

Humanity 1501

Chapter 1501 - You're Strong Enough

If Chu Shen's plan can be realized, then the safety issue of Unparalleled Island won't need to be considered in the future. By that time, there surely won't be any forces foolish enough to cause trouble.

Because by then, many forces will have their industries on Unparalleled Island. In such an environment where interests are intricately intertwined with various forces, anyone who dares to move against Unparalleled Island would be making enemies of all the forces with shops there.

So from a long-term perspective, Chu Shen's desire to transform Unparalleled Island into a commercial Spirit Island is indeed a wise choice.

The Soul Race girl still refuses to communicate with Lu Ye. Since bringing him back from the All Phenomena Island auction, to this day, Lu Ye doesn't even know her name.

However, this girl shows no intention of escaping or resisting. Usually, while Lu Ye stays in the cave, she sits quietly by the side, neither speaking nor disturbing, almost like a puppet.

With persistent deductions, the Life Origin Method finally made good progress, and based on this foundation, a new spirit rune was created. However, the efficacy of this spirit rune is somewhat strange, and without personal testing, Lu Ye finds it hard to grasp its mysteries.

Even Lu Ye himself is somewhat unsure whether this spirit rune is useful or useless.

There are countless spirit runes in the world, some of which can be stably formed and constructed, but actually have no function. Such spirit runes are usually ineffective and, if not overly complex, are mostly used for practice by spirit runes masters.

No suitable subject was available nearby to test, so Lu Ye can only put it aside for now. Fortunately, through this period of deduction, Lu Ye came up with some ideas on how to disband the Life Origin Method, and as long as he can return to the Nine Provinces, he can attempt it.

Having chosen the next spirit rune to deduce, Lu Ye continued to apply himself.

One day, an uninvited guest suddenly came into the cave.

Lu Ye looked at Ban Ci, who was sitting opposite him, curiously scrutinizing the Soul Race girl nearby, and frowned, "What is it?"

Although they were on Unparalleled Island, Lu Ye and Ban Ci didn't have much interaction. The only previous encounter was when Ban Ci first came and greeted him.

So Lu Ye was unclear why the other party came looking for him.

It cannot be denied that Ban Ci is very strong. If nothing else, the method she used to bind a Moon Jade cultivator back then was something Lu Ye couldn't understand, not knowing how she achieved it.

Although such a binding only lasted a short time and Ban Ci paid some price for it, for someone in the Constellation Realm to achieve such a degree is truly astounding.

"I want to ask you for a favor," Ban Ci withdrew her gaze and said seriously.

"No time!" Lu Ye refused outright. They weren't very familiar, and according to Lu Ye and Chu Shen's speculation, Ban Ci was likely sent by Jiu Yan to protect Chu Shen secretly. Such a person, even if not from the Cheling World, must have a significant background. What could she possibly need his help with?

Ban Ci smiled, "You refuse without even listening?"

"I have many things to do."

"What if I say I can give you a substantial reward?" Ban Ci looked at Lu Ye.

Lu Ye shook his head, "I don't lack spirit jade!" He still had eight million spirit jade, spirit crystals worth ten million; it was enough for personal use in the short term. Once Unparalleled Island was on track and generating income, he would have an income stream. At the very least, the spirit jade from selling the As-Close-As-Siblings Array Disc would surely be given to him by Chu Shen.

"How about this?" Ban Ci said as she flipped her palm, instantly revealing an item in her alabaster-like small hand.

Lu Ye looked at it, slightly stunned, because this item looked familiar, and he had just seen a piece like it not long ago.

Phoenix Sky Blue Crystal!

This Phoenix Sky Blue Crystal seemed even larger than the one seen at the All Phenomena Island auction, undoubtedly more valuable.

The main point is that this item is something money can't buy. Lu Ye had asked Cao Xiang to keep an eye out for some time, but only one piece appeared at the last auction.

Lu Ye didn't expect that after missing a Phoenix Sky Blue Crystal at the auction, Ban Ci would present another piece to him.

He wasn't tempted; instead, he became cautious. "How do you know I need Phoenix Sky Blue Crystal?"

Ban Ci looked justified, "You're a combat cultivator; of course, you would need this thing."

That's true; no combat cultivator in the Constellation Late Stage would ignore Phoenix Sky Blue Crystal, but Ban Ci's offer of such a treasure as a reward clearly indicated that what she wanted was not simple.

After a brief thought, Lu Ye asked, "What do you need me to do?"

If it were something else, Lu Ye wouldn't be tempted. Ban Ci's origins are mysterious, and her skills are exceptional; whatever she needed help with was likely complicated. Although the Phoenix Sky Blue Crystal is excellent, Lu Ye wouldn't risk his life for it easily.

"Accompany me to a place," Ban Ci said concisely.

"Explain in detail," Lu Ye frowned.

Through Ban Ci's account, Lu Ye finally understood what she needed to do.

She was at the Constellation Late Stage and was preparing to ascend to Moon Jade. However, the biggest hurdle for a Constellation ascending to Moon Jade is the metamorphosis from one's spirit force to mana. This hurdle stops many Constellations at the doorstep of Moon Jade.

Because such metamorphosis is incredibly difficult with just the cultivator's strength and takes an extremely long time, typically requiring some external force like elixir pills or exotic treasures.

However, elixir pills capable of transforming a cultivator's spirit force are extremely expensive, and exotic treasures are even rarer.

The rewards on the Cumulated Points Ranking between Constellations are also a means, and in terms of effect, they are better than any elixir pill or exotic treasure.

This is why many seasoned Constellations delay their promotion, waiting for the opening of the Constellation Palace. As long as they can leave their names on the ranking, they can use the power of the Constellation Palace to be promoted to Moon Jade.

Ban Ci plans to go to a secret ground, which will help her accelerate the metamorphosis of her spirit force, so she needs a helper or a guard. In this way, she can exchange her spirit force in peace, without being disturbed by external forces.

After listening to Ban Ci's explanation, Lu Ye vaguely felt that things might not be so simple.

If Ban Ci was really sent by Jiu Yan, she could easily ask Jiu Yan to transform her spirit force, and they could just send any Moon Jade cultivator to accompany her. Why bother coming to find him, and even offer something like the Phoenix Sky Blue Crystal?

"Is there danger in the secret ground?" Lu Ye asked.

Ban Ci understood what he was thinking and explained, "It's somewhat dangerous for me because I need to endure the power of the secret ground. If I can't withstand it, I will suffer backlash. But for you, it's not very dangerous, although others might enter that place, so I need to ensure I am not disturbed while refining my spirit force."

"You could find a Moon Jade!"

"I don't know any Moon Jade, nor do I have anyone I trust." Ban Ci looked at Lu Ye with a clear gaze.

Lu Ye stared at her without expression but couldn't see any fluctuation in her eyes.

Darkly curious, could he and Chu Shen's speculations be wrong? Was she not sent by Jiu Yan?

