

Humanity 1291

Chapter 1291 - Constellation

Lu Ye was unsure what it was like for other Nine Provinces cultivators to ascend to the Constellation stage, since he had never observed it himself. He supposed it might be somewhat different from his own ascension.

The Nine Provinces cultivators relied on the spirit light born from the Nine Provinces, while what he obtained was the spirit light nurtured within the Taichu Realm.

It was said that this kind of spirit light offered greater benefits for a cultivator's future. As for the differences, he could only slowly perceive them afterward; for now, they were indiscernible.

Time slowly passed.

Until a moment five days later, Lu Ye suddenly felt the mysterious power he had acquired from the Taichu Realm completely depleted. It was at this time that the shackles of his Divine Sea Realm shattered with a loud bang.

His entire body began to writhe, his blood surged and flowed vigorously through his meridians, appearing more vibrant.

His mind also elevated substantially in that instant, and he felt a stronger connection between himself and the Nine Provinces.

There were no extraordinary phenomena, nor was there too complex a process.

The entire ascension was smooth and natural, like water flowing.

Only an invisible force field emanated outward from him as the center, undulating endlessly, seemingly intent on spreading across the entire Nine Provinces' land.

At Mount Ao, the Righteous Blood Sect cultivators initially sensed something, although the sect's disciples currently had low cultivation, so even if they sensed something, they did not know specifically what had happened.

Only Shui Yuan looked toward the location of Emerald Bamboo Peak with gratification, knowing this was the pivotal step taken by her junior brother.

Moments later, Lu Ye's elevated mind returned to its place, and he felt slightly dazed.

So... I've ascended to the Constellation stage?

Quietly perceiving his own changes, he quickly noticed the differences from before. The greatest change was in his physical body!

In cultivation of the upper three realms, ultimately it is the leap of Essence Qi, and as the first checkpoint of the upper three realms, a Constellation cultivator's primary focus in cultivation is the enhancement of essence.

Essence is the foundation of one's being, the origin of life. From the beginning of a cultivator's practice, they are linked to the Path of Essence.

The so-called Essence Refinement-Qi Conversion is a means of cultivation, and when Lu Ye first started cultivating, he used this method to generate his own Spiritual Energy.

Cultivators often use this method to aid their practice because, compared to swallowing elixir pills, it doesn't have significant aftereffects. Of course, the degree must be controlled; refining too much could lead to exhaustion, which would be counterproductive.

Therefore, essence is not exclusive to the Constellation stage, but rather, it's something cultivators possess from birth, affecting all aspects of their life.

Sufficient vitality results in strong blood Qi, strong blood Qi results in a robust physique.

Before the Constellation stage, cultivators focused on Essence Refinement-Qi Conversion, but after entering the Constellation stage, they must emphasize the enhancement of their own essence.

Comparing to before the ascension, Lu Ye could clearly feel his essence seemed to have undergone a qualitative leap. This leap wouldn't instantly make his physique much stronger; in fact, compared to before, his physique hadn't changed much. However, it made his blood and flesh more vibrant, which led to a direct result—cultivators could traverse the stellar space with their physical bodies without fear of the pervasive mystical energies' erosion!

Without this vitality, a cultivator delving recklessly into the stellar space would only be eroded to death by its energies.

Of course, this is just one aspect of the benefits; there are many more.

For instance, after physical injuries, under the same environment and conditions, Constellation stage cultivators could recover faster than those in the Divine Sea Realm, because the blood and flesh are more vibrant, recovery naturally quicker.

Previously, Lu Ye had asked Number Nine some things about the upper three realms, but his understanding was incomplete because Number Nine didn't know much about these things. Its spiritual intelligence was born in the later Nine Provinces era, by then no strong cultivators existed in the Nine Provinces, so there were no examples to observe, and its knowledge was only from the records remaining from the Nine Provinces' scriptures.

But these matters were common knowledge passed down orally among cultivators from the earlier Nine Provinces era—who would bother recording them in writing?

Therefore, even those remaining scriptures are few in number, and mostly fragmentary.

According to Number Nine, the pinnacle of Constellation stage cultivation is the ability to regrow lost limbs.

In the past, Lu Ye thought this idea was too mystical and possibly untrue, but now having ascended to the Constellation stage and carefully perceiving his essence, it seemed indeed possible.

Currently, he couldn't regrow lost limbs, nor could he regenerate his flesh. But if he continued cultivating, allowing his blood and flesh to become more vibrant, flesh rebirth would be attainable; by then, even if injured, he could recover swiftly.

Regrowing lost limbs leads to Drop of Blood Rebirth, but that's not something achievable at the Constellation stage, nor at the Sun Blaze Realm!

However, in the Blood Race inheritance Lu Ye obtained, there's such a record; with Blood Race secret technique cultivation to its peak, Drop of Blood Rebirth is possible!

Who knows if this is true or not.

The path of cultivation is long, and until one reaches that level, it is impossible to truly comprehend its wonders.

However, in his perceptions, Lu Ye discovered an interesting phenomenon: the more abundant a cultivator's energy, the higher the starting point they can occupy after advancing to the Constellation Realm. From this perspective, physique cultivators certainly have an advantage.

But in the end, it's just a starting point. Those magic cultivators with delicate bodies can make up for this gap through cultivation, so it is not a big deal.

Lu Ye's energy is undoubtedly very abundant. Not to mention that his physique is comparable to that of physique cultivators of the same level, but he has also practiced the Blood Race's secret technique. Just that point alone is something ordinary cultivators cannot match.

Therefore, after advancing in cultivation, the starting point he occupies is much higher than that of ordinary cultivators.

The most direct manifestation is that, under introspection, small points of starlight can be vaguely seen within the flesh and blood! These starlights are unique to the Constellation Realm, a manifestation of one's own essence, and the origin of the name "Constellation Realm." Each point of starlight contains extremely powerful energy that surpasses the Divine Sea Realm level.

Lu Ye became enlightened, roughly understanding what the cultivation in the Constellation Realm is about.

Regardless of the method used, increasing the accumulation of starlight within oneself—when this mysterious energy, manifested as starlight, accumulates to a certain extent, it will step into the next level!

This is just his conjecture based on his current situation, but he cannot confirm if it is indeed so.

So he gently called, "Number Nine!"

A bit of spirit light gathered by his side, quickly transforming into the form of a rabbit, looking very cute, but opening its mouth ruined the playful allure.

"What's up!"

"What is the cultivation in the Constellation Realm about? Is it divided into Level 1, Level 2, and then up to Level 9?"

Lu Ye had not understood this before, partly because it wasn't the time yet, and he wasn't sure if Number Nine knew. Now that he had advanced to the Constellation Realm, it was time to understand.

It's a pity that when Yang Qing was around, he never got the chance to ask him. Now he could only hope for answers from Number Nine.

The rabbit, which Number Nine had transformed into, scratched its ear and cheek, obviously puzzled by the question. After a while, it said, "Wait a minute!"

The figure flickered and disappeared. When it reappeared, there were a few ancient-looking jade slips in its rabbit paws, which it tossed to Lu Ye, saying, "See for yourself."

After saying that, it vanished in a flash, leaving Lu Ye unsure of its whereabouts.

Lu Ye picked up the jade slips, casually selected one, and his Mental Consciousness surged, probing into it to examine the content.

The jade slips are relics from the pre-Nine Provinces era, and so old that Lu Ye found it difficult to read them. Much of the information inside was damaged and fragmentary, making it hard to make sense of.

Moreover, the jade slips did not record the cultivation methods and level division of the Constellation Realm, but rather something else, though there were occasional mentions of the upper three realms.

It took Lu Ye quite some time to finish exploring the contents of these jade slips. Although his understanding of the Constellation Realm was still not comprehensive, at least he was no longer completely in the dark.

It was somewhat different from what he thought; the level division of the Constellation Realm is not that complicated, with no such thing as Level 1 or Level 2. There are only three levels: Early, Mid, and Late Stage. Not only is this true for the Constellation Realm, but it also seems to be the same for the subsequent Moon Jade Realm and Sun Blaze Realm.

This type of division is undoubtedly based on an ancient tradition, and if it exists, it must have its reasoning.

It sounds like advancing beyond the Constellation Realm is more straightforward since there are only three sub-levels, but Lu Ye knows that this is definitely an illusion. Although there are only three sub-levels, each advancement will likely be many times more difficult than before.

While he was deep in thought, his battlefield marking reacted, and upon checking, he discovered that it was a message from Jian Guhong!

Had he not left yet?

Lu Ye was a bit surprised. Last time, when he returned from the Reincarnation Tree, Jian Guhong and Wuchang had specifically sought him out to inquire about his views on remaining in the Nine Provinces. Lu Ye's opinion was that now was an excellent time for the Nine Provinces Constellation cultivators to cultivate, and there was no need to stay in the Nine Provinces, especially since they were protected by Heaven's Augury. Even if a strong enemy came, as long as it wasn't at the Sun Blaze Realm, they wouldn't be able to do much to the Nine Provinces.

Lu Ye had thought that Jian Guhong and the others had left the Nine Provinces and ventured deep into the stellar space, yet he hadn't expected him to still be in the Nine Provinces.

A message from him now undoubtedly meant he realized Lu Ye had advanced to the Constellation Realm.

"What is it, Senior?" Lu Ye asked. The source of this content is Novel_Fire(.)net

"Come to Tianzhou!" Jian Guhong replied, providing a location, which was surprisingly the spirit mountaintop where the Reincarnation Tree's doppelganger was located.

Lu Ye didn't know what he was doing there, but since he was invited by a senior, he naturally had to go.

He got up and walked out of the wooden house, heading to Heaven's Augury Hall for teleportation.

A short time later, Lu Ye arrived at the spirit mountaintop and was slightly stunned at a glance, for there stood a grand and imposing hall.

It hadn't been there before; when Yang Qing was here, there was only a wooden house. Now, though that wooden house was still there, at some unspecified time, a grand hall had been erected there.

Inside the hall was Jian Guhong's presence. Out of curiosity, Lu Ye stepped inside. Their eyes met, and Jian Guhong gave a slight nod: "Indeed, you've advanced to the Constellation Realm!"

Chapter 1292 - Star Map

When Lu Ye ascended to the Constellation Realm, a mystical aura spread out. Although the commotion wasn't large, any cultivator with accomplished cultivation would be able to sense it.

Jian Guhong naturally noticed and immediately realized that someone had ascended to the Constellation Realm. As for who it was... after looking around briefly, he pinpointed the location at Mount Ao and then decided to send a message to Lu Ye.

Seeing him now, it was indeed Lu Ye who had ascended to the Constellation Realm.

He felt genuine comfort and satisfaction. Among the countless cultivators of the Nine Provinces, Jian Guhong and his peers considered Lu Ye as the most deserving among the younger generation. This was attributable to his various accomplishments. In the present Nine Provinces, if anyone had the ability to lead them to new heights, all those in the Constellation Realm could likely agree on one name.

Lu Yiye of the Righteous Blood Sect!

Thus, Lu Ye stepping into the Constellation Realm holds significant importance for the Nine Provinces. It means he can leap out of this small pond and step onto the grand stage of stellar space. How he would develop in the future depends entirely on his own abilities.

"Why have you summoned me, elder?" Lu Ye asked.

Jian Guhong usually wore a stern face, not out of arrogance, but simply due to his nature. However, he managed a rare smile at this moment: "Having ascended to the Constellation Realm, when do you plan to embark on your journey into the stellar space?"

"In the next few days," Lu Ye replied, not intending to linger in the Nine Provinces. Before ascending, he was constantly working toward this goal; now that he had ascended, naturally, it was time to explore the vast wonders outside.

If Jian Guhong hadn't summoned him, he would probably stay at Emerald Bamboo Peak for a few days to experience the mysteries of the Constellation Realm and then set out.

