

Humanity 1251

Chapter 1251 How Satisfying

As soon as the thought arose, a massive pressure suddenly descended from the sky. Caught off guard, this Blood Race member's body went limp, nearly collapsing, and he hurriedly shouted: "Fellow Daoist Li!"

Not only him, but the other few Blood Races also felt the same, and the originally stabilized Blood Sea was once again in fierce turmoil, nearly about to collapse.

Lu Ye spoke: "Apologies, apologies, I'm still not very skilled at using this Saintliness Restraint Technique for the first time."

While apologizing verbally, he had already approached the Blood Race, raised the Boulder Mountain Saber, augmented it with the Double-Sharpness Spirit Runes, and struck down with the saber.

Almost simultaneously as he acted on his side, a doppelganger suddenly appeared behind another Blood Race, and numerous Sword Qi from the sword gourd emerged, rapidly converging into a startling sword flash, sweeping towards the Blood Race's back.

The massive Blood Sea became increasingly turbulent.

The life force of two individuals was extinguished almost at the same time.

The remaining three Blood Races vaguely sensed something was wrong, but due to the suppression of saintliness and the unrest of the Blood Sea, they could not accurately determine what exactly happened at the moment.

The Sacred Seed was still calling out: "Fellow Daoists, please retract your saintliness quickly!"

Lu Ye's voice floated over from another side: "Retract, retract, be calm and patient!"

As another slash fell, a short exclamation came from the doppelganger's side. In terms of close-range assassination, the doppelganger's techniques were not as proficient as the main body, causing a slight mishap, though it wasn't a major issue.

The Sacred Seed Blood Race finally sensed something amiss and urgently called out: "What is Fellow Daoist doing?"

The moment after asking this question, his face changed dramatically: "Human race?"

Their Blood Seas had completely merged, allowing him to glimpse Lu Ye's true identity through the feedback from the Blood Sea. What he saw truly startled him, as the one they considered their fellow, Li Taibai, turned out to be a human race face!

And his four companions were completely wiped out!

Moreover, there was an additional figure in the Blood Sea identical to Li Taibai.

His mind was instantly plunged into chaos, with various thoughts emerging, leaving no time for deep thinking. Instinctively, he wanted to escape.

Even though he did not understand why a human could possess such powerful saintliness, nor did he understand where the other human emerged from, he knew he must flee to survive at this moment.

Amid the tremendous suppression of saintliness, he couldn't exert even half of his full strength. With his four companions already dead, if he did not flee immediately, he would follow in their footsteps.

As expected of a Sacred Seed, his decision was swift, but after Lu Ye seized control of this Blood Sea, escaping was no trivial task.

In the Blood Sea where he moved like a fish in water, he now felt trapped in a mire, struggling to take steps. Before he could run far, Lu Ye's main body and the doppelganger blocked him from front and back.

The outcome was naturally tragic. With his powers severely suppressed, he had little room to maneuver.

After only two exchanges, he died on the spot.

The five Blood Races, who boasted on this defensive line for an unknown period, were now wiped out, all as one family.

Lu Ye briefly scavenged for spoils of war and disposed of the bodies as usual.

The massive Blood Sea, without the support of the other five Blood Races, was beyond Lu Ye's control. Following the deaths of the Blood Races, the Blood Sea's volume rapidly decreased, eventually leaving only Lu Ye's residual Blood Sea.

He contracted it to a Blood Cloud about ten feet around as usual and proceeded leisurely in one direction.

From a distance, cultivators from various races witnessing this scene were puzzled, for the previous battle erupted within the Blood Sea, which served as a cover. Hence, no matter the commotion from the fight or the Blood Races' demise, the movements were subtle, and these distant cultivators naturally couldn't perceive clearly.

They couldn't fathom why the once enormous Blood Sea reduced to such a small size after an additional Blood Race appeared...

They dared not make any rash moves, for fear of exposing themselves and inviting a counterattack from the Blood Race. They continued to await others' impatience, ready to act when an opportunity arose.

On the Baiyu Platform of the Reincarnation Tree, almost simultaneously with Lu Ye's swift execution of the five Blood Races, murmurs arose throughout the platform.

The esteemed Sun Blaze Realm and Moon Jade Realm cultivators were naturally not so easily startled, but those present comprised more than just these powerful individuals; most were Divine Sea Realm cultivators who followed their seniors to broaden their horizons.

Limited by their strength and cultivation, they lacked the qualification to participate in this Divine Sea Struggle and likely would not have future opportunities, so they could only observe here to satiate their curiosity.

In reality, they could not witness the combats within the Taichu Realm, only able to observe the changes in leaderboard rankings.

Each change in the ranking list signifies a fierce battle between dragons and tigers. The disappearance of each name represents the fall or defeat of a domain's prodigy.

A month ago, the pillar on the right had no rankings, while the left pillar had two or three thousand names. The names of those strong individuals did not disappear quickly, with only a few hundred disappearing throughout the month.

But after the month passed, the frequency of these names disappearing increased significantly, and as for the rankings on the top hundred list on the right, they fluctuated dramatically, with some people suddenly rising a few spots, and others' names suddenly fading and disappearing, making many in the Divine Sea Realm feel the danger within the Taichu Realm.

Overall, the ranking changes are less frequent for the top-ranked, while the frequency increases the further down the list one goes. The higher the rank, especially the top twenty, the changes are rare, even if there is a change, it is only rising or falling by one rank, never several ranks suddenly.

During this period, only Lu Yiye from the Nine Heavens World did something unknown and suddenly jumped from eleventh to seventh, but over the past few days, he dropped one place, now standing at eighth.

Concerning Lu Yiye's background, tens of thousands present have some basic understanding. It's hard not to pay attention to him, the only Divine Sea Level 8 cultivator, especially since his success or failure directly affects the ownership of a nine-star Treasure Bead.

As the huge uproar spread, the originally eighth-ranked Lu Yiye suddenly surged upward dramatically, directly landing at third!

Even without participating in the Divine Sea battle or showing the number of enemy kills in these rankings, everyone knows that those ranked at the front have a nearly identical number of kills, only differing in terms of timing.

But to leap from eighth to third all at once, more than one opponent must have been killed.

Lu Yiye's ranking had experienced such a situation before, and now it happened again!

How can he, a Divine Sea Level 8 cultivator, instantaneously kill several opponents? It must be noted that those inside are the most elite Divine Sea Realm prodigies from each major domain, even the weaker ones are stronger than the average Divine Sea Realm cultivators.

The competition among these prodigies shouldn't result in someone crushing several opponents easily, not to mention the obscure Nine Heavens World, even the prodigies from top-tier domains couldn't achieve such a feat.

Yet, this has indeed happened.

While the strong did not react with shock, they were extremely astonished, each face turning stern.

Everyone felt a great threat, such upheaval in this generation's Divine Sea battle is unfavorable for all domains, because each domain's junior may encounter Lu Yiye, and underestimating his Level 8 cultivation could disastrously result in a downfall.

"It's the Blood Race! Several of the Blood Race's names have disappeared."

"Five! All ranked between fifty and sixty."

"That's truly exhilarating, boosting the prestige of the human race!"

Murmurs started to fill the platform. Since Lu Yiye had suddenly surged several ranks, he must have killed several opponents. The question arises, who died?

In fact, it's not difficult to see. Just observe which cultivator's name has disappeared.

Though the names on both pillars are still numerous, among the cultivator group with at least Divine Sea Realm cultivation, the disappearance of names is quite obvious.

So, everyone soon detected something unusual.

Originally ranking between fifty and sixty, five Blood Race members suddenly disappeared without a trace!

In other words, these five Blood Race members died at the hands of Lu Yiye, and the numbers match.

This made the human race cultivators feel gratified. If Lu Yiye obtained the rank by killing fellow cultivators, while not objectionable and within the rules, it wouldn't have stirred such a widespread resonance.

But killing the Blood Race is different...

It is known that the Blood Race has a secret technique to connect with each other, acting as a group at this point to intercept and kill various race cultivators. Although it is known, there is no effective way to counter it.

Over a thousand years, the Blood Race has repeatedly gained from the Taichu Realm using this method.

Finally, someone stepped up to teach them a lesson! Naturally, this is satisfying, not only are the human race's strong delighted, but other races' strong are equally thrilled.

Many eyes intentionally or inadvertently gazed towards the direction of those Blood Race world's strong, and sure enough, saw the grim faces!

Due to their skin color, the Blood Race originally all have red faces, but now their red faces have turned black.

"Targeting five Blood Race members at once, it certainly isn't his solo achievement, he probably allied with strong individuals from other races to attack together." Someone speculated.

This seems logical. Everyone knows the Blood Race secret technique's eerie nature, five Blood Race members acting as a group, and unless outnumbering them two to one, it's absolutely impossible to confront them, let alone kill them.

The strong from various domains do not know specifically what happened within the Taichu Realm, but even if Lu Yiye has incredible abilities, he cannot alone defeat five and eliminate them with deadly precision. There is only one explanation, that he has considerable allies.

Chapter 1252 Ascending to the Summit

This is also the most logical guess, but there's one point that's puzzling. If this is truly the case, why haven't his companions made any gains, and he's the only one succeeding?

Isn't this just stealing credit? Many people acting together, yet only he reaps the rewards, while others' efforts are all for nothing?

This kid is not a good character!

Lu Ye's performance not only surprised the experts from various domains but even left Yang Qing somewhat taken aback.

Although he has been sealed on the Spirit Stream battlefield for tens of thousands of years, his strong prowess and the weakening sealing power over time have allowed him to perceive many things in the Nine Provinces, especially regarding Lu Ye.

Yang Qing began to pay attention to Lu Ye when he was merely at the Spirit Stream Realm, and he somewhat understood Lu Ye's capabilities, which is why he brought Lu Ye to the Reincarnation Tree.

Because he believed that with Lu Ye's foundation and skills, even if his cultivation was slightly lower, he was fully qualified to claim a position in the top hundred. Before Lu Ye departed, he set a goal for Lu Ye to reach the top ten, which was merely high expectations, not genuinely expecting him to claim a spot in the top ten.

Yang Qing anticipated Lu Ye could secure a position within the top twenty, which was quite decent, not belittling him but recognizing the formidable talents from top domains cannot be overlooked.

But witnessing this now, have I underestimated this young man's skill?

How could he annihilate five Blood Race members at once? Even if he did get help, why would he claim all the kills while others had no objections?

Yang Qing was aware of some of Lu Ye's abilities demonstrated within the Nine Provinces but was completely oblivious to the prowess honed in the Blood Refinement World, naturally ignorant of Lu Ye's inherent advantage against the Blood Race. Had he known, these doubts wouldn't arise.

While the commotion and astonishment continued on the Baiyu Platform, Lu Ye was already heading towards the next group of Blood Race members.

The real body was revealed, while the doppelganger sneaked.

Having mastered the Blood Resonance Technique, locating Blood Race members was extremely easy, as they also activated the Blood Resonance Technique intermittently while moving to converge more of their kin.

At this point, most Blood Race members had already assembled, with only a scarce few wandering outside due to various reasons, unable to join in yet. The assembled Blood Race guiding these lone members by frequently activating the Blood Resonance Technique.

The Blood Race probably never imagined that the Blood Resonance Technique, originally developed for the Divine Sea contest in the Taichu Realm, would become their fatal flaw.

Everything is interconnected. Though the Blood Race thrived using the secret technique in the Taichu Realm for thousands of years, it leads to a tragic, unbearable price for them this time.

Once more encountering a Blood Race group, joining them smoothly, and the following matters became straightforward. With saintliness revealed, several Blood Race members obeyed submissively, surrendering control of the Blood Sea, allowing Lu Ye to blend within.

