed as if Lu Ye was facing a relentless storm of magic and spells, moving against the wave, yet being blown away each time.

The opponent's lightning strike was key; without the lightning strike, Lu Ye felt he could break through the magic fan's spell blockade. Once he closed in, the combat's rhythm would be in his control.

But figuring out how to counter lightning strikes was indeed a headache; lightning type techniques are notorious for their speed. By the time you see them, they're already upon you, with no chance to evade beforehand.

Thus, the only option was to deal with the magic cultivator who cast the lightning strikes!

Lightning type techniques are indeed incredibly fast, but everything has pros and cons. It's impossible to have all advantages with no drawbacks. A major downside of lightning type techniques is their difficulty to control.

Unlike Wind Blades and Fireballs, which can be slightly controlled after being cast, a lightning strike is a straight-line attack once unleashed, even the magic cultivator casting it can't steer it.

In other words, it can't swerve!

Lu Ye had encountered other magic cultivators in Nine Provinces who could cast lightning type techniques. Of course, their skill and spell expertise weren't comparable to this fat magic cultivator, but the principle was the same.

So as long as the right method is found, there is always a way to counter.

After several attempts to advance and getting knocked back by lightning strikes, Lu Ye began to detect some patterns.

When the magic cultivator was about to use another lightning strike to repel him, Lu Ye's figure suddenly shifted direction prematurely. However, the anticipated lightning strike did not come. The magic cultivator had a meaningful smirk at the corner of his mouth, and in the moment Lu Ye paused slightly, lightning flashed forth.

This guy is so cunning!

Lu Ye thought he found some patterns, but what he actually found was rather what the magic cultivator wanted him to find—in essence, it was a deliberately exposed flaw, a well-planned trap!

Wonder how many people this magic cultivator had deceived with such a tactic.

This time the lightning strike was more powerful than any before, filled with an energy that a few hastily constructed Defense Spirit Runes could not withstand.

While Lu Ye was searching for ways to deal with the magic cultivator's lightning strike, the magic cultivator was observing Lu Ye as well. He was confident that this meticulously prepared lightning strike could severely wound the combat cultivator, and then he could reap the fruits of victory.

Quite a formidable Divine Sea Level 8, clearly having rich combat experience, though seemingly lacking encounters with top-tier foes.

One must admit, the fat magic cultivator's eyes were quite sharp!

Lu Ye had grown significantly through numerous battles, yet his cultivation advanced so quickly and was so robust. This led to a downside: he encountered very few opponents who could truly challenge him, often settling scores swiftly.

The Sacred Seeds in the Blood Refinement World had decent power, but under the suppression of saintliness, they performed poorly.

Lu Ye had also been guided and taught by figures like Jian Guhong, who were indeed powerful, but such guidance was quite different from deadly combat.

A cultivator's growth is not without setbacks; occasional adversities are not a bad thing.

Looking at it from a different perspective, it's precisely the accumulation of setbacks that forges a cultivator's invincibility!

Lu Ye realized this issue himself, and naturally was intentional about addressing this weak point. The Reincarnation Tree's Divine Sea contest was a golden opportunity. Here gather top talents from thousands of domains, each possessing exceptional abilities, with ample time to be his whetstone.

Otherwise, only if his brain was spasming would he choose such a foolish way to contend with a magic cultivator. In a situation where their strengths are equal, if you fail to close the distance with the magic cultivator immediately, you should retreat at once and seek the next opportunity, rather than stubbornly pushing forward.

Yet the observations made earlier are not entirely meaningless. Especially when faced with a threat capable of severely injuring oneself, Lu Ye had a warning in his heart. So the instant the warning emerged, though he did not understand what was about to happen, he instinctively shifted his body slightly.

A thick bolt of lightning grazed past his body, surging into the distance, crackling with explosive sound, leaving a pitch-black scar in the void, the scent of charred air entering his nose.

The smile on the magic cultivator's face transformed into astonishment. He never imagined Lu Ye could do this. What was certain is that his strategy was sound; during the previous domain competition, his strongest opponent was similarly taken down by him.

The strategy was correct, yet he failed to succeed ultimately for one reason only: the combat cultivator has extremely powerful instinctual foresight, allowing him to evade simultaneously when the magic cultivator acts, rendering his lightning strike ineffective.

Impressive! The magic cultivator silently marveled; this opponent can't be measured merely by Divine Sea Level 8. He is indeed a formidable rival equal to his own strength.

