

Humanity 1281

Chapter 1281 - Deriving a New Spirit Rune

The pill gourd was handed over to Shui Yuan, and Lu Ye left Righteous Peak, heading straight towards Emerald Bamboo Peak.

In mid-air, he encountered many juniors flashing by. Upon sensing his aura, they stopped and all respectfully greeted him.

Mount Ao is gradually becoming more lively now, because the disciples accepted earlier have gradually advanced in their cultivation, unlike when Lu Ye first joined in those years. Every time he returned to Mount Ao, it felt empty with just a few big and small cats around.

Now the Righteous Blood Sect truly exhibits the demeanor a sect should have!

The new generation of disciples endlessly emerges, while the cultivation of disciples from previous years continues to climb. Such passing of the torch ensures the continued development and prosperity of a sect.

Lu Ye came across a few familiar faces, all part of the earliest group to join Righteous Blood Sect, now mostly at the Cloud River level in terms of cultivation.

Compared to his cultivation progress, the speed of improvement in these people's cultivation is very slow, but this is actually the normal pace for a cultivator's advancement.

Not to mention Lu Ye himself, but even Hua Ci and Giant Armor are also exceptionally talented individuals who, coupled with sufficient battle merits and achievements, are able to outpace normal people in cultivation speed by a long margin.

Currently, Righteous Blood Sect is flourishing on the whole, yet it still lacks high-tier combat prowess, which is not an issue that can be resolved quickly; it's a matter for the future, awaiting countless disciples to ascend to True Lake and Divine Sea, which will eventually improve the situation.

This might take ten to twenty years.

Emerald Bamboo Peak remains tranquil. As the Peak Master of Emerald Bamboo Peak, Lu Ye holds absolute jurisdiction and authority over his spirit mountaintop. If any disciple wishes to settle on Emerald Bamboo Peak, they must consult him first and receive his consent.

Though Lu Ye is rarely at the sect headquarters, even if disciples wanted to establish their cave residences on Emerald Bamboo Peak, they find nowhere to seek approval.

With so many spirit mountaintops on Mount Ao to choose from, it's not mandatory to focus on Emerald Bamboo Peak; most disciples eligible to establish cave residences within the sect choose other spirit mountaintops instead.

Upon arriving at Emerald Bamboo Peak and scanning with his mental consciousness, Lu Ye was somewhat surprised as he couldn't detect the presence of Yiyi and Amber.

Previously, he found it peculiar since he has a pet contract with Amber, and later secured the Life Origin Method and Beast Seal Method. As long as they're not too far apart, he should be able to sense each other; yet upon returning to the sect headquarters this time, he couldn't feel Amber's presence.

Attempts to communicate failed as well.

Such circumstances only suggest one possibility, Yiyi and Amber aren't in the Nine Provinces!

Not being in the Nine Provinces leaves only one destination, which is over at the Unparalleled Continent.

Presumably, it's either due to the tediousness of cultivation or the necessity for battle merits, thus they went to Unparalleled Continent to hone themselves. This is also the proper method of cultivation, for continuous seclusion in cultivation can be unwise, as it leads to unstable foundations with unpredictable future repercussions.

Taking Lu Ye himself as an example, had he focused solely on elevating his cultivation realm, he could have ascended to the Constellation Realm quite some time ago, yet currently, he remains at Divine Sea Level 8.

This is a result of his deliberate suppression of cultivation speed; where advancing cultivation was needed, he advanced cultivation, and where foundation stabilization was needed, he stabilized foundations. Thus, the future path can be longer!

Emerald Bamboo Peak appeared unoccupied. Lu Ye stepped into the bamboo building he crafted earlier, tidied up a bit, and sat cross-legged.

Three months of struggles in the Taichu Realm, witnessing demonic cultivators of various races across different domains, not only broadened his horizons but also solidified his Level 8 cultivation realm.

Now that the Nine Provinces are aligned with stellar space, Constellation Realm cultivators emerge one after another, embarking on the exploration of stellar space. Lu Ye feels it's time for himself to take a step forward too.

This session of secluded cultivation aims for the advancement to Divine Sea Level 9!

This task doesn't pose much of a difficulty for him; it's simply a matter of spending some time.

Before coming to Emerald Bamboo Peak, he had already exchanged enough gold-hued spirit fortune sticks; at this moment, he pulled out a gold-hued spirit fortune stick and crushed it, immediately creating a golden vortex in front of him.

The Talent Tree's roots extended inside, greedily devouring!

Meanwhile, he calmed his mind and observed the Talent Tree.

The Talent Tree now has many burning leaves, and merely those leaves bearing spirit runes amount to several dozen kinds, each rune having played an indelible role in Lu Ye's growth and combat.

With his cultivation improvement, along with the constant development of spirit runes on the leaves of the Talent Tree, as of now, the Talent Tree no longer has new spirit runes.

But he could inscribe the spirit runes he desired onto those newly burning leaves.

The Void Spirit Runes were currently the greatest and only achievements; with these Void Spirit Runes, Lu Ye could often act stealthily during battles in the Taichu Realm, catching enemies off guard, especially when battling with magic cultivators. The Void Spirit Runes made it easy to achieve close-range effects.

One Void Spirit Rune brought significant benefits to Lu Ye, and having tasted the essence, he naturally wanted to inscribe more spirit runes.

In battles with various talents in the Taichu Realm, Lu Ye realized some of his shortcomings; that was because in several upgrades of the Boulder Mountain Saber, he hadn't focused on its sharpness. Therefore, in this realm, it somewhat lacked the killing power when fighting against enemies!

Previously, Lu Ye could enhance the Boulder Mountain Saber with the Sharpness Spirit Rune to improve its killing power, compensating for this shortcoming. If one Sharpness Spirit Rune wasn't enough, he added Double-Sharpness Spirit Runes. But as his cultivation continued to advance, the enemies he encountered grew stronger, making the damage from the Sharpness Spirit Runes insufficient.

At this stage, it's already like this, not to mention reaching the Constellation Realm.

Because in the upper three realms, the focus of cultivator cultivation is Essence Qi, where the Constellation Realm corresponds to the Path of Essence!

With sufficient essence, and flourishing blood Qi, the body's protection becomes robust, thus necessitating sharper strikes when facing enemies. If you can't break through the enemy's body protection, no matter how refined the combat skills are, they will be futile.

To change this, there are only two approaches: one is to increase the sharpness of the Boulder Mountain Saber itself.

But such an enhancement is merely a temporary fix, not addressing the root, as a combat cultivator, each battle requires close-range assaults; every slash is exerted with full force. Once the Boulder Mountain Saber becomes sharper, it means it is more prone to damage.

As such, perhaps after just a few battles, it would require careful repair, which is quite troublesome.

Take the previous battle with Bao Shi as an example; after that battle, the Boulder Mountain Saber had many small chinks, directly affecting its power.

Thus, simply reforging the Boulder Mountain Saber to make it sharper is not feasible. All along, the Boulder Mountain Saber has never used sharpness as its characteristic; in several upgrades, Lu Ye focused on its solid texture. Only when it's solid enough can he exert full force while slashing, without worrying the saber will damage in battle, thus affecting his strength.

This is the Boulder Mountain Saber's greatest advantage, and Lu Ye isn't preparing to change this trait.

So only the second approach remains, finding a solution with spirit runes!

After the second metamorphosis of the Talent Tree, possessing the effect of deriving spirit runes, Lu Ye actually had a vague idea - deriving a new Sharpness Spirit Rune with better results than the original.

But at that time, because he needed to derive Void Spirit Runes, he couldn't focus on two things at once. Moreover, the idea was too vague, and Lu Ye didn't know how to put it into action until he encountered the Fairy Race in the Fairy Tree World!

The fairy's blessing gave him hope.

The blessing given by Lü Yingying, from the final result, was no different from spirit runes, both enhancing the Boulder Mountain Saber's killing power, allowing him to dominate against the Insect Race, slashing with ease and ruination. However, the blessing's effects were far better than the Sharpness Spirit Rune.

The reason Lu Ye thought of taking Lü Yingying and Hong Dandan wasn't for greed over these two fairies themselves; he merely wanted to bring them back to research their blessing. If through their blessing, he could complete his previous idea of deriving new Sharpness Spirit Runes, that would be ideal.

Unfortunately, this never happened as the Reincarnation Tree stopped him before leaving, and the two fairies swapped for leaves from the Reincarnation Tree; whether it was a loss or gain was unknown.

Regardless, the fairy wasn't brought back, but Lu Ye ultimately experienced the blessing enhance. At that time, he intentionally felt the blessing's power, having some vague ideas in his mind. Now, it's a matter of whether he can transform those ideas into reality.

This is undoubtedly a challenging task, as it requires the derivation of the process from the result.

The result is that under the blessing, the Boulder Mountain Saber becomes sharper, and Lu Ye needs to derive a new spirit rune from the Sharpness Spirit Rune to achieve the same effect as the blessing.

This requires continuous exploration and attempts.

Fortunately, Lu Ye currently has sufficient time, as he doesn't need to spend much thought during the cultivation process. He just needs to activate the Talent Tree's power to devour pure spirit force; hence, this derivation wouldn't hinder his cultivation.

Immersing his mind, on the newly burning leaves of the Talent Tree, the Yin-Yang Dual Origins began to change and connect, gradually spreading over a leaf, and then onto a neighboring second leaf.

With the original Sharpness Spirit Rune as the basis for derivation, this process also seemed to have traces to follow, not entirely imagined.

The Talent Tree's derivation is extremely magical; as soon as Lu Ye began deriving, he became completely absorbed, entirely forgetting his surroundings, unaware of his cultivation state. All his energy and spirit were devoted to it.

In this state, numerous novel ideas kept emerging in his mind, transforming into each Yin-Yang Dual Origins. The various aspects of the Path of Spirit Runes he had previously learned further collided in his spirit, sparking new and interesting insights.

This was a back-to-the-origin-and-new-discovery derivation, and also a summarization of his existing knowledge. Despite being utterly immersed, Lu Ye could still vaguely feel that if this idea succeeded, his proficiency in the Path of Spirit Runes would likely see a great enhancement!

Chapter 1282 Divine Sea Ninth Layer Realm

Amidst such cultivation and deriving spirit patterns, Lu Ye completely lost track of the flow of time, with his mind entirely absorbed by the various combinations of Yin-Yang Dual Origins.

He even completely forgot about utilizing the gold-hued spirit fortune stick.

Yet, the practice of cultivation did not cease.

This state persisted for an unknown duration until Lu Ye suddenly felt his spirit force surging much faster than usual, and at the same time, an intangible shackle seemed to have been broken through, jolting him back to awareness.

An aura erupted into a fervent boil, spirit force and blood Qi surged together, and an undefinable comfort permeated from inside to out.

He reached Divine Sea Level 9!

This had been the bottleneck that troubled countless generations of Nine Provinces cultivators, the highest elevation they could attain for millennia, where many heroes chose death-seeking retreats, hoping for a breakthrough opportunity.

Yet ultimately, they all ended in failure. None before this generation realized that a cultivator's realm of cultivation was related to their home world's tier level; if the world's tier wasn't high enough, even with excellent aptitude and cultivation, the dawn of breakthrough remained unreachable.

Compared to ancestors of Nine Provinces, this generation of cultivators is extraordinarily fortunate, coincidentally witnessing the elevation of the Nine Provinces World's tier, ensuring future elite cultivators need not worry about being stuck at Divine Sea.

But this is an opportunity fraught with risk; connecting with stellar space means Nine Provinces can no longer exist in solitary silence. One day, new enemies and crises may arise, requiring current Nine Provinces cultivators to diligently improve themselves to protect their homeland amidst potential future threats.

For cultivators like Lu Ye, Divine Sea Level 9 is merely a new starting point, a horizon reaching into stellar space; only at this level of cultivation can one endeavor into stellar space, albeit just possibly.

Though there have been no failures in Divine Sea Level 9 advancement to Constellation thus far, that's because the current elite cultivators of Nine Provinces, without exception, accumulated substantial time in the Level 9 realm, making the success rate naturally high.