There was no need to say farewell to anyone; he had already said his goodbyes. When the time comes, he'd simply inform the Second Senior Sister.

Jian Guhong nodded slightly: "Have you decided where to go, or in which direction to head?"

Lu Ye had no idea which direction he should go. Once out of the Nine Provinces, every direction becomes spherical with no specific destination in mind, moving wherever fate takes him.

However, Jian Guhong would not ask such a foolish question. A thought struck Lu Ye: "I haven't decided yet. Do you have any advice, elder?"

"Follow me!" Jian Guhong gestured with his hand.

Lu Ye followed closely behind him, entering a side hall nearby.

Upon entering, he was immediately struck with astonishment because there was a sphere placed within the side hall. It appeared to be made of wood, but it was clearly not just a simple object, as Lu Ye perceived some characteristics of a spirit treasure within it. In other words, this thing was a spirit treasure, though he didn't know its intended purpose here.

He turned to Jian Guhong with a look of inquiry, Jian Guhong gestured: "Try channeling your spirit force into it."

Lu Ye stepped forward, raised his hand, and pressed it on the sphere, channeling his spirit force into it.

A soft buzzing sound occurred as points of light suddenly flew out from the spirit treasure sphere, spreading throughout the entire side hall. At first glance, it seemed as though fireflies had suddenly appeared inside the hall, like he had suddenly been placed within stellar space, with each point of light representing a star.

It wasn't just these lights; there were also some unusually shaped clusters of light.

The central light was relatively bright, flickering gently, as if it had its own life.

All these sights radiated from this central light, but it was quite evident that many areas were blank and not adorned with points of light.

At the farthest edge of one direction, there was a point of light shining most brightly!

Originally, Lu Ye did not know what this was, but after observing it for a moment, he suddenly realized: "Elder, could this be a map of outer space beyond the Nine Provinces?"

Jian Guhong nodded: "Indeed, it's a map of outer space beyond the Nine Provinces. We call it a star map!"

Lu Ye gasped in surprise. When did they craft something like this? He hadn't known at all.

It seemed that during his time spent diligently cultivating, the pioneers hadn't wasted time either. They were doing things that couldn't be achieved by those below the Constellation Realm.

Jian Guhong's voice spoke: "At present, the number of Constellations from the Nine Provinces has reached over 800. These people are exploring the stellar space, running far and wide, and near from afar. They record the size and positions of many stars in space, then pass this information to me, enabling me to create the star map."

This is also the main reason he stayed at the Nine Provinces!

The cultivators of the Nine Provinces started venturing into stellar space, but as a newly ascended large domain, those in the Constellation Realm understood that everyone needed to act as a collective rather than individually. Therefore, even though Lu Ye had given his suggestion, Jian Guhong and others weighed their options and chose to have someone remain stationed in the Nine Provinces.

It's not for protecting the Nine Provinces but for the convenience of those who come later.

We can't have every cultivator who advances to the Constellation Realm entering stellar space completely clueless, can we? The experiences of these pioneers in exploration are extremely valuable and need to be passed on, so more people can become aware of it.

That's why Jian Guhong, Wuchang, and others have built a great hall here, known as the Nine Provinces Governor's Palace, where the Nine Provinces Governors reside naturally.

The duty of the Governor's Hall is quite simple, which is to provide various information about stellar space to newly promoted Constellation Realm cultivators, allowing these successors to avoid detours and explore stellar space more effectively.

This is also the awkward point and growing pain of every newly promoted major domain, because there is no path paved by predecessors to follow, and everything needs to be slowly explored.

Unlike those established large domains or even top-tier domains, where the Constellation Realm cultivators have already mastered complete stellar space data before leaving their native domains, and their star maps can cover countries and beyond.

Nine Provinces cultivators do not have such conveniences; nowadays, each Constellation Realm cultivator is a pioneer of history.

The first thing they need to do is improve the star map of outer Nine Provinces. Having experienced the Spirit Stream battlefield and Cloud River battlefield, Lu Ye knows the importance of maps.

For a moment, he felt solemn respect and respectfully bowed to Jian Guhong: "Your efforts, senior, will not be in vain, younger generations will emulate them."

Jian Guhong smiled slightly: "This is a decision made by all Constellation Realm cultivators, not my sole effort!"

Lu Ye shook his head: "Yet at this moment, you are the first senior to have stayed behind. Your dedication to Nine Provinces will be remembered by future generations."

Just like Lu Ye himself, after advancing to the Constellation Realm, he also had an eager desire to venture into stellar space. Not to mention veteran seniors like Jian Guhong who have lingered in the Divine Sea Realm for hundreds of years. Yet, he still held back his desires and chose to stay in Nine Provinces.

This stay will not be short; it's impossible for someone to replace him in one or two months, as journeys in stellar space take a long time. Those who leave the Constellation Realm won't return in just a month or two.

In the discussion among Jian Guhong and others, this matter isn't forced. If someday a Constellation Realm cultivator becomes tired and weary from wandering outside, or collects a certain amount of spirit jade and needs a stable environment to cultivate, they can return to Nine Provinces to take on the duty of Governor from Jian Guhong. Only then can Jian Guhong depart for stellar space.

Of course, if no one returns for a long time, Jian Guhong can choose to pull someone in to replace him, as Nine Provinces, based on its current situation, will continue to birth new Constellation Realm cultivators.

Of course, that's a matter for later.

Jian Guhong smiled slightly and didn't speak further on this issue. Having decided to guard Nine Provinces alone, he won't self-pity but will do his duty as agreed.

This star map is the result of his recent efforts.

"This is Nine Provinces!" Jian Guhong pointed to the brightest light spot at its center and said. Lu Ye had guessed it. Since it's a star map of Nine Provinces, naturally it was drawn with Nine Provinces at its center.

He pointed to the brightest light spot at the furthest edge: "This is the Sun!" How far the Sun is from Nine Provinces, no one knows now, since no one has been able to fly there, so it is placed at the furthest edge, symbolizing a long distance.

"Look here." Jian Guhong pointed to another direction, where there was another relatively bright light spot.

"This star we call Taibai Star! In stellar space, it's challenging to determine your position, as in such a grand environment, there's no up and down, left and right, or east, west, south, north. For cultivators newly entering stellar space, it's easy to get lost. Don't laugh, but I'll tell you, this was the most frequent problem encountered by our first batch of cultivators entering stellar space! Thankfully, we didn't wander too far initially and could safely return. If we went further, returning wouldn't be certain. So, in stellar space, how can one accurately find Nine Provinces' location?"

Jian Guhong paused momentarily, giving Lu Ye space to think.

Without his prior guidance, Lu Ye might not have thought of anything, as he was clueless about this. He hadn't ventured through stellar space on his own.

But with his prior specific hints, Lu Ye vaguely understood: "Using the Sun and Taibai Star to locate Nine Provinces?"

Jian Guhong nodded: "Exactly! As long as you recognize these two stars' positions, finding Nine Provinces' location isn't hard."

Lu Ye imagined himself in stellar space, giving him some semblance of understanding.

This reflects the wisdom of predecessors; if left alone to explore, he might find a way, but it would cost time and energy. If truly lost in stellar space, who knows where he might drift to.

"What is this?" Lu Ye pointed to a place on the star map, where a cluster of hazy light gathered, unlike any star.

"I'm not sure what exactly this is; the message we received described it just like this, so I only visualized it based on that description."

Lu Ye stared at the cluster of light, realizing at first glance that it resembled a ferocious beast in shape, but there couldn't be such a huge beast in stellar space. Suddenly inspired, he said: "Stellar marvel!"

"What?" Jian Guhong showed a puzzled expression.

Chapter 1293 - Direction

"In the stellar space, there are not only various celestial bodies but also many unique phenomena, known as star marvels. However, these marvels differ from the wonders within domains, as most star marvels possess a considerable degree of danger," Lu Ye explained simply.

"Did Senior Yang Qing tell you these things?" Jian Guhong asked. Since Lu Ye had left the Nine Provinces with Yang Qing, it was likely he obtained information about the starry sky from him.

It matched his understanding, because a Nine Provinces Constellation Realm cultivator had passed on intelligence about star marvels here, stating that Mental Consciousness cannot penetrate the area where the light clusters converge. He attempted to delve in but dared to go only ten thousand miles forward, as he felt more threatened the deeper he went. Ultimately, he had to withdraw, and no one knows what risks lie within.

Lu Ye shook his head and took out several ancient jade slips, handing them over: "I found out from here."

These jade slips were given to him by Number Nine previously, containing a variety of information, including cultivation beyond the Constellation Realm and introductions to star marvels.

Jian Guhong took them, immersed his mind to observe, and couldn't help but frown.

He encountered the same issue as Lu Ye before, as the records in the jade slips were fragmented due to their age, making them hard to peruse. Yet, these were extremely important pieces of intelligence, so Jian Guhong patiently probed them.

While Jian Guhong was investigating the jade slips, Lu Ye was examining the star map in front of him.

The star map before him was undoubtedly incomplete, with many blank spaces where Nine Provinces cultivators had yet to explore. Although the Nine Provinces now had a significant number of Constellation Realm cultivators, when plunged into the vast stellar space, they were still but a drop in the ocean.

With the current manpower, it would take at least ten to twenty years to fully explore the outer space near Nine Provinces.

By then, Nine Provinces would have a complete star map, albeit relatively speaking, covering only a limited distance.

But as Nine Provinces cultivators continuously emerge and venture farther, it is believed that this star map will become increasingly perfected.

After observing for a while, Lu Ye took out a blank jade slip and copied the star map in front of him. This was not difficult for him; it just required spending some time.

A half-day later, he was finished, and Jian Guhong too had completed investigating those jade slips, showing a thoughtful expression: "So Constellation Realm cultivation still has these aspects, no wonder those of us old folks always felt something was slightly off during cultivation."

"What was off?" Lu Ye humbly inquired, as after advancing, he hadn't begun cultivation.

Jian Guhong said: "We also tried to refine the strength within the spirit jade before but found that these refined powers only affected the blood and flesh, appearing difficult to penetrate the body's interior—it was like this for everyone. Because there was no clear path to follow, we thought it was a mistake in cultivation methods, but now we know it's not the method that's wrong, it's an essential step!"

"Essence of Blood and Flesh!" Lu Ye stated.

Jian Guhong nodded: "According to the records in the jade slips, Constellation Realm cultivation is divided into three stages: Essence of Blood and Flesh, Essence of Inner Organs, and Essence of Bones, corresponding to the Early, Mid, and Late stages of the Constellation Realm. Presently, the Constellation

Early Stage corresponds to the Essence of Blood and Flesh, so the strength refined from spirit jade naturally accumulates within the flesh."

This is precisely why those in the Constellation Realm can rapidly heal injuries and even regenerate flesh after being wounded; the more one cultivates during this stage, the more vitality their body holds.

Until reaching the Constellation Mid-Stage, the refined power begins tempering one's internal organs.

In the Constellation Late Stage, it refines the bones.

The entire cultivation in the Constellation Realm can be seen as a detailed honing of the flesh from outside to inside, and by reaching Great Perfection, one can achieve limb regeneration.

Moreover, once advancing to Moon Jade, it signifies that the cultivator's physical form no longer has any glaring weaknesses. At that point, the body strength of each cultivator won't be inferior to the most supreme spirit treasures.

This intelligence is crucial and needs to be disseminated quickly, enabling Nine Provinces cultivators who have advanced to the Constellation Realm to understand, preventing continual feelings of unease in their cultivation or the emergence of bizarre cultivation techniques that might lead to prioritizing incorrectly.

"I'll keep these jade slips," Jian Guhong announced.

"Certainly, Senior. Take them," Lu Ye nodded, having read them thoroughly himself; they held no further utility for him. Instead, by allowing Jian Guhong to oversee them here, future advancements to the Constellation Realm at this locale could reference the contents, gaining preliminary understanding of Constellation nuances.