The magic cultivator felt a bit troubled. Truthfully, he thought he would be dealing with a soft target, but instead, he kicked an iron plate. The battle for Divine Sea has just begun, contending with such a strong adversary is not wise. Excessive consumption would be detrimental to subsequent actions.

However, at this juncture, neither side has a retreat route. It's not just a matter of saying to stop and reconcile. The magic cultivator hardened his heart; this is the first opponent he encountered, if he can't resolve this, what hope is there for the future? No matter what, he must slay him!

The fierce battle continues, and the magic cultivator soon finds something amiss.

It seems the combat cultivator's perception of lightning strikes grows increasingly keen. Previously, each time a lightning strike was launched, the opponent was forced to activate defensive power to resist, but since that flawless dodge, the opponent seems to have realized something. Now, he evades nearly half the lightning strikes in advance!

The magic cultivator couldn't help but sigh; lightning type techniques are truly elusive, appearing in an instant, yet the one who casts them has flaws. Smart individuals don't target the lightning techniques, but rather the ones casting the spells.

He initially concealed well, even intentionally selling another flaw to hide his true weakness. Yet the combat cultivator's perception was too sharp, and his vision too discerning, having already noticed something.

This is the reason he can evade in advance.

Continuing like this, the situation will undeniably become more unfavorable!

Indeed, the situation keeps deteriorating for the magic cultivator. Since the lightning strikes are unable to exert effect each time, Lu Ye's advance becomes easier. In the initial battle, the magic cultivator was calmly standing his ground, but now he is forced to retreat continually.

Retreating is unavoidable; failing to retreat would quickly result in the combat cultivator getting in his face.

Yet he still has no intention to give up because his strongest lethal strike is being brewed; once it takes form, it won't just be a matter of victory or defeat, but life and death!

With the situation developing to this point, he can only go all-in, and before the combat cultivator breaks through his spell blockade to attack, he must prepare his strongest attack thoroughly. Thus, he had to accelerate the cast of the Lightning Strike Technique!

Ordinarily, he shouldn't do this because it exposes his flaws when casting lightning techniques too easily. But since others have seen through it, there's no need to hide; might as well proceed boldly.

The result leads to one thing only: Lu Ye managed to evade all the lightning forces!

Yet he felt no happiness because with the opponent continually casting lightning techniques, a daunting sense of danger loomed over him. Initially unclear, but becoming increasingly intense with time, like a sword hanging over his head, ready to fall at any moment!

He quickly identified the problem, which is that around him, for reasons unknown, a trace of Thunder Power is lingering, unshakable no matter how he maneuvers.

Moreover, this Thunder Power is being enhanced continually with the magic cultivator's spell casting, appearing ready to explode at any moment!

Lu Ye felt apprehensive; should this Thunder Power burst, it would be akin to him falling into a Lightning Pool. Then even with his exceptional constitution, it would likely result in severe injury.

This chubby magic cultivator, having too many tactics, initially convinced he'd defeated him, who would've thought he'd produce such a trick.

However, it granted him valuable insight; encountering such an enemy in the future will allow him to prepare in advance.

In the current predicament, he actually has one option for a quick resolution, a measure prepared to deal with the magic cultivator long ago, but doing so might force the opponent to prematurely unleash the power of the Lightning Pool, causing mutual destruction, as he couldn't escape the Thunder Power encircling him, clinging persistently like a leech.

He could only endure for now, misleading the opponent with an even more ferocious assault, appearing eager to eliminate the adversary swiftly.

The distance between them closed rapidly; when the magic cultivator's lightning strikes failed to significantly obstruct Lu Ye, this outcome was already destined.

Chapter 1239 - From a Small Place

The fatty magic cultivator couldn't help but sigh. He originally wanted to wait a bit longer before using his trump card, so that his methods would be stronger and more assured.

But the combat cultivator clearly had already sensed something. If he delayed any further, the situation could become unpredictable, so he had no choice but to activate it prematurely!

Having made up his mind, the Thunder Power around the fatty magic cultivator suddenly surged wildly. At the same time, the sense of danger in Lu Ye's heart intensified, and his skin tingled with a numbing sensation — a sign that the Lightning Pool around him was about to erupt.

The magic cultivator stopped retreating, steadied his stance, made a spell gesture, and smiled slightly at Lu Ye, who was charging at him: "Fellow Daoist, your strength is impressive, but this is a contest for opportunity, not personal grudges. I hope you understand!"

Coming from different domains and having never met before, there naturally would be no personal enmity. So he was right; it was indeed a struggle for opportunity. Before the greatest opportunity in the Divine Sea Realm, no one would hold back.