Moreover, under the previous Nine Provinces environment, those reaching Divine Sea Level 9 were undeniably talented; these elite cultivators just needed an opportunity to soar, which the world's elevation provided.

Still, Divine Sea advancing to Constellation is ultimately an elevation of a major domain, lacking certainty of success. Just as with past domain advancements, there was always a risk of failure; while True Lake advancements were manageable given sufficient accumulation, the threshold from True Lake to Divine Sea halted many cultivators.

It's foreseeable that, with Nine Provinces cultivation environment changes, advancing to Divine Sea will become easier, while failures in Constellation advancement will inevitably appear.

Ordinary cultivators advancing from Divine Sea Level 8 to Level 9 don't experience much, merely strengthening their foundation and power.

But after Lu Ye's advancement to Level 9 here, he clearly felt a mystical force starting to work, gently invigorating his every cell, enlivening his flesh and making him feel comfortably warm.

With subtle perception, Lu Ye understood what force was in play.

It turned out to be the reward for ascending to the top in the Taichu Realm! This force lay dormant in his flesh prior, expected to activate upon advancing to Constellation; unexpectedly, it began now.

This is undoubtedly better, as the period from Divine Sea Level 9 to Constellation requires accumulation; during this time, this mystical force will naturally maximize its effect.

He gained clarity that when this gentle force fully integrates with his flesh, it marks the optimal moment for his advancement to Constellation! This process may require a duration.

Turning his head, he looked at the rabbit-like Number Nine beside him, "Thanks!"

During his absorbed state in deriving spirit patterns, he completely forgot to crush the gold-hued spirit fortune sticks to maintain cultivation, yet his cultivation persisted without interruption due to Number Nine's arrival. Each time a fortune stick's limit approached, it would crush a new one for him, maintaining his state of cultivation.

Otherwise, Lu Ye's cultivation might not be severely impacted, but interruptions during derivation would undoubtedly be frustrating.

Number Nine opened its eyelids to glance at him, staying silent, a proud expression saying 'What would you do without me'.

Lu Ye rose and walked outside the bamboo tower, gently drawing his Boulder Mountain Saber from his waist.

With a thought, Sharpness spirit runes were imbued on the saber!

However, this time the imbued runes were not the original Sharpness spirit runes but those derived recently.

The long derivation bore some fruit at last.

Upon imbuing the new Sharpness spirit runes, a faint light flashed on the black Boulder Mountain Saber, exuding an especially sharp feel.

Lu Ye swung the saber, moving gracefully as he did when his cultivation was low, each move meticulously executed.

On Emerald Bamboo Peak, amidst the shifting figures, the sound of a long blade slicing through the air was continuous and unending.

It was only after a long time that Lu Ye slowly sheathed his sword, his brow furrowed.

Even though there wasn't an opportunity to engage a formidable foe in a real battle to test the results of his recent deductions, Lu Ye could still feel that the newly derived Sharpness spirit rune was unsatisfactory.

Comparatively, the new spirit rune was indeed slightly better than the previous Sharpness spirit rune in terms of effectiveness, but it hadn't reached the expected level!

Let alone compared to the blessing empowered by Lü Yingying.

Such a spirit rune would provide limited enhancement in a genuine life and death struggle. At the Constellation level, relying on such results to slay enemies would likely require considerable effort.

Indeed, deriving a new spirit rune is not that easy.

Previously, when the Void spirit rune had been successfully derived, it was because Lu Ye had learned a complete Void spirit rune from a book. His deductions on Void were merely optimizations of the existing details, not a groundbreaking result.

But now, when it comes to Sharpness, it's not so straightforward; it's like deriving an entirely new spirit rune. Even with the original Sharpness as a foundation, the difficulty is exceptionally high!

Lu Ye felt that even if he continued to laboriously derive further, there would likely be no significant progress. Fundamentally, although he had some accomplishments on the Path of Spirit Runes, he was still young, and over the years, he hadn't spent enough time on it. Most of his time was spent on cultivation and improving his combat skill, treating the Path of Spirit Runes merely as an auxiliary.

It seems he's still too reliant on the Talent Tree. Because he can freely use the spirit runes on the Talent Tree, he's lost the interest and motivation to delve into the Path of Spirit Runes.

Indeed, learning has no bounds! Especially with the Path of Spirit Runes, which is more theoretical in nature. Without enough time and energy invested in this path, he's only a half-filled water bucket.

Fortunately, there's still the mentor!

Lu Ye decided to seek guidance from his mentor!

Speaking of which, he hadn't visited his mentor since returning, which seemed somewhat inappropriate.

But upon arriving at Bright Moon Summit, Lu Ye discovered the once bustling spirit mountaintop was empty, even the doppelganger, Little Butterfly, who was always present, was nowhere to be seen.

It seemed no one had been here for quite a long time.

Attempting to send a message to his mentor, the message couldn't be delivered, leaving him with no choice but to contact Second Senior Sister for information.

Only upon receiving Second Senior Sister's reply did Lu Ye learn that his mentor had already advanced to Constellation, leaving the Nine Provinces over three months ago, and had ventured deep into stellar space!

Not only his mentor, Yun Xuechu, but even the sect master had also left!

That's why Lu Ye didn't even see the sect master when he returned this time.

Currently, only Shui Yuan remains, holding on bitterly, as she cannot leave. If she does, the entire Righteous Blood Sect would truly be without a leader, and the disciples would be left completely unprotected, becoming scattered like loose sand.

Of course, it's also because Shui Yuan's cultivation isn't enough. Although she advanced to Divine Sea long ago, her cultivation is still only Divine Sea Level 7 to this day.

Lu Ye couldn't help but be a bit stunned; over three months ago, he was competing against prodigies from various domains in the Taichu Realm.

Still, it's a good thing, with his mentor and sect master both advancing to Constellation and exploring stellar space together, their dual journey is quite carefree; it's uncertain whether the sect master can help unravel the mentor's inner knot.

With his mentor absent, there's no one to offer guidance, Lu Ye considered for a moment and sent a message to Shui Yuan, asking her to help investigate the whereabouts of renowned spirit runes masters still in the Nine Provinces.

Since his mentor isn't around, he'll have to seek out other spirit runes masters to discuss and explore; while these masters still in the Nine Provinces may not compare with him in cultivation and strength, Lu Ye wouldn't underestimate them.

Given the previous environment, these spirit runes masters had managed to achieve widespread fame, certainly possessing remarkable qualities worthy of Lu Ye's learning.

He didn't leave Bright Moon Summit; instead, he delved right in.

It's true his mentor has departed, but the books she left behind remain, and Lu Ye decided to thoroughly revisit the Path of Spirit Runes before advancing to Constellation, starting with the mentor's remaining collection of books.

Chapter 1283 Divine Runes Sect

There is no end to learning; the more deeply immersed in the Path of Spirit Runes Lu Ye becomes, the more he feels its vastness and profundity.

In fact, in the cultivation of cultivators, every aspect is inseparable from spirit runes, though often even the cultivators themselves overlook this point.

But the influence of spirit runes undoubtedly weaves through every cultivator's life.

There are many collections about spirit runes on Bright Moon Summit, all of which are the lifelong collections of his master. Lu Ye had flipped through many before, but back then, with low cultivation and immature understanding of the spirit runes path, he skimmed through without deep comprehension.

Looking back now, his feelings have changed; he often gains new insights that benefit him greatly.

Days passed by, and Lu Ye stayed on Bright Moon Summit for two whole months.

Until one day two months later, he walked out of Bright Moon Summit.

There was an inexplicable feeling, as if a lifetime had passed.

Through two months of cultivation, Lu Ye could sense substantial growth on the path of spirit runes. However, he didn't rush to derive spirit patterns, as he faintly felt he was still short of a breakthrough; even attempting it now might not yield excellent results.

Arriving at Righteous Peak, he found Second Senior Sister, who was holding a pill gourd crafting elixir pills.

"If you want to cultivate the Path of Spirit Runes, I suggest you visit Youzhou!" Shui Yuan understood his intentions as soon as he arrived.

"Youzhou?" Lu Ye was puzzled.

Shui Yuan said, "There is a Divine Runes Sect in Youzhou, occupying a treasure land, which has always been a sacred place in the hearts of Nine Provinces spirit runes masters. However, because Divine Runes Sect belongs to the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, only their spirit runes masters could cultivate there in the past. But now, the situation is different, and the sacred land of Divine Runes Sect is also open to the Divine Sea Realm cultivators of the Haotian Alliance. If you want to go, Divine Runes Sect will surely not refuse."

This was something Lu Ye truly did not know. In actuality, he doesn't know much about the Nine Provinces, being young and not having spent enough time within its borders. He knows little of various sect secrets. If not for Shui Yuan's advice, he would never have known that such a sacred place for spirit runes masters existed in the Nine Provinces.

"You want me to scout out the whereabouts of those famous spirit runes masters? Now, many powerful spirit runes masters are gathered there, contemplating the spirit runes path!"

Hearing this, Lu Ye's interest was immediately piqued. Right now, he was hungry for knowledge related to the path of spirit runes, and upon learning of such a gathering place of numerous spirit runes masters, he naturally didn't want to miss out.

He then bid farewell to Shui Yuan and set off immediately.

Straightaway, he went to the Heaven's Augury Hall at his sect headquarters, and utilizing the Heaven's Augury Pillar, he transported to Youzhou.

The point of his arrival was within a Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union less than three thousand miles away from Divine Runes Sect; it was the closest Heaven's Augury Pillar to Divine Runes Sect.

If seeking a visit, it's not appropriate to descend directly into their sect, even if Lu Ye had that ability now. Doing that would not be a visit but an invasion.

Taking out the ten-part map, determining the direction slightly, Lu Ye walked out of the mercantile union and soared into the sky, heading straight for Divine Runes Sect.

Previously, the major trend in Nine Provinces had been the relentless confrontation of two coalitions, each loyal to their own, unable to coexist like fire and water, with Youzhou entirely controlled by the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, and Divine Runes Sect was also a sect of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, with its internal spirit runes sacred land certainly not open to members of the Haotian Alliance.

Just like the Hundred Arrays Pagoda of Tianyan Sect in Wuzhou wouldn't be open to the people of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, each side cherishes what they have.

However, after the insect disaster that swept through the Nine Provinces, and the expedition to the Blood Refinement World, the previous situation has been shattered.

Presently in the Nine Provinces, the two coalitions, though not obliterated, have thawed much in their relations, especially many big sects showing signs of collaboration in many areas.

Amidst such a major trend, Divine Runes Sect has also opened its sacred land, willing to let the Haotian Alliance's spirit runes masters come and exchange knowledge, establishing good rapport.

So now, within the sacred land of Divine Runes Sect, spirit runes masters from all over the Nine Provinces are gathered. If Lu Ye wishes to discuss and exchange with spirit runes masters, going to Divine Runes Sect is the most time-saving and labor-saving approach, certainly much better than visiting each one individually.

Shui Yuan also perceived his intention, which is why she guided him so.

Moments later, a vast mountain range appeared in Lu Ye's view.

The grade of Divine Runes Sect is not low; according to Heaven's Augury's assessment, it is a 2nd grade sect, with no small number of Divine Sea Realm cultivators, naturally occupying a large foundation.

Compared to the current Righteous Blood Sect, the scene at Divine Runes Sect is undoubtedly much more bustling; the mountains are filled with exotic beasts and treasures, and within the spirit mountaintop, there are hidden pavilions and terraces, figures of cultivators shuttle back and forth, a scene of a prosperous sect.

One day, Righteous Blood Sect will have such prosperity, but not now.

Lu Ye did not hide his own aura as he delved deeper into the sect. Along the way, he encountered disciples of the Divine Runes Sect, and upon sensing Lu Ye's Divine Sea Realm aura, they courteously paid their respects.

However, Lu Ye's youth still left these disciples astonished and envious, making them realize that he must be someone groomed by a top-tier sect; otherwise, it would be impossible to have such profound cultivation at such a young age.