Thinking about it, if Ban Ci was really sent by Jiu Yan, she shouldn't leave at this time; she should stick to Chu Shen closely. Yet, in reality, she has never done so and has not shown any special care or concern for Chu Shen.

"Why choose me?" Lu Ye asked.

"You are strong enough!"

"Piao Ke is strong enough too!" In terms of strength among the Constellation Realm, Piao Ke is considered top-tier, especially now as the cultivators ranked before him on the ranking have mostly entered the Constellation Palace for promotion.

"Don't you know what kind of person Piao Ke is?" Ban Ci glared at him irritably.

Lu Ye remained silent; he certainly knew what kind of person Piao Ke was. Ban Ci, despite her petite figure, is well proportioned and quite attractive, and Piao Ke probably hasn't missed many chances to chat with her recently.

Ban Ci certainly doesn't want to choose Piao Ke.

"If you agree, once we leave that secret ground, this item is yours. If you don't, then I can only think of other ways." Ban Ci casually tossed the Phoenix Sky Blue Crystal in her hand.

"Where is the secret ground?" Lu Ye asked.

"I can only tell you, starting from here, it will take us nearly three months to reach, the specific location... can't be said."

"When do we set off?"

"The sooner, the better!"

Ban Ci left, and Lu Ye looked at the Soul Race woman quietly sitting beside him, then got up and walked outside: "Follow me!"

The Soul Race woman silently complied and followed.

The Phoenix Sky Blue Crystal was very enticing to Lu Ye, so although he was somewhat puzzled why Ban Ci chose him to guard her, he ultimately agreed.

With such a piece of Phoenix Sky Blue Crystal, once he promotes to Moon Jade in the future, the Boulder Mountain Saber could be upgraded to a magic treasure.

However, before that, the Soul Race woman needs to be settled first; taking her along is ultimately inconvenient. Despite her always being quiet like a puppet, Lu Ye was sure that should he encounter any danger, she would find a way to exploit it.

This was unrelated to personal character; the other party seeking freedom could only act in such a way.

Originally, Lu Ye didn't want to expose some of his special methods in front of her, but now he couldn't care less.

He summoned the starboat, left the All Phenomena Ocean, and arrived at a desolate planet, where he took out a green sea conch and sounded it.

When the misty portal appeared, the Soul Race woman's eternally expressionless face finally showed a trace of curiosity, gazing at the portal as if her deep eyes could see into the world beyond.

"Enter!" Lu Ye pushed her forward.

The Soul Race woman stepped into the portal, and Lu Ye followed closely behind.

Arriving as usual in front of the Divine Conch Hall, where two male merfolk continued to guard it, Lu Ye glanced at them, knowing talking wouldn't work, and directly activated his spirit force.

After a brief moment, Great Elder Yann Miao, detecting the disturbance, flashed onto the scene.

Generally, Bai Lu is the first to come running, but Bai Lu is currently busy cultivating with the specter, unable to spare effort.

"Great Elder!" Lu Ye saluted.

Chapter 1502 - Shang of the Domain

Yann Miao smiled at Lu Ye: "I've asked you to come by often, yet it's been so long since your last visit."

Lu Ye was embarrassed: "I've been tangled up in trivial matters, I hope the Great Elder forgives me."

"What brings you here this time?" Yann Miao asked. Typically, Lu Ye wouldn't come all the way unless there was something important.

Lu Ye pointed to the Soul Race woman beside him and explained the situation to Yann Miao.

Yann Miao understood: "So you hope that before you return, she can stay here."

"If it's inconvenient for the Great Elder, I could take her with me."

Yann Miao said: "There's nothing inconvenient, she can stay here. The Soul Race... is quite rare. Considering the entire stellar space, they're as precious as my own race. Go ahead without worry, I will personally keep an eye on her."

The Soul Race woman's cultivation was the same as Lu Ye's, both at the Constellation Late Stage. With Yann Miao, a Moon Jade, personally watching her, there wasn't much concern about her causing trouble.

Lu Ye then took out the Token to control the Soul Race restriction and handed it to Yann Miao, before turning to step into the portal, returning to the desolate planet.

He did not return to Unparalleled Island but instead took out an audio talisman to send a message to Chu Shen, explaining the situation. He then sent a message to Ban Ci, agreeing on a meeting place before he drove the starboat away.

Upon arriving at the agreed location, Ban Ci was nowhere to be seen. Lu Ye waited for half a day before he saw a beautiful and exquisite starboat traveling through the air towards him, with Ban Ci standing on it, waving to Lu Ye: "Get on board!"

Lu Ye leaped on board, sitting not far from Ban Ci.

The journey was far, but with Ban Ci driving the starboat, he didn't have to worry about anything and could focus on deriving spirit runes.

Yet, Ban Ci couldn't sit still. While traveling, she asked: "Fellow Daoist Li, I observed your strength to be quite formidable. Why haven't you made a name on the Cumulated Points Ranking in the Constellation Palace?"

Lu Ye didn't lift his head: "Fellow Daoist is equally strong, yet seems to not have a name there either!"

Ban Ci smiled: "My situation is a bit special. I couldn't participate in the Constellation Palace competition, missing out on a great opportunity."

With the strength Ban Ci previously displayed, if she had participated in the Constellation Palace competition, the top twenty would have been within reach, allowing her to ascend to Moon Jade without the hassle, straight into the Constellation Palace.

"Could Fellow Daoist be in the same situation?"

Lu Ye replied indifferently: "Coincidentally, I am."

Ban Ci continued: "This time the Constellation Palace saw many powerful individuals emerge, including one named Fa Wuzun. Have you heard of him?"

"I've heard a little." Lu Ye's expression remained unchanged, casually responding.

"Allegedly, this person had to leave midway for some reason. Otherwise, he could've claimed the top spot on the Cumulated Points Ranking, a real pity."

Lu Ye was unsure why Ban Ci suddenly brought up Fa Wuzun. Judging from her tone and expression, it seemed like casual chit-chat, yet since he himself was Fa Wuzun, hearing his name from Ban Ci made him somewhat wary.

Perhaps recalling something, Ban Ci suddenly chuckled: "Our Island Master always says Fa Wuzun is his older brother. I wonder if there will be a chance to meet this Fellow Daoist and glean some wisdom from him."

Lu Ye ceased speaking, while Ban Ci uttered a few sentences here and there but, getting no response, likely felt it boring and went silent.

Traveling was quite dull, until a month later when an Insect Path suddenly appeared ahead!

Only then did Lu Ye realize why the secret land was so far from Unparalleled Island. He had assumed the secret land was within the All Phenomena Galaxy, but now it was clear that the secret land was evidently in another star system.

Nevertheless, it made sense. With so many cultivators traversing the All Phenomena Galaxy, if there truly were a secret land there, it would likely have been discovered long ago.