In this instant, the magic cultivator revealed his true intentions!

If things went as expected, the next moment the combat cultivator would be severely injured, if not dead!

But he suddenly felt a sense of unease because even though the combat cultivator was in dire straits, his expression had somehow become calm, which was unusual.

Then he saw a streak of light flashing from the combat cultivator's waist, flying toward him!

Is this... weapon control?

The magic cultivator chuckled. At such a level, he was still playing with weapon control.

Weapon control was something used by combat and physique cultivators when their abilities were not high, as a way to compensate for their lack of attack range. It was very popular among low-level cultivators because, at low cultivation levels, neither combat nor physique cultivators had means for long-distance attacks. But as the cultivator's level grew, such methods were basically abandoned.

It's not that it lacked lethality, but rather that combat and physique cultivators preferred to trust their weapons and fists, enabling them to exert their full might.

Weapon control... is merely an embellishment.

Is this his last trick? Knowing he couldn't close the distance, he used weapon control to attack?

Thinking this, the magic cultivator still didn't underestimate the weapon control; the opponent was very strong, and he couldn't rule out some trickery with the weapon control; it's best not to get involved.

He stepped aside, letting the glowing weapon control fly past him.

Meanwhile, the Thunder Power swirling around Lu Ye suddenly intensified, instantly transforming the area he was in into a Lightning Pool teeming with lightning serpents!

This was a long-planned trump card of the magic cultivator. Although he had to activate it prematurely due to the situation, its might was still formidable and not something easily withstood by a Divine Sea Realm cultivator.

With this, the combat cultivator would be either dead or severely injured!

The magic cultivator raised the treasure fan in his hand, channeling his spirit force and concentrating on the front, ready to deliver the finishing blow.

However, at this moment, an inexplicable aura surged from behind, sending a chill down the magic cultivator's spine. As he hastily turned his head, he was horrified to discover that the combat cultivator, who should have been struggling to survive in the Lightning Pool, had somehow appeared behind him!

This was something that should never have happened! He had no idea how the opponent managed to do it.

Facing the other's calm gaze, the magic cultivator realized that this time he might... have lost!

The Boulder Mountain Saber was raised high, and a misty blood light erupted behind Lu Ye, quickly expanding into a Blood Sea.

As the Boulder Mountain Saber fell, the Blood Sea also surged down.

At such close range, the magic cultivator had no chance to dodge. A forceful and heavy saber strike hit him, making him feel as if a boulder had crashed into him, sending his corpulent body falling down uncontrollably.

Thankfully, he had been cautious, activating the protective power of his treasure tower at the start of the battle. Otherwise, just this one strike would have been enough to cleave him in two.

Though the treasure tower's light blocked the saber strike, the overwhelming force couldn't be completely neutralized. As he fell, he felt his internal organs shifting, his blood Qi surging.

Before he could stabilize himself, he was already engulfed by the Blood Sea, trapped in its sticky depths.

"Blood Technique?" The magic cultivator was shocked. It didn't make sense; clearly, this was a human race combat cultivator. How could he use Blood Techniques? Was this guy... dual cultivated in combat and magic?

Though he didn't think Lu Ye was from the Blood Race, as their traits were obvious and distinctly different from humans, and there were those on the human side who practiced Blood Techniques, so he assumed Lu Ye was dual-cultivated.

What kind of monstrous talent is this? Just from the Blood Technique the opponent displayed, it seemed even more exquisite and grand than that of the true Blood Race.

The second saber strike was incoming. Rolling and tumbling in the Blood Sea, he couldn't stop himself; after falling into the Blood Sea, he was ambushed by another heavy blow from Lu Ye. Even though he was undoubtedly the genius of his home domain, at this moment, he couldn't make any waves.

True combat has always been this perilous. One side might have a significant advantage, yet could be defeated or killed in an instant.

He just couldn't figure out how the combat cultivator managed to appear so suddenly behind him; he should have been in the Lightning Pool!

But soon, he realized the problem.

Before the Lightning Pool's power erupted, the combat cultivator had swiftly sent a weapon flying towards him, which he avoided due to caution, allowing it to pass behind him.

Looking back now, the position where the combat cultivator appeared was exactly where the weapon control was located!

Does he have the means to shift the position with weapon control? What kind of ability is this?

It must be said, the magic cultivator's thoughts were a bit off.

What Lu Ye deployed wasn't exchanging places with the weapon control, but directly using the power of the Void Spirit Runes to teleport to where the weapon control was!