When he arrived at the sect's entrance, Lu Ye finally landed. A reception disciple stationed there stepped up to greet him, bowing respectfully: "May I inquire where Fellow Daoist comes from and what business you have with our Divine Runes Sect?"

The reception disciple's cultivation was neither high nor low, about at the True Lake Level 3 stage. In a 2nd grade sect, this was a standard representation. Usually, when encountering someone of the Divine Sea Realm, one would address them as Senior, but since Lu Ye appeared young, the disciple could only address him as Fellow Daoist.

Lu Ye took out a pre-prepared calling card and handed it over: "Please inform them that Lu Ye from the Righteous Blood Sect is here to visit!"

The reception disciple had been merely astonished by Lu Ye's youth and skill, but upon hearing Lu Ye's name, he visibly startled and couldn't help but scrutinize him closely, indeed finding Lu Ye somewhat familiar.

Back when Lu Ye stirred up trouble in the Spirit Stream battlefield and Cloud River battlefield, making life miserable for the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge's top sects, the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge segment had even issued a Bounty Order against him, promising a handsome reward to anyone who could kill Lu Yiye.

During that period, Lu Ye's image circulated for some time within the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge camp.

This reception disciple had also seen Lu Ye's image, but with several years having passed, Lu Ye's cultivation and aura had changed, causing the disciple not to recognize him at first glance.

But upon hearing Lu Ye's name, he quickly responded, "From the Righteous Blood Sect in Bingzhou?"

"Indeed!"

The reception disciple's expression became solemn, and he hurriedly said, "Please wait a moment, Fellow Daoist, I will go and inform them immediately!"

Nowadays, if anyone's reputation within the Nine Provinces is most prominent, it would not be those who have ascended to Constellation level, nor those seasoned strongmen of the Divine Sea Realm; it would undoubtedly be Lu Yiye of the Righteous Blood Sect, known as Lu the Sect Destroyer!

Whether it was resolving the insect disaster or the expedition to the Blood Refinement World, Lu Ye played an irreplaceable, monumental role. The current prosperity in the Nine Provinces owes much to Lu Ye's significant contributions.

Countless younger generation cultivators in the Nine Provinces view him as a role model, considering him a legend.

A figure like this visiting in person, how dare the reception disciple be negligent?

Even the upper echelons of the Divine Runes Sect do not dare to slight him!

Therefore, shortly after the reception disciple left, a number of figures soared from the inner sanctum of the Divine Runes Sect, each with a powerful aura and all at the Divine Sea Realm.

In the blink of an eye, they gathered at the entrance, with a slightly aged elder leading them. He greeted Lu Ye with a hearty laugh: "I was wondering why the magpies were chirping joyfully today. It turns out we have a distinguished guest! Fellow Daoist Lu, you've traveled a great distance, and we at the Divine Runes Sect have been remiss. Please forgive any discourtesy!"

"Senior exaggerates. Coming uninvited, I have disturbed you greatly and hope for your understanding."

Initially, upon learning that Lu Yiye of the Righteous Blood Sect had arrived, these Divine Sea Realm members of the Divine Runes Sect were somewhat apprehensive. After all, this young and renowned figure might possess the typical pride of youth. But seeing Lu Ye's humility and sense of propriety, they were relieved, and their attitudes warmed significantly.

After exchanging a few pleasantries, Lu Ye learned that the leading Divine Sea Realm cultivator was named Pei Yuan, the current Sect Master of the Divine Runes Sect.

He was originally the Vice Sect Master, but the previous Sect Master had ascended to the Constellation level and departed the Nine Provinces, handing him the position. However, judging by his aura and foundation, he might not hold the position for long, and could rise to the Constellation level should he gain the opportunity.

At present, many top-tier sects in the Nine Provinces face a generational transition. It's not just one sect; the entire Nine Provinces cultivation world sees it as a good thing. Yet, for the sects involved, there are many intricate matters to arrange.

Following Pei Yuan's introduction, Lu Ye greeted the Divine Runes Sect's Vice Sect Master and elders, then proceeded lively inward.

Upon reaching the visitors hall, they settled down for a while, exchanged a few words, then Lu Ye got straight to the point, clarifying his purpose.

Pei Yuan seemed to have anticipated it: "I've long heard of Fellow Daoist Lu's considerable accomplishments in the Path of Spirit Runes. Indeed, you are young and talented. Our sect's Sacred Land is currently open to fellow Daoists throughout the Nine Provinces. It would be our honor for you to visit it. There is no reason to refuse. Would you like to go now, or rest a bit first?"

Lu Ye said, "Let's go now." He had come here for the so-called sacred land of the spirit runes masters, and had no interest in idle conversation with the Divine Runes Sect members.

Pei Yuan nodded, stood up, and said, "Then please follow me, Fellow Daoist."

He personally led Lu Ye out of the main hall, took flight, and headed in one direction. Along the way, Pei Yuan briefly introduced the situation of the Sacred Land, and Lu Ye silently listened.

Actually, before coming, he had already learned about these details from Shui Yuan, but since the host intended to introduce it, Lu Ye certainly wouldn't be ungrateful.

Soon, they arrived at a sheer cliff, smooth and flat as if cut by some supreme power. This must be the so-called Sacred Land.

Chapter 1284 - Sacred Land

At a position three hundred feet off the ground on the cliff face, there was a dark cave entrance. Pei Yuan led Lu Ye here, stopped, and pointed at the cave entrance, saying, "Fellow Daoist Lu, entering through this cave mouth leads to the Sacred Land. Inside, many spirit runes masters have gathered, and perhaps more will come in the future. I hope you will find something worthwhile there."

"Thank you, Sect Master Pei!" Lu Ye expressed his gratitude.

Pei Yuan was only responsible for guiding Lu Ye here and did not plan on venturing deeper inside, so he soon turned and left.

Watching him depart, Lu Ye then swiftly stepped into the cave. The passage within was spacious enough to allow several people to walk side by side. Using Mental Consciousness, he could sense many sources of life deeper within the cave, likely spirit runes masters from all over the Nine Provinces gathered to observe and cultivate.

Lu Ye proceeded inward, walking for a full half a tea's time before he began to faintly hear voices ahead, seemingly arguing over something.

Continuing forward for a while, a massive cavern came into view.

Around it, points of light dotted the area, with peculiar stones ornamenting the cavern, making it not dark at all—instead, it was as bright as daytime.

Looking around, there were quite a number of people gathered in this cavern, at least a hundred or so. Some clustered together, some sat cross-legged before sections of cave wall, observing intently, and others sat facing each other, with a jade disc set between them, each channeling their spirit force, seemingly engaged in a contest of skills.

Various sounds filled the air, creating a lively atmosphere.

Lu Ye hadn't expected such a scene in this place. He originally thought this so-called Sacred Land would be peaceful and harmonious, but now he realized he had thought too much.

Turning his head to survey the area, he noticed that the cave walls were smooth and flat throughout, adorned everywhere with complex patterns. To cultivators unfamiliar with the Path of Spirit Runes, these intricate patterns were dizzying and incomprehensible, yet for spirit runes masters, these patterns contained profound truths worthy of careful study and contemplation.

When Lu Ye walked in, some people did notice him, but they only glanced at him casually and then no longer paid attention. Nowadays, people frequently enter and exit the Sacred Land, and a youthful face like Lu Ye's was not uncommon and naturally did not attract attention.

Following the sound of arguing, he arrived before a smooth stone wall and listened silently for a moment before sorting out the details. Clearly, the spirit runes masters gathered here had differing understandings and insights regarding the patterns inscribed on the stone wall. One group believed those patterns were the nascent form of a certain kind of spirit runes, while the other group thought it was the nascent form of another type, each side holding fast to their view, arguing heatedly.

Seizing the opportunity, Lu Ye joined in and shared his opinion, but he was soon overwhelmed by the voices of both sides. This kind of scene was unfamiliar to him, facing seniors who exceeded him in both age and immersion in this field, Lu Ye couldn't argue too strongly and chose to stand aside and watch the spectacle instead.

However, the two groups of cultivators didn't argue for too long. For disputes over the Path of Spirit Runes, words alone couldn't decide the winner; each side had their own reasoning, and neither was wrong.

So they could only show the truth with actions.

It wasn't like ordinary combat to fight to the death; since everyone present was spirit runes masters, their competition naturally revolved around the Path of Spirit Runes.

Using the contested patterns as a foundation, each exerted effort to derive spirit patterns, seeing whose derived spirit runes were most stable as determining the victorious side.

This was the most cooperative way of contest among the gathered spirit runes masters, and Lu Ye hadn't witnessed it before, finding it surprisingly novel.

Silently assimilating into the group, he took out a jade tablet used by spirit runes masters and began constructing Yin-Yang Dual Origins on it, channeling spirit force.

The patterns on the stone wall were incomplete, and deriving a new spirit rune from them was undoubtedly a test of a spirit runes master's skill.

Lu Ye didn't know about the progress of the other spirit runes masters, but he was making quite good progress. Perhaps due to the properties brought about by the secondary metamorphosis of the Talent Tree, he always had many creative insights that others found difficult to match when it came to deriving spirit patterns.

One hour later, the jade tablet in Lu Ye's hand flashed with light, and a spirit rune was formed.

This anomaly immediately attracted the attention of the other spirit runes masters who were working hard, all turning to look. Each was incredibly astonished, none having expected that among so many people present, the seemingly youngest lad was the first to produce a result.

There was no need to continue deriving further; everyone gathered around, passing Lu Ye's jade tablet among themselves, occasionally offering their critiques.

Though there were flaws in this newly derived spirit rune, its undeniable fact was that it had indeed formed because it could stably exist on the jade tablet.

Of course, being able to stably exist and being formed did not mean it was useful!

Spirit runes were categorized into two types: useful spirit runes, which can perform functions in combat, cultivation, or other fields, and the type Lu Ye had just derived, which was a useless spirit rune, only able to exist in and of itself without any practical effect.

Such spirit runes were actually numerous, mostly used by spirit runes masters for research purposes. Almost every spirit runes master could derive numerous useless spirit runes.

Of course, useless and useful could often transform into each other; a useless spirit rune might only need slight modifications to become a useful spirit rune.

Similarly, those useful spirit runes will become useless, or even fail to form, if the arrangement of one or two Yin-Yang Dual Origins is altered.

After some evaluations, the two sides of spirit runes masters fell into another round of argument, each believing that the spirit runes derived by Lu Ye belonged to their recognized field.

Lu Ye discovered something: these spirit runes masters all had the trait of being stubbornly opinionated, each unwilling to yield. If they were to leave a legacy a hundred years after their passing, it might just be their obstinacy.

Amidst the noise, everyone suddenly turned their gaze toward Lu Ye. A revered elder asked, "Young friend, this spirit rune was derived by you. Tell us, what is the characteristic of this spirit rune!"

Lu Ye appeared awkward, stammering, "I think... what everyone said seems quite reasonable!"

A crowd immediately glared at him in anger!

Being a fence-sitter never ends well; Lu Ye was soon ostracized from the group, but he didn't mind and continued to observe other patterns on the stone wall.

Undoubtedly, these patterns were left by powerful spirit runes masters from the pre-Nine Provinces era. This might have been a place where some spirit runes masters sequestered themselves for cultivation, engraving some of their insights from cultivation onto the stone wall. Over the years, it has been passed down.

Later visitors come here to observe the remnants left by predecessors, gain some inspiration, and thereby refine their Path of Spirit Runes.

Over time, this place has become a Sacred Land for spirit runes masters.

Actually, there's nothing particularly special about it. If people who aren't spirit runes masters came here, they wouldn't get any practical benefit, but true spirit runes masters eagerly flock to this treasure land, and those who can come here, who are qualified to come here, are invariably individuals with high accomplishments in the Path of Spirit Runes. Those with insufficient accomplishments cannot be brought here.

Initially, during the first few days, those spirit runes masters somewhat ignored Lu Ye due to his age, but as time passed and Lu Ye gradually revealed his accomplishments in the Path of Spirit Runes, many spirit runes masters genuinely regarded him as a fellow cultivator.