The same scenario unfolded once again, with yet another five Blood Race members!

The Baiyu Platform was once again filled with uproar and exclamations as Lu Yiye's rank suddenly ascended several positions. In less than half a day, he completed another surge, triumphing at the top!

Initially, this participation by a Divine Sea Level 8 realm cultivator in the Taichu Realm would have been enough to draw attention, but claiming the top spot brings an unimaginable visual shock.

Scanning beneath Lu Yiye's name, among the top fifty ranks, nearly all are formidable talents from top domains, except him, a product from a large domain, with no strong figure knowing where this Nine Heavens World resides.

When the same scenario occurred a second time, many experts instinctively began searching for the vanished names from the list. Though each harbored someone speculation, confirmation left them incredulous.

Because the disappeared names from the list were once again those of the Blood Race.

What exactly is going on? Is this Nine Heavens World's Lu Yiye engaging in nothing else but targeting the Blood Race exclusively?

Not satisfied with killing five earlier, now he has eliminated yet another five...

Looking at the faces of the Blood Race experts, they were already darkening as if about to drip water.

Also, how exactly is he doing this?

After the first batch of five Blood Race names vanished, many speculated that Lu Yiye had numerous allies surrounding him. Those from various domains had probably had enough of the Blood Race's arrogance, hence united to resist, with Lu Yiye ultimately benefiting by taking the kills.

But at this moment, anyone still thinking that is foolish.

No matter how adept at stealing kills, it can't be to the extent of claiming all kills entirely. The prodigies from other domains are not fools. Each accomplishment ties to the final ranking, how could they allow such a scenario?

Thus, the most probable explanation is Lu Yiye's own ability, maybe he possesses some means to counter the Blood Race?

This thought emerged, exhilarating many experts. If such a means truly exists, the Blood Race will be in trouble. They could definitely leverage this, and once encountered in the stellar space, dealing with Blood Race experts will be at their discretion.

The strong ones of the Blood Race themselves realized this problem, and their gazes, whether intentionally or unintentionally, glanced towards Yang Qing, suspecting that Lu Ye might have received guidance from him.

But just a Divine Sea Level 8, even with guidance, how much threat can they really pose to the united Blood Race? Moreover, the Blood Race itself doesn't have any fatal weaknesses to exploit.

A muddled account!

But undeniably, as Lu Ye's ranking changed significantly twice, even the many cultivators watching the fun on Baiyu Platform became expectant.

Originally, they were here just to watch the ups and downs of rankings, without much to see.

But now it's different.

Everyone's eyes were almost glued to the names of the remaining few Blood Race members on the right side of the rankings, all eager to see when these names would disappear!

If these names truly vanished, it would prove that Lu Ye from the Nine Heavens World was indeed targeting the Blood Race!

On the periphery of Baiyu Platform, Duu Lang was utterly dumbfounded.

Initially, when the top hundred rankings appeared, Lu Ye's ranking at eleven was already enough to shock him. Unexpectedly, it jumped to seventh place.

Although it slowly slipped to eighth, in the blink of an eye, it surged to third, and then to the top!

By this point, he really started to question whether this Lu Ye was the same person he encountered in the Spirit Jade Vein. He hadn't doubted before because the name and origin matched, but now it's difficult not to question, as it all seems so incredible.

"Dear nephew, your friend is surely in the top hundred if nothing unexpected happens," said the elder from the Red Sky Continent, stroking his beard.

Ranked first for now means he has made great gains, and even if there are no more gains later, as long as he ensures his survival, he won't drop from the rankings.

During past Divine Sea Competitions, having five gains meant securing a place in the top hundred by the end.

Lu Yiye has more than just five gains, having long exceeded that.

Duu Lang, however, frowned: "The tree that stands out in the forest must be destroyed by the wind."

Showing off now might not be entirely beneficial, because there is another rule in the Divine Sea Competition. When the number of participants reduces to a certain extent, the Reincarnation Tree will reveal the positions of both high-ranking and low-ranking cultivators.

Historically, those at the top of the rankings have always been the preserves of the top domains. An unknown domain's cultivator at Divine Sea Level 8 reaching the top will only attract endless covetousness and greed.

The higher the ranking, the greater the benefits afterwards. Those top domain prodigies, even if not for themselves, would contest for the top spot for their domain, targeting Lu Ye in the process.

When the final moment arrives, those prodigies might show no mercy, even if they are also of the human race!

Between Lu Ye and him, there's hardly any friendship, but Duu Lang, due to his circumstances, had to withdraw mid-competition and really hoped to see Lu Ye from a small place succeed till the end. This is also why he stayed to watch; otherwise, he would have returned to the Red Sky Continent with his elders.

For now, Lu Ye has strong momentum, but it might not last long, since his current glory was achieved by killing the Blood Race, which means his success is built on their bones.

He has means to deal with the Blood Race but might not have ways to deal with prodigies from other races.

Less than half of the three-month period has passed, and there's still much unpredictability. Hopefully, this friend can hold on, not necessarily maintaining the top spot, but surviving means winning!

Amidst everyone's gaze, and after half a day more, a burst of excitement suddenly erupted on Baiyu Platform, from those Divine Sea Realm who came with their elders to watch.

Because things were unfolding as everyone had predicted.

Just now, a few names suddenly disappeared from the top hundred on the right pillar, and unsurprisingly, they were all of the Blood Race!

Thus, almost all Blood Race cultivators participating in the Taichu Realm from various domains were wiped out, with perhaps two or three slipping through the net, but they no longer mattered.

Indeed, Lu Ye from the Nine Heavens World had special means against the Blood Race! That's how he could successively kill so many Blood Race prodigies with just a Divine Sea Level 8 cultivation.

This allowed various domains to let out a sigh of relief, for a thousand years, no one devised an effective counter to the Blood Race's rogue methods, yet unexpectedly, a young fellow emerged and nearly eradicated the Blood Race.

This naturally caused some schadenfreude among the races, feeling it truly was the way of heaven's reincarnation, showing mercy to no one.

Chapter 1253 - An Age Without Heroes

A group of Blood Race elites from different domains gathered together, their expressions grim, and from time to time, they glanced at Yang Qing.

If it weren't for the shock of the 9-star treasure Yang Qing previously revealed, these Blood Race elites could hardly restrain themselves from probing his background.

Blood Race, considered a major clan in the stellar space, being so targeted by a human race, how could they tolerate it?

The most crucial point is, he indeed has the means to target them, yet even these Blood Race elites don't know what exactly his methods are.

If such methods were to be popularized, where in the vast stellar space would there be a place for Blood Race? No matter where they go, they're bound to be targeted, as Blood Race's enemies are numerous.

"We must find a way to seize that boy when the Divine Sea contention ends, to uncover exactly what tricks he's using!" a Blood Race elite suggested.

Another Blood Race elite gently shook his head: "If this were the stellar space, we'd have a chance, but here is where the Reincarnation Tree exists, how could we capture him? We'd likely be expelled by the Reincarnation Tree the moment we make a move."

"Then just watch helplessly?"

"Besides watching, we have no other means!"

"We must try something."

The Blood Race elites argued intensely, each with a headache over the current plight, truly having no good solutions. After some time, a Blood Race elite turned to the oldest and most silent among them: "Veteran Qin, what do you think?"

The aged Blood Race lightly snorted: "Why are you all anxious here, there's no use going to the Taichu Realm." Then coldly chuckled: "The youngsters within Taichu Realm will be more anxious than us when the time comes."

A quick-witted Blood Race elite understood immediately, slapping his thigh: "Yes, why are we anxious? When the Divine Sea contention reaches later stages, if that boy still holds the top position, even if he isn't first, but remains in the top ten, naturally someone will deal with him! Even if he really has some means to suppress our Blood Race cultivators, the disadvantage of cultivation is evident here, and against other races, he will inevitably be defeated."

Other Blood Race elites' eyes brightened, turning to look at the column on the right of the portal, where beneath Lu Yiye's name at the top rank were names of talented individuals from top domains.

Indeed, they didn't need to do anything, just wait, and naturally, someone would clean up this Lu Yiye!

Once Lu Yiye is dead, their greatest concern would vanish, and they felt quite relieved for a moment.

But on second thought, recalling so many Blood Race descendants who died at the hands of that boy, their hearts felt heavy with pain again!

In a certain area of the Taichu Realm, three figures remained hidden, Ding You frowned: "How long has it been?"

Yuk Yaorao replied immediately: "Three days."

"Yes, three days now, how come those Blood Race have disappeared?"

Previously, that squad of Blood Race would patrol back and forth on this defensive line stretching one hundred thousand miles, but ever since they were jointly attacked, they vanished from sight, something felt unusual.

"They must have left!" Zhao Yunliu, who had been silent, spoke.

"Left?" Ding You was stunned.

Zhao Yunliu, being from a top domain, had been informed by his elders before setting off, thus he had some guesses about the current situation, explaining: "The Blood Race acting as a collective easily incites public wrath, so each Divine Sea contention, they dare not go overboard. Once they believe they've secured enough to maintain a top hundred ranking, they will halt. This is a tacit understanding between Blood Race and other major races, thus although Blood Race occupies numerous spots each Divine Sea contention, their ranks are relatively low, clustered around seventy or eighty, else they risk universal opposition."

After hearing his explanation, the other two suddenly realized.

Blood Race's approach seems somewhat unjust, and if they insist on exterminating other domain's prodigies completely, they might succeed once, but with another event, all domains would likely unite to deal with Blood Race first.

This isn't unfeasible, it just needs those prodigies from top domains to lead. As long as the thousands of Divine Sea Realm entrants do nothing but hunt for Blood Race traces, how could Blood Race withstand it?

Thus, they can only cut losses appropriately, timely hold back, to maintain continuity in advantage, an approach Blood Race has honed over a thousand years, smoothly practiced.

"They're gone, so what are we waiting for, let's go!" Ding You said, stepping out from his hiding place.

The trio quickly rushed forward.

Zhao Yunliu wasn't the only one who realized this. After lying low for several days without spotting Blood Race traces, prodigies from various domains made their move towards the front.

Now, with the Divine Sea contention halfway through, some have gained plenty, some nothing at all, but for all cultivators partaking in this grand event, the foremost priority is survival!

Only by surviving can there be a chance of victory.

A large number of cultivators rushed inward from different directions, and there were bound to be unexpected encounters along the way. In such situations, it's almost certain that both parties engage in a battle, leaving no room for peaceful coexistence.

Moreover, due to the significant shrinking of the Taichu Realm, many cultivators now travel in pairs or small groups, no longer solitary as they were initially.

The situation outside is reflected by the constant flickering of names on the gate pillars, with some rankings rising and others falling. More often, names dim and disappear entirely.

No matter how others' names change, the name of Lu Yiye at the top remains as steady as a mountain, unmoved. There's an air of being at the summit.

This makes many domain experts amused and annoyed, secretly cursing the lack of heroes and letting a brat gain fame!

Such a situation lasted for several days before Lu Yiye's name was suddenly surpassed, and they looked at who had overtaken him.

Yellow Dragon World, Gu Yulou!

A predictable outcome, the young man from the Nine Heavens World used some method to kill more than a dozen Blood Race cultivators, achieving a temporary ranking quickly, but would inevitably fall back since his stamina would not last.

The Yellow Dragon World, self-proclaimed as the center of the stellar space and boasting as the number one domain, might sound boastful, yet its strength is clearly visible. The top geniuses from Yellow Dragon World are naturally extraordinary. In previous Divine Sea competitions, as long as cultivators from Yellow Dragon World didn't perish, they typically secured a top-three spot. This is the formidable foundation of a top domain.