Under normal circumstances, a strong force from the home galaxy would be stationed at either end of an Insect Path. The cultivation would at least be Moon Jade, primarily to prevent home galaxy cultivators from being ambushed while passing into the All Phenomena Galaxy via the Insect Path, and to thwart any malicious intent from infiltrating the home galaxy via the Insect Path.

But that's not always the case.

Some Insect Paths don't have strong forces guarding the ends, typically appearing in star systems without powerful domains, as the lack of strong forces renders guarding irrelevant, allowing anyone to freely travel through the Insect Path.

Lu Ye was unsure about the opposite star system's situation concerning this Insect Path, but he guessed there were no strong forces or perhaps not even Constellations present.

Ban Ci didn't slow down, driving the starboat straight into the Insect Path and vanishing within.

Lu Ye instinctively activated his power to shield himself. Traversing the Insect Path was a mysterious affair; during the journey, the Insect Path's surroundings exerted peculiar pressures, often composed of spatial turbulence. If accidentally caught in it, one might lose their way.

Lu Ye had encountered such a situation once before and had narrowly escaped using the Void Beast's core, thus naturally wanting to avoid another ordeal.

Yet no sooner had he activated his power for protection than a protective light veil emerged on the starboat.

This starboat unexpectedly had a protective Array, indicating superior quality, as cheaper starboats typically lack such features.

While traveling through the Insect Path, Lu Ye felt his senses overwhelmed, until abruptly, the agitation subsided.

Raising his eyes to see once more, in his view was now an unfamiliar stellar space, and turning back, there behind him was the very Insect Path they had entered.

"This is an unnamed star system. Although there seem to be a few local domains, there are basically no powerful cultivators." Ban Ci casually explained, which confirmed Lu Ye's previous guess.

She glanced around, then chose a direction, and drove the starboat away.

A little over half a month passed, and as the starboat neared a small domain, Ban Ci's aura suddenly changed, and she looked coldly toward the domain.

Lu Ye noticed something was off. Following her gaze, his eyes narrowed.

Although the distance wasn't too close, with Lu Ye's current eyesight, he could vaguely make out some scenes on the domain.

Ban Ci had already turned the direction, flying toward the domain.

Soon, they passed through the clouds, arriving above a city.

It was obviously a domain where living beings once thrived, but at this moment, under their perception, the entire city was devoid of life.

The buildings within the city were in ruins, and traces of a great battle were evident around the city walls. Dry corpses lay scattered everywhere.

Lu Ye frowned and flashed to a certain spot within the city, looking down at a corpse before him.

The corpse was clearly left behind by a deceased human race, confirming that the beings living in this domain were indeed human race. However, what the person encountered before death was unknown, as there was a hole in the chest and all blood Qi had vanished completely, making the corpse resemble a mummy.

The nearby human race corpses were all like this, each bearing wounds as if something had drained their blood Qi.

Lu Ye raised his hand, capturing a strand of white silk from a corpse, gripping it in his palm. He didn't know what it was, and as he tugged at it, found it extremely tough, comparable in quality to Divine Sea level treasures.

"Heaven's Desire Demon Spider's silk!" Ban Ci's face was grim.

"Star beast?" Lu Ye frowned as well.

Ban Ci nodded.

Lu Ye was puzzled, "Isn't it said that star beasts usually don't invade domains? Why have they come here?"

Star beasts generally don't possess high spiritual intelligence and act on instinct, just as cows eat grass and wolves eat meat. Star beasts require stellar space energy, so usually they don't invade domains as they operate in stellar space.

Because ordinary domains don't entice star beasts unless they can spawn Spirit Jade Veins, which are top-tier domains filled with powerful figures that star beasts dare not provoke easily.

Ban Ci explained, "In general, star beasts won't invade domains, but there are exceptions; Heaven's Desire Demon Spider is one of them, as they crave not only stellar space energy but also blood Qi."

The situation was clear. Heaven's Desire Demon Spiders had arrived in this small domain and started a massacre. Judging from the battle remnants left in the city, more than one spider came—it was indeed a group!

"We'll split up to see if there are any survivors." Ban Ci said as she flew off in one direction.

Lu Ye headed another way. In such situations, one with even a bit of compassion wouldn't walk away idly.

Shortly after, Lu Ye made a discovery, albeit not finding anyone alive, but a group of Heaven's Desire Demon Spiders. This pack was gathered in a mountainous area, their white webs covering everywhere.

From an external view, Heaven's Desire Demon Spiders look much like ordinary spiders, just larger, with the smallest the size of a calf and the largest comparable to a house.

This should be a group of Demon Spiders, not very strong, the strongest only comparable to Constellation, the rest merely Divine Sea, True Lake.

No need for courtesy from Lu Ye toward these creatures; he charged in with a blade and hacked away.

With his current prowess, these Demon Spiders couldn't resist, and within moments, the group was annihilated.

Continuing forward, his Mental Consciousness expanded searching, finding no sign of life anywhere.

This left Lu Ye a bit heavy-hearted, assuming the human race inhabiting this small domain had been slaughtered by the Demon Spiders.

The Demon Spider groups were numerous, and Lu Ye eradicated them upon discovery.

Occasionally, he sensed battle movements from the domain's other side, presumably Ban Ci taking action. She evidently encountered spider groups too.

Not until a day later did Lu Ye regroup with Ban Ci, and after a day's search, Lu Ye found no living person, encountering only Demon Spiders which he killed completely.

Ban Ci's current location was in a dilapidated village, with some dry corpses remaining. She stood before a farmhouse, appearing quite wry.

"What's the situation?" Lu Ye asked, simultaneously looking inside. Under perception, a life force was indeed present!

This meant there was still one person alive inside.

"A young girl, likely traumatized, unwilling to come out."

Lu Ye stepped inside, soon reaching the young girl's hiding spot.

Chapter 1503 - Secret Domain

It seemed to be a cellar used by farmers to store grain. The cellar was several meters deep and had been opened by Ban Ci. Lu Ye came to the entrance, peeked down, and immediately saw a small, dirty face.

The young girl looked about seven or eight, and who knows how long she had been hiding there. Her face was sallow, clearly showing signs of malnutrition over a recent period. If this place hadn't been meant for storing food, she might have starved to death long ago.

In the dim environment, only her eyes appeared somewhat bright.

The young girl curled up at the bottom of the cellar, looking up at Lu Ye, posing defensively, like a little beast provoked to anger.

Ban Ci came up beside Lu Ye, looking down: "I wanted to bring her up, but she didn't want to come and even kicked and punched me. I was afraid of hurting her, so I didn't use force."

If it weren't for such concerns, why would Ban Ci be at a loss against a mortal young girl without cultivation? However, even if Ban Ci had used force, she wouldn't have been able to resist.

Lu Ye thought for a moment, then jumped down into the cellar.

As soon as he landed, the girl rushed at him frantically, slamming punches and kicks, just as Ban Ci had described.