Turning towards the star map, Lu Ye remarked: "Senior asked me earlier which direction I intended to travel, suggesting I explore these blank areas, correct?"

The blank areas inevitably need exploration, but no one will be forced into anything. For Lu Ye, if truly left to his choice, he would actually prefer those unexplored regions, as they present greater opportunities to find spirit jade.

Following others' paths doesn't carry much significance, only picking up remnants they've left behind.

"Exactly, would you be willing?"

"Naturally, willing," Lu Ye casually pointed to a blank region in the stellar space, "Then I shall head in this direction."

Jian Guhong cheerfully agreed: "That's excellent, though for your first exploration outside, I suggest not venturing too far. Also, frequently utilize Sun Taibai Star to pinpoint Nine Provinces' location within the stellar space, familiarizing yourself with this technique."

Jian Guhong paused slightly, then said, "Additionally, after you leave, go find a Heaven's Augury Hall, connect with Heaven's Augury, and receive a Heaven's Augury Pillar to carry with you."

Lu Ye was surprised, "Constellation Realm cultivators can receive a Heaven's Augury Pillar?"

He hadn't heard of this before.

Jian Guhong nodded, "It was also an inspiration from Heaven's Augury when we were constructing this Governor's Hall. Every Constellation Realm cultivator can receive a Heaven's Augury Pillar when leaving the Nine Provinces. This way, even when in stellar space, one can communicate back with the Nine Provinces. However, there is a distance limitation. According to their current feedback, within a half-year journey, you can contact the Nine Provinces at any time. But beyond this distance, the connection will be interrupted."

This half-year journey naturally refers to the distance the current Nine Provinces Constellation can traverse within half a year while normally flying through stellar space.

Such a distance is quite far.

Number Nine did well with this. It must have realized the inconvenience for Nine Provinces cultivators to maintain contact with their home domain after going out, hence this inspiration and the granting of the Heaven's Augury Pillar.

With such means, Constellation Realm cultivators out exploring can timely relay their discoveries back, which allowed Jian Guhong to draft an incomplete star map here.

Since it's a benefit everyone gets, naturally Lu Ye will go and find Number Nine to receive one for himself later.

Everything that needed explaining has been explained to Lu Ye. There's nothing more to remind. Once one has stepped into the Constellation Realm, it is inevitable to venture into stellar space. No one will remain stagnant in the Nine Provinces forever.

Jian Guhong suddenly remembered something, "By the way, there's another matter I need to discuss with you."

"Please speak, Senior!" Lu Ye became solemn.

"It's about forms of address."

"Forms of address?" Lu Ye was puzzled. What's the issue with addresses?

"After discussions among us old folks, we've decided unanimously that after a Nine Provinces cultivator ascends to the Constellation Realm, we should consider each other peers. You know, the lifespan of us cultivators is far longer than that of mortals. In the past, the limit was the Divine Sea, so the generational hierarchy wasn't confusing. But now, with potential advancement to Constellation and beyond to Moon Jade and Sun Blaze, it's different. Take you, Yiye, for example. Given time, you will surely reach the Sun Blaze Realm! By then, perhaps some of us will still be stuck in the Constellation Realm. We can't possibly have you still call us senior, can we? Now we have you, Lu Yiye, and perhaps in the future, there'll be a Lu Liangye and a Lu Sanye..."

Lu Ye didn't think it was a problem, "Since you're seniors, you'll always be seniors."

Jian Guhong waved his hand, "That's true, but honestly, we elders can't bear it. So after much discussion, we felt that since Nine Provinces now has a new future, it should have new conventions. Let Constellation be the dividing line: below Constellation, the hierarchy stands as it is; above, treat each other as peers! With our long lifespan as cultivators, even if we elders are at least hundreds of years older than you, calling each other brothers isn't really a big deal. I reckon in those top domains, there are surely cultivators who are thousands of years apart calling each other brothers."

Lu Ye vaguely sensed the pride among the elders. On one hand, they hoped for future generations to surpass them in cultivation. On the other hand, they dreaded the awkwardness of being called seniors by someone with higher cultivation.

Hence, they set such a precedent.

Lu Ye pondered briefly, then graciously cupped his hands in a salute, "Senior Brother Guhong!"

Jian Guhong laughed heartily and returned the salute, "Junior Brother Yiye!"

However, Lu Ye soon realized a problem, "But my sect master is also in the Constellation Realm..."

Jian Guhong teased, "When you see him, try calling him brother!"

Of course, Lu Ye wasn't that foolish.

Among those not from the same sect, calling each other brother was not a problem. But within the same sect, naturally, one should strictly follow the generational hierarchy.

"Alright, I've said all that needs to be said. Go back, prepare a bit, and set out when you're ready." Jian Guhong waved his hand, "After entering the Constellation Realm, you'll soon realize that the Nine Provinces is just a speck!"

Lu Ye wasn't in a hurry to leave. Instead, he took out a ring, "Please accept this, Senior Brother."

Jian Guhong received it, suspicious, "What is it?"

"You'll see for yourself, brother. The things inside can be considered common property of the Governor's Hall."

With that, he turned and left the hall, soaring into the sky.

After he left, Jian Guhong inspected the ring in his hand, quickly understanding what it was. It turned out to be a kind of storage tool, similar to a storage sack, but the internal storage space was undoubtedly more stable and larger.

Chapter 1294 - Attempts at Cultivation

This is something that doesn't exist in the Nine Provinces; the storage tools in the Nine Provinces are storage sacks. They are simple to make, requiring only the hide of a demon beast, which can be bred. Therefore, in the Nine Provinces cultivation world, even Spirit Stream Realm cultivators can have several storage sacks.

The storage ring in Jian Guhong's hand had never appeared in the later Nine Provinces era. As for where Lu Ye obtained this item...

Just by a simple thought, Jian Guhong knew that there must be a human life behind this storage ring! And it's the life of a top-level demon prodigy from another domain!

Examining the contents of the ring, Jian Guhong was greatly surprised!

Inside, it was piled like a small mountain full of spirit jades. Sweeping with his Mental Consciousness, he roughly estimated about fifteen thousand pieces!

Jian Guhong had never seen such a large number of spirit jades. Although he previously collected spirit jades in the stellar space with a considerable harvest, it was only a few hundred pieces; fifteen thousand pieces would take him several years to collect in the stellar space!

Shocked by Lu Ye's wealth, yet understanding that this was surely Lu Ye's harvest from the Taichu Realm, he felt grateful and promptly sent a message to Lu Ye.

"Senior brother, on behalf of future governors, thank you for your generous gift, junior brother!"

Lu Ye made it very clear that this is considered a shared asset of the Governor's Hall, meaning whoever is responsible for governing this place has the right to use these spirit jades for cultivation.

The first governor in Nine Provinces is Jian Guhong. To guard the Nine Provinces, he voluntarily gave up the right to explore the stellar space and collect cultivation resources. Making such a decision at this time required a high level of awareness because staying in Nine Provinces meant he couldn't access cultivation resources, and he would have to wait until the next person replaced him before he could leave.

He had such awareness, and naturally, Lu Ye would not hoard things selfishly.

In the Taichu Realm, the spirit jades he mined with the help of jade-eating ants were roughly thirty thousand pieces, so Lu Ye took out half.

This way, at least while guarding the Nine Provinces, Jian Guhong's cultivation won't fall behind. Later, when someone else replaces Jian Guhong, they can also use those spirit jades for cultivation.

Of course, Lu Ye didn't know how long fifteen thousand spirit jades would last. But as long as a good start is made, followers will surely emerge later.

In the future, a new situation might evolve where Nine Provinces governors receive a monthly salary, which would be great.

There is no compulsion for governors; since it's voluntary, there should be some benefits.

Returning to Emerald Bamboo Peak again, Lu Ye first familiarized himself with various changes after his promotion to the Constellation Realm, then took out a supreme-grade spirit stone, placed it in his mouth, and crushed it with a crunch.

He wanted to know if spirit stones were still useful after being promoted to the Constellation Realm.

After some trials, he found that spirit stones were still useful, but compared to before, their effect was almost negligible, since the energy refined from spirit stones couldn't significantly enhance the vitality of his blood and flesh.

With the supreme-grade spirit stone being so, other spirit stones were even less useful.

Lu Ye then took out a bottle of ordinary Spirit-Nurturing Pill and chewed it.

Moments later, he came to the same conclusion: Spirit-Nurturing Pills were also no longer effective for cultivation in the Constellation Realm.

Ordinary Spirit-Nurturing Pills didn't work; what about the ones refined in the Pill Furnace? With this thought, Lu Ye took out a Spirit-Nurturing Pill from the pill gourd, and found it was still the same.

Though it was produced by the pill gourd, it was still a Spirit-Nurturing Pill, with its essence unchanged. It was just that the Spirit-Nurturing Pills refined by the pill gourd were without any impurities, making them easier for cultivators to absorb and refine, without any side effects.

Right after, Lu Ye took out another elixir pill, which was also used for cultivation. How to name it, Lu Ye was uncertain. It was also produced by the pill gourd, but refined from rare and precious herbs from the Taichu Realm.

There weren't many of such elixir pills in Lu Ye's hand, nine were produced from the previous batch; he tried one on the spot, leaving only eight.

Swallowed whole, he activated the Bestial Gluttony Feast, quickly detecting the difference.

This elixir pill was effective for cultivation; he could distinctly feel the subtle change in his body's vitality, indicating an enhancement in the Essence of Blood and Flesh.

Although he found an effective cultivation method, it couldn't be popularized, because Lu Ye wasn't sure what herbs he threw into the pill gourd during his initial attempt, so even he couldn't refine the same elixir pill now, unless he tried repeatedly.

Feeling slightly regretful, Lu Ye took out a gold-hued spirit fortune stick and crushed it.

The golden vortex spun before him as the roots of the Talent Tree extended into it, later causing Lu Ye to furrow his brow.

The cultivation method of Theft of Heaven's Augury was also not very useful for him.

He sighed slightly, no wonder the stage for Constellation Realm was in the stellar space; the things within the domain, whether spirit stones, elixir pills, or nature's spiritual energy, provided minimal enhancement to the Constellation Realm—almost negligible, which no doubt compelled Constellation Realms to delve into stellar space.

Of course, this is also related to Nine Provinces now being promoted as a large domain; perhaps in the future, Nine Provinces might produce higher-quality herbs, if not comparable to the products within the Taichu Realm, at least sufficient to refine elixir pills beneficial to Constellation Realms.

Currently, Nine Provinces' produced herbs don't have this effect.

After various attempts, Lu Ye finally took out two pieces of spirit jade; he wanted to test the exclusive effect of these cultivation resources for the Constellation Realm.

Sitting still, keeping his mind focused, he channeled spirit force while refining the energy within the spirit jades in his hands.

Immediately, he felt two streams of warmth flowing into his body through his palms, starting to nourish his flesh and blood.

The effect was quite apparent, of course, partly due to the change in Lu Ye's cultivation aptitude. Initially, when he first began cultivation, he couldn't directly use Spirit Stones like this, just as he couldn't absorb nature's spiritual energy, because his aptitude was insufficient.

But after receiving the Origin's gift from Soaring Dragon World, he had been transformed completely, and his aptitude improved from Yiye to sixty-four Yiye. What was a regular cultivation method for most cultivators, he could now apply, and more effectively at that.

After meditating for half a day and comparing the energy consumed from the spirit jade, he roughly estimated that these two pieces of spirit jade could sustain three full days of his cultivation.

For others, it might last around four days.

This means that a cultivator new to Constellation Realm would need less than twenty spirit jade pieces for a month of uninterrupted cultivation.

Such consumption was incredibly low!

Given such low usage, as long as Constellation Realm cultivators aren't terribly unlucky, they should be able to find enough spirit jade in stellar space to meet their own cultivation needs.