Lu Ye would sometimes observe and comprehend the patterns on the stone wall by himself, and sometimes discuss and compete with other spirit runes masters, occasionally joining some debates.

In such a place, nobody knew he was Lu Yiye from the Righteous Blood Sect, nor did he know others' names, regardless of gender or age. All were kindred spirits striving tirelessly in the Path of Spirit Runes, true Fellow Daoists.

Such an atmosphere is a rare experience for a spirit runes master, undoubtedly more effective than building cars behind closed doors.

Every mutual discussion with a spirit runes master would benefit Lu Ye, allowing him to discard the chaff from the grain and incorporate the strengths of a hundred masters.

Lu Ye once again lost track of time, completely immersed in it, and in this unconscious state, continually improved his accomplishments in the Path of Spirit Runes.

With purposeful arrangements, he almost had one-on-one in-depth communication with all spirit runes masters there.

Many spirit runes masters gradually recognized his profound accomplishments in the Path of Spirit Runes, and no longer belittled him because of his age. In fact, often, when unable to discern a clear argument, they would seek him for judgment.

Each time, Lu Ye found it quite difficult because no matter which side he stood on, the other side wouldn't be convinced. Ultimately, the resolution had to come by determining victory the spirit runes masters way.

Thus time quickly passed, and three months elapsed.

On this day, two groups of spirit runes masters were arguing endlessly over the patterns on a stone wall. Unable to reach a conclusion, they decided to have Lu Ye make a judgment.

As they turned around, they found Lu Ye sitting quietly by a stone wall, not moving, seemingly in a deep meditative trance!

"Don't disturb him, this young Fellow Daoist has been in meditative trance for three days, seems to have come to some realization." Someone spoke.

"Then let's lower our voices. Having a realization here is a stroke of fortune; don't ruin someone's opportunity." Everyone nodded in agreement.

Lu Ye was indeed in meditative trance, but it was not because of a realization; he was revisiting the many contents stored on the leaves of the Talent Tree.

The leaves of the Talent Tree contained not only complete spirit runes but also techniques for constructing spirit runes and insights into the Path of Spirit Runes.

Lu Ye wasn't sure where these insights into the Path of Spirit Runes came from, just as he wasn't clear about how the stored spirit runes appeared.

But undoubtedly, these insights are invaluable treasures for any spirit runes master, enabling Lu Ye to achieve higher accomplishments based on the foundation of these perceptions.

Chapter 1285 - Inscribing a Mark

At the Bright Moon Summit of the Righteous Blood Sect, Lu Ye perused the collection of books on the Path of Spirit Runes left by his master. Over the course of two months, he traveled to this Sacred Land of spirit runes masters to observe the legacy of the pre-Nine Provinces era and spent an additional three months discussing and comparing skills with many Fellow Daoists.

After five full months of diligent cultivation, Lu Ye wasn't sure how much progress he had made in the Path of Spirit Runes, but he knew it wasn't enough.

There were still areas he could delve deeper into, particularly the knowledge contained within the leaves of the Talent Tree.

Just like when he initially read his master's collection, his previous understanding of these teachings in the Path of Spirit Runes was superficial. Many concepts were merely grasped in passing without deeper insight. Now, upon revisiting and savoring them more thoroughly, he found new revelations.

It was as if he once ate a bowl of rice, only appreciating its delicious taste. But now, when he eats the same bowl of rice again, he discerns what ingredients were used and the techniques applied in its preparation.

In this way, should he desire, he could make the same bowl of rice himself.

While reviewing the information carried by the leaves of the Talent Tree, Lu Ye also organized his own learning, frequently encountering delightful surprises.

From that day on, Sacred Land saw one less spirit runes master engaging in debates and skill comparisons. Lu Ye sat motionless before a smooth stone wall like a statue, silent and still. Were it not for the steady flow of his breath and the vitality within him, others might have mistaken him for a lifeless figure.

During this time, some joined, and others left. Such a place held no restrictions on what one could do. As a Sacred Land for spirit runes masters, anyone with sufficient qualifications could come and go freely.

On this day, after a group of spirit runes masters concluded a debate, an elderly man turned to glance at Lu Ye and lamented, "This young Fellow Daoist has been in a meditative trance for over two months. One wonders what insights he's gained to warrant such an extended period."

Gaining insight and entering a state of enlightenment here wasn't unheard of, and generally, others wouldn't disturb someone rashly in such a condition. However, no one had ever remained in meditative trance for this long; the longest previous duration was barely under three days.

After all, insights in the Path of Spirit Runes often come as a Single Flash and don't typically require such lengthy contemplation as in other aspects of cultivation.

"Who's to say? We'll have to wait for him to wake and ask him."

Just as this was said, someone suddenly exclaimed, "He's awake, he's awake!"

Everyone looked up to see that Lu Ye, who had sat unmoving for those two months, slowly stood up. With the sound of a saber being drawn, the Boulder Mountain Saber was unsheathed from his waist.

The sight startled everyone present.

Someone asked, bewildered, "What does he intend to do?"

This is the Sacred Land of spirit runes masters, and the stone walls are inscribed with the legacies of ancient sages and powerful beings. It's not a place for reckless weapon use. Hence, even if spirit runes masters argued vehemently here, no one would resort to violence, lest they damage the stone walls and become infamous for all time.

So the moment Lu Ye brandished his saber, some grew anxious, fearing the young man might destroy the place in frustration should his comprehension of the spirit runes prove unsuccessful.

Such a thing was not beyond possibility.

But soon, the crowd realized something was different. The stone wall Lu Ye faced was smooth, devoid of ancient patterns.

As Lu Ye leaped into the air towards the wall, with spirit force surging and his saber moving elegantly, the crowd realized his intention.

"He's going to... leave an inscription?"

The words left everyone gasping.

Leaving an inscription is not about leaving one's name; none would deface such Sacred Land with their moniker. But if one had a novel idea or had derived a new spirit rune unknown before, they could leave their mark here for others to admire and learn from.

The legacies on the Sacred Land's stone walls aren't from a single era. Some are ancient, others from more recent times, with certain inscriptions dating back only a few hundred to a thousand years. They were left by spirit runes masters of the past who practiced and sought enlightenment here, showcasing their knowledge.

But without exception, any pattern worthy of being inscribed here must withstand the scrutiny of future visitors, regardless of whether it's a completed spirit rune.

Random scribbles or incomprehensible patterns would not earn recognition but ridicule.

The most recent inscription on the four walls dates back over three hundred years, when a genius spirit runes master derived a new spirit rune based on ancient ones. Since then, no one has been deemed fit to leave an inscription in this Sacred Land.

Yet, the tale of leaving an inscription remains a legend to this day.

The gathered spirit runes masters never anticipated that in this present era, someone dared to attempt leaving an inscription here, especially a young man with such a youthful appearance.

Does he not fear making a laughingstock of himself?

After all, once the pattern is engraved on the stone wall, it must endure the scrutiny of all the spirit runes masters present, and the subtleties within cannot be faked.

The sound of hissing continued, stone debris flying everywhere, and Lu Ye didn't notice the movements of the other spirit runes masters around him. However, after half a year of persistent pursuit on the Path of Spirit Runes, a strong feeling suddenly surged in his heart.

That is, deriving a new Sharpness spirit rune at this time might hold a surprise!

He thought and acted!

He chose not to derive the new Sharpness spirit rune on the leaves of the Talent Tree, instead opting to directly inscribe it on the stone wall before him, a testament to his intense confidence in his current state!

When the Boulder Mountain Saber danced across the stone wall, leaving crisscrossing patterns behind, all the spirit aster runes nearby were drawn over, gathering behind him. Regardless of whether they were optimistic about his actions or not, at least at this moment, no one rashly interrupted, merely waiting in silence.

Even if there was to be criticism, it would be after Lu Ye completed his work!

Lu Ye was unaware of this; at this moment, he was entirely immersed in a wondrous, ethereal state, with various flashes of spirit light continuously bursting in his mind. This feeling was very similar to when he relied on the Talent Tree at Emerald Bamboo Peak to derive new Sharpness spirit runes over half a year ago, but even more profound.

That time, there was always a sense of dissatisfaction, as if unable to exert full power, and indeed, the new Sharpness rune derived wasn't very practical in the end.

But this time was different. Lu Ye felt extremely good in his current state, understanding why there was a lack of strength last time; it was because he didn't have a deep enough understanding of the Path of Spirit Runes. But after half a year of pursuit in cultivation, he had made a tremendous improvement in his skill on the Path of Spirit Runes, allowing him to fully unleash his knowledge and skills.

"Is this... the intention to inscribe a complete spirit rune?" The spirit runes masters observing from behind were gradually being shocked.

They had assumed that even if Lu Ye was going to inscribe, he would only leave behind a clever segment of a pattern; if so, there would be ample room for criticism since no one could be certain that such a segment could truly function within a spirit rune.

In fact, there were many such incomplete segments on the stone wall, often focal points for debates among spirit runes masters.

But if a complete spirit rune were inscribed, the result would be entirely different; a complete spirit rune leaves no room for criticism because it is sufficiently complete to function!

In a place like this, inscribing a complete spirit rune would undoubtedly be a brand-new rune, one that had never appeared in the history of cultivation in the Nine Provinces.

This undoubtedly carries pioneering significance, capable of leaving a lasting name in history.

Throughout history, all the various spirit runes that have appeared in the cultivation world were derived by generations of extraordinarily talented spirit runes masters, and the birth of each new rune is enough to stir up the world of spirit runes.

It has been many years since a new spirit rune emerged in the Nine Provinces.

Could it be that history was about to unfold right under their noses today?

The spirit runes masters were excited for a moment, paying ever-increasing attention.

But with time passing, they gradually discovered something unusual.

"This spirit rune... is far too complex; currently, it has nearly a thousand basic elements, and judging by the looks, it's not even halfway done. If fully inscribed, wouldn't it have at least two thousand basic elements?"

Spirit runes aren't necessarily better for being more complex; on the contrary, the simpler a rune, the more widespread it can be, because it's simple enough, making it easier to construct.

In this way, they can play a role in battle or other fields. But if the rune is too complex, it becomes difficult to construct and naturally can't become widespread.

Take the example of crafting a Spiritual Artifact: during artifact refinement, runes need to be inscribed within the artifact to form a restriction, and even the most outstanding Artifact Refiner wouldn't want to inscribe overly complex runes into a spiritual artifact, because doing so increases the likelihood of failure.

A spirit rune with at least two thousand basic elements, such as this, simply couldn't be used in crafting artifacts; the requirements for an Artifact Refiner would be too high. Inscribing such a rune as a restriction already equates to having inscribed five or six normal runes; it's too low on cost-effectiveness.

Such complex spirit runes are usually used in array setups, especially in formations that are arranged in advance, because there is ample time to prepare and allow for errors.

Gradually, the basic elements on the stone wall surpassed two thousand, confirming the previous spirit rune master's prediction.

A moment later, Lu Ye suddenly withdrew his saber, and with the last of the stone debris settling, a complete spirit rune appeared in everyone's line of sight.

It contained as many as two thousand and forty-six basic elements, and the overall shape of the rune, at first glance, looked like a long saber drawn from its sheath.

In fact, if a person unfamiliar with the Path of Spirit Runes were to see it, they would only see the pattern of a long saber engraved on the stone wall, but that saber was meticulously composed of over two thousand basic elements.

A sharp aura undulated out from the stone wall!

Chapter 1286 - Divine Sharp Edge

A spirit rune never before seen in the Nine Provinces was presented before many spirit runes masters, captivating their senses and mesmerizing their hearts.

These were people who had long immersed themselves in the Path of Spirit Runes, so they naturally discerned some intricacies. In terms of overall harmony, this spirit rune had no major issues, but whether it could stabilize, whether it could wield its unique effect, and what effect that would be, needed careful verification. Just because it was engraved on a stone wall did not mean it was truly a new spirit rune.