Lu Ye silently endured, lifting his hand to try touching the girl's head.

But unexpectedly, she suddenly hugged his arm and opened her mouth to bite.

Lu Ye didn't dodge, letting her bite his hand without using any force to protect himself.

The girl bit his hand, glaring at him with wide, fierce eyes, as if he was the enemy responsible for her family's death.

The blood and tears in those eyes stirred something in Lu Ye's heart, making him sigh inwardly.

This domain wasn't large, yet there should have been at least tens of millions of human race; but in the face of disaster, almost everyone perished. Only this little girl survived, and it was hard to say if it was good or bad fortune.

The pain transmitted from his hand was negligible, akin to an ant bite. He gently raised his other hand, placing it on the girl's head, speaking softly, "It's okay now, don't be afraid!"

After a long while, the fierceness in the little girl's eyes gradually faded, and the force of her bite dwindled.

Moments later, Lu Ye picked her up, emerging from the cellar.

Such a small child, hiding in the cellar for who knows how long, did everything inside, so she was covered in filth.

Lu Ye seemed not to notice, turned to Ban Ci, "Take her for a bath!"

Ban Ci nodded and extended her hand to take the child.

Unexpectedly, the girl clung tightly to Lu Ye's neck, unwilling to let go, even burying her face into Lu Ye's chest, soiling his clothes.

Ban Ci was puzzled, "Am I that unlikable?"

No matter what, she was a beauty. She couldn't succeed in bringing the child out the first time, but Lu Ye did this time, yet the child ignored her.

Lu Ye coaxed and soothed, yet no matter what he said, the little girl clung to him, refusing to release her grip.

The two exchanged a helpless glance.

After experiencing such changes and living in constant fear and loneliness for so long, the girl had a strong sense of caution. Lu Ye had barely earned a bit of her trust, and now she quickly grew a strong dependency on him.

"You'll handle this?" Ban Ci chuckled.

And so, Lu Ye had to tackle it himself.

He carried the girl, fetched water from a well, heated it with magic, found a large wooden tub, adjusted the water temperature, and then placed the girl inside.

"Take off your clothes and clean yourself up," Lu Ye instructed her.

The girl, however, just sat in the tub, staring at him fearfully, as if he would vanish with a blink.

Lu Ye, troubled, persuaded for a while, promising he wouldn't leave. The girl then slowly started to move.

After changing the water several times, the girl was clean. Ban Ci had found some clothes among the ruins and helped her put them on.

This time, she seemed less resistant to Ban Ci.

Once clean, the girl returned to Lu Ye's side, grabbing his clothes and standing quietly.

A "gurgling" sound suddenly came from her stomach. Lu Ye glanced down, realizing she was probably hungry. He found some food from the domain, cooked it, and let her eat.

After the meal, the girl slowly fell asleep, peacefully and sweetly.

Lu Ye and Ban Ci were at a loss, looking at each other.

After a while, Lu Ye finally spoke, "What should we do?"

They were just passing through, originally intending to go to the secret place Ban Ci mentioned. Now, they'd rescued a little girl. With no experience in cultivation, carrying her around was impractical. Leaving her here was even less suitable.

In this entire domain, only she was left alive; leaving her behind seemed too cruel.

Ban Ci hesitated for a moment and said, "Leave it to me."

With that, she raised her hand and summoned an object. It looked insignificant, just like a lump of coal, but as Ban Ci activated her spirit force and illuminated the young girl's figure with the coal, a mystical ripple suddenly emerged from thin air, and the girl vanished without a trace.

Lu Ye stared fixedly at the coal in Ban Ci's hand, extremely surprised, "A miniature world?"

Ban Ci was also surprised, "Fellow Daoist Li, your perception is keen. You managed to recognize this as a miniature world."

Lu Ye said nothing. He hadn't recognized it; he was merely guessing. He never expected it to actually be a miniature world. After all, according to what he knew, only such objects could contain living beings.

He had seen some records in Xiyuan Pavilion and knew that this item was a very rare treasure. No one knew how such a treasure was born. From its appearance, one couldn't tell there was anything special about it, yet inside it was a world of its own.

This world might be small, lacking any offensive or defensive abilities but it had some unique attributes.

Containing living beings was just one of its insignificant uses.

The fact that Ban Ci possessed a miniature world made Lu Ye all the more unable to see through her. This was not something an ordinary cultivator could have.

"Don't let her starve to death," Lu Ye reminded. The little lass was just a mortal and still needed food and drink. Even if Ban Ci put her inside, neglecting her for a long time would surely lead to grave consequences.

"Don't worry," Ban Ci replied, putting away the food Lu Ye had found earlier. She then sought more food and water, tossing them into the miniature world.

Without any worries, they resumed their journey.

After hurriedly traveling for over a month, they finally arrived at the destination.

On a massive floating land, Ban Ci stowed away her starboat and stood shoulder to shoulder with Lu Ye before a deep cave entrance.

"Is this the place?" Lu Ye asked.

Ban Ci nodded.

Lu Ye looked around but couldn't see anything special.

Ban Ci knew what he was thinking and smiled as she explained, "Precisely because it doesn't seem special, it doesn't attract attention. Although this place is remote, some cultivators will pass by. If it really looked special, it would have been discovered long ago. The mystical quality of this secret location has limits; each time it's used takes a long time to recover. If, Fellow Daoist, you wish to metamorphose your spirit force in the future, you can also come here."

Lu Ye nodded, "Thank you for your kind offer, Fellow Daoist!"

However, if he truly wished to metamorphose his spirit force, he could simply go to the Constellation Palace, which would be far less troublesome.

"Let's go in," Ban Ci said, leading the way into the cave entrance, with Lu Ye following close behind.

But after entering, Lu Ye tossed a weapon nearby out of habit. Entering an unknown area like this, he always left a contingency behind.

He was somewhat puzzled, considering his recent observations of Ban Ci. This woman seemed to come from an extraordinary background; otherwise, she wouldn't possess something like a miniature world. Even so, if she needed someone for protection, why choose him?

It wouldn't make sense to say she had any ulterior motives regarding him. He hadn't felt any malice from her, and she even exposed the location of this secret place to him.

Unable to figure it out, he decided not to dwell on it.

The cave was very deep, extending downwards for dozens of breaths before reaching the bottom. Ban Ci, who had arrived first, had already placed some illuminating objects around, casting a hazy light.

Only then could Lu Ye see the place clearly; it seemed like a huge karst cave. All around were bizarre rock columns everywhere, and only at the forefront was there a series of peculiar stone slabs, resembling a stairway, extending upwards one level at a time.

Lu Ye found it intriguing, for the stone slabs had no visible support points, yet they floated in mid-air. There were ninety-nine slabs in total, extending nearly a hundred meters up, and on the topmost slab was a strange stone cauldron, from which a hazy mist was flowing out.