There are more than ten other domains comparable to the Yellow Dragon World.

Hence, it can be foreseen that as time passes, more and more will surpass Lu Yiye, continuously pushing his ranking down.

When Lu Ye was killing the Blood Race, experts from various domains were jubilant, thinking the young man was impressive, releasing a thousand-year grudge on everyone's behalf.

But his name constantly remaining at the top was indeed eye-catching and seemed unworthy of the honor. Now that he's been knocked off the top spot, the list looks much more pleasing to them.

Yep, if the youngster's rank could drop out of the top ten, it would look even better.

Lu Ye was collecting herbs!

He discovered a pattern: if the Taichu Realm could be divided like the Spirit Stream battlefield, there could be three regions: the outer circle, inner circle, and core circle.

The outer circle is his initial location, where spirit jade is abundant. Finding a Spirit Jade Vein easily shows this.

While the doppelganger was wandering the outer circle, it frequently collected scattered spirit jade.

The current location is considered the inner circle, different from the outer circle, abundant in exotic flowers and rare herbs.

Yang Qing previously reminded him that the environment here differs from the outside world. As a very ancient wilderness, many exotic flowers and rare herbs that grow here have long been extinct outside. If possible, collecting them would be valuable, if not for crafting, at least for exchanging spirit jade while traveling through stellar space later.

Because they are rare, the spirit flowers and rare herbs produced here are exceptionally precious, items that cannot be found at leisure.

If he encounters them, Lu Ye wouldn't miss collecting them, which is why his ranking dropped. During this period, he also encountered two battles: one where he attracted the Blood Race using the Blood Resonance Technique, easily handling them, and another was a close combat fight with a human race combat cultivator, which Lu Ye thoroughly enjoyed.

If the opponent hadn't suddenly ambushed him, he might have been willing to let him go. But since the opponent attacked first, he had no choice but to be ruthless.

No idea which domain the cultivator belonged to, but he clearly regretted before dying.

Lu Ye isn't skilled in pharmacology, but fortunately, he was influenced by Second Senior Sister and Hua Ci, knowing that many Spiritual Medicines require special collection techniques and containers to prevent the loss of their properties.

But that's essentially all he knows...

The Spiritual Medicines growing in this place are unknown even to Second Senior Sister, should she come here.

Therefore, Lu Ye uses the most straightforward method to collect them - dig up the soil containing the entire root system and throw it directly into his storage space, ignoring special techniques or containers.

This may cause some loss of medicinal properties, but it's efficient and time-saving.

Both the primary form and doppelganger are acting in separate locations, making significant gains for now.

Until a certain moment, the wandering doppelganger suddenly paused and looked down at his waist.

Hanging from the waist of the doppelganger is the sword gourd. It can be said that the doppelganger became a sword cultivator mainly due to the presence of the sword gourd, a mystical item capable of devouring treasures and turning them into Sword Qi, the higher the quality of the devoured treasure, the greater the power of the Sword Qi.

When Lu Ye was in the Nine Provinces killing and looting, he obtained many spirit and magic artifacts, things that wouldn't fetch much when sold to the Heaven's Augury treasure vault. Therefore, he let the sword gourd devour them all in one go. However, since the devoured treasures weren't of high quality, the Sword Qi wasn't very powerful, which is one reason the doppelganger's overall strength is inferior to the primary form.

Chapter 1254 - Ancient Vine and Gourds

If the sword gourd can devour some high-quality spirit treasures, the doppelganger's strength will surely be enhanced, maybe even surpassing the Venerable One, but the cost would be significant.

The doppelganger has always existed as a facade, not a fundamental element, so some things need not be forced. Defeating enemies mainly relies on the Venerable One's various means.

But at this moment, the sword gourd at the doppelganger's waist is having an unusual reaction, gently vibrating, and even conveying a hint of joy?

Lu Ye has no idea what is going on.

What's undeniable is that the sword gourd is of very high quality, far surpassing any treasure Lu Ye has encountered thus far; otherwise, it wouldn't easily absorb those spirit and magic artifacts, and its internal restriction is complex. Lu Ye has only refined a part, unable to unleash the sword gourd's full power.

But he couldn't ascertain the precise quality; perhaps he could ask Yang Qing later.

Such a treasure has existed for at least ten thousand years and naturally possesses considerable spirituality. Usually, it remains hidden, but its current anomaly inevitably draws attention.

The doppelganger quietly senses, soon looking up towards a direction, detecting a faint resonance with something distant there.

This place is the Taichu Realm. What could the sword gourd obtained from the Sword Weapon Sect's secret realm resonate with?

A bold guess forms in his mind but remains uncertain, prompting him to set off and investigate.

Deciding on this, the doppelganger travels through air towards that direction, with the Venerable One trailing thousands of miles behind, ensuring a distance that allows instant transmission to the doppelganger's side.

After flying for half a day, the doppelganger suddenly halts, gazing forward to see the sky overflowing with treasure light, radiant and majestic. The sky is awash with inexplicable transformations, indicating a valuable treasure is about to emerge.

Through Mental Consciousness, he further detects several powerful presences faintly heading towards that direction.

This is normal; the commotion over there is so conspicuous that any cultivator in the vicinity will surely notice and be drawn to investigate.

It's certain there's a mysterious connection between the anomaly and the sword gourd. Usually, the doppelganger wanders around with the sword gourd without much significance. Gourd-like treasures are numerous—just in the Nine Provinces, Fourth Senior Brother Li Baxian has a gourd-shaped treasure at his waist, storing many flying swords and used for holding wine.

So even if cultivators spot the sword gourd at the doppelganger's waist in the Taichu Realm, they wouldn't associate too much, but if the anomaly has a mysterious connection with the sword gourd, it's not suitable for the doppelganger to bring the sword gourd there now.

In the public eye, something might be exposed?

Thinking thus, the doppelganger raises his hand to construct a Void Spirit Rune, and in the next instant, a figure appears, as the Venerable One arrives and continues flying forward.

Since the doppelganger is unsuitable for exposure, let the Venerable One step in; as for the doppelganger, he will find a place to conceal himself and first let the Venerable One investigate what's happening over there.

Indeed many are drawn by the anomaly here, and when Lu Ye arrives at the site, upon glancing up, he sees the vicinity of two spirit mountaintops with silhouettes standing all around—some in groups of three or two, some loner—all diverse in form and possessing powerful presences.

As many as over two hundred people!

The total number of cultivators participating in the Divine Sea dispute is two to three thousand; now, over half the time has passed, and those lost are approximately around one thousand. Only one to two thousand remain alive, yet over two hundred have gathered here, and Lu Ye has no idea where they've all emerged from.

When the Venerable One and the doppelganger scouted around, they didn't find many.

But upon reflection, it's unsurprising—the anomaly here is evident and majestic, any nearby cultivator seeing it will surely come to investigate.

These are just the visible figures; those lurking covertly undoubtedly exist too.

The source of the anomaly is an old vine suspended between the two spirit mountaintops, rugged and ancient, exuding a particularly vivid primitive aura, barely adorned with green leaves, and on the vine, three gourds hang!

One large, two small!

The two small ones are only fist-sized, completely light green, and clearly underdeveloped, but the large one is different, about the size of a human head, its entire body glowing with flowing treasure light, evidently at the verge of perfect maturity, and the anomaly in the sky is caused by this large gourd.

Upon seeing this gourd, Lu Ye realizes his earlier guess was correct and feels fortunate enough to be cautious, not sending the doppelganger to investigate thoroughly; otherwise, their resonance might indeed expose something.

The sword gourd he obtained from the Sword Weapon Sect's secret realm undoubtedly originates here! Otherwise, the sword gourd wouldn't have exhibited such unusual changes.

The Sword Weapon Sect was a powerful sect from the era before the Nine Provinces; presumably, a Sword Weapon Sect expert participated in the Divine Sea dispute in the Taichu Realm back then and obtained a sword gourd here.

After ten thousand years, by fate, Lu Ye brought the sword gourd back to the Taichu Realm, leading to the events now unfolding.

The sword gourd is a treasure, so the three gourds here must undoubtedly be treasures as well. However, the two small gourds haven't matured and probably won't be of use. But that big gourd is about to mature, which is why numerous cultivators are drawn by the phenomenon and have all recognized this, hence the fervent looks directed at that big gourd.

However, since the timing isn't right and there are too many people gathered, everyone is holding back; otherwise, with so many gathered, they would have started fighting by now, and there would have been no semblance of peace.

The sword gourd can swallow treasures, turning them into sword energy to kill enemies. What use does this big gourd have? Could it also swallow treasures and turn them into sword energy?

If so, it wouldn't be of much use to me.

All around, gazes focused on Lu Ye's location, instantly making him the center of attention for everyone present.

It was because, compared to others, his cultivation level was lower, naturally attracting attention, amidst the many gazes; there were doubts, astonishment, mockery, and even more eager anticipation.

When the portal opened, Lu Ye moved relatively late, so those who entered the Taichu Realm before him didn't know there was an eighth-level participant in this Divine Sea dispute, and upon seeing him, were naturally a bit stunned.

Yet, in a place like this, no one would spare you because of low cultivation. It's certain that many have already set their sights on him, but due to the valuable treasure in front, no one wanted to provoke a dispute, so each held back.

Lu Ye was candid and fearless, displaying an indifferent demeanor.

If he wished, he could disguise his cultivation as Level 9, blending in effortlessly with the crowd, but rare as it was to encounter so many cultivators together, he intended to play some tricks with his cultivation, naturally refusing to disguise.

One could only say, whoever sets their sights on him would be unfortunate. After numerous battles, he had gained a relatively clear understanding of the general strength of prodigies from various domains.

A familiar voice suddenly sounded by his ear: "Junior Brother Lu, over here!"

Lu Ye followed the voice and immediately saw a familiar alluring face, it was indeed Yang Yaorao from the Jiuxuan World.

Quite a coincidence, he hadn't expected her to be here too.

With her were two other men, both had previously participated in attacking him, though at the time, none of them knew who the target of their attack was.

One was an ordinary-looking man, whose attire revealed no specific traits, but his aura was restrained and pure; he was the physique cultivator. The other, standing tall with a proud demeanor and sharp aura, resembled a sword; he was the sword cultivator!

Among those who surrounded him at the time, this sword cultivator's attacks were the most vicious. Still, Lu Ye bore no resentment against him; sword cultivators behave that way, their attacks are strong and brutal, and if they were not, they would not be sword cultivators.

Lu Ye naturally didn't hold grudges; those three had attacked an isolated member of the Blood Race, which had nothing to do with Lu Yiye.

Yang Yaorao greeted him proactively, and Lu Ye promptly glided towards that direction, as he had many questions to ask. Previously, during their interaction in the Fairy Tree World, Lu Ye roughly understood Yang Yaorao's disposition; a fairly decent woman indeed.

Without mentioning other things, in terms of knowledge of various common senses in stellar space, she was much stronger than him, perhaps she knew some methods here?

"Senior Sister Yuk!" Lu Ye approached and greeted.

Yang Yaorao smiled and nodded: "We meet again."

Previously, after resolving the insect hive in the Fairy Tree World, they parted ways, each choosing their path, unnecessary to mention further. At the time, Yang Yaorao felt that infiltrating the Insect Race Tree World was too dangerous and didn't follow. Now, seeing Lu Ye standing here certainly explained a few things.

She was a perceptive person, clear on matters without needing to express them.

Now she introduced her two companions to Lu Ye: "This is Fellow Daoist Ding You from Xuandu World, and this is Fellow Daoist Zhao Yunliu from the top domain, Dominant Star."