No one asked questions, relying only on their own judgments, so the spirit runes masters all sat cross-legged, each taking out their jade tablets, and began meticulously reconstructing the spirit runes shaped like a long saber.

Yet, a spirit rune composed of more than two thousand precise basic elements isn't something that can be casually constructed. Even these spirit runes masters must go through many failed attempts before becoming skilled enough to form it slowly.

That would require at least half a month or even longer, but that is another matter.

Lu Ye quietly withdrew from the crowd, walked straight to the back, and stopped in front of a plump woman in a floral skirt, smilingly gazing at her.

The woman looked quite uneasy, trying to act composed: "Something the young friend needs?"

Lu Ye unbuckled the Boulder Mountain Saber from his waist, held it with one hand, and handed it over.

The woman glanced at the Boulder Mountain Saber, then looked up at him, sighed lightly: "Let's speak outside." She finally couldn't evade...

Leaving a group of spirit runes masters tirelessly exploring and verifying in front of the stone wall, Lu Ye took the lead, followed by the woman in the floral skirt as they left the Sacred Land of spirit runes masters through a corridor.

Finding a secluded spot nearby, Lu Ye stopped walking, turned around, and gazed at the woman: "Feathered Master, finally we meet!"

Though she had suspicions in her heart, hearing Lu Ye call out the name Feathered Master, the woman couldn't help but feel a headache, really couldn't figure out how she got exposed.

The moment Lu Ye arrived at the Sacred Land, she recognized him, not for who Lu Ye was, but because she recognized Lu Ye's Boulder Mountain Saber. After all, the saber had undergone upgrades several times with her, Feathered Master was quite familiar with it.

It was not until this moment that Feathered Master realized that the person who had been using the Heaven's Augury treasure vault to commission weapon upgrades was actually Lu Yiye of the Righteous Blood Sect!

But their few meetups were all within the Heaven's Augury treasure vault, under its concealment, she also deliberately altered her voice, there was no reason for her to be recognized.

Yet she didn't know that ever since Lu Ye just ascended to Cloud River, he was blessed by Heaven's Augury, her supposed concealment was completely ineffective before Lu Ye, her voice and appearance were already exposed under his gaze.

When entering the Sacred Land, Feathered Master recognized his Boulder Mountain Saber, and he equally recognized Feathered Master, yet didn't immediately reveal it.

The Boulder Mountain Saber was due for recasting. Initially, Lu Ye planned to have Ouyang Zi do it since currently within the Nine Provinces, his Artifact Refining skills were the highest. Unfortunately, Ouyang Zi had also ascended to Constellation, left Nine Provinces, and vanished without a trace.

Lu Ye had considered doing it himself this time. After all, recasting wouldn't be too complicated this time, but upon deeper thought, he decided against it, mainly because he lacked suitable tools and the environment for Artifact Refining. Doing it himself would be quite troublesome.

Since he ran into Feathered Master here, he thought of not troubling another and chose her.

Strictly speaking, this was not their first meeting, but when examined closely, it indeed was their first face-to-face meeting.

Lu Ye didn't know Feathered Master's real name, considering such a charming woman, she couldn't possibly be truly named Feathered Master, but among cultivators, there's no need to dig overly deep.

"How did you recognize me?" Feathered Master wondered intensely.

"Those blessed by Heaven's Augury find its concealment of no consequence at all." Lu Ye confessed truthfully.

Feathered Master's face showed a helpless expression, turned out her true identity had long been laid bare before him, despite her strenuous attempts to use an elderly voice every time she met Lu Ye in the Heaven's Augury treasure vault.

"Upgrading again?" Feathered Master asked.

Lu Ye replied: "No need for upgrading, this time it's recasting!" Saying this, he casually tossed over the Boulder Mountain Saber and stated his requirements.

Feathered Master drew out the Boulder Mountain Saber, her pretty face immediately sank, glared angrily at Lu Ye: "For you combat cultivators, your weapon is like your second life. You should love it, cherish it, how could you let it become like this?"

She appeared indignant, as though the Boulder Mountain Saber were hers.

Lu Ye scratched his chin: "I want to love it, cherish it, but I always encounter some strong enemies, slashing and cutting it ends up like this."

It's true that a weapon is a combat cultivator's second life, but when facing enemies, you cannot simply abandon your saber. Guys like Bao Shi are incredibly tough, this can't be blamed on Lu Ye.

Feathered Master evidently understood this point, so she didn't say more, only mentioning: "To fulfill your requirements, some precious minerals need to be used, moreover they must have specific properties."

Lu Ye directly pulled out a portion of the short end and some black sand from earlier, and handed one to Feathered Master: "These two items, can they be used?"

Feathered Master took them, investigated for a moment, and was slightly moved: "The quality of these two items is extremely high, especially this black sand, which I have never seen before, perfect for recasting."

She didn't bother asking where Lu Ye got these items. Among them, one is clearly a finished spirit treasure, and the other resembles an exotic treasure. No need to ask, Feathered Master knew these were spoils of battle. As for which pair of unfortunate souls ran into Lu Ye the Sect Destroyer, she didn't care to explore.

"How long will it take?"

"About a month, I suppose!" Feathered Master considered briefly.

Lu Ye nodded, "Then I'll contact you in a month." The timing seemed just about right, as he should be advancing to Constellation in a month.

"I have a condition!" Feathered Master spoke up.

"Go ahead."

"You must not let anyone know that I can refine artifacts!" Feathered Master looked at Lu Ye with a serious expression.

Lu Ye asked curiously, "Refining artifacts isn't something to be ashamed of, why hide it?"

Feathered Master sighed, "You wouldn't understand, and there's no need to ask further. In any case, besides you, there's no one else in this world who knows I can refine artifacts."

Everyone has their own secrets. Since Feathered Master said so, Lu Ye naturally wouldn't pry further. He nodded, "Rest assured, this affair will be known only to heaven and earth, only to you and me, and to no others."

"There's one more thing I want to know, what is the purpose of that spirit rune you left on the stone wall?" If Lu Ye had not sought her out specifically, she would have been like the other spirit runes masters, constructing that complex spirit rune on the stone wall, probing its mysteries.

But since Lu Ye was present in person, it was undoubtedly better to ask directly.

"That spirit rune... I call it Divine Sharp Edge!"

"Divine Sharp Edge?" Feathered Master frowned.

"It's an advanced form of the Sharpness spirit rune; it can unleash more potent offensive power than Sharpness!"

Feathered Master pondered briefly, then remarked, "If that's the case, it's somewhat ostentatious but impractical. Whether in combat, artifact refining, or other areas, this Divine Sharp Edge is difficult to apply."

Her assessment hit the mark; while the Divine Sharp Edge might deliver stronger strikes than Sharpness, its shortcomings were apparent. It was too complex.

Comprising over two thousand basic elements guaranteed that it was of little use in battle. In the life-and-death instant-changing situations that arise, who has the energy and time to construct such a complex spirit rune? By the time it's built, the outcome might already be decided.

Lu Ye chuckled, "Indeed."

The Divine Sharp Edge spirit rune wasn't perfect; owing to its excessive complexity, it was difficult to use. But when Lu Ye developed this rune, he had no intention of popularizing it; he intended it only for his own use.

No matter how complex a spirit rune might be, with the Talent Tree, he could construct it freely.

Moreover, with this foundation in place, as his future strength and cultivation improved, alongside deepening his mastery of the Path of Spirit Runes, there might be a chance to further optimize this spirit rune and elevate it to a popular level.

Of course, that might take a long time before he could manage it.

Feathered Master said, "But no matter what, being able to develop a new spirit rune is enough for you, Lu Yiye, to be remembered in the history of the Nine Provinces. Indeed, you are a remarkable youngster."

"The Master isn't too old either, right?" Lu Ye looked at her.

Feathered Master clearly did not wish to discuss her age further, as she turned around, her voice trailing off, "Then when the time comes, come to retrieve the saber." She flew straight out without mentioning any payment.

Once she had left, Lu Ye sat cross-legged.

The Divine Sharp Edge had already been developed and etched on the stone wall of the Sacred Land, but Lu Ye still had one more task to complete.

That was to inscribe the Divine Sharp Edge onto the leaves of the Talent Tree, so that in future confrontations, he could activate this spirit rune at will, adding strength to the Boulder Mountain Saber and enhancing its lethality.

This task was not difficult, especially since he had already inscribed it once before.

In just over two hours, Lu Ye completed the inscription. The burning leaves of the Talent Tree bore a new spirit rune.

This new spirit rune held significant meaning for Lu Ye because, in a strict sense, it was the first spirit rune he independently developed.

The Void previously couldn't be counted; the Void Spirit Runes he had learned from books long ago, and with the derivation from the Talent Tree, merely optimized some details.

But the Divine Sharp Edge was truly something brought from nothing.

It might not be perfect, and indeed was quite complex, but this was like Lu Ye's first child, and he placed great expectations upon it.

And with this successful experience, he would surely avoid many detours when trying to derive other new spirit runes in the future.

The most important thing was that Lu Ye felt there was room for simplification and enhancement with the Divine Sharp Edge, but that required him to continually improve his understanding of the Path of Spirit Runes, and there was no hurry for that.

Chapter 1287 - Farewell

Unparalleled Continent, a large number of cultivators from the Nine Provinces in the True Lake Realm and above poured in, making this originally lifeless domain exceptionally lively.

Currently, the situation in the Nine Provinces is very clear, Spirit Stream Realm cultivators indulge in the Spirit Stream battlefield, Cloud River Realm cultivators have the Cloud River battlefield to vent their energy and compete with each other. As for those in the True Lake Realm, they can go to the Unparalleled Continent to kill the Corpse Race and earn battle merit for cultivation.

It has been a year since the passage between the two realms opened. In this year, there have been at least hundreds of thousands of True Lake Realm cultivators who have surged into the Unparalleled Continent, and as time goes by, this number will inevitably grow larger.

Thanks to Yueh Xin's painstaking arrangements back then, the Nine Provinces cultivators could use the formation to transmit themselves to the Unparalleled Continent without greatly depleting the foundation of the Nine Provinces. The only consumption was the accumulated energy of the transfer arrays on a few desolate planets.

This was not out of Yueh Xin's goodwill, but because he had his eyes on the Nine Provinces back then and wanted to take over this rapidly growing domain. Naturally, he wouldn't do anything that would harm the foundation of the domain.

Unfortunately, his thorough arrangements ended up benefiting the Nine Provinces cultivators, while he himself was forcibly killed by Yang Qing.

Nowadays, within the Unparalleled Continent, centered around the formations left by Yueh Xin, the Nine Provinces cultivators have explored an area spanning hundreds of thousands of miles.

This area is already not small, but compared to the entire size of the Unparalleled Continent, it is just the tip of the iceberg. The Unparalleled Continent is also extremely vast, and its full scale is not much less than the Nine Provinces.

It can be foreseen that the existence of the Unparalleled Continent will allow Nine Provinces cultivators to struggle for many years. Before the Corpse Race on the Unparalleled Continent is completely eradicated, Nine Provinces cultivators need not worry about earning battle merit. As for the matters after... who can say for sure hundreds of years later? Perhaps by then, the situation in the Nine Provinces will undergo some unexpected changes.

There will always be places where cultivators can earn battle merit.

In a mountain valley, a fierce battle was underway.

A towering, robust figure stood like a small mountain, immovable despite any ferocious attacks, forming an unshakeable defensive line with his body.

The half-naked Giant Armor strengthened his footing, staying motionless as though nailed to the ground, resisting wave after wave of the Corpse Race's fierce assaults.

Beside him, Xiao Xinghe wielded his long blade, cutting the Corpse Race members into halves, with corpse blood splattering.

On the other side, Li Baxian's flying sword darted back and forth, the dazzling sword light rampaging among the corpse masses.

Also, the magic and spells displayed by Feng Yuechan and Yiyi were dazzlingly splendid. Amidst the corpse masses was a petite figure flickering in and out, killing freely—it was Lin Yinxiu.