The mist spilled from the stone cauldron like a waterfall over the stone slabs.

Ban Ci observed carefully and smiled, "It seems no one has come here recently, Fellow Daoist Li. You just need to guard here in case someone intrudes. If they do, I would appreciate it if you could stop them."

Lu Ye nodded. Although the chance of such an occurrence was slim, Ban Ci had him come to guard against such events. Some things shouldn't be underestimated.

To ensure everything went smoothly, Lu Ye immediately started the array setup.

Ban Ci didn't rush to begin but silently sat in meditation for a while.

Once Lu Ye completed the setup of the formation, Ban Ci adjusted herself to peak condition. Then she rose and stepped toward the stairway.

Lu Ye was curious about how this place refined a cultivator's spirit force and naturally intended to observe.

What's more, he saw Ban Ci step onto the lowest step, but to his surprise, she seemed to endure considerable pressure with that step.

Her movements were very slow, taking a breath before stepping onto the next one.

Once she steadied herself, the white mist on the steps surged toward Ban Ci, seeped into her body, and vanished.

Lu Ye surmised that the mist must be the source aiding in spirit force refinement.

Ban Ci paused for a moment, presumably refining the power of the mist, then stepped onto the second step.

Chapter 1504 - Sudden Turn of Events

Ascending one level at a time, Ban Ci moved very slowly. Often, after stepping onto one level of the staircase, it would take a long time before she would make her next move. The mist she passed through vanished completely.

Lu Ye became increasingly certain that this mist was indeed the source that helped cultivators refine their spirit force.

He looked up toward the top of the staircase, directing his gaze at that peculiar stone cauldron.

The mist is the source for cultivators to refine their spirit force, and its origin is this stone cauldron. In other words, the stone cauldron is the treasure.

If he could take the stone cauldron away, wouldn't he be able to refine spirit force anytime and anywhere? In the future, if friends and family wanted to ascend to Moon Jade, they wouldn't have to go through the trouble of purchasing expensive elixir pills.

However, Lu Ye only entertained this thought momentarily. Ban Ci had long known about this place, yet the stone cauldron had always been there, which undoubtedly indicated the problem.

This stone cauldron... is probably not so easy to take.

A day passed, and Ban Ci had reached halfway. At this pace, in two or three days, she should reach the end, by which time her spirit force would undergo metamorphosis, satisfying the conditions for ascension to Moon Jade, allowing her to ascend at any time.

This journey, albeit time-consuming, was merely traveling, and the reward was a piece of Phoenix Sky Blue Crystal, which was fairly good.

Another day passed, and Ban Ci had reached over eighty steps, in line with Lu Ye's calculations.

However, upon reaching this point, the pressure Ban Ci endured obviously increased significantly, often requiring a long rest before she could muster the strength to move to the next step.

At a certain moment, Lu Ye suddenly noticed Ban Ci's body trembling slightly, realizing the situation seemed dire; she appeared to have reached her limit.

Upon closer observation, her clothes were drenched with sweat, clinging closely to her body, revealing alluring curves. Lu Ye had long known of her attractive figure but hadn't realized she was so enticing.

Unable to resist, he glanced a few more times, a warmth spreading in his heart, his gaze even becoming aggressive.

As if sensing his gaze, Ban Ci's body trembled even more violently.

No, this is not right!

Lu Ye suddenly became alert.

Though usually, when encountering a pretty or attractively figured female cultivator, he would glance a few more times, it was merely looking. Everyone has their aesthetic preferences, and seeing someone or something that fits one's aesthetic and gazing more is normal; it's instinct.

But never had Lu Ye ever harbored any sordid intentions.

Yet just now, he actually gave rise to some inappropriate thoughts.

Ban Ci the cause? Lu Ye vaguely felt it might not be the case; he wanted to withdraw his gaze, but a voice deep within hindered him, making his gaze more aggressive, like a leech firmly gripping Ban Ci's alluring figure, his mind filled with fanciful imagery.

Lu Ye hurriedly steadied his mind, examining himself.

No anomalies were found!

It seemed everything just followed the dictates of his inner self.

But this was obviously wrong, undeniably something was influencing him.

He had his Talent Tree within him. If any strange external force invaded him, the Talent Tree would react.

Until this point, he had only heard Bai Lu's singing in the Merfolk Territory, which somewhat impaired his rationality. Yet, that was the mystique of the merfolk's song, not something the Talent Tree could resolve; ultimately, he relied on his strong willpower to break free from Bai Lu's song's influence.

But this time, the situation was completely different. He knew the thoughts emerging in his mind were wrong, yet the more he tried to restrain them, the harder it became to escape, seemingly urgently wanting to immerse himself and promptly act upon it.

It could be said that the force affecting him this time was more terrifying than Bai Lu's song.

It's chilling.

Since there were no anomalies within his body, the problem was not within him. With this in mind, Lu Ye quickly examined his own Divine Sea.

As his psyche spirit body manifested, Lu Ye was slightly startled, finding a pink mist drifting within his Divine Sea without knowing when it had appeared.

Moreover, the mist kept expanding along with the changes in his thoughts. The more he tried to control those inappropriate thoughts, the faster the pink mist expanded, seemingly intent on engulfing his Divine Sea.

As the mist expanded, he found those thoughts becoming increasingly wild!

"Fellow Daoist Li!" Ban Ci's voice suddenly rang out from the staircase, trembling, as if enduring something with great effort.

Lu Ye raised his gaze abruptly, seeing that Ban Ci had unbeknownst to him turned around to face him, her face flushed alarmingly red, her fists clenched tightly with her nails embedded into her palms, blood streaming.

Lu Ye could tell at a glance that she was facing the same dilemma as he was, but her willpower was clearly as strong as his, otherwise she would have already succumbed to the constantly emerging chaotic thoughts in her mind.

It wasn't Ban Ci's doing!

Lu Ye initially thought Ban Ci had done something in secret, but seeing her in this state, he realized he was mistaken.

But if it wasn't Ban Ci, then where did the issue arise?

Before Lu Ye could ask, Ban Ci had already given the answer: "Great Lust Demon Spider!"

"What?" Lu Ye was suspicious and uncertain.

Ban Ci closed her eyes, her chest heaving violently: "The Great Lust Demon Spider we killed wasn't all of them; there's an even stronger one. It might have been hiding here all along or followed us here secretly. We have to find it and kill it to escape, otherwise..."

She didn't say what would happen otherwise, but Lu Ye knew the outcome wouldn't be good.

But how could there be a Great Lust Demon Spider here? He hadn't detected any abnormalities at all.

As he surveyed the surroundings, Lu Ye was shocked to notice that the cavern was now filled with white spider silk, crisscrossing and weaving throughout the cave. Looking back, he saw that the entrance where he and Ban Ci had come in was covered with a web.

It was almost unbelievable; although he'd been observing Ban Ci's situation for the past two days, he hadn't relaxed his vigilance. Yet, he had no idea when all these spider silks and webs appeared.