Just before the burst of the Lightning Pool's power!

Too early wouldn't work, as the incessantly accumulating Thunder Power always lingered around him, impossible to shake off, following him everywhere. If this technique were executed too soon, it would only alert the magic cultivator.

Too late wouldn't work either, as it would mean getting truly enveloped by the Lightning Pool.

He could only teleport out simultaneously with the burst of the Lightning Pool, thus avoiding its power and catching the enemy off guard.

In fact, Lu Ye could have done this from the beginning. Ever since the second metamorphosis of the Talent Tree, he has imprinted the Void Spirit Runes on the leaves of the Talent Tree, no longer fearing distant attacks from others.

He could use the Void Spirit Runes to teleport beside the enemy anytime and anywhere, and complemented by the Blood Sea Technique, it can be said that at the Divine Sea Realm level, this tactic allows him to stand undefeated.

If not for this, why would he bring a supplies box with him at his current Divine Sea Realm cultivation, or employ the Weapon Control Technique against an enemy? If he had time to use weapon control, it would be better to slash with the saber light a few more times, which might even have greater power.

Weapon control was just a decoy; constructing the Void Spirit Runes upon weapon control was Lu Ye's real objective.

This is a set of tactics unique to him, extremely flexible and mobile. In the Insect Race Tree World, he used this method to ambush Loathesome Aphid, and now it's the fat magic cultivator's turn.

In the Blood Sea, the magic cultivator was still struggling and resisting, but it was destined to be futile.

The viscous constraint of the Blood Sea greatly reduced his speed, unable to escape from its cover, he was just a lamb waiting to be slaughtered.

Under repeated mountain-like heavy slashes, the fat magic cultivator kept spitting blood, until at a certain moment, his treasure tower could no longer provide protective power for him. The treasure tower, once dazzling and radiant, now became dull and lost its spiritual essence, then shattered apart!

Accompanied by a muffled sound, this battle came to an end.

The Blood Sea receded, revealing two figures.

Lu Ye slumped loosely in mid-air, the Boulder Mountain Saber already sheathed, while the fat magic cultivator collapsed in front of him, not dead yet, just hanging on by a thread.

Though he just went through a life-and-death battle, Lu Ye actually quite respected this person, because even though falling into an absolute disadvantage, even without any power to resist, this fat magic cultivator didn't open his mouth to beg for mercy, because he knew that since he came with the intent to kill, it was only right for others to kill him.

One cannot say he failed to kill, and instead wants others to let him off.

"Fellow Daoist, forgive the embarrassment; it was quite disgraceful!" The fat man sighed heavily.

Lu Ye remained silent; facing someone destined to die, especially someone he killed, he didn't know what to say.

"So, Fellow Daoist had the assurance to defeat me from the start, then why didn't you act sooner?" The fat man asked; this was his biggest doubt, if Lu Ye had shown those divine skills from the start, he would have turned and left, never entangled with Lu Ye.

To say he was deliberately showing weakness to mislead the enemy? That didn't seem right either, because throughout the process, the combat cultivator also took huge risks; one wrong move and he could have ended disastrously for himself.

The magic cultivator didn't believe the opponent had such a plan.

Lu Ye originally didn't want to say anything, but since the other asked, he decided to casually chat. After all, the battle was over.

"Came from a small place, not very knowledgeable; since there's a chance, I thought to temper myself more, to widen my horizons, and see what kind of techniques geniuses from other domains have."

This was a good reason.

The magic cultivator chuckled, realizing he had been viewed as a whetstone, and he had perfectly fulfilled the role he should play.

"Coincidentally, I also came from a small place." The magic cultivator smiled, "So Fellow Daoist shouldn't use me as a benchmark to measure the geniuses from top domains; when facing them, indeed, you should be even more cautious and prudent."

Switching topics, the magic cultivator said, "But with Fellow Daoist's skills, a top hundred rank is secure; I wish Fellow Daoist a smooth journey and success in all endeavors here."

Lu Ye nodded, "Thanks for your kind words."

To an outsider witnessing this scene, they might think two friends were chatting here, not noticing the life-and-death dangers just unfolded.

"Ah, a truly brisk and rushed life!" The fat man sighed again heavily; as the words fell, his head drooped, and he began falling downward.

Lu Ye raised his hand to catch his corpse, stimulating his spirit force, and flames shot into the sky.

Moments later, he had destroyed the evidence, then casually collected the storage sack and treasure fan left by the opponent, and leisurely departed from the spot.