She also introduced Lu Ye to the two.

Lu Ye politely saluted: "Greetings, Fellow Daoists!"

Ding You slightly nodded in return, while Zhao Yunliu remained staring at the radiant big gourd hanging on the old vine, as if he hadn't heard anything.

Yang Yaorao felt a bit awkward, naturally knowing what Zhao Yunliu was thinking, and as Zhao Yunliu knew what she was thinking. Though they were not familiar initially, after spending time together, they could sense each other's disposition.

Zhao Yunliu's attitude was undoubtedly his response.

Fortunately, Lu Ye seemed indifferent to it, whether because his temperament was broad-minded or his cultivation was insufficient, lacking presence. He turned and asked: "Senior Sister Yuk, what is the significance of this gourd? Why does it cause such a fuss?"

Yang Yaorao secretly breathed a sigh of relief. Anyone who could come here, regardless of their cultivation, were top prodigies from each domain. Proud individuals, she knew what Zhao Yunliu was like, and judging from their previous interactions, Lu Ye undoubtedly had determination and persistence and was daring and combative. She enthusiastically invited Lu Ye over; if any conflict arose between the two, she would be caught in the middle. Fortunately, that didn't happen, so she explained to Lu Ye.

Chapter 1255 - Creation Vine

"The stellar space possesses supreme treasures, born alongside the heavens and the earth, mysterious and unfathomable, such that they are unique; the Reincarnation Tree is a supreme treasure, as Junior Brother Lu should know."

Lu Ye nodded; Yang Qing had mentioned this to him previously.

Yuk Yaorao continued, "The uniqueness of the supreme treasure means that there won't be two identical supreme treasures in the world, but it's not that only one such treasure exists at that level. The Reincarnation Tree is a supreme treasure, and the ancient vine in front of you is said to be a supreme treasure too!"

Lu Ye raised an eyebrow, "It is a supreme treasure too? Does it have its own spiritual intelligence?"

Yuk Yaorao laughed, "Not all supreme treasures possess spiritual intelligence. Of course, most do, but there are always some exceptions. This ancient vine is one; it doesn't have its own spiritual intelligence. It's called the Creation Vine, and in itself has nothing particularly mystical, but the treasure gourds it bears are each miraculous and possess some unique powers."

Lu Ye became interested, "What kind of powers does it have?"

Yuk Yaorao responded, "The treasure gourds produced by the Creation Vine have varied powers, which is difficult to summarize, but I've heard that cultivators from a top-tier domain once obtained a wind gourd here, capable of releasing Hellfire Astral Wind, deadly to any cultivator it touches. Now it serves as the world-stabilizing treasure of that domain. Originally just a large domain, the presence of this wind gourd has deterred anyone from seeking trouble, and it has gradually become a top-tier domain."

Ding You added from the side, "There seems to be another sword gourd. Over ten thousand years ago, a cultivator supposedly encountered the owner of the sword gourd in the stellar space, and the sword gourd could unleash endless Sword Qi, capable of destroying stars and eclipsing the sun."

Lu Ye felt a bit uneasy and touched his nose silently.

The sword gourd was hanging on the waist of his doppelganger, fortunately unknown to others. If it were known, it could incite unpredictable madness.

There are many gourd-like treasures that can release Sword Qi, making it difficult for anyone to link the doppelganger's sword gourd with the legendary treasure. After all, such a treasure wouldn't possibly reside with someone at the Divine Sea Realm, would it?

Though the sword gourd is miraculous, destroying stars and eclipsing the sun seemed exaggerated, probably due to Lu Ye's cultivation and the low quality of the treasures consumed by the sword gourd.

Limited by cultivation, Lu Ye couldn't completely refine the intricate restrictions within the sword gourd and thus couldn't utilize its full power. Furthermore, the low quality of consumed treasures directly affected the strength of the Sword Qi.

If the sword gourd mentioned by Ding You truly is the doppelganger's sword gourd, then the treasure obtained from the Sword Weapon Sect is indeed incredible.

"There should be several other treasure gourds with different effects acquired by others, but they are either lost to time or the owners have hidden them away, beyond our knowledge and search. Yet, it is an undisputable fact that all these treasure gourds originate from the Creation Vine. It's unexpected that our present Divine Sea struggle brings such a fortuitous encounter."

Lu Ye picked up on her implication, "Isn't this kind of opportunity available in every Divine Sea struggle?"

Yuk Yaorao chuckled, "How could it be every time? Perhaps once every few thousand to tens of thousands of years can such a chance arise, and supreme treasures like the Creation Vine usually remain hidden. They only reveal themselves when the treasure gourds are about to mature. Junior Brother, look, isn't there something subtly off about the space where the Creation Vine is located?"

Had she not pointed it out, Lu Ye wouldn't have noticed. With her prompting, he scrutinized and discovered there was a subtle, hazy feeling in the space of the Creation Vine, like the moon in water or flowers in mist.

"Although we can see the Creation Vine now, it actually isn't in this space. Its essence exists in a mysterious place, and what we see is merely its projection."

This point had already been verified by others, although Lu Ye arrived late and hadn't witnessed it.

So many cultivators had come, naturally some were early and sought advantage by proximity, ready to pick the treasure gourd regardless of maturity. Even if such an action might impair the treasure gourd's power, it's better than letting others take it. But upon really trying, they found space was wrong; they couldn't touch the Creation Vine or the gourds on it.

This is the primary reason why over two hundred cultivators can restrain their impulses in the face of such valuable treasure. Until the treasure gourd fully matures, it won't emerge from another space.

Only when it fully matures will it truly fall into this space, and then it will be the time for numerous cultivators to vie for it.

It's predictable that it will surely be a grand chaotic fight!

"Since the Creation Vine is a stellar space supreme treasure, what is the quality of the treasure gourd?" Lu Ye asked, curious about this aspect. He had been unable to evaluate the quality of the sword gourd, as he didn't know how many restrictions it contained.

Such a question clearly came from someone inexperienced with worldly matters, prompting a chuckle from Ding You, who explained, "Treasure gourds are considered affiliated treasures of supreme treasures, making it difficult to assess their specific quality. In the hands of someone at the Spirit Stream Realm, it becomes a Spiritual Artifact; in the hands of someone at the Cloud River Realm, it becomes a Magic Artifact; for us at the Divine Sea Realm, it becomes a spirit treasure. It entirely depends on what power the holder can unleash; this is one of the features of affiliated treasures to supreme treasures. Many affiliated treasures to supreme treasures possess this characteristic; otherwise, such quality treasures aren't something just anyone can wield."

What level of cultivation requires what level of treasure. This is common knowledge in the cultivation world; a treasure belonging to a Sun Blaze Realm cultivator given to Lu Ye and others, even if they are all prodigies of various domains, they wouldn't be able to wield it.

But it is different with the affiliated treasure of a supreme treasure, because of its unique traits, its quality and effectiveness entirely depend on the wielder's ability to harness its power.

In other words, a treasure like the treasure gourd can grow in power as the cultivator's cultivation advances, continuously expanding its potential. This is a trait that all cultivators yearn for.

Now Lu Ye can be certain that the doppelganger's sword gourd indeed originates from the Creation Vine, exactly as Ding You mentioned before about the sword gourd.

Compared to other treasures Lu Ye has come across, the sword gourd has always stood out in this regard. Although he hadn't paid much attention to it before, now it seems this is an extremely precious trait.

"What kind of power will this treasure gourd possess?" Lu Ye asked.

Yuk Yaorao shook her head: "Until it ripens and falls into someone's hands, no one knows, but it can be confirmed that every treasure gourd born from the Creation Vine has different powers. Since there are wind gourds and sword gourds and the like, this one nearing maturity will not repeat any that have come before."

Lu Ye wished to inquire further, but Zhao Yunliu, who had remained silent, suddenly coldly spoke: "Why bother asking so many questions? If you really want to know, wait until you leave the Taichu Realm and ask your elders!"

Even while scolding, he didn't glance at Lu Ye.

Yuk Yaorao frowned slightly. No matter what, Lu Ye was someone she had called over. Although she indeed acted improperly by summoning Lu Ye without her companions' consent in such a setting, Zhao Yunliu's attitude undoubtedly left her in a difficult position.

She wondered whether this Junior Brother Lu would be offended. If the two of them were to start quarreling, or even fighting, it would be troublesome for her.

Fortunately, Lu Ye seemed uninterested in arguing with Zhao Yunliu, merely nodding slightly: "What this Fellow Daoist says is true, I was indeed being presumptuous."

Turning to Yuk Yaorao, he cupped his hands in salute: "Thank you, Senior Sister, for clarifying things. If there is anything in which you require assistance in the future, please feel free to call upon me."

With that, he swiftly moved aside.

The rejection from Zhao Yunliu was evident on his face. Naturally, Lu Ye wouldn't make things awkward for himself by staying there, and had it not been for Yuk Yaorao's invitation and his own curiosity about certain matters, he wouldn't have approached such a gathering.

He fully understood his own situation. His inferior cultivation level had already drawn the attention of many. Despite Yuk Yaorao's goodwill, he couldn't put her in a tough spot.

Now, having gathered all the information he needed, there was no reason to linger and be a hindrance.

Shortly after Lu Ye left, Yuk Yaorao sighed slightly: "Senior Brother Zhao, this person is indeed formidable."

During their joint efforts in the Fairy Tree World, Yuk Yaorao had witnessed Lu Ye's strength, which was indeed on par with her. Moreover, he had entered the Insect Race Tree World alone and emerged unscathed, a feat Yuk Yaorao doubted she could accomplish.

Of course, this also had to do with her being a magic cultivator.

No matter Lu Ye's true power, from what she had observed, he was worthy of joining forces with them. With the treasure gourd nearing maturity, having one more person would add strength, especially someone they had previously collaborated with. This was the reason Yuk Yaorao invited Lu Ye over, not expecting her companion to be so unwelcoming.

Zhao Yunliu said indifferently, "Of course, I know he's formidable. Anyone who has survived thus far has some skill, let alone being alone. His strength might indeed not be poor, but his cultivation is a real

handicap! The fact that he's at the Level 8 Realm has already caught many people's attention. If he really acts with us, should someone specifically target him, are we to protect him or seize the treasure gourd? Furthermore, after all this concludes, during the kill and divide, adding one more person means less share for us! Fellow Daoist Yuk, you must understand one thing. I'm not targeting him personally. Even if it were Gu Yulou and such wanting to join us now, I still wouldn't agree! As things stand, a three-person squad is the optimal configuration. Moreover, judging by his attire, he should be a combat cultivator. Even if he were to join us, he wouldn't contribute greatly. If we wish to recruit, it should be a Ghost Cultivator."

Yuk Yaorao pondered silently for a while, then nodded: "Senior Brother's considerations are thorough; it was my lack of foresight."

Zhao Yunliu waved a hand: "Since we are working together, any decision must be carefully discussed with companions. Do not act on your own."

Yuk Yaorao declared earnestly, "There will be no next time."

Only then did Zhao Yunliu nod in satisfaction. In their three-person team, though no one explicitly claimed leadership, Zhao Yunliu had always been the leading figure since their cooperation began. While he spoke nobly to Yuk Yaorao, no one knew how much self-interest lay behind his words.

Chapter 1256 – The Emergence of the Treasure Gourd

More than two hundred figures gathered around the two peaks, and more people were continually drawn by the anomaly here. Upon arrival, they would take a glance around before quickly understanding the situation, quietly standing aside.

Though the scene appeared peaceful, it was actually filled with undercurrents. Gazes crisscrossed in all directions, with no one knowing what schemes others might harbor.