Of course, this also relates to Lu Ye's recent promotion to Constellation Realm. As his cultivation advances in the future, the efficiency of refining spirit jade energy is bound to increase.

Typically, cultivators don't practice in stellar space, as most people require a stable and undisturbed environment and stellar space is unsuitable for cultivation. Usually, they search for a sufficient quantity of spirit jade, then return to their home domain or find a restful environment, only replenishing a bit of their power when consumed.

Lu Ye, however, doesn't need a stable or serene environment; he always multitasks during cultivation.

What he was experimenting with now was the most orthodox and widely adopted cultivation method.

But he had hardly ever used this method to cultivate.

He had his own unique cultivation method.

The Talent Tree's power was activated, and invisible roots spread out, plunging into the two pieces of spirit jade in his hand, absorbing swiftly!

The sensation was different again; he could clearly perceive the energy from the spirit jade rapidly rushing into his body, settling as potent capital for himself.

Using the Talent Tree for cultivation, efficiency had always been exceptionally high, though consumption was also considerable.

Whereas with normal cultivation, two pieces of spirit jade might sustain three days, but once the Talent Tree was activated, it couldn't even last for two hours.

Yet Lu Ye quickly noticed a problem; perhaps it was due to his recent promotion to Constellation Realm, amidst this frantic absorption, the cultivation efficiency soared, but there was not enough time to refine the spirit jade energy pouring into his body.

This led to a consequence where much of the spirit jade's energy, once absorbed into the body, dissipated before it could settle, causing unnecessary waste.

Lu Ye tried to control the Talent Tree's absorption speed.

After some experimentation, he determined a relatively reasonable absorption rate.

This way, he could perfectly refine the energy from the spirit jade, achieving the highest cultivation efficiency, where two Spirit Stones could last approximately half a day.

In other words, even if he cultivated tirelessly, about 120 spirit jade pieces would be consumed in a month.

With 15,000 pieces of spirit jade remaining, he had enough for four to five months of cultivation! In fact, it should last even longer, since he couldn't possibly cultivate nonstop.

So even if half of the spirit jade was distributed, he wouldn't have to worry about his cultivation resources for a while.

After confirming a reasonable cultivation method, Lu Ye couldn't resist trying another method.

Acting on impulse, he held a piece of spirit jade, placed it into his mouth, and bit down hard.

Crunch!

Spirit jade, a solidified form of mysterious energy in stellar space, is inherently no harder than Spirit Stones. Cultivators of any rank could crush it with just a bit of force.

More so with Lu Ye's current teeth.

Chewing briefly, he swallowed it whole.

Lu Ye immersed his mind in feeling it.

His stomach felt a bit burning, not too serious, but the energy contained in the spirit jade erupted all at once in a short time. Despite Lu Ye's efforts, he couldn't prevent most of the energy from dissipating.

Under inner sight, gray mist rose from the Talent Tree, clearly indicating that harmful essence from the spirit jade was being burnt away.

Judging purely by the commotion, it was larger than when he had eaten Spirit Stones before, which meant that consuming spirit jade would deplete the Talent Tree's fuel even more.

Chapter 1295 - Setting Out

In just one incense stick's time, the strange burning sensation in his abdomen vanished, and the energy contained in the spirit jade was exhausted. Lu Ye showed a contemplative expression.

After various attempts, one thing has already been confirmed.

Currently, it's not quite suitable for him to directly consume spirit jade like this. He can only rely on the Talent Tree to moderately enhance cultivation efficiency.

Of course, even moderately, compared to the normal cultivation of cultivators, his efficiency is nearly ten times higher, which undoubtedly means that as long as resources are abundant, he can grow faster.

The Talent Tree has never been disappointing.

This is quite good. When his cultivation gradually improves, he can continue to adjust his cultivation efficiency one day. He will be able to consume spirit jade as he does spirit stone without worrying about wasting the energy of the spirit jade.

However, truly reaching that day, Lu Ye estimates his cultivation should be at the Moon Jade Realm, which would be a long time from now.

"Number Nine!" Lu Ye softly called.

This time Number Nine did not appear, only a voice was heard: "What's the matter?"

"Heaven's Augury Pillar!"

Jian Guhong had reminded him that every cultivator who ascends to the Constellation Realm before leaving the Nine Provinces can obtain a Heaven's Augury Pillar bestowed by Heaven's Augury to maintain a connection with the Nine Provinces in stellar space.

Number Nine hadn't mentioned this, and Lu Ye was unaware, but now that he was about to leave, he naturally should take one.

The Void in front slightly twisted, and a small Heaven's Augury Pillar appeared out of thin air. Lu Ye reached out and grabbed it.

Number Nine's voice came: "Keep it close to your body, don't put it in the storage sack or storage ring. When using it, channel spirit force inward, but the farther the distance, the weaker the connection with the Nine Provinces, so be careful yourself."

"Got it!" Lu Ye rummaged through his storage ring to find a rope. It was not an ordinary rope, he did not know what material it was made of, quite sturdy, and he was unsure when he acquired this as a trophy.

He tied the Heaven's Augury Pillar securely and hung it around his neck, hiding it under his clothes.

Rising to his feet, he walked out of the bamboo building,

Sweeping his Mental Consciousness, he found Shui Yuan's location, transmitted a message, and then soared into the sky!

He had attempted everything that needed trying and bid farewell where needed. All preparations were complete; it was time to experience the wonders of stellar space.

His figure continuously elevated, a thousand feet, ten thousand feet, a hundred thousand feet, quickly reaching an unprecedented height.

In the Divine Sea Realm, there was once a time when Lu Ye, out of sheer boredom, tried flying upwards constantly, wanting to see if he could fly out of the Nine Provinces.

He wasn't alone in this; actually, nine out of ten people in the Divine Sea Realm had done such foolish things because everyone was very curious about the stellar space.

But without exception, everyone would reach a certain height and be unable to fly any higher.

It seemed that there was an invisible barrier above the Nine Provinces, blocking all further ascending paths, which Lu Ye estimated was not a tangible barrier but the limit of the Divine Sea Realm itself.

Without acquiring the power to cross into stellar space, those in the Divine Sea Realm can only be considered cultivators within the domain, unable to escape its constraints.

Of course, utilizing the Nine Provinces Heaven's Augury Pillar for Teleportation is an exception, but even then, it only teleports within other domains.

Only upon reaching the Constellation Realm, possessing the ability to cross stellar space with the physical body, can cultivators break free from the domain.

Originally, it was a cloudy day in Mount Ao, dark clouds hanging heavily, with blackness covering the top. But when Lu Ye flew to this height, suddenly, brilliant sunlight streamed down. Looking downward, the sea of clouds roiled, presenting a majestic view. The sun's rays painted the edges of the cloud layers with a golden hue, immensely grand.

As he continued ascending, the outline of the Nine Provinces began to emerge in view. The higher he flew, the clearer the overall scene of the Nine Provinces became.

Indeed, it wasn't Lu Ye's first time observing the Nine Provinces from such a perspective. He had experienced this a few times before.

Once was returning to the Nine Provinces from the Blood Refinement World, but that time it was just a mental overlook, not a literal observation, so it wasn't as overwhelming as at this moment.

The second time was when Yang Qing took him from the Spirit Stream battlefield back to the Nine Provinces; it passed by hastily, not gleaning much significance.

This time, it's different. This time, he truly relied on his own ability to fly out of the Nine Provinces, standing in stellar space and gazing back at his homeland.

The entire Nine Provinces is a spherical body; its atmospheric layer refracts the sunlight in brilliant and colorful ways, while vast areas of blue on the sphere's surface leave Lu Ye suspecting they might be oceans.

Any cultivator entering stellar space for the first time, gazing upon such a scene, would likely become enchanted.

Near the Nine Provinces star body, the drifting Blood Refinement World remains unchanged in appearance, resembling a female creature with its head and limbs severed, akin to a giant corpse lying beside the Nine Provinces.

Comparing the two star bodies, the Nine Provinces undoubtedly appear far more beautiful.

There were also many large and small pieces of floating land, tightly surrounding the Nine Provinces, exhibiting a very rhythmic rotational movement.

That was the Spirit Stream battlefield, the Cloud River battlefield, and many other secret realms themselves.

Since the Nine Provinces were relocated here, established their abode, and Number Nine gained spiritual intelligence, it had been like a scavenger, picking up broken celestial bodies or floating lands that drifted near the Nine Provinces. It was precisely these collected pieces of "junk" that became the active stage for today's Nine Provinces cultivators, also bringing them considerable benefits.

If one were to really calculate it, Number Nine played an indelible and enormous role in the revival of the Nine Provinces, not only in the past but also in the future. The now rapidly growing domain of the Nine Provinces owes its success to Number Nine.

The Heaven's Augury Compass, which consumed enormous resources, manpower, and energy in the pre-Nine Provinces era, ultimately preserved the transmitted flame for this domain.

It's hard to imagine how formidable the enemies encountered in the pre-Nine Provinces era were, to force those strong individuals to make the decision to relocate their homeland.

But these were not matters for Lu Ye to worry about. The pre-Nine Provinces era was already over, and now was the post-Nine Provinces era, the era of those in the Constellation Realm like them!

When venturing out, as long as one is cautious and does not expose their Nine Provinces origin, they likely won't provoke those former enemies. After all, who would bother to inquire into the background of a stranger cultivator?

Taking out the star map for a comparison, Lu Ye found that he was headed in the wrong direction.

In the Governor's Hall on the spirit mountaintop of Tianzhou, Lu Ye had discussed the direction he planned to explore with Jian Guhong, but the location he currently found himself in was not within the intended range but on the opposite side.

This was due to his lack of experience. If he were experienced, Lu Ye would have utilized the Heaven's Augury Pillar to teleport to the appropriate location and then head into the stellar space.

Fortunately, it wasn't a significant issue. This journey was primarily for Lu Ye to get accustomed to the stellar space, and taking extra detours wasn't a bad thing.

He immediately activated his spirit force and flew in that direction.

Very quickly, Lu Ye discovered the difference between flying in stellar space and flying within a domain.

When flying within a domain, one can feel resistance, which is the resistance of the wind. The faster you fly, the greater the resistance, so the higher one's cultivation, the faster they can fly, because they can mobilize deeper spirit force to combat the oncoming resistance.

But in stellar space, there was no resistance whatsoever. Lu Ye only needed to expend a very small amount of spirit force to achieve a very decent flight speed.

Once this speed was achieved, he could maintain it even without mobilizing spirit force.

It dawned on him that theoretically, by continuously activating his spirit force, he could reach near infinite speeds. What a sight that would be!

Curious, Lu Ye attempted it at once, constantly increasing his speed.

The fact proved that he was right. Influenced by the spirit force, his speed increased almost explosively, getting faster and faster.

There was no sound of wind rushing past, only a feeling of lightning speed. Moreover, being in stellar space, with nothing particularly noticeable around for comparison, even though Lu Ye knew he was already very fast, he still didn't feel it perceptibly.

Until a huge meteorite suddenly appeared ahead, and Lu Ye suddenly realized something was wrong.

He wanted to change his direction, but because he was moving too fast, he couldn't change it in time. He narrowly brushed past the edge of the meteorite.

Soundlessly, the meteorite shattered into numerous pieces, flying out in different directions, while Lu Ye also drifted like a kite with a broken string, heading toward another direction.

After finally stabilizing himself, Lu Ye grimaced, realizing that even with his formidable physicality, and although the brush was slight, at such an absurd speed, the collision nearly resulted in serious injury.

He moved slightly, feeling immense pain at the point of impact, as if his internal organs had been displaced, and he felt somewhat dizzy and nauseous.

Lu Ye then realized that in stellar space, although theoretically, one could achieve near-infinite speeds, there was a prerequisite — the path must be free of any obstacles.

While stellar space is vast and empty, in actuality, it's full of drifting meteorites. Some of these are large and easy to spot, while others are small and lifeless, making them easily overlooked even by the Mental Consciousness of cultivators.