As a tiger's roar resounded through the heavens, Amber, fierce and mighty, leaped back and forth, each strike of its claws claiming the life of a Corpse Race member.

The change in the Nine Provinces' structure impacted Bingzhou's Justice Department as well. Now, the Justice Department was in name only, even the Justice Department Chief Qian Wudang had advanced to Constellation and left the Nine Provinces, yet the configuration of the various squads remained intact.

Team D-9 was one of them. Normally, they hunted the Corpse Race on the Unparalleled Continent alone to earn battle merit, only regrouping when encountering large groups of corpse masses to combine forces and eliminate the enemy.

This sizable corpse mass was exactly the kind of prey Team D-9 liked. Recently, Lin Yinxiu discovered the whereabouts of this corpse mass, and so sent messages to gather scattered members, leading to this intense slaughter.

Nowadays, everyone in Team D-9 had the Divine Sea Realm cultivation. Although their level was not very high, with the power of the As-Close-As-Siblings Array Disc, they could still exert strength beyond their own standard.

The battle had started at dawn and, until now, only half of the corpse mass had been reduced in size.

"Third Senior Brother, I think we can withdraw for now!" Shouted Li Baxian loudly amid the fierce battle.

Xiao Xinghe also felt the same way, not because Team D-9's strength was insufficient or the corpse mass too strong. Although there were many powerful Corpse Race members within the mass, some individually even stronger than them, due to their low spiritual intelligence, they were not too difficult to handle.

The key was that fighting the Corpse Race required continuously mobilizing spirit force to resist the invasion of corpse poison, and being extremely careful not to get injured. Otherwise, once the corpse poison invaded, it would become very troublesome.

This was undoubtedly very consuming for each cultivator.

Having halved the corpse mass after one slaughter, they could rest and then return to deal with the other half, which would be the most appropriate response.

Just as he was about to respond, Xiao Xinghe suddenly sensed something, looking up in one direction to see a stream of light rapidly approaching, vigorous and fearsome.

Xiao Xinghe's face showed joy because he felt a familiar presence from the oncoming being.

Amber's roar also became increasingly excited, and even Yiyi showed a cheerful expression.

The stream of light swiftly reached the front, followed by a blade light as swift as a piercing strike, precisely cutting several of the most powerful Corpse Race members in two in an instant, greatly reducing the pressure on the defensive line constructed by Giant Armor.

The members of Team D-9 looked up, watching as Lu Ye smiled at them: "Everyone, do you need any help?"

Li Baxian laughed and said, "Junior brother, no need to step in, these are all battle merit!"

"Withdraw for now!" Xiao Xinghe called out, raising his arm. Amber was the first to turn around and rush out of the battlefield, not forgetting to pass by Yiyi and Feng Yuechan on the way, biting them one by one and tossing them onto his back.

Lin Yinxiu's figure vanished, leaving only faint ripples in the air, marking her movement. After advancing to the Divine Sea, the techniques of Ghost Cultivators became increasingly mysterious and unpredictable.

Li Baxian unleashed a long river of Sword Qi, controlling his sword as he went. Xiao Xinghe also retreated swiftly, leaving Giant Armor to fend off the corpse horde's attacks for a while. He turned, letting numerous blows hit his sturdy back with clanging sounds, then dashed away quickly.

A moment later, the members of Team D-9 gathered on a wilderness area about 30 miles away from the battlefield.

Yiyi joyfully leaped into Lu Ye's embrace, and Amber transformed into cat size, jumped onto his shoulder, rubbing his cheek with its head.

Li Baxian clicked his tongue in amazement, "Not seen for a year, little junior brother's power has grown even deeper."

Just now when Lu Ye arrived, the spirit force fluctuations within him had evidently reached the Divine Sea Level 9, just a step away from breaking through to Constellation.

Such a cultivation speed is truly enviable. Back then, he and Feng Yuechan had cultivation levels higher than Lu Ye's, and Xiao Xinghe's was even more advanced, but now Lu Ye has far surpassed them all.

Compared to other cultivators, everyone here was exceptionally talented, yet when compared to Lu Ye, they seemed lacking.

No resentment, no jealousy; the faster Lu Ye grows, the higher he stands, the happier they are. Everyone has their own opportunities, and the true competition in personal growth is not with others but with oneself. Only by constantly surpassing oneself can one become stronger and go further. People like them understand this well.

"About to reach Constellation?" Xiao Xinghe looked Lu Ye up and down.

Lu Ye rubbed Yiyi's little head and smiled slightly, "It's a matter within a month."

Since he's about to advance to Constellation, he specially came to the Unparalleled Continent to find his friends.

Because once he advances to Constellation, he'll leave the Nine Provinces and delve into stellar space, making meetings with old friends much harder.

At the very least, before leaving Nine Provinces, he wants to bid farewell to these few friends and relatives.

"It's really fast!" Xiao Xinghe couldn't help but feel nostalgic.

Lin Yinxiu still carefree, greeted Lu Ye warmly, "Captain!"

Giant Armor remained the same, just giving Lu Ye a simple smile.

After some small talk, Lu Ye winked at Li Baxian, "I brought good wine!"

Li Baxian licked his lips, couldn't help but glance at Feng Yuechan, and said insincerely, "I've quit drinking, my senior brother!"

Feng Yuechan rolled her eyes, "Drinking less is fine!"

Li Baxian was overjoyed.

Thus, the group sat around, Lu Ye took out the fine wine and fruits he brought, and everyone drank and chatted happily as if returning to times of carefree low cultivation.

They discussed their experiences over the past year on the Unparalleled Continent, while Lu Ye talked about Yang Qing taking him to compete at the Reincarnation Tree Taichu Realm, sparking everyone's interest.

Unfortunately, the Taichu Realm opens only once every hundred years, and each domain has only one slot, leaving no chance for others.

This round of drinks went from night to dawn, then from dawn to night, until it was dawn again before they finished the last drop. Xiao Xinghe stood up, smiled, and said, "Little junior brother goes first, the future is long, we will meet in the stellar space someday."

He stretched out his hand, it hovered in the air.

Everyone rose, each placing their hand on his, Lu Ye said, "Then I'll go explore first, waiting for you seniors to come!"

It's hard to gather, also hard to part, but every banquet will eventually end. Team D-9 still needs to deal with the remaining half of the corpse horde, and Lu Ye must go find another person's whereabouts.

This time Yiyi didn't show much reluctance, and even Amber seemed carefree following Yiyi away, because both the spirit and tiger knew that to stand shoulder to shoulder with Lu Ye again, they must cultivate diligently. Not to mention catching up to his pace, they mustn't fall too far behind, or else they will rarely have the chance to intersect again.

Long before, both Yiyi and Amber had realized this, and as their respective cultivations gradually diverged, separation was inevitable.

But they all believe, this situation is only temporary; as long as they work hard enough, one day they will stand by Lu Ye's side, fighting strong enemies together!

As the sun rises, with the morning light, Lu Ye watched the figures waving their arms with their backs to him, letting go of much of the lingering attachment and reluctance in his heart.

Yiyi and Amber have such awareness, there's no reason he can't!

Having bid farewell to Team D-9, there remains one person left to find, now the question is... where to search for her?

Chapter 1288 - So Lovable

Directly sending a message to inquire is one option. Nowadays, in various places on the Unparalleled Continent, some Heaven's Augury Pillars have been set up, serving as hubs through which cultivators can communicate with each other. This is also why Team D-9 can quickly regroup after battling individually.

But Lu Ye doesn't plan to send a message. It's been so long since they last met, it's always good to have a surprise.

It's not without clues either, because Yiyi had contacted her before, and knew the general location. Lu Ye decided to search on his own first, and if he couldn't find her, then it wouldn't be too late to send a message.

Following the direction previously indicated by Yiyi, Lu Ye leapt up and skimmed across the low sky.

Along the way, he occasionally encountered some Nine Provinces cultivators.

Although there are quite a few Divine Sea Realm cultivators active on the Unparalleled Continent now, it's rare to see cultivators above Divine Sea Level 7. This is because those at this level have generally accumulated enough battle merits during the previous insect disaster and expeditions in the Blood Refinement World. Their main goal now is to constantly enhance their cultivation, striving to take that step early. Generally speaking, cultivators above this level are currently left to cultivate on the Nine Provinces mainland.

Only cultivators with insufficient cultivation and battle merit accumulation would venture to the Unparalleled Continent for benefits.

So when those Nine Provinces cultivators sensed the aura of Lu Ye's Divine Sea Level 9 from afar, instead of feeling cordial, they quickly distanced themselves, subconsciously thinking Lu Ye was here to steal their kills.

Lu Ye didn't mind it at all.

There is one hassle about low-altitude flying: it easily disturbs the dormant Corpse Race. However, Lu Ye generally just passes by without any intention of engaging.

As Fourth Senior Brother Li Baxian said, these Corpse Race are all battle merits for Nine Provinces cultivators. Killing one more will mean one less for others, and battle merits meant little to him nowadays, so there's no need to compete with others.

Flying like this all along the way, Lu Ye flew tens of thousands of miles. Initially, he still frequently encountered traces of cultivators, but the further he went, the harder it became to see any living soul.

Lu Ye realized then that he might have ventured beyond the areas where Nine Provinces cultivators currently operated.

Yet, he still didn't find that woman.

The direction was correct, as Yiyi had specifically pointed to this spot earlier. If he hadn't found her yet, it either meant he missed her, or that woman was located further in!

Lu Ye leaned towards the latter possibility. It wasn't that he thought Hua Ci's cultivation was particularly strong, but merely that her cultivation method was different from ordinary cultivators.

Her desire for battle merits wasn't significant because Spirit Stones and elixir pills weren't her primary cultivation means, let alone the method of Invoking Heaven's Augury.

She preferred to cultivate in places where toxic substances congregated, corpse poison included, making the overall environment of the Unparalleled Continent quite suitable for Hua Ci.

Thus, she would certainly choose to be in sparsely populated areas, which was why she didn't come over during Team D-9's gathering. Killing Corpse Race gave her no actual benefit.

To seek sparsely populated places, one would have to delve deeper! Despite appearing as a delicate woman, she was braver than anyone and could tolerate the loneliness of solitary cultivation extremely well.

The Ten Thousand Poisons Forest in the Spirit Stream battlefield, the Five Poisons Pond in the Cloud River battlefield, all were forbidden lands that ordinary cultivators dared not tread, yet were her preferred places.

Moving further forward, Lu Ye flew tens of thousands more miles without results, realizing that he might not find her with just his abilities.

With a slight sigh, he had to resort to sending a message to inquire.

Just as he prepared to do so, his gaze shifted to a different direction. There was something unusual about that position compared to other places; although other parts of the Unparalleled Continent were desolate and barren, with rampant Corpse Race, there was no sign of such dense corpse clouds gathering.

Lu Ye's heart stirred, and he flew towards that direction.

The closer he got, the more he could sense the thickening of the corpse clouds. It must be a large mountain valley, with emerald green corpse clouds swirling within, even gale-force winds wouldn't scatter them.

There must be many Corpse Race gathered here! Otherwise, such a scale of corpse clouds couldn't form. Such a perilous land, even if Team D-9 came, they might shake their heads in regret, unable to venture deep within or harvest battle merits.

Lu Ye initially intended to take a curious look, but when his Mental Consciousness penetrated through the corpse clouds, scanning the circumstance inside the valley, his eyes lit up suddenly, breaking into a smile.

Indeed, a blessing in disguise, when you find no trace searching the iron-shod path, then success comes without effort! It seemed that this place had gathered such dense corpse clouds not naturally, but because of human intervention.

Crossing nearly a million miles to find such a place in the end, without prior contact, Lu Ye wondered if this was some kind of telepathy.

He headed straight to the mountain valley, plunging into the corpse clouds.

In the next moment, Lu Ye sensed an abnormal movement in the Talent Tree, and focused intensely, seeing large clusters of gray mist burning on the Talent Tree.

Hmm, very toxic!

He immediately pushed his spirit force to isolate himself, finally calming the Talent Tree's reaction.