Yet there was a mutual understanding: until the treasure gourd matured and fell, no one would easily initiate the battle.

In such circumstances, picking a fight with someone could very likely lead to two parties fighting and a third benefiting. Those present were no fools and naturally wouldn't engage in such a stupid act.

Most came in pairs or groups, but no party exceeded three people, which was normal. As Zhao Yunliu just mentioned to Yuk Yaorao, once the group grows, it becomes difficult to distribute gains during a successful haul, so a three-person squad is the best setup, ensuring both combat strength and adequate bounty.

Even those who arrived alone began seeking opportunities to form alliances.

It didn't matter if they had never met or didn't recognize each other. As long as there was an intention to ally, they could temporarily join forces, race differences notwithstanding.

Of course, such alliances were loose, without any guarantees. Whether they could truly work together when facing enemies was uncertain.

Many solitary cultivators found temporary companions here.

Lu Ye was the exception, standing alone and unperturbed. His Divine Sea Level 8 cultivation was too conspicuous; anyone with some wit wouldn't approach him rashly. Those who did must harbor ill intentions.

He was happy with the arrangement.

Yuk Yaorao, unable to watch idly, quietly transmitted a message to persuade him to leave quickly. Lu Ye only thanked her and continued his own course.

Seeing him like this, Yuk Yaorao refrained from saying more. Although she did not deny Lu Ye's strength, being targeted in such circumstances could lead to unfavorable outcomes.

As the saying goes, good advice is hard to accept by those doomed. Despite some interactions, they hadn't forged any substantial friendship.

Time passed, and slowly fewer people arrived, while the anomaly in the sky grew increasingly magnificent. Everyone knew the treasure gourd on the Creation Vine would mature soon, but no one could pinpoint the exact moment.

Such an event occurs only once every several thousand years, without precedent to refer to, leaving everyone to simply wait.

Lu Ye's expression remained leisurely, showing no hint of danger. He was pondering only one thing: how to seize the treasure gourd amid so many people.

Confident in his strength, he understood that once the treasure gourd matured, chaos would ensue. Everyone would find themselves surrounded by countless enemies; even the strongest couldn't guarantee success.

It partly depended on strength but largely on luck.

After obtaining the treasure, escaping was not a worry for Lu Ye. His doppelganger concealed thousands of miles away allowed for instant transmission.

Thus, the crucial issue was how to seize it.

Though he already possessed a sword gourd, such high-grade treasures are never excessive. Missing it wouldn't be a loss, but encountering it naturally prompted a grab.

No good strategy came to mind, unless he could set up an array beforehand. Only the might of formations might give him a slim chance. But under so many watchful eyes, where could he possibly set up arrays? Any move would make him a target, and despite his robust foundation, he'd be reduced to ashes in an instant.

He ultimately decided to give his all in seizing the opportunity. If successful, great; if not, it didn't matter. Treasures are meant for those destined for them; one couldn't hoard all the good fortune.

With that thought, he felt more relaxed; even if empty-handed, it would be an eye-opening experience.

Hundreds awaited here for the treasure's emergence, baffling the Baiyu Platform's mighty ones. Historically, this period witnessed rapid decreases in numbers with swift ranking changes, persisting until the end of such grand events.

Current circumstances were different, however. Some names did disappear, and the top hundred rankings changed, but not as intensely as expected, as if the Taichu Realm oddly entered a relatively calm period.

This left everyone puzzled about what was happening. Observing from outside, they couldn't grasp the internal specifics, merely continuing to wait.

What irked many powerful individuals was that Lu Yiye of Nine Heavens World was alive and well, not only surviving but holding the third rank!

Ahead of him were two: Gu Yulou of Yellow Dragon World and Youping of Northern Underworld Land of Specters, each with formidable domain backing. After these two overtook him, no one else did.

This infuriated numerous mighty figures, deeming this generation's Divine Sea Realm truly unimpressive.

Between the two peaks of Taichu Realm, the sky's anomaly suddenly vanished. The waiting Divine Sea cultivators all felt an urgent sense of danger, realizing the treasure might soon emerge. Conjuring spirit force, they readied themselves, poised to strike the moment the treasure fell from the vine.

The void surrounding the Creation Vine between the peaks subtly shuddered, as if the ancient vine was breaking through from another dimension.

Amidst such anticipation, the large gourd slightly swayed, suddenly dropping from the vine, creating ripples as it landed in this space.

Without the slightest pause, it transformed into a streak of light, shooting in one direction, coincidentally colliding into the arms of a cultivator.

The cultivator hadn't yet reacted, only feeling a weight in his arms, instinctively reaching out his hand, and the treasure gourd was already in his grasp.

However, he did not show the slightest joy, his face changed dramatically, and he lifted his hand to throw the treasure gourd away, but he was a step too late.

Almost at the moment he threw the treasure gourd, all directions came alive with colorful beams of light bombarding towards his position.

Under the shroud of light, the cultivator's figure was instantly swallowed by the chaotic spirit force fluctuations, only managing to curse angrily before turning into a shower of blood raining down.

No matter how strong an individual's strength, in such a situation they cannot withstand the siege of everyone.

Not only was he killed, even several cultivators near him suffered unjust fates, each one looking disheveled and quietly cursing their bad luck.

Many figures shifted, flying towards the direction of the treasure gourd, with attacks being launched in all directions, plunging the scene into utter chaos.

The struggle of the Divine Sea in the Taichu Realm had been ongoing for nearly two months, and the largest battle officially unfolded at this point. At such a time and place, everyone around was an enemy, even those who had just allied were not to be fully trusted.

Amid the scramble of hundreds, several auras were immediately snuffed out, soon followed by more people meeting their end.

Everyone understood, this was not the time to snatch the treasure gourd, because once it was in hand, it would undoubtedly become the target of others' attacks, so nearly everyone's goal was to eliminate opponents around them, all while following the direction in which the treasure gourd fled, ensuring it stayed within their sight.

This scenario was bound to last for a while, perhaps several hours, perhaps a few days, until the number of competitors decreased to a certain point. The cultivators still alive then would truly make a move to seize it.

In the blink of an eye, the space between the two peaks was vacated.

Only three figures stood solid.

In the center stood Lu Ye, Boulder Mountain Saber in hand, its dark blade slowly gathering a smear of crimson at the tip, transforming into a drop of blood that fell.

At his feet, a headless corpse tumbled into the valley below, the head rolling a few times, eyes wide with a look of shock, as if not expecting to be so easily slain.

On either side, two figures each wore expressions of disbelief, the one on the left a delicate female cultivator, undoubtedly a member of the human race.

The one on the right's race was unknown, although broadly resembling the human race, their cheeks were covered with snake scale-like markings, appearing extremely strange.

Lu Ye recognized this fellow.

Back on the Baiyu Platform, Yang Qing had haggled with his elder at a stall, purchasing a treasure for the price of one spirit jade, even leaving only a verbal IOU for that one spirit jade.

According to Yang Qing, this fellow's elder had clashed with him before, so he decided to teach them a lesson.

Lu Ye still remembered the look of anger in this fellow's eyes as he left with Yang Qing.

Those elders dared not act rashly in front of Yang Qing, but surely had instructed their juniors to deal with Lu Ye in the Taichu Realm.

Having been unable to find Lu Ye before, unexpectedly encountering him here, naturally, they wouldn't hold back.

He had also formed an alliance with others, a squad of three in total, besides him and the delicate female cultivator, there was a now-deceased ghost cultivator!

While others set their sights on the soon-to-mature treasure gourd, this group of three focused on Lu Ye, just waiting for the chaos to take his head. Then there would still be time to chase the treasure gourd.

Undoubtedly, others had similar thoughts, but since these three had already secretly arranged, others wouldn't get involved, to prevent unnecessary disputes.

Besides, pursuing the treasure gourd at this moment was indeed more prudent, as its value far exceeded a simple kill. As long as one could acquire it, even retreating from the Taichu Realm wouldn't be a loss.

This squad of three thought it was a simple task, but once they made their move, they realized things exceeded expectations.

The ghost cultivator had long been concealed beside Lu Ye. By logic, striking suddenly should have left Lu Ye no chance to fight back, yet it was the ghost cultivator who perished.

This made the other two instantly realize that Lu Yiye had long been aware of the ghost cultivator's cloaked presence, awaiting this precise moment to unleash a thunderous strike!

Chapter 1257 - Abandoning the Blade

The Ghost Cultivator died too quickly, so quickly that his two companions didn't have time to assist. This doesn't mean the Ghost Cultivator's strength was really that easy to overthrow; which cultivator taking part in this grand event would be weak?

It was just that Lu Ye seized the moment with such exquisite precision, counterattacking almost at the instant the Ghost Cultivator struck with full force.

To achieve a one-hit kill effect, all Ghost Cultivators would unleash all their power at the very moment they acted, and this is also when their defense is the weakest.

The opportunity flashed by like lightning, yet Lu Ye grasped it with unfailing accuracy. The Ghost Cultivator, almost devoid of any protection, had no chance of survival under the slash of the Boulder Mountain Saber.

Such reactions are not something everyone possesses; they need to go through countless life-and-death combat experiences to accumulate such proficiency in facing enemies.

He looked calmly at the female cultivator, his eyes filled with silence, as if looking at a dead person.

The female cultivator felt her skin tingling with unease, a sign of imminent crisis that's a natural reaction when the sense of danger reaches its peak. She was also a battle-hardened person, so how could she not know what this signifies?

Without waiting for Lu Ye to move again, she decisively retreated and shouted: "Zhoo Kou, I'm not getting involved in your mess anymore!"

These words seemed directed at her companions but were actually meant for Lu Ye, to clarify her stance. Even after saying this, she dared not relax her vigilance, fearing Lu Ye would pursue her with his saber. To her relief, the combat cultivator just gazed at her indifferently, showing no intention to chase.

Not until she retreated to a relatively safe distance did the female cultivator quickly turn and flee.

Their group was initially a loosely bound alliance, working together briefly when there was profit to be had, but falling apart instantly when trouble arose.

The female cultivator could retreat, but Zhoo Kou couldn't. He remembered Lu Ye, and how could Lu Ye forget him? Since he chose to act here, there was no chance of a peaceful resolution.

Before setting out, his elder had already instructed him: if there's an opportunity, be sure to deal with this combat cultivator, to vent their grudge properly.

Thus, almost the moment the female cultivator retreated, Zhoo Kou fiercely rushed at Lu Ye. Even though Lu Ye's earlier one-slash kill of the Ghost Cultivator displayed his formidable strength, Zhoo Kou was undeterred because dealing with combat cultivators was precisely what he excelled at.

As he charged, three pitch-black spheres suddenly emerged around him, spinning rapidly around his body.

In a blink, he was close. Even before making a move, the three black spheres flew towards Lu Ye amid their spinning motion.

Though Lu Ye didn't know exactly what these sinister objects were, he knew not to touch them recklessly. The Boulder Mountain Saber slashed down through the gaps between the rotating spheres.

The slash could have landed on Zhoo Kou, but the originally neatly rotating black spheres suddenly became chaotic, with one stopping eerily, intercepting the slash of the Boulder Mountain Saber.

It was too late for Lu Ye to retract his strike. The long saber hit the black sphere, yet it neither shattered nor gave any significant feedback; instead, it quickly disintegrated into a mass of black light clinging to the Boulder Mountain Saber, rendering it unbearably heavy. This wasn't all—the other two masses of black light joined in, further increasing the saber's weight to an astonishing degree.

For the first time since his cultivation, Lu Ye felt unable to lift his weapon, and the saber's horrendous weight even caused his body to slightly sink.