Once an obstacle is encountered, and the speed exceeds the cultivator's limits of control, a collision is inevitable and such a collision could undoubtedly be fatal.

Luckily, he only suffered minor injuries this time. If his speed had been twice as fast, Lu Ye suspected he would have been smashed into paste.

With a silent sigh of relief, it seemed that flying in stellar space from now on, he would have to control his speed, ensuring it remained within his limits. Otherwise, he might not even know how he died.

This was a precious lesson, and he needed to transmit a message to Jian Guhong to let him record it for future warning.

With that thought, Lu Ye sent the message over.

Moments later, Jian Guhong replied, "I am already aware of this matter."

Lu Ye was startled, "Senior brother, if you knew, why didn't you tell me?"

Jian Guhong replied, "Even if I had told you, would you have not tried it yourself?"

Chapter 1296 - Asteroid Belt

Lu Ye had no words to counter this, and upon careful consideration, it seemed to be true. Even if someone had given him a heads-up, he would probably still want to try it himself. It wasn't that he refused to heed the advice of elders; it was just that every cultivator first entering the stellar space would have such curiosity.

Jian Guhong continued, "There are some things you have to try personally and suffer a loss to remember deeply."

"Did Senior Brother suffer a loss too?"

Jian Guhong didn't reply. Lu Ye chuckled to himself, feeling certain in his heart that not only had Jian Guhong suffered a loss, but many others likely had too. Yet, everyone kept it secret. These old folks weren't necessarily good people either.

Standing quietly in the stellar space, Lu Ye was enveloped by a feeling of insignificance. In such vastness and depth, a Constellation cultivator indeed seemed as insignificant as dust.

Even advancing to Moon Jade or Sun Blaze later on might not change this feeling much.

After experiencing the initial novelty and suffering a small setback, Lu Ye finally calmed his mind, focusing on recovery and trying to absorb the mysterious energy of the stellar space.

This could be considered a way of cultivation, just like cultivators below the Constellation Realm inhaling and exhaling nature's spiritual energy within their domain.

The only difference is that nature's spiritual energy within a domain is the known energy, while outside the domain, it becomes the indescribable stellar space energy.

This stellar space energy is highly corrosive to cultivators below the Constellation Realm. If one's cultivation isn't adequate, being corroded would lead to death from shriveled flesh and blood. Only Constellation cultivators can ignore this corrosion and refine it for their use.

Stellar space energy fills every corner of stellar space. When it condenses to a certain degree, it forms cultivation resources like spirit jade and spirit crystal.

Theoretically, a Constellation cultivator could always cultivate as long as they are in the stellar space, even without spirit jade or spirit crystal.

Of course, this is just theory. In reality, no one would cultivate this way.

Because the energy in stellar space, although omnipresent, is too sparse, so sparse that it's not efficient for cultivation.

After some attempts, Lu Ye found this to be true. With his current sixty-four leaves of talent, even when absorbing the stellar space energy, he didn't feel much, let alone others. Even activating the power of the Talent Tree didn't yield much benefit, as the cultivation environment was inadequate. This was not something that could be changed by simply changing cultivation methods.

Of course, there must be places where the energy in stellar space is rich, which would definitely be excellent spots for cultivation. It's just a matter of whether cultivators find them.

After a brief recovery, the aftermath of brushing against the meteorite slowly dissipated.

Lu Ye had now reached the correct position. The Nine Provinces lay at his feet, and he only needed to fly upward to explore the blank areas on the star map.

This was also one of his goals or rather one of his tasks for this trip.

Stepping into stellar space for the first time, Lu Ye did not plan to go too far, limiting himself to a journey of half a year based on the speed he could currently manage.

That way, a round trip would take a year.

But in reality, it would definitely take longer, because the area he planned to explore wasn't a simple sector; it was a three-dimensional sector space, vastly expansive.

One trip back and forth would definitely not suffice for a thorough exploration. Even ten or eight trips wouldn't be enough. For him alone to fully explore such a three-dimensional sector, it would take at least several decades to a hundred years.

Fortunately, in the future, there would be a steady stream of Constellation cultivators from the Nine Provinces, so it wouldn't be just him doing this work. Everyone's efforts would improve efficiency considerably.

Determining the direction, he activated his spirit force and controlled his speed, flying forward.

As a novice in the stellar experience, the first thing one naturally needed to do was accumulate various experiences in the stellar space. These experiences couldn't be taught by others but needed to be carefully experienced by oneself.

Only by accumulating enough experience could he navigate the stellar space in the future and handle unexpected situations.

Lu Ye also tried searching for spirit jade.

The outer space of the Nine Provinces had remained unexplored, so naturally, many spirit jades were still out there. This was indeed a benefit of a newly emerging large domain.

Unlike those older large or top-tier domains, where powerful beings constantly emerged. In their outer domain areas, should spirit jade or spirit crystals appear, they were long since plundered by predecessors, leaving not much to be gained.

Searching for spirit jade wasn't difficult because formed spirit jade would emit a peculiar energy fluctuation. As long as the cultivator's Mental Consciousness scanned in all directions and felt these energy fluctuations, they could generally find it by following the position.

Lu Ye's luck was good. After flying for less than two hours, he felt the unique energy fluctuation of spirit jade.

Following the source of the wave, he saw a meteor speeding by; its speed far surpassed Lu Ye's usual flying speed. By the time Lu Ye caught sight of it, it had already vanished in a flash, not knowing how far it had traveled.

Lu Ye hurriedly accelerated, pursuing the meteor, increasing his speed beyond the limits of his control. However, because he followed directly behind the meteor, he wasn't worried about colliding with anything.

For if there were any obstacles ahead, the meteor would already have crashed through them.

He continued to accelerate, closing the distance between them, finally landing on the meteor. Searching around, he indeed found two spots of shimmering purple.

They were the color of spirit jade.

Though it was just two pieces of spirit jade, it was a good start. Furthermore, this was Lu Ye's first celestial harvest, as the excavation of the spirit jade vein in the Reincarnation Tree's Taichu Realm was nothing but a chance encounter.

Very pleased, he went forward, gathered the two pieces of spirit jade, and carefully searched other parts of the meteor, finding nothing else. Only then did Lu Ye depart.

After this endeavor, his direction had somewhat deviated. Lu Ye turned to assess, looking at the positions of the Taiyang Star and Taibai Star, and then attempted to locate Nine Provinces. Finding it was not difficult, he quickly identified Nine Provinces' position and felt relieved.

Continuing forward, he searched for spirit jade while recording some celestial bodies he observed. These findings were to be sent back to Nine Provinces to inform Jian Guhong, allowing him to perfect the star map.

He did not neglect his cultivation, holding a piece of spirit jade in each hand during his activities, activating the power of the Talent Tree to absorb them, controlling the efficiency within his capacity to convert.

In this aspect, he was far superior to other constellations. Other constellations had to find a suitable place for cultivation to refine the energy of spirit jade, making it impossible to engage in other activities simultaneously.

However, Lu Ye began to realize a concern he had considered before: the advancement of the Constellation Realm was far more challenging than the realms below. Despite there being only three tiers of Constellation, each tier's advancement was significantly more difficult than before.

As Lu Ye explored and cultivated, consuming spirit jade continuously, he could feel the enhancement of his Essence of Blood and Flesh, yet this improvement seemed like a bottomless pit, never satisfied. He wondered when he'd cross this tier and reach the stage of Essence of Inner Organs.

Constellation was a watershed moment. When a cultivator steps into the Constellation, it seems they've entered another world of cultivation.

Lu Ye also discovered that Nine Provinces' location was indeed considered remote and isolated, as he hadn't encountered a single living being during his three months in stellar space!

In the vast stellar space, it seemed he was the only living entity, its silent stillness causing a sense of loneliness and oppression. Cultivators with insufficient mental fortitude might go crazy if they stayed in such an environment for too long.

Fortunately, Lu Ye could endure this solitude. Truth be told, since his cultivation began, he was often on solitary missions, long having developed a nature able to withstand loneliness.

Over the three months, he had covered countless miles. Initially, when Lu Ye looked back, he could vaguely see the outline of Nine Provinces, but by today, upon turning back, Nine Provinces was already out of sight.

He wasn't anxious, simply adhering to his pre-established plans, continuing to explore and document. This was a responsibility he assumed as the Nine Provinces Constellation.

He harvested some spirit jade; though compared to the quantity he mined in the Taichu Realm, it was a small harvest, it sufficed for his usual cultivation needs, even leaving a surplus.

One day, Lu Ye followed the spirit jade's fluctuation and arrived at a long asteroid belt.

Such asteroid belts were common in stellar space, Lu Ye had seen several before, composed of meteorites of varying sizes, drifting from and leading to unknown directions, having wandered through countless ages before Lu Ye discovered them.

After months of hardening, although Lu Ye's experience in stellar space was not yet extensive, he was much better off than at the beginning.

Especially in the search for spirit jade, he had accrued some experience.

These asteroid belts frequently gave rise to spirit jade, and once found, it wouldn't merely be one piece. Lu Ye had substantial harvests in a previous asteroid belt.

Today, encountering another belt, its energy fluctuations appeared chaotic, seemingly richer in resources than the prior find. Naturally, Lu Ye wouldn't miss this opportunity.

This asteroid belt was long, stretching over a distance of roughly ten thousand miles, yet such length doesn't amount to much amidst the vastness of stellar space.

According to his experience, Lu Ye entered at the end of the asteroid belt, avoiding the chaotic meteors from hitting him, simply controlling his speed.

From the end, searching toward the front ensured that he wouldn't miss anything.

Using the rapidly passing meteors as stepping stones, Lu Ye advanced ten miles before landing on a meteor, where two points of purple light gleamed in his view.

Having done this for several months, without the initial novelty of collecting spirit jade, Lu Ye swiftly approached, reaching out for one of the spirit jade pieces.

He felt slightly curious at heart, as the purple glow of this spirit jade seemed brighter than usual.

Chapter 1297 - Lanternfish

Lu Ye didn't pay much attention to it; although spirit jade doesn't have the distinct classifications like Spirit Stones, the quality does vary, just not significantly.

Generally speaking, higher-quality spirit jade will appear darker in color.

So even if he noticed the color of these two pieces of spirit jade in front of him was slightly bright, it wasn't a big deal.

But the moment he grasped one of the spirit jades, he suddenly realized something was wrong because the feeling from his hand was unusual.

Not only that, but a tremendous sense of danger suddenly enveloped his mind.

In front of his vision, space twisted, and in what seemed to be an empty spot, a bloody maw filled with sharp fangs suddenly opened wide, biting down towards him.

Lu Ye instinctively wanted to retreat, but a strange pulling force surged from that giant mouth, preventing his escape.

Seeing the fanged mouth about to close, Lu Ye crashed forward, at the moment the fangs descended, he plunged into the giant mouth.

On the meteorite, the twisted space calmed, a figure several meters high suddenly appeared, a peculiar creature with a round body covered in spikes, tailless, and looking like a round ball, with two long, antenna-like things on its forehead, each tipped with a fleshy sac emitting a purple glow.

These fleshy sacs, irrespective of color or shape, with their surface textures, looked indistinguishable from spirit jade.

The "spirit jade" Lu Ye saw earlier was precisely the disguise of these two fleshy sacs, but once this peculiar creature revealed its true form, the real appearance of these sacs was exposed, now looking not just like spirit jade, but like two lanterns hanging from the creature's forehead.

If seen by people living by the sea, they'd surely recognize it as something that looks very similar to a lanternfish from the ocean.

But lanternfish live in the sea, while this peculiar creature resides in the stellar space.

The lanternfish swallowed Lu Ye whole, its two eyes flickered with a slightly cunning light, but before it could savor the delicacy in its mouth, a sudden change occurred.