Landed in the valley, Lu Ye looked down at his feet, where he saw underfoot all those brightly red mushrooms, dazzling in color, typical of highly toxic substances.

Because of the view being obstructed by corpse clouds, he couldn't see far, yet Lu Ye felt that the entire valley might be covered with those poisonous mushrooms.

This was undoubtedly the woman's unique method. But what puzzled Lu Ye slightly was that he couldn't sense the presence of her aura.

Given his current cultivation at the Divine Sea Level 9, with an extremely powerful Mental Consciousness and incredibly keen perception.

There was no hurry to search, since he had already arrived at the place; surely, he could find it. Driven by curiosity, he bent down and pinched a mushroom at his feet, giving it a slight tug.

It didn't budge!

This was quite outrageous; mushrooms usually grow on the ground and generally don't have well-developed roots, so they can typically be picked without much effort.

But Lu Ye felt that this mushroom seemed to be growing atop something, tightly integrated with it.

Using a bit more force, he finally managed to move it.

As the mushroom was pulled out, a stench wafted into his nostrils, followed by a head full of rotten flesh being lifted out from below, like a carrot. Half of the face was missing, exposing muddy flesh, with one eyeball completely intact and the other dangling half out of its socket.

Lu Ye paused for a moment, a big-eyed stare-off ensued with the head as they both observed each other silently.

Suddenly, the eyeball of the other party stiffly moved, its cloudy, dim gaze fixated unwaveringly on Lu Ye!

Lu Ye pondered briefly, exerting some force with his hand to press it back into the ground before it could roar, stomping on the surrounding soil to firm it.

A roar erupted as the tranquility of the valley was shattered, followed by corpse clouds swirling and mushrooms stirring at the scent of the wind.

Amidst the commotion, figures of the Corpse Race leapt out from the ground, mostly rotting corpses, some missing arms or legs, some with open abdomens trailing intestines, and some missing half a head.

Each was uniquely distinct; had a timid person witnessed this scene, they'd likely lose two of their three souls.

Without exception, all these Corpse Race members had a bright mushroom atop their heads, precisely the ones Lu Ye had seen earlier.

Only now did he realize that however many mushrooms he had seen, that was how many Corpse Race were hidden underground!

It wasn't that he wasn't cautious, but these Corpse Race revealed no trace while dormant. If Lu Ye hadn't unwittingly pulled a Corpse Race out while picking a mushroom, he wouldn't have discovered these underground secrets.

He simply thought someone was using the corpse cloud here to cultivate mushrooms.

Now it seemed these mushrooms were probably a means to control the Corpse Race, otherwise, why would each Corpse Race have one planted on its head?

The Corpse Race members clawed and snarled arrogantly as they slowly approached Lu Ye, creating real pressure.

Lu Ye stood there nonchalantly, exaggeratedly shouting, "Help, someone is trying to murder their husband!"

A light scoff came from the side, tinged with disdain, "What nonsense are you babbling about? Who's the husband?"

Lu Ye looked toward the voice and saw a woman in a green dress standing there, smiling gently amidst the snarling Corpse Race—a truly distinctive scene.

With eyes meeting, Hua Ci said, "Lucky there's no one else here, or you'd ruin my reputation!"

"What do you want a reputation for?" Lu Ye asked in surprise.

"I have to get married someday," Hua Ci blinked provocatively.

Lu Ye gave a meaningful "Oh," nodding, "When you do get married, let me know; I'll make sure to prepare a grand gift!"

Hua Ci smiled warmly, "Sure, you'll be the first to know then!"

Though they hadn't seen each other for a long time, there was no sense of unfamiliarity; a few banters exchanged and Lu Ye laughed, "With all this corpse Qi, no man could probably handle it!"

"That's none of your business!" Hua Ci pouted.

Lu Ye laughed and approached, opening his arms for a hug.

But Hua Ci gently raised a finger, placing it on his forehead to stop his movement, looking warily, "Just arrived and already trying to take advantage? Do you still think I'm as naive as before?"

Lu Ye was helpless, having failed to take advantage, he lamented, "You've changed!"

Hua Ci chuckled, "You'll see even more change the next time you meet me."

Recalling that scene, Lu Ye was somewhat scratching his head, so he switched topics, "Have you been here all along?"

"Yes, how did you find this place?"

"Yiyi pointed me in a direction, so I just wandered until I ended up here. What are you doing here?"

"Raising corpses," Hua Ci smiled slightly, "Look at these little things, aren't they lovable?"

Lu Ye turned to the nearby Corpse Race, unable to see how they were lovable but understood that Hua Ci was likely borrowing the corpse poison of the Corpse Race for cultivation, a method uniquely hers, impossible for others to emulate.

Chapter 1289 - Lu Yiye's Daring Charge

In the center of the valley, there was a wooden house, where Hua Ci lived. However, the dense corpse clouds in the valley had hidden it from Lu Ye earlier.

Many of the disturbed members of the Corpse Race had gone back into hibernation underground. Hua Ci, with the special methods of those mushrooms, could very easily control their actions.

Following Hua Ci, Lu Ye came to the wooden house and immediately noticed a pitch-black coffin placed at the center.

Clicking his tongue in amazement, he went up to examine it closely for a while: "Who did you prepare this for?"

Without any explanation, Hua Ci simply leapt and lay down in the coffin, closed her eyes, her breath still and body motionless. At first glance, she resembled a Sleeping Beauty who had been asleep for countless years...

Lu Ye's eye twitched slightly.

How peculiar this woman had become. She used to just delight in some venomous insects, scorpions, and little creatures like toads. Now she not only kept a bunch of corpses in this valley but also played the part of a corpse herself.

No wonder he didn't sense her presence before; once she lay here, it was indeed as if her presence disappeared entirely.

I have to admit, though, in such a setting, seeing such a graceful Sleeping Beauty seemed to hold a certain... unique allure?

Lu Ye propped himself up with his hands and also turned into the coffin to lie down next to Hua Ci.

The coffin was crafted very spacious by Hua Ci, accommodating two people without it feeling cramped.

Hua Ci's body tensed slightly.

Lu Ye's nose was filled with intoxicating fragrance and he couldn't understand how, living daily in such an environment surrounded by corpses, she could still smell so pleasant...

Women, indeed, are strange creatures.

He couldn't help but take a few more deep breaths.

Hua Ci turned to look at him, coldly snorted, "And you're not talking about corpse Qi now?"

Lu Ye put on a serious face, "Shh, don't speak!"

Closing his eyes, he savored this rare tranquility.

It seemed ever since embarking on the path of cultivation, he had been constantly on the move, even rare visits back to the sect headquarters did not afford him rest. Over these years, he continuously devised ways to improve his cultivation, once naively believing that ascending to the Divine Sea would mean freedom and no constraints. However, reaching this point, he realized the Divine Sea was just the starting line.

There were many more distant journeys waiting for him in the future.

Lu Ye wondered when such days would end; perhaps they never would. However, for this moment, in this confined, narrow space, he unexpectedly felt a kind of warmth.

Of course, this might have something to do with the softness and sweetness of the woman beside him. Had Lu Ye been alone, he might have been swept by poignant melancholy.

Sensing Lu Ye's mood, Hua Ci no longer bantered but quietly lay beside him.

Gradually, she noticed that Lu Ye had fallen asleep next to her and couldn't help but laugh silently.

Slowly, she turned to face him, with her hands tucked under her cheeks, quietly gazing at him without making a sound. In her bright eyes reflected an entire world.

Lu Ye slept deeply. In fact, given his current cultivation level, he no longer required sleep to maintain his energy. Even if exhausted, he just needed a short meditation to rest.

Maybe his heart was utterly at peace, or perhaps there was no sense of threat here. Either way, this experience was extremely rare given his current cultivation level.

He didn't know how long he slept, but eventually, he leisurely awoke, feeling refreshed and in great spirit, unable to resist a stretch.

Mid-stretch, he suddenly realized his current surroundings and felt a pair of bright eyes watching him.

Turning his head, making eye contact with Hua Ci, Lu Ye's face turned slightly red.

It wasn't the situation of being here with Hua Ci that made him embarrassed. Since their humble beginnings, she was one of the few dear companions he had in the Nine Provinces.

This visit was initially to say farewell to Hua Ci because once he ascended to the Constellation Realm, he would leave the Nine Provinces and venture into the stellar space. He didn't know how long it would be until they met again.

Unexpectedly, before discussing business, he took a nap here, which seemed a bit improper.

He shifted his body and turned sideways, imitating Hua Ci's position.

Now, it was Hua Ci's turn to feel slightly awkward, as they were so close they could easily feel each other's breath.

And that wasn't the end; acting as if oblivious, Lu Ye extended a hand to play with a strand of her hair, twirling it around his fingers.

In the silence, Hua Ci spoke first, "Are you planning to leave?"

When Lu Ye arrived, she had already had an inkling, for Lu Ye's cultivation had unexpectedly reached the Divine Sea Level 9.

For Lu Ye, the Unparalleled Continent had lost its allure, yet he still traveled great distances to find her, which could mean only one thing.

He was about to leave the Nine Provinces!

How could a keen woman like Hua Ci not realize this?

"Yes, once I return, it will be time for my advancement."

"Any plans after ascending?" Hua Ci asked casually.

"Travel and explore. The stellar space is vast, while the Nine Provinces is quite small. The Nine Provinces has changed since merging into the stars. Sooner or later, cultivators from other domains will discover the Nine Provinces, possibly leading to conflicts breaking out, so I have to enhance myself as much as possible, to protect our home. Besides, the Constellation cultivator's stage lies beyond the domains."

Hua Ci advised, "Then be careful. I've heard there are many formidable beings out there. If confronted with unbeatable foes, don't be stubborn; even if it means kneeling and begging for mercy, save your life first. Only with life can anything else be possible, without it, nothing exists."

She was rarely serious in front of Lu Ye, and it made Lu Ye a bit uncomfortable, but he still nodded earnestly, "Don't worry, if I really encounter a situation where I can't win or escape, I'll definitely kneel down and beg for my life first thing, what does integrity even matter."

Hua Ci was helpless. The more Lu Ye spoke like this, the more she knew that if such a situation truly arose, Lu Ye would definitely not do anything disgraceful.

What cultivator doesn't have some dignity? Especially a cultivator like Lu Ye.

Sensing her concern, Lu Ye smiled again, "But don't worry, the stellar space is vast. Meeting those strong folks out there isn't actually that easy, and most large domains just have Constellation cultivators, so

even if I truly encounter some outside cultivators, they're likely at the Constellation level. Same tier, who do I fear?"

This was indeed true. Since beginning cultivation, in the same tier condition, Lu Ye really hasn't lost to anyone; he typically kills enemies across tiers.

Next was some idle chat, reminiscing about the scene when they first met, talking about when Lu Ye went to the Independent Wanderers Society specially to find her, and recalling the intriguing experience of fighting side by side for the first time in the Chess Sea.

It seemed like a cycle of time, savoring past warmth, and carrying expectations of a beautiful future.

Topics eventually reach their end, as does time to part.

Over the years, they didn't actually spend much time together, so naturally, there wasn't too much to talk about.

Thus followed a prolonged silence.

Until one moment, Lu Ye suddenly stood up, took a deep breath, "Time to go!"

"Mm." Hua Ci gently responded, her voice faint like a mosquito's buzz.

"Then I'll be going, cultivate well," Lu Ye said as he was about to stand up.

A tight grasp on his wrist suddenly held him back, Lu Ye turned to look at Hua Ci, seeing her stare at him with some annoyance, her silver teeth lightly biting her red lips.

"What is it?"

Hua Ci remained silent for a while before finally getting upset, "Can't you show some responsibility?"

"What?" Lu Ye looked at her, puzzled.

"Are you even a man?" Hua Ci's expression seemed even angrier.

How could he take this? Lu Ye angrily retorted, "How am I not a man?"

Hua Ci's face obviously turned a bit redder, slowly averting her gaze.

Lu Ye was about to argue further when the force on his wrist suddenly increased. He tilted and directly fell down.