Lu Ye had a sense of foreboding. No matter if the Great Lust Demon Spider was originally hidden here or had followed them secretly, it surely possessed immense power, likely being a Moon Jade star beast. His complete unawareness of its presence indicated its formidable strength.

Suppressing the chaotic thoughts in his mind, Lu Ye raised his hand and drew the Boulder Mountain Saber, slashing it down towards the web behind him.

The long saber descended, and to Lu Ye's amazement, the web that didn't seem particularly sturdy was completely impervious to the attack. Even with the Divine Sharp Edge Spirit Runes empowered Boulder Mountain Saber, he couldn't sever it, and the web's adhesive strength firmly held onto the saber.

Lu Ye's spirit force surged around him as he crazily channeled it into the saber, igniting a violent flame in an instant.

The web remained intact, further convincing Lu Ye that the Great Lust Demon Spider hiding in the shadows was a Moon Jade level star beast. Just the web it spun was so resilient, incomparable to the ones spun by those Demon Spiders he had slain earlier.

The sound of the air being sliced was heard as several strands of spider silk suddenly flew out of the web, coiling towards Lu Ye. His heart skipped a beat as he quickly retreated.

The Boulder Mountain Saber, however, was left on the web, soon covered by spider silk, and the blade could no longer be seen.

This was the first time a combat cultivator like Lu Ye had ever lost his weapon, but in that situation, had he not abandoned the saber, he would have been ensnared by the web.

Spider silk attacked from all sides, and Lu Ye was dodging in utter disarray.

His situation was far from optimistic. On one hand, he was battling various chaotic thoughts deep in his heart, and the more he resisted, the more fiercely they retaliated. On the other hand, he had to evade the harassment of the spider silk and search for the Great Lust Demon Spider's whereabouts.

In a matter of moments, Lu Ye felt the struggle was becoming too much for him to handle.

With the Insight Spirit Runes empowered, Lu Ye couldn't even spot a Spectral Shadow, let alone the Great Lust Demon Spider.

In this situation, he could use the weapon control he left outside the cave and activate the Void Spirit Runes to escape, but if he left, the Boulder Mountain Saber would be lost, and leaving Ban Ci here alone would lead to her certain death.

Ban Ci's situation was worse; though she was also avoiding the harassment of the spider silk, the swirling desires in her heart were clearly having a significant impact on her, so it wasn't long before a strand of spider silk ensnared one of her hands, worsening the situation. A few more strands wrapped around, and Ban Ci was no longer able to evade, becoming tightly bound hand and foot.

Lu Ye saw at a glance that she was doomed, and in the next moment, Ban Ci was likely to meet her end.

But what puzzled Lu Ye was that after binding Ban Ci, the hidden Great Lust Demon Spider didn't seem intent on taking her life.

And judging by Ban Ci's expression, she didn't appear overly panicked.

Her eyes had become extremely mesmerizing, like spring water, yet her expression was one of extreme shame and anger. But the moment she was completely bound, the shame and anger vanished, replaced by a look of determination, as if she had made a resolute decision.

"Li Taibai, do you know why it doesn't kill us?" Ban Ci suddenly spoke.

"I don't know!" Lu Ye dodged the spider silk's harassment coming from all directions. Ban Ci's question was also something he was puzzled by; at this moment, if the Great Lust Demon Spider wanted to kill

Ban Ci, it could do so with ease, and Lu Ye could feel that the spider silk harassing him was only trying to imprison him without any intent to harm or kill.

The hidden Great Lust Demon Spider bore no intent of murder.

"Because it wants to consume our Essence Blood!" Ban Ci explained.

"It could just kill us and still consume it!" Lu Ye retorted amid his busyness.

"It's different!" Ban Ci shook her head. "This is a Moon Jade level Great Lust Demon Spider. Ordinary Essence Blood doesn't entice it much. What it wants is Essence Blood from those emotionally driven to the utmost pinnacle, in the most fervent states of mind. That's what it craves. Especially since both of us are in the Constellation Late Stage, which is immensely attractive to it. Now it hides in the shadows, and with our abilities, we can't find it. Until it gets what it wants, it won't easily reveal itself!"

Chapter 1505 - The Prepared Versus the Unprepared

Lu Ye had no idea where Ban Ci got this information from, because even at the Xiyuan Pavilion of the Dwarf Race, he hadn't seen any records in this regard.

But during this journey, Ban Ci's vast knowledge and broad horizons left a deep impression on Lu Ye. Since she said so, it must be correct.

"What should we do?" Lu Ye dodged the spider silk crisscrossing towards him in a panic, feeling like he was about to falter.

The space here was not large, and the exit was sealed tightly by a spider web, unless he used the weapon control he'd left outside to activate the Void Spirit Runes, there was no hope of escape.

But if he did that, the Boulder Mountain Saber would certainly be lost, and Ban Ci would be in grave danger.

The main thing was, the clashing thoughts in his mind were overwhelming, causing a severe impact on his psyche, something he had never encountered before.

"Lure it out!" Ban Ci gritted her teeth and said.

Lu Ye discerned her intention, and his last bit of resolve unraveled as Ban Ci spoke, causing his movements to falter slightly, and a strand of spider silk immediately ensnared him, winding around him tightly, with more strands drifting over, adhering to Lu Ye's body.

Lu Ye tried to break free, but it was in vain. He looked towards Ban Ci with a complicated expression, "Your information better be accurate!"

Because if the information was wrong, he might not be in much trouble here; at worst, he could teleport away, but Ban Ci's sacrifice would be great.

But this was still a hope, better than leaving Ban Ci here alone.

Ban Ci closed her eyes, seemingly resigned to her fate.

When the ripping sound occurred, the spider silk attached to Ban Ci suddenly exerted force and shredded all her clothing, and the same fate befell Lu Ye.

Then Lu Ye found himself losing control of his body, turned into a puppet manipulated by the spider silk sticking to him.

The same was true for Ban Ci.

Ban Ci, who had originally reached over eighty steps, was trembling, and under the control of the spider silk, her movement was stiff as she floated down, landing in front of Lu Ye.

So close, Ban Ci's long eyelashes quivered. Although she had anticipated this scene and was mentally prepared, when it actually happened, she was still filled with shame and anger.

Originally, inviting Li Taibai to accompany her here was just a probe because she suspected Li Taibai might be someone else she knew. If so, she might need to win him over strongly in the future, but she didn't expect things to develop to this extent.

But wanting to lure the Great Lust Demon Spider out, she couldn't think of any other way, especially since she was already entangled by the spider silk.

The intense gaze and aura on the opposite side made her body tremble. Under normal circumstances, such a gaze would be extremely repulsive, but under the influence of the Great Lust Demon Spider, she found herself surprisingly without much aversion, and somewhat joyful instead.