Bright light suddenly burst from the gaps of the lanternfish's fangs, at first glance, it seemed like a bright lamp was in its mouth, and soon, the surface of the lanternfish's body also emitted linear bright lights, with powerful and violent spirit force suddenly erupting.

A lotus flower abruptly bloomed, exploding like a big sun, its brightness making the area within hundreds of miles like daytime.

No sound was heard in the stellar space; the lotus petals flew in all directions, cutting through the Void, and as the lotus slowly dissipated, there stood Lu Ye in the heart of the bloom, eyes slightly downcast, with his Boulder Mountain Saber in hand, the blade stained with blood!

The entire blade shimmered with a faint glow.

That was the empowerment of the Divine Sharp Edge Spirit Runes!

Since developing this new spirit rune, Lu Ye had never used it against an opponent before, mainly because he hadn't had the opportunity, but unexpectedly, today it debuted.

The effect was excellent! Though slightly inferior to the blessing from Lü Yingying, the difference was minor.

Once he further enhances his expertise in the Path of Spirit Runes, he should be able to further improve and optimize the Divine Sharp Edge.

This is the kind of spirit rune that can provide him support in the Constellation Realm; in comparison, the initial Sharpness spirit rune is considerably less useful.

This encounter was quite unexpected; honestly, before the sense of danger suddenly descended, Lu Ye hadn't detected anything amiss because this creature hid itself perfectly, those two "spirit jades"

distracted him a bit, and since leaving the Nine Provinces, he hadn't encountered any living beings, which made him slightly complacent.

But his response was extremely swift; if he hadn't slammed into the beast's giant mouth, when those fangs clamped down, Lu Ye figured he wouldn't have kept one arm!

At this point, Lu Ye realized what he had encountered.

Star beast!

Within the domains, there are various demon beasts, and outside the domains, there are as well, but outside they're not called demon beasts; they're star beasts, which come in many strange varieties, each with unique abilities. Lu Ye's stellar space exploration experience is limited, and he has scant information about the stellar space, so he naturally didn't know what this star beast was; he hadn't even had time to see its complete form.

But relatively speaking, star beasts have a unique advantage, which is the innate ability to absorb and refine stellar space energy, so they live in the stellar space from birth.

Spirit jade and spirit crystals, essential cultivation materials for cultivators, are also their favorites; every star beast can devour spirit jade and spirit crystals to enhance its strength.

Like the Void Beast core Lu Ye obtained in the Insect Race Tree World, the Void Beast is a type of star beast, and a very powerful one, since it naturally controls the power of the void, so even if you surpass its strength, it's hard to hunt it down.

This further highlights the rarity of the Void Beast Core.

On the Insect Race's side, it's unclear how they obtained a Void Beast Core, which they placed in the Insect Race Tree World as a channel to connect with other Tree Worlds, eventually leading to Lu Ye clearing it out completely.

Such a loss is undeniably significant.

Lu Ye could feel that the star beast he just slew was at the Constellation Realm level, because when it appeared, the spirit force fluctuations revealed themselves, and the pulling force from its giant mouth was likely its instinct, or called Innate Divine Ability!

Both of them at the Constellation Realm level, yet the star beast fell in one strike, showcasing Lu Ye's own foundation, even as a newcomer to the Constellation level, the rich accumulation from the past continues to ferment.

Of course, it also has to do with the environment Lu Ye is in; no matter how strong the star beast's defense is, its mouth is always relatively fragile.

The third form of the Tyrannical Saber, enhanced with Divine Sharp Edge Spirit Runes, has an extremely terrifying power.

But Lu Ye had no joy in slaying a powerful enemy; instead, his scalp tingled with unease. In his mental consciousness, he sensed powerful auras rapidly reviving, and in his vision, star beasts that resembled lanternfish with round bodies and two lanterns hanging from their heads were flying over from all directions.

There was not just one lanternfish in this asteroid belt, but a whole group!

Lu Ye even sensed the aura belonging to the Moon Jade Realm among them!

In other words, this group of lanternfish included some in the Moon Jade Realm.

As they flew and crashed into the meteorites, shattering them, it slightly slowed their speed, but it didn't seem to be a big problem.

Lu Ye immediately knew these guys were the tough and thick-skinned type.

He had stumbled right into a den of thieves!

Without thinking, Lu Ye turned around and fled, quickly pushing his speed to a controllable limit with the help of his spirit force.

Thanks to the experience he had accumulated over time, he had entered this asteroid belt from the tail end and had only ventured about ten miles in. It wasn't too difficult to escape now.

If he had recklessly entered from the middle of the asteroid belt, he would be surrounded, finding it hard to save himself.

The sudden death of their companion undoubtedly infuriated the lanternfish, each one chasing relentlessly. Soon, the ones with lower cultivation were left behind, with only the higher-cultivation lanternfish clinging to Lu Ye like leeches.

Lu Ye realized his speed was insufficient.

The distance between them was closing rapidly, and the closest lanternfish were already within thirty miles.

Such a distance within a domain would still be relatively safe, as a Divine Sea Realm cultivator's attack couldn't reach that far.

But in stellar space, it wasn't enough.

Lu Ye's skin tightened immediately, a needle-like pain warning of impending danger.

Without hesitation, he shifted his body to the side.

Almost simultaneously with his movement, several purple beams pierced through his previous position.

Lu Ye broke out in a cold sweat, not knowing exactly what those purple beams were, but guessing they surely were an attack method used by the lanternfish. He couldn't withstand the attack of a few Moon Jade Realm lanternfish.

Turning his head hurriedly, he saw the two lanterns hanging from the lanternfish's heads emitting increasingly bright purple light, which then transformed into beams dashing toward him.

Lu Ye maneuvered through stellar space, constantly dodging the attacks from behind, narrowly avoiding several near misses, looking quite distressed.

But this also slowed his escape speed. He could still speed up, but that would exceed his controllable limits, and crashing into something ahead would be disastrous.

Lu Ye felt exasperated, never imagining his first battle in stellar space would unfold like this. Just for killing one of their companions, they pursued him relentlessly, blatantly unfair.

In a moment of defiance, Lu Ye turned back and hurled a weapon control technique.

He didn't aim at the chasing lanternfish, knowing such an attack was of little use; the weapon control was meant for something else.

Unexpectedly, shortly after launching the weapon control, a purple beam intercepted it, shattering it instantly.

Helpless, Lu Ye changed direction and launched another weapon control, learning from the last attempt to avoid the direction whence the lanternfish were coming, aiming to the side instead.

He continued fleeing forward, persistently dodging the purple beams attacking from behind.

After a brief moment, his figure suddenly flickered and disappeared from the spot.

The relentless lanternfish immediately fell into a state of bewilderment. They too had spiritual intelligence, and while drifting through stellar space with the asteroid belt, had encountered other races' cultivators and witnessed their techniques, but such a strange method was a first.

How could such a large living person disappear into thin air?

The lanternfish surged to where Lu Ye vanished, searching in all directions. Moreover, they fired purple beams from their dangling lanterns to all sides, seeming convinced that Lu Ye was hidden nearby, trying to force him out.

Little did they know, Lu Ye had already appeared nearly ten thousand miles away.

Chapter 1298 - Single-Handedly Purging the Star Beasts

After advancing in cultivation to the Constellation Realm, the range of the Void Spirit Runes' Teleportation experienced a tremendous enhancement.

Lu Ye remembered that in the Divine Sea Realm, the distance he could teleport was around three thousand miles; any farther and it wouldn't work. But now, he could reach nearly ten thousand miles, a near threefold increase.

And he had only just recently advanced to the Constellation Realm. What would it be like when he reached the Moon Jade or Sun Blaze in the future?

No time for speculation, Lu Ye immediately condensed his sword cultivator doppelganger, hurriedly put on a prepared set of clothes, took the sword gourd, and then set off in a specific direction.

Originally, the doppelganger was wearing the Crimson Dragon Battle Suit, a treasure garment, but during the Taichu Realm the suit got damaged. Lu Ye was too lazy to repair it, as with his rapid increase in power, the Crimson Dragon Battle Suit, which once provided decent protection, was now of little use.

While his main body set off, the doppelganger rushed towards another direction, which was precisely where the asteroid belt was located.

Those few lanternfish in the Moon Jade Realm rampaged around the spot where Lu Ye had disappeared, yet couldn't find any trace of him. Confounded, they suddenly sensed intense spirit force fluctuations coming from afar, evidently someone was in a fierce battle.

The few lanternfish in the Moon Jade Realm immediately sensed something was wrong and returned the way they came. They hadn't flown far before they witnessed a scene that made their eyes bloodshot.

The human race cultivator they were searching for had somehow circled behind them and was slaughtering them!

There were quite a number of lanternfish chasing out from the asteroid belt, but due to power disparities among them, the ones with inferior strength lagged behind after a while, with the weaker ones falling even further back.

Indeed, Lu Ye didn't want to provoke those few lanternfish in the Moon Jade Realm; there's a limit to overcoming enemies beyond one's level. As a newly advanced Constellation Realm combat cultivator, Lu Ye wasn't arrogant enough to think he could annihilate several Moon Jade Realm star beasts.

Though he couldn't defeat the Moon Jade Realm, he could go after those star beasts in the Constellation Realm!

These creatures drifted through the stellar space alongside meteorites, disguising the two lanterns on their heads as spirit jade, deceiving and harming countless cultivators. They were clearly not good entities. If it hadn't been for Lu Ye's timely reaction, at the very least he would've lost an arm.

That said, it's their survival way, and Lu Ye didn't want to comment too much. It was his own fault for failing to see through the lanternfish's disguise due to poor eyesight.

But having so many lanternfish chasing after him relentlessly was crossing a line, sparking Lu Ye's murderous intent!

Since returning from the Taichu Realm, almost a year has passed. During this time, aside from having slain a few Corpse Races on the Unparalleled Continent, Lu Ye hadn't wielded his weapons.

For a combat cultivator, times like these were undeniably dull.

Moreover, after advancing to the Constellation Realm, Lu Ye hadn't seriously tested his own power, mainly due to lacking a suitable opportunity. He couldn't just challenge those Constellation Realm cultivators in the Nine Provinces; even if he did, it wouldn't yield much.

This group of star beasts was undoubtedly an excellent target.

Slaughter them all! Where the long blade pointed, there was no opponent.

Though both were in the Constellation Realm, the cultivators' means were undoubtedly more varied than the star beasts'. The attacks of these lanternfish were too sparse, mainly relying on the purple threads from the two sacs on their heads. Without adaptation, their attacks had traces, making evasion easy.

Besides that, they would only leap to bite at close range. Their fanged mouths looked intimidating, but failing to bite rendered them useless.

They could still employ some peculiar Divine Skills, like emitting strong pulling force from their mouths. But for Lu Ye, as long as he was cautious, escaping wasn't a challenge.

The seemingly small figure maneuvered nimbly, and wherever the blade flashed, blood splattered.

The Divine Sharp Edge Spirit Runes displayed their power again. These star beasts were undoubtedly of the thick-skinned type. For ordinary Constellation Realm novices like Lu Ye, even if exerting all efforts, it would've been hard to break their corporeal defenses, but in front of the Boulder Mountain Saber fortified with Divine Sharp Edge Spirit Runes, their thick skins were insufficient.

Though not to the extent of killing them with a single slash, each cut was deep and to the bone.

Plus, with the properties of the Soul Severing Saber, once injured, the star beast's performance deteriorated, often being killed bit by bit by Lu Ye.

However, Lu Ye soon realized a problem: the threat of the Soul Severing Saber seemed significantly diminished against the Constellation Realm.

Previously in the Divine Sea Realm, any enemy injured by his saber would endure immense blows to their psyche, resulting in psychic pain, mental instability, and drastically reduced power.

But seeing these star beasts now, although there was some impact, it wasn't as exaggerated as it was in the Divine Sea Realm.