Despite the pleasant chat with the fat magic cultivator, that did not prevent him from claiming the spoils of victory, which were rightfully his.

Chapter 1240 Spirit Jade Vein

Lu Ye realized that he might have misunderstood something. He thought that at the start of the battles in the Divine Sea, everyone was running around like him, looking for targets.

But now thinking about it, it is possible that some people are doing so, but definitely not many. More people would probably stay hidden, ready to act, rather than openly exposing themselves.

In this level of conflict, whoever exposes themselves first will be at a certain disadvantage, as it is easy to become a target.

So, those who dare to expose themselves must be the top geniuses from top domains, precisely those first hundred or so who rushed into the Taichu Realm's gate!

The Divine Sea Realm entrants from ordinary large domains would absolutely not have the courage to be so ostentatious.

This is probably why, even after being in the Taichu Realm for several days, he has only encountered three battles.

Apart from encountering a Blood Race when he first arrived, the second battle involved a fat magic cultivator, and his doppelganger encountered another person. Other than these, there have been no other discoveries.

The opponent encountered by his doppelganger was a physique cultivator, whose race was unknown. Covered in flourishing hair, it seemed like a refined gorilla. In terms of strength and heritage, he was almost on par with the fat magic cultivator. Even though the doppelganger controlled a sword gourd with unmatched Sword Qi, it was a fierce battle.

The doppelganger can certainly employ all the methods of the main body, but Lu Ye himself is a combat cultivator who uses a saber. His understanding of the Sword Dao was all gained by reflecting on the Origin of the Soaring Dragon World.

Previously, when his cultivation was not high, his understanding of the Sword Dao surpassed his comprehension of saber skills. But as his cultivation level increased, these disparities were gradually evened out.

This is also why, even after obtaining the Origin of the Soaring Dragon World and having the ability to reflect on the lifetime cultivation of many experts from Soaring Dragon, Lu Ye still insisted on following his own path.

Only what belongs to oneself can continually develop; if you pick up the leftovers from others, you may become strong for a time, but ultimately your achievements will be limited.

Now it seems that his initial persistence was correct, and he did not let temporary gains and losses cloud his judgment.

So, at this stage, even if the main body and the doppelganger have the same heritage, in a true comparison of their strengths, the main body is definitely stronger. The doppelganger is slightly inferior.

If the main body encountered that unknown-race physique cultivator, it would certainly be a tough fight, but it should not be difficult to win. It's nothing more than his familiar close combat; with the Boulder Mountain Saber combined with the Soul Severing Saber, he has a significant advantage against enemies that prefer close combat.

But the doppelganger was not as adept.

The physique cultivator's lush hair served as the most natural armor. Sword Qi slashed on him, often with reduced power. The opponent braved the attack of unparalleled Sword Qi and rushed to the doppelganger's side. Thinking they could seize the advantage and determine the outcome with one strike, to their surprise, the doppelganger cast a Blood Sea Technique...

The physique cultivator was instantly dumbfounded.

The result, of course, needs no elaboration. The physique cultivator trapped in the Blood Sea couldn't advance or retreat, and during the fierce battle, he cursed the doppelganger for his deceit and trickery, and called him shameless...

Compared to the fat magic cultivator's acceptance of defeat, this showed a bit of not knowing how to lose. He probably also knew that even if he begged for mercy, the doppelganger would not really spare him.

Cultivators entering the Taichu Realm might realize their inadequacies and quit peacefully, but that definitely won't happen during a battle. Even if both parties verbally agree that the winner will spare the loser, will the other really exit willingly? Should they turn and flee, it might cause more trouble.

So, either there are no conflicts, or once a conflict arises, it ends with total eradication, which is the most reliable approach.

Lu Ye's main body no longer worried about finding anything. The Taichu Realm is vast, and even if he searched, it would be challenging to gain anything. Thus, he let the doppelganger wander around.

As for the main body... he discovered a Spirit Jade vein!

It wasn't that he had such an excellent eye that he immediately found this Spirit Jade vein, but rather, there were traces of previous mining, so if one passed by nearby, it would be hard not to notice.

As for who mined it, it's obvious with minimal thought. It was certainly the work of cultivators who entered the Taichu Realm a hundred years ago or even earlier.

Because the traces left here have age, they certainly aren't recent.

Spirit Jade, as a resource, is exclusive to cultivators above the Constellation Realm. Cultivators below the Constellation Realm cannot absorb and refine it because it is a condensation of stellar space energy, generally only found in stellar space or on some dead or desolate stars. Of course, top domains also have it.