He finally realized what these three masses of black light were about—they could attach to a combat cultivator's weapon, augmenting it with a weight akin to a mountain effortlessly.

A combat cultivator without a weapon is like a tiger without teeth. How much of their strength can they truly display?

This was Zhoo Kou's perfect method to deal with combat cultivators. Relying on this unique secret technique, two combat cultivators had previously fallen by his hand. He believed this one in front of him would be no exception.

So, with a loud laugh, he swung his fist down: "Die!"

This punch was as powerful as a thunderbolt, with immense momentum that even distorted the surrounding Void space.

He expected at least to give this combat cultivator a good beating, but to his surprise, the opponent reacted swiftly, counterpunching immediately.

The instant their fists met, the smile on Zhoo Kou's face froze because from the opponent's fist he felt an overwhelming force that was impossible to resist—so great that even he felt it was beyond reach.

Is this truly a combat cultivator? Zhoo Kou suddenly doubted whether his eyes had deceived him.

While he was distracted, Lu Ye had already kicked out—a rapid, instinctive, and nigh-irresolvable response—striking Zhoo Kou in the stomach and sending him flying like a ragged sack.

Seizing the chance, Lu Ye looked down at his Boulder Mountain Saber, attempting a swing. The motion was incredibly sluggish because it had become extraordinarily heavy. He tried to channel spirit force to dispel the black light clinging to the blade, but to no avail. The black light wasn't a mere appearance—it was actually innumerable tiny, peculiar grains of black sand, each possessing substantial weight.

This must be something Zhoo Kou specifically refined to target male cultivators' treasures, whether it was the weapons of combat cultivators or the flying swords of sword cultivators—once stained, they could never be wielded effortlessly again.

In this light, any cultivator needing a spirit treasure to fully exert their strength would find no advantage when facing Zhoo Kou.

The stellar space is vast and full of wonders. Lu Ye had previously encountered cultivators from various races, each time broadening his horizons. He thought he was knowledgeable, but now realized he was still ignorant.

Undeniably, this black sand was a peculiar thing; the specifics of which Lu Ye did not understand.

Without delving deeper, he lifted his gaze towards Zhoo Kou, who was struggling to stabilize his stance not far away. Lu Ye loosened his grip, letting the Boulder Mountain Saber fall straight down.

Zhoo Kou was a little dumbfounded.

In the past, he used his unique method to deal with combat cultivators, often catching them in disarray. No combat cultivator would easily abandon their weapon, and without a weapon, what kind of combat cultivator would they be? Especially since a combat cultivator's weapon typically accompanies them for many years, it is an extension of a combat cultivator's body, something not easily discarded.

He could exploit this point, trapping combat cultivators in a bind, controlling the fight's rhythm, and deciding their life or death.

But what he saw before him was evidently abnormal. This combat cultivator actually discarded his long saber so effortlessly?

"When the saber is with you, you're alive; when the saber is lost, you're dead. Where is your combat cultivator's pride and persistence?"

Boom...

A thunderous sound echoed as the Boulder Mountain Saber fell like a meteorite into the valley below. The massive impact split the earth, winds roared, and trees swayed.

Zhoo Kou's body swayed along with them.

For no other reason than that Lu Ye had already rushed to him, wielding a short mace in each hand, which were the two spirit treasures from the formidable Insect Race member, Loathesome Aphid.

Without the Boulder Mountain Saber, he couldn't unleash his full strength, but if only dealing with a physique cultivator... it seemed irrelevant whether he had the Boulder Mountain Saber or not.

After all, it was just a close quarters fight, brute force triumphs over a hundred skills.

The two short maces formed afterimages, raining down mercilessly on Zhoo Kou. Without refining these two spirit treasures, he couldn't activate the restrictions within, only his own force augmented them.

Zhoo Kou raised his arms to block, swinging a fist in counterattack, spirit force and blood Qi surging around him.

Initially, he managed a counterattack or two, but quickly sensed things were amiss. Compared to him, a proper physique cultivator, the combat cultivator opposite him was both faster and stronger.

This forced him to go all out on defense.

The clangs resounded constantly in the valley. Undeniably, a physique cultivator's body was truly tough. Even under Lu Ye's frenzied assault, he repelled every strike, each impact yielding a feedback akin to hitting an iron wall.

When a cultivator's cultivation is low, a physique cultivator's body is indeed stronger than other schools, but the advantage isn't too obvious. As cultivation increases, the benefits of a strong physique become increasingly prominent. At the level of the Divine Sea Realm, their physical bodies are their most relied upon spirit treasure.

Hence, cultivators at this level rarely employ protective treasures, as those treasures' defenses may not surpass their physique. Using treasures requires effort, which is a waste during a fight.

But this doesn't mean physique cultivators lack protective spirit treasures. They always have at least one or two for emergencies.

Zhoo Kou also had a protective spirit treasure. Seeing the tide of battle turning, he immediately summoned it, forming a protective shield around himself. In an instant, he radiated brilliantly, as if enveloped in a golden glow.

However, this golden glow lasted less than ten breaths before it shattered under the relentless assault, no matter how firm the defense, it couldn't withstand such continuous, brutal force.

When the golden light shattered, despair crossed Zhoo Kou's eyes. He knew this time, he was likely doomed.

Every time he restrained a combat cultivator's weapon, he prevailed, but this time he failed spectacularly.

Indeed, as the saying goes, often walking by the river, how can your shoes not get wet?

A cracking sound emerged as Zhoo Kou's arms broke, pain etched on his face. With that strike, his condensed blood Qi defense also violently oscillated.

Like the last straw that broke the camel's back, his original resistance and defense utterly collapsed at that moment.

With a ruthless expression, instead of retreating, he advanced, spreading his broken arms as if to embrace Lu Ye, indicating that even if he were to die, he must take a bite out of Lu Ye.

How could Lu Ye let him have his way? His body gracefully drifted back while the two short maces in his hands swung more fiercely, aiming directly at Zhoo Kou's head.

When the final mace struck down, Zhoo Kou's head suddenly burst, blood rain splattering everywhere, like a blooming blood rose.

Chapter 1258 - A Unique Advantage

Zhoo Kou is dead, Lu Ye turns his head and looks in a certain direction.

In that direction, a figure suddenly appears, transforming into a streak of light quickly fleeing into the distance.

Looking at that figure, it is surprisingly the female cultivator who had escaped earlier!

The woman had somehow snuck back without being noticed, concealing herself nearby, clearly planning to emulate the scenario of the mantis stalking the cicada, only to be caught by the oriole behind. Hopefully, if Lu Ye and Zhoo Kou fought to both suffer serious injuries, she might scoop them up easily, with twin rewards.

To her surprise, however, the battle was completely one-sided from the start; Zhoo Kou, under the berserk and ruthless suppression of the combat cultivator, couldn't even fight back and was brutally beaten to death!

Moreover, she clearly saw that the combat cultivator had discarded his long saber from the start, using two short mace spirit treasures that hadn't even been refined.

In other words, the combat cultivator hadn't even used his full strength! If he had the long saber in hand, one can only imagine the level of crushing dominance.

The situation undoubtedly shook the female cultivator's psyche. She had previously sensed Lu Ye's strength, which prompted her swift departure, yet an unwillingness lingered, thinking she might seize some opportunistic gains, so she had sneaked back. But upon observation, the combat cultivator's might far exceeded her expectations!

Zhoo Kou's strength was certainly not weak; among the current batch of Divine Sea Realm cultivators, although not top-tier, he was at least mid-level. Yet before the combat cultivator, he was like a child being thrashed.

Had she not seen it with her own eyes, the female cultivator would never believe such a thing could occur in this world.

Where did this freak come from? To her horror, the man is only Divine Sea Level 8!

Hence, when Lu Ye turned his gaze towards her, she dared not hesitate anymore and fled instantly, truly leaving this time. In her three-member squad, the ghost cultivator died mysteriously, Zhoo Kou was brutally crushed—she would not follow her companions' footsteps.

Looking in the direction where the female cultivator escaped, Lu Ye did not pursue.

Mainly because the Boulder Mountain Saber was still underground, he needed to retrieve it; otherwise, if someone else picked it up, he wouldn't have time to cry.

With a flash, he glided to where the Boulder Mountain Saber had fallen. Only a section of the hilt was exposed above the ground; the entire saber body was embedded in the earth, cracks radiating from the long saber's center on the surrounding surface.

Raising his hand, he pulled out the Boulder Mountain Saber, still able to feel its deep heaviness. Previously, he had tried dispersing the black light adhering to the saber's body but failed; however, at this moment, attempting again faced no obstacles.

The essence of the black light was tiny grains of black sand, each fine as dust, yet individually immensely heavy, refined by Zhoo Kou, used to restrain cultivators' blades.

Now that Zhoo Kou is dead, no one controls the black light, making its dispersal not too difficult.

Lu Ye spent a bit of time completely dispersing the black light, restoring the Boulder Mountain Saber to its original appearance, and the black sand was also collected. This thing's quality is evidently not common, could be sold later, or maybe incorporated into the re-casting of the Boulder Mountain Saber, increasing its weight to match his growing strength.

The last time the Boulder Mountain Saber was upgraded was a long time ago. Since Lu Ye ascended to the Divine Sea, his cultivation has advanced rapidly, and the quality of the Boulder Mountain Saber could evolve through merging the Soul Severing Saber within at any time to meet Lu Ye's demands, but the Boulder Mountain Saber's inherent texture has somewhat struggled to keep pace with Lu Ye's cultivation upgrade.

Don't mention anything else, just the weight alone is far from satisfactory.

Lu Ye estimates that once he ascends to Constellation, the current Boulder Mountain Saber will hardly satisfy his cultivation needs, so by then, re-casting will be inevitable.

After a brief delay, Lu Ye swiftly pursued in the direction where the treasure gourd fled.

Previously, many cultivators had already chased after it; no one knows the current situation, but with so many people gathered, yet only one treasure gourd, obtaining it wouldn't be easy, and once fighting breaks out, chaos is inevitable.

During the flight, he simultaneously senses the doppelganger's situation nearby.

The doppelganger is currently lurking in a hidden location about 30 miles away, having set up a big array to conceal its presence. Previously, when nearby cultivators were drawn away by the treasure gourd's phenomenon, it's still challenging to detect traces.

At this moment, the sword gourd at the doppelganger's waist is rhythmically vibrating...

Undoubtedly, the sword gourd originates from the Creation Vine, an affiliated treasure of the supreme treasure, hence when the Creation Vine appears, the sword gourd senses it, guiding the doppelganger towards this side.

But before that, it was merely a direction indicator. Even without such guidance, as long as Lu Ye was nearby, he could see the grand and conspicuous phenomenon, gathering hundreds of cultivators here.

However, after the treasure gourd on the Creation Vine matured and fell off, the sword gourd elicited a different response, as it is rhythmically vibrating now.

Moreover, the doppelganger can obviously feel that the sword gourd faintly seems to want to detach from him, flying forward. However, this tendency is not strong and is easily suppressed by the doppelganger.

Reflecting on the direction in which the treasure gourd fled when it fell, coinciding precisely with the location of his doppelganger, an exhilarating thought surged in Lu Ye's mind.

Could it be that the newly emerged treasure gourd is attempting to fly towards the doppelganger?

Treasure with a spirit, both originating from the Creation Vine, even if their effects differ, are naturally drawn to each other, sharing a kindred source.

Now, with the Creation Vine having concealed itself, the newly emerged treasure gourd is in a state of confusion and lost, naturally gravitating towards a familiar aura!