She suddenly opened her eyes, her gaze hazy as she looked at Lu Ye in front of her, and then her facial features swiftly changed.

Lu Ye was startled to find that the Ban Ci he usually saw was not her true appearance; she had used some mysterious means to alter her looks.

The usual Ban Ci already had a remarkable appearance, but her true appearance was even more stunning. It was a beauty beyond description. In comparison, the Ban Ci he used to see had a bit of playfulness, but the one before him now was more dignified.

Silently and swiftly, like two marionettes, they approached each other, and the fiery aura spread in the cave, completely lost in oblivion and intoxicated as if to sink entirely, unaffected by the changing of days and years outside, or the seas transforming into mulberry fields.

Until a certain moment, a sharp, barbed, furry claw appeared out of thin air; before this, neither Lu Ye nor Ban Ci sensed it. By the time it appeared, it was too late for them to react.

That claw, like a bolt of lightning, pierced through Lu Ye's chest, and immediately pierced into Ban Ci's body, which was stuck against him.

Despite being at the Constellation Late Stage and having strong bodies, they were penetrated like paper under such a sneak attack.

The sensation of pleasure and pain hit them simultaneously, and both let out a muffled grunt.

But the intense pain was also what brought a sliver of clarity back to their nearly entranced gazes.

Ban Ci's eyes looked past Lu Ye's shoulder, staring at a position behind him, where the Great Lust Demon Spider's figure couldn't be seen, but she knew the spider was hiding there. She opened her mouth, and a golden light shot out; it was unknown what treasure it was, but it carried immense power. Ban Ci had prepared for this moment long before, it was her all-out strike.

This was her move to turn the tide, a strike even Moon Jade couldn't ignore!

If this strike had no effect, then she and Lu Ye would only be able to await death.

Almost at the same moment Ban Ci made a move, Lu Ye also fiercely activated the power of the Talent Tree.

In the Divine Sea filled with pink mist, blazing flames suddenly ignited. The color and nature of these flames were exactly the same as those burning on the Talent Tree.

In the past, the power of the Talent Tree could only burn away impurities that invaded the body and could not be used in the Divine Sea. However, after the Talent Tree underwent metamorphosis three times, Lu Ye discovered that its power could now be utilized in the Divine Sea.

This was a discovery made by chance, but Lu Ye had never done it before. Previously, when the Soul Race woman invaded his Divine Sea, if Lu Ye had done this, the woman's psyche would have undoubtedly been burned to oblivion.

The merfolk's song was ethereal and elusive, offering no opportunity for the Talent Tree's power to be useful. But the pink mist invading the Divine Sea was evidently something the Talent Tree could burn.

When he first noticed the pink mist, Lu Ye had considered whether to use the Talent Tree's power. But at that time, the Great Lust Demon Spider was hiding in the shadows, and even if he did, he couldn't trace the spider's whereabouts, so he had to endure.

Lu Ye wasn't very clear about the nature of this pink mist, but since it could invade his Divine Sea, it was likely part of the Great Lust Demon Spider's Divine Soul Power.

So Lu Ye deduced that once this pink mist was burned, the outcome for the Great Lust Demon Spider wouldn't be favorable.

Lu Ye's intuition was correct. The moment the flames of the Talent Tree began to burn in the Divine Sea, a sharp sound suddenly echoed. Immediately afterward, he sensed an overwhelmingly powerful presence suddenly appear behind him.

Facing him, Ban Ci saw more clearly. The Great Lust Demon Spider, which should have been concealed, suddenly revealed itself and seemed to have suffered some injury, letting out violent screeches.

At this moment, Ban Ci launched her carefully planned attack. Originally, without the spider revealing itself, she wasn't very confident, but when the golden light struck forth, the spider's form emerged.

With a thought, Ban Ci directed her golden light straight into the open maw of the spider, violently penetrating it.

Green blood splattered as the spider reeled in agony, its terrible maw turning tattered and torn.

Yet Ban Ci felt a sinking heart, realizing that although her strike caused harm, it wasn't enough to be lethal.

Ultimately, the gap in strength was too great.

This is bad!

The spider, writhing in pain, pulled back, retracting its legs intertwined with Lu Ye and Ban Ci, causing blood to gush forth. Lu Ye had no time to assess his injuries, his mind so intensely focused he couldn't even feel the pain at his wounds.

He raised his hand and summoned the sword gourd!

With the Boulder Mountain Saber entangled in webbing, the sword gourd was his only quick weapon capable of threatening the spider.

Aiming the gourd at the spider, he urged his spirit force, unleashing nine sharp, unparalleled Sword Qi, slicing through the air like shooting stars, targeting the spider's tattered maw, its only current weakness.

The 9th Dao Sword Qi had formed after the sword gourd had devoured the Skeletal General's magic treasure sword. Lu Ye had never used it, and compared to the other Sword Qi within the gourd, this one was exceptionally powerful.

The nine Sword Qi simultaneously bombarded the spider's maw. Lu Ye faintly heard the sound of organs being torn and damaged, and the spider's screeching intensified, indicating the strike had caused substantial injury.

It wasn't over; Lu Ye held another short arrow in his other hand.

This was an exotic treasure he had spent a fortune on at a recent auction on All Phenomena Island, capable of threatening even Moon Jade. However, despite its immense power, it had an unavoidable flaw.

It required charging; unlike the sword gourd, which could be activated with a mere thought, the short arrow needed Lu Ye to infuse sufficient spirit force to fully unleash its power.

This was a flaw common to all exotic treasures, including the Spirit Talisman.

During the pause after unleashing the sword gourd's Sword Qi, Lu Ye had already begun channeling spirit force into the short arrow.

Just as the 9th Dao Sword Qi's power waned, the short arrow exotic treasure activated!

The short arrow trembled slightly in his hand, transforming into a stream of light, instantly reaching the spider. Under normal circumstances, with the spider's strength, neither the sword gourd's Sword Qi nor this short arrow exotic treasure would've posed much threat to it. Even Ban Ci's well-prepared strike might not have wounded it.

However, by burning the pink mist—the manifestation of its Divine Soul Power—with the power of the Talent Tree, Lu Ye had caused the spider great trouble. With its psyche damaged and in pain, its reactions naturally slowed significantly.

The short arrow, too, plunged into the spider's maw. As expected of an exotic treasure, the power of this strike surpassed even the previous nine Sword Qi from the sword gourd, piercing through the spider's body and ripping out from behind it, penetrating it completely.

In mere moments, Ban Ci and Lu Ye consecutively launched three powerful assaults. Even the mighty Great Lust Demon Spider, caught off guard, was left bewildered, with its body severely injured and endlessly screeching.

Chapter 1506 - Slaying the Demon Spider

However, the vitality of the Moon Jade star beast was extraordinarily strong. Even after suffering repeated heavy blows, it had no fear for its life. In its pain, the Demon Spider swung its legs, the Sharpness on its claws' reverse barbs glinting coldly.