Domains with traces of living beings, like the Nine Provinces or the Unparalleled Continent, will not produce Spirit Jade, because the energy absorbed from stellar space by these domains is entirely digested for their own growth, naturally preventing its accumulation and condensation.

Dead and desolate stars differ; they have no life force, consume nothing, and require no growth. After years of accumulation, Spirit Jade is naturally born.

Across the stellar space, apart from within the Reincarnation Tree's Taichu Realm, there are hardly any other means for Divine Sea Realm cultivators to obtain Spirit Jade directly.

They're all here planning for their imminent advancement to the Constellation Realm. Although it's not useful now, it will be soon, so collecting some early on ensures readiness.

Lu Ye had heard Jian Guhong and others talk about their experiences of collecting spirit jade in the stellar space, claiming it was easy—just a matter of picking them up.

But after a round of attempts, he found that reality differed quite a bit from the descriptions of Jian Guhong and others.

The spirit jade here was tightly interlocked because it formed a mine vein, so he had to separate them from their edges. Any slight mistake would cause the surface to be damaged, and the energy contained within would quickly dissipate.

Lu Ye had never encountered spirit jade before, but upon handling it, he realized it wasn't the crystalline structure he imagined. It might be hard, but that was just a surface hardening. Inside, it was filled with pure, liquid-like energy, so it couldn't be damaged in the collection process. Once damaged, the spirit jade was worthless.

The spirit jade felt to Lu Ye like a berry with a hardened surface and a viscous interior like juice.

Jian Guhong and others found it simple only because spirit jade in the stellar space was in individual pieces, easy to pick up.

But the spirit jade in this mine vein was stuck together, and Lu Ye had to find a way to separate them to collect them.

Initially unaware, Lu Ye worked hard but reaped little; most of the spirit jade was ruined.

His control over his spirit force was intricate, theoretically making the task easy, but he soon realized it was time-consuming.

Because using spirit force to cut the spirit jade was slow, a moment of inattention would damage the surface.

So he had been busy for three whole days and had only collected less than three hundred pieces of spirit jade.

This harvest was surely much more compared to Jian Guhong and others' exploration in stellar space, but standing in front of a spirit jade vein, the result was disappointing.

This matter couldn't be rushed, so he could only patiently proceed slowly. His doppelganger roaming outside didn't greatly affect his battle of the Divine Sea.

Currently, he had already secured three birds, a good record for the initial stage. If his doppelganger got lucky, there might still be gains, so it was okay to waste some time here.

Of course, Lu Ye couldn't stay here forever. According to Yang Qing, the area of activity in the Taichu Realm would shrink periodically. Eventually, this place might become off-limits, and he'd have no choice but to leave.

While he could still stay here, he aimed to collect as much spirit jade as possible, reflecting the humble and unembellished thoughts of a Divine Sea Realm from a small place.

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Duu Lang, like a frightened rabbit, continuously scanned the surroundings while flying, keeping only thirty feet above the ground.

For someone in the Divine Sea Realm, this was unusual because if there were ambushes on the ground, it would be easy to be attacked.

But Duu Lang had no choice; flying higher would attract more attention, so he chose a relatively safer flying altitude.

He had to hope that everyone was still scattered early on and that nobody was hiding right along his flight path, though it was a slim chance.

The urgency stemmed from the little time he had left.

He had to rush to a place and couldn't stay long due to the rules of the battle of the Divine Sea.

That location contained a spirit jade vein with abundant resources, and due to certain reasons, his domain urgently needed a hefty amount of spirit jade.

Relying on elders to search leisurely in stellar space wouldn't work, time was tight, and there weren't many elders above the Constellation Realm left in his domain, limiting what they could achieve, leaving hope on him.

The awareness of the spirit jade vein came from elders who had once mined there and left a detailed path map.

Luck wasn't on his side initially, as he couldn't find any familiar landmarks to match the map, rendering it useless.

Yet luck wasn't entirely absent, for after days of searching, he found a landmark matching the map, clarifying his direction.

If all went well, he estimated nearly a month of optimal time, plenty given his preparation.

After much toil, he arrived at the spirit jade vein's location, at the foot of an unremarkable hill. Such hills were common throughout the Taichu Realm, and without preconceived notions, no one would suspect a spirit jade vein was hidden here.

The discovery made by his domain's elders was a sheer coincidence, with no noteworthy details in the background story to speak of.