Truth be told, Lu Ye previously harbored little desire for the treasure gourd. While it is indeed valuable and highly sought after, trying to seize such a valuable treasure under the gaze of hundreds was not just a test of strength.

The reason he remained here was first out of opportunistic curiosity—a rare chance to gain knowledge and insight—and second, to see if there was an opportunity to eliminate some competitors and gain a few more victories. His stance on the treasure gourd was simply go with the flow.

Most cultivators likely shared this sentiment; if luck were on one's side and they obtained the treasure gourd, it would be for the best. Its value was sufficient to cause any cultivator to immediately withdraw from the Taichu Realm and give up the pursuit of the top hundred spots.

Yet the situation has changed now; the treasure gourd has shown signs of connection with his sword gourd, prompting Lu Ye to think more deeply.

Compared to others, his doppelganger undoubtedly holds a significant advantage.

This was something Lu Ye hadn't anticipated before.

But how could he take the treasure gourd from under hundreds of people without leaving any concerns? Forcefully snatching it wouldn't work. Even if he succeeded, he'd become the target of

everyone, making survival in the Taichu Realm impossible, leaving him no choice but to exit early. That's not what Lu Ye wanted. He now had some thoughts on the treasure gourd, but he was determined to claim a top hundred spot.

He could only find a way; obviously, if that treasure gourd could fly directly to his doppelganger, that would be perfect. At that point, when everyone was chasing the treasure gourd, the doppelganger could directly teleport it back to Lu Ye, naturally shaking off others. The doppelganger could then activate the Thousand Faces Spirit Runes to change his appearance. Thus, without notice, no one would know that he, Lu Ye, had obtained such a valuable treasure.

But the distance was around thirty miles, and the treasure gourd hadn't flown to the doppelganger yet, suggesting a problem had occurred.

Lu Ye quickly realized the problem. After flying less than sixty miles, he saw hundreds of cultivators forming a large circle in the sky up ahead, with a treasure light darting left and right among them, but all intercepted and blocked. That treasure light was evidently the treasure gourd!

At first glance, it seemed like hundreds of cultivators were united in suppressing the treasure gourd; in reality, it was far from it. While intercepting the treasure gourd, these cultivators were also attacking each other, albeit with restraint, resulting in minimal casualties.

No one wanted to engage in mutual destruction with others, allowing others to reap the benefits.

Moreover, the strange thing was, despite being attracted to the phenomenon caused by the treasure gourd, no one dared touch it.

There was a precedent...

Before Lu Ye arrived, several unsuspecting individuals tried to seize the treasure gourd, but in that instant, they were annihilated by attacks from all directions, their psyche shattered. In such chaos, no one knew who delivered the deadly blows.

Thus, the cultivators opted for this current approach—only intercepting, absolutely avoiding contact!

Every cultivator found this situation troubling. Faced with the valuable treasure, it was impossible not to be moved, but having a life to take it but not to use it was futile.

Nobody knew how long this situation would last, but it certainly couldn't endure much longer because they were roughly in the inner circle of the Taichu Realm. When the specific time limit expired, cultivators would be unable to remain, causing this tight defensive circle to collapse on its own.

Upon Lu Ye's arrival, he did not attract much attention. Currently, most cultivators were distracted by others, so who would pay attention to someone else?

Moreover, Lu Ye did not step forward, just stood observing from a distance, making it even harder to attract attention.

After watching for a moment, he gained a rough understanding of the situation, and a plan began to form in his mind!

To seize the treasure gourd, the doppelganger had a natural advantage, so what he needed to do was simply break through this impenetrable defensive circle, giving the treasure gourd a chance to escape!

If the gourd managed to break through, it would most likely fly in the direction of his doppelganger, who could then directly secure it.

However, before that, some arrangements were still necessary!

After all, if the doppelganger did succeed, he would have to face the pursuit of hundreds of cultivators. If Lu Ye had no one by his side, the doppelganger could teleport over, but the actual situation was unpredictable, so making some prior arrangements was more prudent.

With this thought, Lu Ye turned and left, while at the same time, his doppelganger also started busying himself.

The situation here wouldn't change much in the short term. Considering the time, the activity area of the Taichu Realm should shrink within two days; by then, no one could remain here, so Lu Ye had to act before then, for any delay might lead to unexpected changes.

Chapter 1259 - Raising Havoc

After some arrangements that took less than half a day, Lu Ye set out again towards the gathering place of the cultivators.

About 30 miles away, he halted and observed from a distance; he could clearly see the situation over there. Hundreds of cultivators still formed a large circle, while the light of the treasure gourd darted back and forth within, yet remained unable to break free from the encirclement.

For how to break this circle's defense, Lu Ye had some considerations. Directly charging in with wild slashing was undoubtedly unfeasible. The cultivators over there were currently maintaining a tacit understanding, mostly grouped in threes and twos, mutually assisting each other. If he charged in alone and aroused anger, he would inevitably face a besiege.

Therefore, a strong and effective assault was needed, one that could cause the assembled cultivators over there to feel a sense of dread, thus increasing the possibility of success!

Lu Ye had such means, though it was not easy to activate under normal circumstances, as the fluctuating battle situations often left him with no room to wield it.

However, using that method here was most appropriate. From a distance of about 30 miles, with a fixed target, he had ample time and space to gather power.

Then...

Let's cause a big stir!

Lu Ye felt a long-lost excitement. Deep down, he too enjoyed this kind of thrill and madness. When his cultivation was low, on the Spirit Stream battlefield, the Cloud River battlefield, he single-handedly opposed numerous enemies, always managing to achieve success and retreat unharmed. However, as his cultivation grew higher and fame increased, he gradually lost that joy.

Now was a good opportunity.

He traveled through the air, his initial speed not fast, but as he advanced, his spirit force and blood Qi gradually began to boil, and his speed became increasingly faster!

After about 3 miles, his form had transformed into a fiery red stream of light, resembling a flying meteor.

Moreover, his body surface was shimmering with spirit light, countless Yin-Yang Dual Origins began to manifest, interconnecting and interlocking, gradually engulfing his figure.

After about 6 miles, Lu Ye's whole person had vanished, replaced by an enormous fiery red egg, with crust-like red patterns flowing over its surface like magma. It seemed to have a life of its own, expanding and contracting with Lu Ye's advance, as if it were breathing.

After about 9 miles, the momentum intensified, and the fiery red egg grew larger, with the breaths indicative of impending life becoming increasingly apparent.

After about 15 miles, as this massive fiery red egg cut through the sky, it left behind a trail of pitch-black scorch marks, as though even space itself was being incinerated.

After about 21 miles... The hundreds of cultivators gathered in a circle finally sensed something amiss, as each person's heart inexplicably conjured a forewarning of danger, as if an enormous crisis was descending mysteriously. Especially those cultivators close to the direction Lu Ye was advancing from had been aware of something when Lu Ye was still 15 miles away, yet no one knew exactly what the matter was. Now, this sense of crisis was becoming more distinctly and intensely apparent.

"What's that?" Someone exclaimed, precisely the cultivator facing the direction Lu Ye was advancing from. Although everyone's attention was mainly focused on the treasure gourd and surrounding enemies, such a phenomenon was indeed hard to ignore.

As his words fell, everyone collectively looked over, only to see a fiery red stream of light hurtling towards them rapidly. Through the shielding of the stream, the vague outline of a gigantic egg was discernible.

This sudden anomaly left most at a loss, but some well-informed cultivators immediately saw through its true nature: "A secret technique?"

Though they weren't sure what kind of secret technique it was, its formidable and realistic booming momentum in approach indicated its power couldn't be small.

If it's a secret technique, there must be someone casting it. Now it seemed evident that the caster was concealed within that gigantic egg!

"This person plans to steal the treasure!" someone shouted angrily.

This stirred an indignant reaction among everyone. Though hundreds of cultivators had gathered there, spending much time unable to determine ownership of the treasure gourd, since the situation was not chaotic, any attempt to rob would result in attacks by others.

Many had already died for this.

While they suffered here, fighting bitter battles, someone dared to crash in so rudely, intending to steal the treasure?

Undeniably, the opponent's booming and powerful momentum instilled a sense of danger in everyone, but as the top prodigies from major domains, their minds weren't easily overcome. Fearing such momentum and fleeing dispersedly would only let this suddenly emerging sinister individual reap benefits.

The opponent hid their form inside the gigantic egg, not daring to reveal themselves; what right did they have to claim the treasure?

Under such circumstances, if the treasure gourd were taken, they wouldn't deserve to be called the prodigies of their home domains.

So, even surprised by the methods displayed by the newcomer, none retreated. Instead, a shared resolve was born.

No matter who ultimately claimed the treasure gourd, one among the hundreds present here, outsiders shall not intervene!

A figure emerged, feinting towards the direction of the advancing red stream, speaking aloud: "I am Nan Xiong of Yaotian, is there a Fellow Daoist willing to lend me a hand and stop this barghest?"

Such a moment of shared adversarial resolve awaited a leader, and Nan Xiong from Yaotian World stepped forward in time. He had both the strength and the qualifications.

Yaotian World was a famed top-tier domain, second only to Yellow Dragon World in the stellar space under human control.

If Gu Yulou were present, he naturally would have stepped forward, but as Gu Yulou wasn't here, Nan Xiong had no choice but to take the responsibility. Decisive by nature, once realizing the situation, he automatically took a stand.

Followers like clouds!

Among the hundreds of cultivators, over thirty immediately stepped forward, arrayed behind Nan Xiong, appearing ready to follow his lead, with all the mighty ones gathered and their aura soaring into the sky.

It wasn't that more people didn't want to step forward, but to intercept, it's clear that magic cultivators and sword cultivators are more suitable, as they can deploy means from a distance, while cultivators from other factions are slightly inferior.

Besides, enough people need to be left to form an encirclement to prevent the treasure gourd from escaping.

So those standing behind Nan Xiong at this moment are almost all magic cultivators and sword cultivators.

There was no need for more words; as Nan Xiong took the lead, multicolored lights mixed with howling flying swords rushed towards the red light coming from the front.

At the distance of about thirty miles, the large egg into which Lu Ye transformed crashed into a storm of magic and sword Qi, immediately feeling enormous pressure.

Fortunately, the large egg itself possesses extremely strong protection, and with the eighty miles of momentum previously gathered and Lu Ye's frenzied infusion of spirit force, it wasn't something that could be easily intercepted.

As the offensive began, it was continuous and unending, with no sign of stopping.

Under everyone's watchful eyes, the surface of the large egg cracked with numerous fissures, seemingly on the verge of breaking.

Seeing this, everyone felt relieved, thinking the opponent's means were just for show, looking impressive but actually ineffective.

However, this was also related to everyone's strength, as each of them had an extremely solid foundation. With such a joint effort, looking at this vast stellar space, which Divine Sea Realm could withstand?

Let's see who this reckless guy is, who dares to act like this.

At about thirty miles, the fiery red surface of the large egg was densely covered with cracks, and the constant cracking sound indicated it could shatter at any moment.

Someone sneered repeatedly, "Overestimating oneself." They felt fortunate they weren't intimidated by this guy, and luckily Nan Xiong stepped forward; otherwise, a few individuals couldn't have stopped such an offensive.

Someone else shouted, "Put more effort into it, he can't hold it anymore!"

As the words fell, a crashing sound was heard, and the fiery red large egg finally couldn't withstand the dense attacks and shattered explosively.

Some people laughed, while others focused on observing, wanting to see the true appearance of the hidden one.

Only a few cultivators with sharp insight felt something was off, including the leader, Nan Xiong, as he vaguely sensed that the egg's shattering seemed not entirely due to their interception, but also had traces of the opponent's active action!