Lu Ye understood clearly. It wasn't the Soul Severing Saber's power that had changed; the saber was still the same. However, the enemies had grown stronger and were more resilient to the saber's impact.

Perhaps one day, when facing even stronger foes, the Soul Severing Saber might completely lose its effect.

The distance of ten thousand miles is not too far in the stellar space, but by the time several Moon Jade Realm star beasts flew to the battlefield, Lu Ye had already killed more than a dozen Constellation Realm star beasts.

Sensing the approach of these threatening auras, Lu Ye immediately withdrew and then vanished from sight.

Several Moon Jade Realm star beasts, burning with anger, rushed over, encircling from different directions, hoping to capture Lu Ye in one swoop, but as they arrived, the ghostly scene from before reappeared.

That wretched human cultivator had disappeared again!

Looking around, the battlefield was utterly devastated, with the dismembered bodies of star beasts everywhere; those still alive were all wounded, looking extremely desolate.

This race was very powerful; though they didn't have a Sun Blaze Realm star beast to guard, they had several in the Moon Jade Realm, nearly thirty in the Constellation Realm, and about a hundred below the Constellation Realm. Such a force, even in stellar space, was quite formidable.

Yet, after a great battle, half of their Constellation Realm members had died! This made the Moon Jade Realm star beasts so pained they almost bled in sorrow.

But soon, one of the Moon Jade Realm star beasts let out a roar. In the starry sky, mere sound could not travel, but the transmission of Mental Consciousness was unobstructed.

Thus, this roar clearly reached the ears of all the star beasts.

The next moment, the surviving star beasts, without even having time to tally the battlefield, flew urgently toward the direction of the asteroid belt.

They realized the danger as well; the human cultivator had previously vanished and then went to kill half of their Constellation Realm members. Now, with the second disappearance, where would he go?

Their fears quickly came true. Midway, whether in the Moon Jade Realm or Constellation Realm, they all sensed intense spirit force fluctuations ahead, along with the rapid extinguishing of life!

Previously, those chasing Lu Ye out were star beasts above the Constellation Realm; those below the Constellation Realm were still hibernating in the asteroid belt.

Star beasts differ from most races' cultivators; they naturally operate in the stellar space from birth, with bodies inherently resistant to the erosion from stellar space energy.

Conversely, the environments within domains are mostly unsuitable for them.

Thus, generally speaking, no domain of any size is at risk of star beast invasion, because star beasts do not rashly head to any domain, regardless of its level. They are born in stellar space and will also die in stellar space.

The vast expanse of stellar space is their true domain of activity.

During his previous escape, Lu Ye had detected many weaker star beasts lingering in the asteroid belt. Now, with the reception of his sword cultivator doppelganger, he returned to the asteroid belt and was certainly not going to be courteous.

The real self and the doppelganger weaved left and right, saber light and sword flashes rampaging, like two flood dragons roaming the sea, leaving a trail of blood and carnage.

Through the ten-thousand-mile asteroid belt, Lu Ye, with his doppelganger, plowed from end to end, shattering countless meteorites before dashing away.

By the time the star beast team returned here, there was no trace of Lu Ye; even if they wanted to pursue, they wouldn't know where to start.

Surviving star beasts emerged from the shattered meteors, flocking to the Moon Jade Realm star beasts. Seeing the number of survivors, each Moon Jade Realm star beast was furious, powerful Mental Consciousnesses intertwining, conveying emotions of anger and grief.

They had encountered many races' cultivators before, even Moon Jade Realm ones, but for such a massive wandering group, a single Moon Jade Realm didn't dare provoke them. Those Constellation Realm ones lured by traps mostly became their food.

But unexpectedly, today they met such a bizarre Constellation, single-handedly causing them a river of blood, killing half of their Constellation Realm and seventy percent below that!

In the end, even for revenge, they didn't even know where to start searching.

This is also the fate of wandering the starry skies; the Moon Jade Realm star beasts knew they couldn't scatter now. Otherwise, once they left, that human cultivator might spring out of nowhere again.

If they couldn't take revenge nor scatter, their options were limited.

Half a day later, the asteroid belt quieted down, and the star beasts hibernated again, drifting away from this void space with the belt.

Tens of thousands of miles away, Lu Ye's true form waited for a moment, noticing no signs of pursuit, realizing those star beasts hadn't followed.

He thought it must have been his previous strategy that worked. When he wreaked havoc in the asteroid belt, he intentionally spared some star beasts.

It's unwise to be too ruthless; once those Moon Jade Realm star beasts have no concerns, they might indeed relentlessly pursue him.

Although he was not afraid of being hunted alone, the Nine Provinces were only three months away. Though the chances of the star beasts finding Nine Provinces were slim, better safe than sorry, caution was still advised.

Chapter 1299 - Taken Hostage

To be safe, Lu Ye wandered through the nearby star space for several days and did not discover any trace of those star beasts. Even the asteroid belt where they had been lurking drifted away and disappeared from sight.

Only then did he feel relieved.

This was his first battle after advancing to the Constellation Realm. As for the outcome, it was quite satisfactory.

However, during the battle, Lu Ye also noticed some of his shortcomings. Having just advanced to the Constellation Realm not long ago, his control over his own power wasn't that perfect.

Of course, this isn't a big issue and won't significantly impact his combat prowess. Moreover, as time passes, this problem will gradually improve.

Additionally, Lu Ye discovered one thing: the Constellation Realm is indeed hard to kill.

He is not aware of the situation with cultivators of other races, having not fought against them directly. As for those star beasts, each of them had formidable restorative strength. The ghastly wounds created by the Boulder Mountain Saber on their bodies would usually heal within mere breaths.

This is something that couldn't possibly happen below the Constellation Realm.

Undoubtedly, this is the benefit of the Essence of Blood and Flesh reaching a certain level of strength. It's also fortunate that the Boulder Mountain Saber, empowered by the Divine Sharp Edge Spirit Runes, is now sharp enough. Otherwise, Lu Ye might not have been able to take down many star beasts in this battle.

This encounter served as a reminder to Lu Ye that the starry sky, which appears tranquil and desolate, could suddenly become dangerous. While wandering through the stellar space, he must be wary not only of cultivators from various races but also of those bizarre star beasts.

Despite the arduous battle, there were spoils to be gained.

The demon beasts within the domain have demonic pills, and the star beasts also possess demonic pills. As Lu Ye slew those star beasts, he collected their demonic pills. Though the circumstances weren't ideal and time was tight, preventing him from collecting them all, he managed to gather about half.

This object should also be usable for cultivation.

Thinking this, he took out a demonic pill from a star beast of the Constellation Realm, held it in his palm, and activated the power of his Talent Tree to experiment.

After conducting an experiment, he found that it was indeed as he thought; the demonic pills from star beasts can be used for cultivation, and the energy contained within them is much greater than that of spirit jade.

That's to be expected. Take the demon beasts within the domain, for example. The energy contained in a demonic pill of a demon beast from the Divine Sea Realm surely couldn't be compared to a Spirit Stone, as it is the essence of the demon beast's entire power.

Similarly, the demonic pills of star beasts are naturally not comparable to spirit jade.

However, this cultivation method is suited solely for him. Other cultivators can't emulate it without the roots of the Talent Tree penetrating and absorbing from the demonic pills. Cultivators can't refine demonic pills with their skills alone, and direct consumption is certainly impossible. So, in the stellar space, demonic pills from star beasts would typically be used in alchemy or for other purposes, always finding places where they can be utilized.

Continuing to fly forward, exploring and investigating along the way, occasionally sending his records back to the Nine Provinces to let Jian Guhong perfect the star map at the Governor's Hall.

As he traveled further, even with the Heaven's Augury Pillar he carried with him, his communication with the Nine Provinces became increasingly weak. The primary manifestation was a certain degree of delay in the messages being transmitted.

Transmitting messages among Nine Provinces cultivators is swift, with no delay whatsoever, but at present, there is a delay, clearly due to the vast distance. As Number Nine had mentioned before, the further he is from the Nine Provinces, the weaker the connection.

Until one day, when he tried to send a message to Jian Guhong, he found he couldn't transmit any messages at all, and Lu Ye realized he had indeed exceeded the limit where he could communicate with the Nine Provinces!

This limit could be considered the airspace of the Nine Provinces. Traveling further would extend beyond the airspace of the Nine Provinces.

When he tallied the time, he realized that he had spent roughly half a year since leaving the Nine Provinces, matching the intel he previously received from Jian Guhong.

A journey of half a year aligns with his initial plan.

After all, this was his first time exploring the stellar space, not suitable to venture too far. Once he gained more experience, he could consider exploring further areas later on.

Lu Ye thought himself to be the kind of person who acts fairly prudently.

Since the encounter with that wave of star beasts three months ago, Lu Ye hadn't encountered any more living entities and has been exploring solo all this time.

Fortunately, cultivation had not been interrupted. Though inferior to proper cultivation in terms of efficiency, overall, it could still achieve about seventy percent.

What left Lu Ye somewhat helpless was that, despite this, his cultivation did not show any signs of ascending to the upper realm, though his blood and flesh did become more vigorous than before. Under introspection, the star lights concealed in the blood and flesh grew denser.

This could be deemed an improvement, but who knows how much longer it would take to advance to the Constellation Mid-Stage and reach the level of the Essence of Inner Organs.

Here, his previous belief was reaffirmed: advancing within the Constellation Realm is considerably more challenging than below it, requiring a lengthy period of accumulation.

The Constellation Realm is already such, so the subsequent Moon Jade and Sun Blaze realms would be even more so, as the higher the Cultivation Realm, the harder it is to advance.

No wonder few powerful individuals of the Sun Blaze Realm were seen at the Reincarnation Tree before, unless they hailed from top-tier domains with abundant resources. Even in those well-established large domains, creating a Sun Blaze Realm cultivator is an immensely difficult feat.

Given this perspective, the stellar space is primarily composed of those in the Constellation Realm. The likelihood of encountering a Moon Jade is not high, and encountering a Sun Blaze is even lower.

When Yueh Xin initially discovered the Nine Provinces as it connected with the stellar space, whether it was luck or misfortune remains unknown.

Having reached the set target, Lu Ye did not intend to delve deeper but planned to return according to the original plan.

Of course, he wouldn't truly retrace his steps; the area he explored this time is a three-dimensional fan-shaped sector, so by slightly altering his direction, he could return to the Nine Provinces along a different route, broadening the area of exploration.

Just as he was about to proceed, he caught a bright light swiftly coming from the side out of the corner of his eye.

The speed of that light was exceedingly fast, several times faster than the fastest speed he's tried before, leaving its nature unknown.

Before Lu Ye could concentrate and take a proper look, a powerful Mental Consciousness had already swept over from that direction.

Lu Ye's face changed, and he immediately turned around, his spirit force erupting as he hurriedly fled forward.

If there is Mental Consciousness present, it must be a creature, and with such a powerful Mental Consciousness, Lu Ye estimated it might be a Sun Blaze Realm!

Encountering a Sun Blaze Realm in this kind of stellar space, Lu Ye naturally dared not haphazardly make contact; who knew whether it was friend or foe.

He felt extremely frustrated for a moment; previously, he was thinking that the primary beings moving in the stellar space were Constellations, and it was rare to even encounter Moon Jade, let alone Sun Blaze.

But unexpectedly, he encountered one in the blink of an eye.

Yet having been discovered, escaping was not as easy as one might think, and Lu Ye could clearly feel that powerful Mental Consciousness clinging to him like a maggot on a bone, entangles him no matter how much he exerted himself to flee.

After a few breaths, a figure suddenly appeared beside him, accompanied by a somewhat elderly voice in his ear: "Boy, why are you running?"

Lu Ye stiffly turned his head, finally seeing the owner of that Mental Consciousness.

It was a human being, and appearing rather disheveled, his clothes seemed not to have been washed in ages. His scraggly white beard was on his chin, and he wore a copper circlet-like thing on his forehead.