The words on his lips immediately vanished into thin air, the alluring scent overwhelmed him, making his mouth dry and tongue numb. Feeling the softness beneath him, Lu Ye dryly said, "So should I... do what a man should do?"

Hua Ci closed her eyes, merely waved a hand, and the coffin lid beside them flew up, immediately plunging the narrow space into darkness.

Indeed, Lu Yiye with responsibility, a hero charging forward.

It was definitely an unforgettable and endlessly relishable experience. Before this, Lu Ye always thought the feeling at the upper realm was the most wonderful in the world, but now he realized he was wrong.

Completely wrong.

Something even more marvelous than the upper realm existed in this world.

And so, three days later.

From within the dark coffin, a weary voice drifted out, "You should go now."

"My legs are weak, can't move,"

"Then rest a bit before leaving."

"Alright!"

Three more days passed.

The tiredness in the voice grew thicker, "Aren't you leaving yet?"

"My back hurts, let me rest some more."

"You're lying to me!"

Another three days, Hua Ci's voice sounded like it might be crying, "What exactly do you want?"

"Shh, don't say a word!"

A half month's time slipped by.

On this day, the long-sealed coffin suddenly opened, long-lost light poured in, catching Lu Ye excited when he suddenly sensed something amiss. Looking up, he met a ghastly pale face staring at him straight with lifeless eyes and a large, colorful mushroom atop its head.

Turning to look around, several female Corpse Race members unbeknownst had gathered around the coffin, each staring with their dead eyes, from every angle, not letting Lu Ye escape their gaze! It seemed they were determined to keep watching him until eternity.

"Hmm?" Lu Ye felt like he had been poured over with a basin of cold water, chilled from head to toe.

Unable to laugh or cry, he looked down at Hua Ci, "This is too far."

Clearly, Hua Ci was controlling these Corpse Race females to come and watch. She couldn't handle this man, couldn't scold him nor send him away, so she could only employ such unusual and sinister methods to make him leave voluntarily.

Regretting greatly, why did she open a new world door for him...

Chapter 1290 - Still Not Strong Enough

In half a month's time, Hua Ci felt as if she was about to fall apart entirely. If this man didn't leave soon, it might really end in tragedy.

"You're going too far!" Lu Ye looked down, torn between laughter and tears.

He truly hadn't expected Hua Ci to resort to such underhanded tricks, completely disregarding martial virtue.

The sight stunned Lu Ye; he saw Hua Ci covered in bruises, with an overwhelming corpse Qi emanating from her, even her eye shadow turning much darker.

To someone unaware of the situation, she might even be mistaken for a member of the Corpse Race!

She lay still with her eyes closed, in a posture suggesting she had died, clearly trying to discourage him from approaching.

Unexpectedly, Lu Ye, whose desire had faded, found himself suddenly intrigued by her unique appearance.

This kind of experience... is extremely rare and worth cherishing.

With a wave of his hand, the lid of the coffin flew back up, shielding them from the view of the female members of the Corpse Race.

In the dark space, Hua Ci weakly cursed, "Beast!"

...

The next day, Lu Ye sat fully dressed on a chair as Hua Ci stood behind him carefully combing his hair.

Lu Ye quietly gazed at the reflection of the beautiful woman's face in the mirror, an unusual rosiness amidst her fair complexion, exceptionally radiant, making his restraint waver.

Hua Ci sensed this, giving a light knock on his head, making Lu Ye behave.

Silence seemed more powerful than words at this moment.

Once the hair was tidied, Hua Ci stepped back, assessed for any imperfections, and nodded contently once she found none.

Lu Ye stood, turning to face her.

It was truly time to go. However reluctant, the future for a cultivator ultimately lies among the stars and the vast universe.

"Go on." Hua Ci said with a smile.

Lu Ye nodded, stepping forward to embrace her tightly, with such force as if trying to merge her into him and take her along.

Moments later, Lu Ye released her soft body, turned, and exited the wooden hut, soaring into the sky and through the clouds.

Hua Ci's voice echoed in his ears: "Don't hold back outside; fight when you need to, kill if you must. If you die, I'll raise the child in my belly alone."

Lu Ye almost stumbled in midair.

This woman... Even as he's leaving, she doesn't forget to leave him with something to think about.

Clearly, this seductive encounter wasn't an impulsive act by Hua Ci; it was premeditated. She knew that once Lu Ye left Nine Provinces, life and death would be uncontrollable. The stellar space wouldn't be as peaceful as Nine Provinces, and powerful enemies could be encountered at any moment outside.

Her worry was that Lu Ye might never return.

So she first tried persuasion, and when that failed, she resorted to confronting him personally, appeasing the tiger with her own body.

At the very least, she wanted him to have attachments that would make him act cautiously when facing problems outside, helping him protect himself better.

As for the child in her belly... Hua Ci had joked about that before, and Lu Ye naturally wouldn't take it seriously.

Suppressing the urge to turn back and scold her again, Lu Ye continued to rise into the clouds. His expression crumbled as he rubbed his lower back.

Though he had reached the Divine Sea Realm, his body stronger than ever, the half-month of unrestricted passion left some aftereffects.

Lu Ye's complaints of weak legs and a sore back were no joke.

It baffled him how Hua Ci, with her seemingly fragile body, always looked about to faint, yet seemed to recover faster than him.

Perhaps this was the difference between men and women?

Or perhaps he wasn't strong enough yet, and the thought provoked a silent resolve in Lu Ye to cultivate even harder!

After returning to Nine Provinces through the array left by Yueh Xin, a message arrived shortly from the battlefield marking. A brief check revealed it to be a message from Feathered Master.

Lu Ye exchanged a few words with him and arranged a meeting place, immediately using the Heaven's Augury Pillar to teleport over.

Soon, both of them appeared in a private room within the Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union.

Feathered Master had arrived early, placing the reforged Boulder Mountain Saber before Lu Ye once he got there.

Lu Ye picked it up, first weighing it with satisfaction before drawing it to inspect.

The previous tiny nicks on the long saber were completely gone. Although its appearance hadn't changed much compared to before, its quality undoubtedly improved. Lu Ye had provided some precious materials for the reforging.

Feathered Master expressed some doubt: "This saber is now indeed heavy and hard enough, but it lacks any internal restrictions. Even with your strength, wielding it might not unleash powerful attacks!"

This is also what she finds most confusing. The essence of an artifact lies in the restrictions engraved within it. The power an artifact can unleash entirely depends on the grade and number of these restrictions. Yet, when Lu Ye asked her to recast it, he didn't request any restrictions to be engraved in it.

As a result, although it was simple for her to modify and the final product had excellent quality, strictly speaking, when classified according to the quality of artifacts, this long blade wouldn't even qualify as a Spiritual Artifact.

Moreover, the blade itself wasn't sharp enough. What use could such a long blade have in combat? Surely, it couldn't just be used to smash people, could it?

If that were the case, it would be better to forge it into a stick, which would be more convenient.

Lu Ye smiled slightly, channeled his spirit force, and instantly a faint glow appeared along the edge of the Boulder Mountain Saber. The previously plain and unassuming long blade suddenly exuded an extremely sharp sensation.

"This is..." Feathered Master was moved at once, "Divine Sharp Edge?"

The blessing of the Sharpness spirit runes couldn't have such an effect, so she immediately recalled the Divine Sharp Edge Spirit Runes that Lu Ye had deduced before. Only the Divine Sharp Edge could make even someone at the Divine Sea Realm feel an unstoppable sharpness.

"Indeed!"

Feathered Master was astonished, looking at Lu Ye with an expression of disbelief, as if gazing at a monster!

When Lu Ye was deducing the Divine Sharp Edge, she had been observing from beginning to end. It took a total of two thousand and forty-six basic elements to construct such a spirit rune. In many spirit runes masters' evaluations, such a spirit rune was deemed as superficial because it was too complex and couldn't be widely applied, at most serving as a research spirit rune.

But it wasn't until this moment that Feathered Master realized the spirit rune wasn't superficial; it was that all other Artifact Refiners lacked sufficient skill.

If she hadn't seen it with her own eyes, Feathered Master would find it hard to believe that someone in this world could construct such a complex Divine Sharp Edge Spirit Rune in an instant and bless it upon their weapon.

She finally understood what those strange requests made by Lu Ye during the recasting of the Boulder Mountain Saber were about.

If one could construct the Divine Sharp Edge Spirit Runes at will, what other spirit runes would need to be engraved? The Boulder Mountain Saber indeed wasn't sharp enough, but with such spirit runes' blessing, coupled with Lu Yiye's own great strength, not to mention stellar space, but just within the Nine Provinces, he feared nothing could withstand a single cut from it!

"Surely, there is always someone better, and there's always a sky beyond a sky. I am enlightened!" Feathered Master acknowledged wholeheartedly.

When Lu Ye deduced the Divine Sharp Edge Spirit Runes, she knew his attainment in the Path of Spirit Runes surpassed her by several streets, but now it seemed her estimation of Lu Yiye's attainment on the Path of Spirit Runes was still low.

"Each profession has its specialty." Lu Ye smiled faintly, sheathing the Boulder Mountain Saber, "How do we calculate the remuneration?"

This was something Feathered Master never mentioned before, and Lu Ye didn't ask much either. They had cooperated several times, and Feathered Master's pricing was always fair.

Feathered Master shook her head, "It's not necessary. Just being able to see this today is already a great gain. How dare I speak of remuneration? Besides, the spirit runes that Fellow Daoist previously left in the Sacred Land are enough to benefit me for a lifetime."

Hearing her say this, Lu Ye didn't insist, and he thanked her immediately.

Feathered Master then shifted the topic, smiling mischievously, "Fellow Daoist seems to have been living quite leisurely lately?"

"What do you mean?" Lu Ye was puzzled.

Feathered Master just smiled without saying a word, gracefully stepped out of the room, and left elegantly.

Leaving Lu Ye in a fog of confusion.

The recasting of the Boulder Mountain Saber was completed ahead of schedule, and now it was time to advance to the Constellation.

In fact, Lu Ye could sense that the opportunity to advance to Constellation was right in front of him because of the benefits received from the Reincarnation Tree, which had been subtly nurturing his body over the past six months. This nurturing didn't significantly affect his strength, but it seemed to endow his flesh with a more vibrant vitality and a more mystical power.

Now, this nurturing had reached its peak, and the moment of breakthrough was at hand.

He turned and left the room.

Half a tea later, he was back at Righteous Blood Sect headquarters.

Exiting the Heaven's Augury Hall, he was about to head to Emerald Bamboo Peak when he happened to meet Shui Yuan approaching.

Lu Ye paused to converse with her for a few moments; however, Shui Yuan came close and kept sniffing Lu Ye continually.

"Wh...what's wrong?" Lu Ye suddenly felt a little guilty.

Shui Yuan drew back, smiling meaningfully, "Nothing, congratulations, junior brother. No matter what, cherish it!"

She turned and entered the Heaven's Augury Hall.

Lu Ye was bewildered, but recalling Feathered Master's earlier words, he quickly realized something, raising his arm to sniff carefully at his own nose, but smelled nothing.

It must be that due to spending so much time together, he had become accustomed to Hua Ci's scent, hence couldn't smell it, but Feathered Master and Senior Sister Shui Yuan must have smelled it clearly.

The noses of cultivators are indeed keen.

Lu Ye felt slightly embarrassed, a baseless feeling of having been caught in wrongdoing by Second Senior Sister welled up, despite being unable to explain elaborately.

Covering his face, he left promptly, heading straight for Emerald Bamboo Peak!

Returning to his bamboo lodge, he sat cross-legged, calmed his mind, and quietly awaited the final opportunity to arrive.

Silently sensing, he could still perceive the mystical force surging inside his body. This force had been acting since he advanced to Divine Sea Level 9, until today.

Lu Ye wasn't quite sure what the essence of such a force was, but he knew that due to this nourishing force, he possessed the ability to step into stellar space. Without this force, he wouldn't be able to break through the shackles of the Divine Sea Realm.