Why?

No time to think about it, for as soon as the egg shattered, a clear and loud cry resounded across the sky, deafening, accompanied by a sudden spread of large fiery red light!

Everyone's pupils suddenly contracted.

In view, there was a giant bird figure of noble temperament, its entire body burning with raging flames, with a wingspan reaching a hundred feet. It lightly flapped its wings, passing through ten miles as if it would ignite the sky.

"Fire Phoenix!" someone exclaimed in shock.

They originally thought there was a sneaky figure hiding in the big egg, but instead of seeing a sneaky rat, they saw the Four Auspicious Sacred Beasts!

Why would there be a Fire Phoenix in the Taichu Realm? Everyone was filled with great doubts.

"It's not a Fire Phoenix, it's just a secret technique!" Nan Xiong gritted his teeth and said in a low voice.

Though this Fire Phoenix at first glance seemed lifelike, like a real creature, he still spotted some flaws. This was by no means a real Fire Phoenix, but an outward manifestation of a secret technique.

Magic cultivators can also evoke such a Fire Phoenix technique, but compared to what they are seeing now, both in terms of charm and scale, it's far inferior.

This Fire Phoenix technique is fundamentally beyond what a Divine Sea Realm cultivator can employ. It might be possible for a Constellation Realm, but even that is just a possibility!

Although he was reminding the others, Nan Xiong's forehead was twitching. Could it be something concocted by someone participating in the Divine Sea battle?

Who could it be?

He had to admit his assessment wasn't wrong. At the Divine Sea Realm level, no one could deploy such a scaled Fire Phoenix technique, and Lu Ye couldn't do it either. But if given enough time to gather momentum, the impossible could become possible.

When cultivation isn't enough, this Fire Phoenix can drain all his spirit force. However, with the foundation of a Divine Sea Level 8, it can now be freely performed, but to ensure the power of this technique, Lu Ye infused most of his spirit force into it!

Since he can recover quickly, there's no need to worry that a lack of spirit force will affect the subsequent plans, which created the enormous figure of the Fire Phoenix currently.

Chapter 1260 - Breaking Through the Formation

The magnificent, gigantic silhouette of the Fire Phoenix soared with its wings, accompanied by a piercing cry, its overwhelming pressure sweeping across.

It was undeniably the oppressive power only a Constellation Realm cultivator could wield!

Whether it was the overpowering pressure or the intense heat, even the void twisted as a result.

Hundreds of cultivators were all shaken at heart.

The cultivators who came here indeed possessed resolute dispositions and strong minds, usually impervious to disturbances. However, the pressure was tangible, so upon sensing that clear oppressive force belonging to a Constellation Realm expert, everyone's heart jumped.

What on earth is happening? Among a group of Divine Sea cultivators, how could a Constellation Realm appear?

This was the merit of Lu Ye's Pseudo-Might Spirit Runes. With his current Divine Sea Level 8 foundations, activating the Pseudo-Might Spirit Runes to simulate the oppressive power of a Constellation Realm cultivator was still a breeze. He originally intended to simulate a Moon Jade Realm's pressure, which would be even more terrifying, perhaps even scaring them all away without any effort.

But after reconsidering, although a Moon Jade Realm's pressure was indeed scarier, it had more flaws, making the Constellation Realm the more appropriate choice.

In the last few miles, hidden within the massive silhouette of the Fire Phoenix, Lu Ye could already discern traces of cultivators employing escape techniques, fleeing in all directions.

Simply such a grand secret technique was insufficient to frighten them off, but if a Constellation Realm did truly make a move, the situation would be different.

Despite no one understanding how a Constellation Realm could emerge here!

Nan Xiong wouldn't retreat!

Not only did he not retreat, he activated magic and spells, striking at the Fire Phoenix, shouting, "Don't be scared of him! Let us join forces! Even if this barghest isn't a real Constellation, if it were a genuine Constellation, we could still fight him!"

Indeed, cultivators originating from the most elite domains had especially resilient wills; naturally, this likely related to his determination to seize the treasure gourd. Coming from a top domain like Yaotian World, simply prevailing in the Divine Sea struggle wasn't enough to prove his capabilities. If he could return with a treasure gourd for his domain amidst this conflict, it would be a true accomplishment. He would surely earn recognition from the domain elders, tremendously benefiting his future prospects.

Regarding the treasure gourd, he secretly had plans and arrangements. Although not absolutely certain, he had a significant chance. As long as the situation continued developing as such, he had a sixty-percent probability of snatching the treasure gourd.

This was why when sensing the impending crisis, he stood out first; he had to ensure no unexpected upheavals would disrupt his plans.

Now, naturally, he couldn't retreat easily.

With his shout, several people immediately responded, attacking together; these were his secret allies.

For a cultivator like him from a top-tier domain, famed outside, recruiting some helpers was still easy, especially with certain domains inherently friendly with Yaotian World.

Upon attacking, they immediately sensed something amiss, as their magic and spells struck that Fire Phoenix, and some peculiar feelings fed back from the spirit force.

Nan Xiong was furious, shouting again, "This isn't a Constellation; it's just an illusion technique! Folks, don't be deceived by him!" How could the Taichu Realm harbor a Constellation Realm? It was merely a unique method.

Pseudo-Might was indeed just an illusion technique, intimidating in appearance but easily broken.

Thankfully, no one had attacked the Fire Phoenix yet, but once an attack was launched, someone as sharp as Nan Xiong could easily make a clear judgment.

Lu Ye triggering Pseudo-Might was merely an experiment. If effective, great, if not, that's fine too, but he didn't expect it to be exposed so quickly. Through the silhouette of the Fire Phoenix, he cast a faint glance at Nan Xiong, remembering this fellow who ruined his plans.

Following Nan Xiong's series of attacks and shout, more people steadied themselves and unleashed assaults.

In an instant, frantic magic spells and flying swords, even denser and more ferocious than before, lashed out, the Fire Phoenix enwrapped by tumultuous spirit force, turbulent energy.

Over the few miles of advance, the enormous figure incessantly shrank, a direct consequence of the attacks, reducing its size to maintain its full shape.

Within a short time, its volume diminished by over thirty percent.

Nan Xiong and his blockading comrades at the forefront could no longer stay putted; although he exposed Lu Ye's scheme, rallied the crowd, achieved some results, yet the distance remained too brief. If farther by ten miles, he was confident of completely stopping the Fire Phoenix.

But now it's impossible!

One thing couldn't be denied; this secret technique, panned across the Divine Sea Realm level, was indeed fearsomely powerful, hard to resist directly.

So before the Fire Phoenix plunged into the crowd, the numerous blocking cultivators could only dodge momentarily, escaping left and right.

The cry resounded once again, akin to life's last echo and struggle, even though its volume diminished, the wingspan still remained at dozens of yards, the Fire Phoenix crashing into the massive circle formed by the hundreds of cultivators.

Everyone was retreating!

The originally tightly guarded circle instantly became shattered and fragmented.

A loud boom echoed out, as the spirit force surged, the massive Fire Phoenix figure dispersed into nothingness. It had rushed into the circle but was attacked by too many people during the process and could no longer be maintained.

Fiery spirit force scattered in all directions, flames shooting up into the sky, engulfing various cultivators within. They shouted angrily, cursed endlessly, and the scene was a chaotic mess.

Some were injured, but more were unharmed. Even those who were injured, their injuries weren't severe. After all, many shared the pressure of the Phoenix's final explosion, so it would not claim their lives.

Amidst the dust-covered faces, some expanded their Mental Consciousness to search all around, investigating the whereabouts of the treasure gourd.

In such a chaotic situation, the tight encirclement could no longer be maintained, and in the final moments, the treasure gourd had already fled with astonishing speed.

More than one cultivator detected this situation—there was a group, and they couldn't afford any delay and swiftly leaped forward to pursue.

However, at that very moment, an extremely fierce and brutal aura suddenly surged, as if an ancient ferocious beast imprisoned for ten thousand years was finally freed.

Amidst the blaze, a fierce saber light suddenly slashed towards this group! Immediately followed by a dense barrage of saber lights, the group scrambled to respond, with some deploying techniques to defend and others dodging.

The already chaotic situation now became even more chaotic.

In such chaos, all eyes soon riveted to one place—the spot where the Fire Phoenix had finally burst!

The flames there were rapidly diminishing, with a tall and twisted shadow swaying amidst the fire, its two bloodthirsty red points slightly rippling.

In the next moment, the true form of that shadow came into everyone's view, and all couldn't help but gasp.

It was a crimson shadow towering three zhang high, with peculiar patterns crisscrossing from the cheeks downwards, forming a totem. Just by looking at it, one felt an extremely wild oppressive force.

The shadow was slender, without any excess, standing there like a great chasm, blocking everyone's path.

But it was the exaggerated and unique long saber with segments protruding, resembling bamboo, that captured attention. However, anyone with some knowledge could tell it was no bamboo. It was the spine of some ferocious beast, exuding a vicious aura, unmistakably indicating it was not some nameless creature.

Mysterious Armor!

And it was a full-bodied human-like armor!

Everyone's expressions turned to shock.

Due to the prior appearance of the Fire Phoenix, everyone instinctively assumed that the one hidden within must be a magic cultivator beyond doubt. After all, the Phoenix was an external manifestation of magic and spells, and undeniably, deploying such spells would be a significant burden for anyone at the Divine Sea Realm. It can be said that whoever cast such a spell would suffer a considerable drop in power.

Therefore, after the Phoenix disintegrated, some cultivators thought the initiator behind it must meet a terrible end, unsure who would gain in the end.

Who would have thought that not only did the person not die, but they even donned such mysterious armor!

It was still unclear who it was inside the armor, but judging from the saber light unleashed, it seemed this person wasn't solely versed in magic and spells.

Many thoughts flashed in their minds, but some cultivators couldn't be bothered to ponder further. They gathered here for the treasure gourd, now that it's gone, why linger here wasting time?

So soon, a figure flickered, rushing outward in pursuit.

But just as he moved, the mysterious armor that stood quietly also moved. Despite its tall stature, its speed was swift like the wind, seemingly in a flash, intercepting the person, with crimson rays trailing alongside from both sides of its face. These were the scarlet trails from its eyes, as the giant long saber raised and descended lightly.

The person was shocked and hurriedly activated the protective spirit treasure to protect himself while exclaiming, "Fellow Daoist, why must you act this way?" He wasn't attempting an attack on the mysterious armor, just trying to chase the treasure gourd, how did he offend the person?

As the saber descended, a fine protective spirit treasure shattered, blood splashed, and the body split in two, the cut was neat!

No fancy moves, nor any grandiose techniques, just a simple and straightforward slash, as if cutting a sheet of paper, a top-tier genius of a domain was split wide open.

But precisely because of such simplicity, it was even more heart-stirring, as hundreds of cultivators in attendance visibly flinched.

Lu Ye himself hadn't expected that with the enhancement in his powers, wearing the Dragon Throne would offer such a massive boost. It had been a long time since he used the Dragon Throne to kill enemies.

The mysterious armor obtained from the secret realm of Soaring Dragon Continent had an unknown upper limit; he only knew it was an extraterrestrial item. When he wore it during the Cloud River Realm, a single full-force burst depleted his life force, nearly leading to his death in the secret realm.

Even after advancing to True Lake Divine Sea, using it still posed a tremendous burden. Now, in Divine Sea Level 8, there's still a significant burden. After donning the Dragon Throne, he felt all his foundations being rapidly absorbed.

This undoubtedly proved one thing, that the Divine Sea Realm was still insufficient to fully master this mysterious armor.