His stature wasn't tall, half a head shorter than Lu Ye himself.

Such a person, if seen in the mundane world, anyone might think he was a beggar.

However, Lu Ye dared not underestimate him because the feeling the old man gave him seemed even stronger than that of Yueh Xin.

It was certainly a Sun Blaze Realm!

Lu Ye's right hand rested on the Boulder Mountain Saber, his expression stiff as he replied, "Does the senior need anything?"

Though being from the human race, Lu Ye didn't relax his guard at all.

In this kind of environment, such a powerful individual, such an unexpected encounter, life and death were already under the other party's control, yet Lu Ye wasn't prepared to compromise; even knowing he was outmatched, if the other were to take action, he would still resist.

He couldn't quite comprehend how he so coincidentally encountered a Sun Blaze Realm.

The old man clearly noticed Lu Ye's tiny movements but didn't mind at all; the disparity in power was evident, should he harbor any murderous intent, Lu Ye wouldn't be able to resist.

"Nothing much, rarely encounter a living person; come over to chat; life's been too solitary." So saying, he enveloped Lu Ye with a surge of spirit force.

The next moment, Lu Ye experienced the terrifying speed of the Sun Blaze Realm!

Not only that, in the depths of his mind, he felt a foreboding sensation as if a great danger was approaching from behind, an intense feeling of urgency that his current cultivation couldn't withstand.

Hurriedly turning his head to look, he saw in an instant a streak of light closely pursuing from behind, precisely the bright glow he had seen earlier, with extremely fierce intent emanating from it.

As for what the true form of the streak of light was... Lu Ye's eyes couldn't discern it at all.

"What's the senior doing?" Lu Ye opened his mouth, feeling no malice from the old man for now, but he dared not place his life in others' hands.

Lu Ye didn't understand why the old man was carrying him along.

"I said to come over and chat with you, are you dumb?"

Lu Ye felt a bit helpless, thinking that if it's only to chat, why must he be carried along; they could easily communicate through Mental Consciousness, plus...

"What's that thing behind us?"

The old man pursed his lips: "Hmm, you can think of it as a flying sword!"

"Flying sword!" Lu Ye was shocked, "Then why is it pursuing the senior relentlessly?"

The old man let out a dry laugh: "This flying sword is sentient; I triggered it in an ancient secret realm, and it's been hunting me ever since."

Lu Ye was dumbfounded upon hearing this; could such bizarre things truly exist?

The old man must be at least a Sun Blaze Realm; what cultivation level must this flying sword have to chase a Sun Blaze Realm to such a state where he could only flee in panic, unable to turn and face it.

As for what exactly the old man said about accidentally triggering it, Lu Ye was reluctant to believe even half of it; nonetheless, he was uninterested in probing into the details, as it was ultimately others' private affairs, and they met only in passing, the old man might not wish to tell.

Chapter 1300 - I, Fong Rumo, Distinguish Grace and Grudge

"Got any food?"

Just as Lu Ye's mind was wandering, he heard the old man's voice by his ear.

Lu Ye didn't quite catch on: "What?"

He thought he had misheard, there was no way a Sun Blaze Realm expert would be asking him for food. The old man looked like a beggar, but surely couldn't actually be one.

"Do you have anything to eat?" the old man reiterated.

This time, Lu Ye heard him clearly, feeling speechless. Though he didn't understand the old man's intent, he nodded: "I do."

As he spoke, he took out a large piece of dried meat. His storage sack had a lot of this stuff, mainly because Amber used to need it, and he himself craved it too. But ever since his cultivation gradually improved, he had rarely eaten these things.

The old man took it, chewed a few times, and swallowed it whole, still unsatisfied: "More!"

Lu Ye took out another large piece, and the old man did the same again, demanding even more, showing none of the grace of a Sun Blaze Realm expert.

Thus, Lu Ye kept pulling out various edible things. At first, it was still dried meat that could be eaten directly, but later it was some raw beast meat, bloody and dripping, which the old man didn't mind whether it was cooked or not. As long as there was meat, he ate, showing a great appetite.

Lu Ye watched nervously, fearing the guy might get carried away and eat him as well, which would be unfortunate.

But being under someone else's roof, he could only respond cautiously. Fortunately, Lu Ye never sensed any malice from the old man.

"That's all!"

A moment later, Lu Ye spread his hands. Though he had quite a bit of beast meat stored, it wasn't much. The old man consumed it so readily that it quickly got depleted.

The old man smacked his lips, full of vigor: "Bring some wine!"

This time Lu Ye was prepared, taking out all his hidden wine in one go.

Not much really, just a few dozen jars left over from drinking with Third and Fourth Senior Brothers previously.

The old man laughed heartily: "You're not bad, kid, I like you!"

Having spoken, he opened a jar, sucking up the seal. The wine jar was drained into his belly.

After drinking over ten jars, the old man burped, patted his stomach, and said: "Comfortable!"

He carefully put away the remaining wine jars, seemingly planning to enjoy them later.

Glancing at Lu Ye, who appeared relaxed but was actually on guard, the old man chuckled: "Boy, don't worry, I never go around killing wantonly. Ask around and you'll find out."

Lu Ye couldn't help but grumble internally. He had just set foot in the stellar space, not even having explored his home world completely, so where could he inquire?

However, judging from the old man's words, it seemed he was quite famous in the stellar space?

Against his heart, he said: "Junior is not worried."

The old man smiled faintly: "Where do you come from, which domain?"

"Nine Heavens World."

"Nine Heavens World..." The old man showed a pondering expression, soon shaking his head: "Never heard of it, must be some backwater place."

Even though he traveled the stellar space and was well-versed, he couldn't claim knowledge of all the domains out there. If it was a domain he hadn't heard of, it certainly wasn't any prominent big world.

"Looks like you're a newbie to the Constellation Realm, having any cultivation troubles? If so, feel free to ask, I can give you some pointers!" The old man asked again.

Hearing this, Lu Ye got straightforward, asking about the key points of cultivation after reaching the Constellation Realm.

Though he had gleaned some information from the jade slips given by Number Nine, they weren't comprehensive enough to ensure his understanding was correct.

Yang Qing moved too fast, when he was around, Lu Ye hadn't thought of asking these things, causing him to find no one to inquire from now.

The old man encountered in stellar space seemed a suitable candidate.

The old man immediately started explaining various aspects of Constellation Realm cultivation to Lu Ye. Lu Ye listened earnestly, comparing with his previous understandings, indeed finding many mistakes and omissions.

These errors wouldn't harm his cultivation, which he would surely perceive as he advanced, but would waste significant time.

The old man seemed to truly have gone ages without conversation, speaking eloquently, not only about Constellation Realm cultivation matters but also sharing all sorts of miscellaneous information.

And these were exactly what Lu Ye and the Nine Provinces were currently lacking.

After speaking for half the day, the old man took a sip of wine, laughed: "Has your Nine Heavens World just advanced to a large domain?"

"Senior's insight is sharp." Lu Ye nodded.

The old man said: "It's not that my insight is sharp, but these things are common sense. Any domain with a Moon Jade Realm seated knows this. You don't seem to know, indicating there's no Moon Jade in your domain. If so, then it must have recently advanced to a large domain."

Lu Ye showed an embarrassed expression.

Just about to inquire further, the old man suddenly said, "Time's almost up!"

"Hmm?" Lu Ye looked at him with confusion.

The old man smiled faintly, "If you stay here any longer, you might face certain death!"

Lu Ye had no idea what he meant, he felt this old fellow seemed somewhat eccentric.

The old man then scratched his head, "I ate your meat and drank your wine, it's only right to give you some benefits."

Lu Ye immediately replied, "The things you spoke about earlier are already great benefits to me, I dare not ask for more."

The old man said, "That's not right. I, Fong Rumo, have always been clear about favors and grudges. What I told you are just basics, nothing much. You've kept me entertained, and I ate and drank at your expense, how can I just leave it at that."

Lu Ye truly didn't want any benefits from others, encountering such a person out of nowhere, even if he didn't sense any malice, a few casual exchanges were fine. But if he truly accepted anything, it would bring more ties. People are unpredictable; who knows what plans they might have?

Moreover, this old guy looks just like a beggar, needing to ask for food and drink. He probably doesn't have anything good.

Even if he did, it wouldn't be something a Constellation Realm like him could wield.

Fong Rumo frowned in thought, muttering to himself, "What should I give you?"

After a while, his eyes suddenly brightened, "Got it!"

As he spoke, he reached out and grabbed, and before Lu Ye could react, he realized that his Boulder Mountain Saber was already in the old man's hand.

Lu Ye's expression suddenly turned serious, his eyes slightly lowered.

The weapon of a combat cultivator is an extension of one's life, it would never be easily taken by others. The old man took the Boulder Mountain Saber without even asking, undoubtedly breaking a taboo.

But the difference in strength was clear, even if Lu Ye was angry, it was to no avail.

Fong Rumo raised his hand and wiped the Boulder Mountain Saber, doing some unknown trick, then casually tossed it back to Lu Ye, "I've sealed a secret technique within the blade, use it against opponents you can't beat, but it only works once, use it wisely!"

He seemed certain that Lu Ye would face an adversary he couldn't defeat.

As he said this, he pointed in a direction, "Fly that way, there's an opportunity there, but also danger, decide for yourself whether to go or not."

Lu Ye suddenly understood that this was the benefit Fong Rumo was giving him, and the secret technique sealed within the blade should be used for the opportunity.

Of course, he could choose not to go in that direction, and if so, the benefit was simply the secret technique sealed within the blade, which he could use against enemies in the future.

Either way, Lu Ye wouldn't lose out.

Just by providing Fong Rumo with some wine and meat, he received such benefits, not to mention the information Fong Rumo shared earlier. Lu Ye felt as if he had judged a noble character with a petty heart.

With such a disparity in strength, if Fong Rumo truly intended harm, it would only take a flip of his finger.

"Of course, the premise is that you must survive! But let me warn you, the immediate danger you face can't be counteracted with the secret technique within the blade, or calamity will surely befall."

"Immedi-..."

Before Lu Ye finished, Fong Rumu shouted in a low voice, "Go on!"

A gentle force pushed him, and he involuntarily moved away from Fong Rumu's side.

By the time Lu Ye steadied himself, Fong Rumu was already far off in the distance, and that flying sword's stream of light was still chasing relentlessly, as if intending to hunt him to the ends of the earth.

Lu Ye immediately understood what Fong Rumu's last words meant, because from that bright sword light, a beam suddenly split off, racing towards him.

From afar, Fong Rumu's voice reached him, "Any living thing that interacts with me gets locked onto by this sword light. Boy, do your best to survive, we shall meet again!"

Lu Ye's fleeting fondness for the old man vanished instantly. Surely, in stellar space, strangers are rarely genuine good people.

The old man's nature was not bad. Apart from holding Lu Ye captive for a while in conversation and requesting some wine and meat, he didn't do anything excessive, not even robbing Lu Ye of spirit jade.

In the end, he sealed a secret technique into the Boulder Mountain Saber and pointed out an opportunity's location.

But, knowing Lu Ye would encounter trouble, he still involved Lu in this; clearly, this was not behavior befitting a good person.

Lu Ye suddenly understood what Fong Rumu meant by 'time's almost up.'

From the current situation, any living beings contacting Fong Rumo would be locked onto by the sword light, and the longer the interaction, the stronger the ray's power.

If not, Fong Rumo wouldn't have let Lu Ye go so easily, surely having kept him longer for more conversation.

This quirky old fellow was neither completely good nor bad, defining him simply as such was inadequate.

Not just Fong Rumo, but most cultivators in the cultivation world are indeed like this.

Lu Ye could only lament his bad luck, the vast stellar space, the first time he left the Nine Provinces, and he ran into this.

No time for contemplation, he thrust his saber forward, spirit force surged wildly, starlight falling and merging towards the impending sword flashes.