Lu Ye immediately turned around and grabbed the evidently exhausted Ban Ci behind him in an embrace, his arms full of warmth and softness, yet his mind was devoid of any sensual thoughts.

At the position with his back to the Demon Spider, Sacred Guard Spirit Runes layered upon one another.

The claws swung down, and the layers of Sacred Guard shattered, causing a sharp pain in Lu Ye's back as a gash appeared over a foot long, deep enough to expose bone. The barbs of the claw had even gouged out a large piece of flesh from the wound.

Using the force from the blow at his back, the two rolled to the side.

Shshsh...

The Demon Spider scuttled forward with rapid steps, appearing extremely furious.

Struggling to stand, Ban Ci couldn't help but sigh when she saw the situation, feeling helpless and inadequate.

Then she saw the naked Lu Ye standing in front of her, his back to her, with the ghastly wound pouring blood.

In the next moment, she showed a look of astonishment because Lu Ye suddenly conjured a spherical object. As spirit force surged into it, the sphere abruptly broke apart and began to cover and envelope him.

In an instant, a towering scarlet figure over three meters tall, elongate in shape, appeared in her vision. It exuded a wild and domineering aura that spread all around, causing the surrounding Void to slightly distort.

The towering figure blocked the ugly Demon Spider and cut off its ferocity, surprisingly giving Ban Ci a strange sense of security.

"Cover armor!" Ban Ci, well-traveled and knowledgeable, immediately recognized it as cover armor. And not just any cover armor, it was a full-body armor. Although the cultivators of the cover armorer faction in the stellar space are not many, there are quite a few. Even the most top-tier cover armor she had seen before couldn't compare to the one in front of her.

Magnificent, wild, with an aura soaring to the sky, as if it could pierce a hole in the heavens.

She instantly realized that this cover armor was somewhat extraordinary, as she sensed some peculiar aura from it, belonging to an extremely powerful ferocious beast!

Lu Ye hadn't used the Dragon Throne in a long time, mainly because he hadn't had the opportunity. But now, without the Boulder Mountain Saber, the strongest 9th Dao Sword Qi from the sword gourd had

already been expended. Besides using the Dragon Throne, the only option left was to activate the red talisman.

But the red talisman was valuable, and Lu Ye was reluctant to use it, leaving him with no choice but to unleash the Dragon Throne.

With the Dragon Throne donned, Lu Ye raised his hand and caught the Dragon Spine Saber. The exaggeratedly long blade perfectly matched the sleek design of the cover armor, facing not far ahead where the ravenous star beast charged with a screech. The clash of their auras painted the small cave with a do-or-die atmosphere.

Facing the gigantic Demon Spider, Lu Ye stepped forward and slashed down with the Dragon Spine Saber, striking heavily on the Demon Spider's back.

Yet, that mightily powerful strike did little to affect the Demon Spider, leaving only a shallow scar on its back. Though its back seemed not too well-defended, being a Moon Jade star beast made its flesh inherently extremely strong. Battling it with the power of Constellation left Lu Ye at somewhat of a disadvantage.

When the Dragon Spine Saber sliced down, the Demon Spider's claw shot out like lightning. Lu Ye wanted to dodge, but he couldn't evade in time and was struck directly. Luckily, the Dragon Throne's material was excellent, and he only bore the brunt of a shock force without suffering much harm.

There's hope, Lu Ye's heart steadied. As long as the Dragon Throne could withstand the Demon Spider's attacks, he'd have a chance to kill this creature!

He realized he'd always underestimated the Dragon Throne. When he first acquired it, he was only in the True Lake Realm. Back then, activating it once left him utterly exhausted.

At that time, Lu Ye realized that with his strength alone, he couldn't unleash the Dragon Throne's full capabilities.

Even at the Divine Sea Realm, it was still hard to sustain. Back then, Lu Ye thought perhaps only upon reaching Constellation could he bear the Dragon Throne's burden.

But now, even in the Constellation Late Stage, using the Dragon Throne still caused an enormous consumption, making it difficult to maintain for long. The miraculousness of this cover armor was beyond imagination.

In the cave, Lu Ye and the Demon Spider were locked in a fierce battle, neither gaining ground.

Ban Ci leaned weakly against the cave wall, watching wide-eyed and open-mouthed.

She never imagined that a Constellation cultivator could contend with a Moon Jade like this. Admittedly, the Constellation cultivator was using a powerful piece of cover armor, and the Moon Jade star beast was severely wounded, but without significant underlying power, mere External Force wouldn't suffice against a foe, no matter how weakened.

Yet, under her observation, the battlefield seemed evenly matched.

During the previous attack on Unparalleled Island, she knew Li Taibai was exceptionally strong, but she never imagined Li Taibai could be this formidable.

This exceeded what a Constellation cultivator could achieve.

And as time passed, Lu Ye slowly gained the upper hand, not because the Moon Jade wasn't strong, but because the Demon Spider was too grievously injured before.

Not to mention the indelible trauma caused to its psyche by the burning, just the long-prepared strike from Ban Ci, combined with Lu Ye's 9th Dao Sword Qi and the exotic treasure short arrow, was enough to give it a hard time. For the Moon Jade star beast, such injuries were not fatal, but they greatly affected its ability to unleash its power.

By this point in the fierce battle, the Demon Spider sensed something amiss. Although it lacked much spiritual intelligence, it had the instinct to seek advantage and avoid harm. It repeatedly attempted to escape the battle circle, but Lu Ye, holding the upper hand, wouldn't let it have the chance. The long saber, with every swing, kept it enveloped within his saber momentum.

The continuous saber momentum was the essence of Tidal Sea Ten Thousand Waves, and with the might of the Dragon Throne, it was enough for Lu Ye, even with his Constellation-level strength, to contend against a Moon Jade star beast whose power had greatly diminished.

After battling for so long, Lu Ye finally found a perfect opportunity; the Dragon Spine Saber pierced through the Demon Spider's mouthparts into its body, the long saber spanning over one meter emerged from the back of its head.

The Demon Spider's claws repeatedly struck Lu Ye, shaking his body violently, yet he did not retreat even a step, only channeling more power into the Dragon Spine Saber, igniting its blade into raging flames.

Gradually, the Demon Spider's resistance weakened until it completely subsided.

Only then did Lu Ye withdraw the Dragon Spine Saber, stepping back a few paces. Fresh blood ran down the long saber, dripping onto the ground.

Spreading out his Mental Consciousness to confirm the demon race was truly dead beyond any doubt, only then did Lu Ye let out a deep breath, removed the Dragon Throne draped over his body, and put away the Dragon Spine Saber, before his body wobbled a bit and he slowly sat down beside.

His face was pale, a gaping hole piercing through his chest from a sneak attack by the Demon Spider initially. Fortunately, it hadn't struck his heart, otherwise, even if he hadn't died then, Lu Ye's strength would have greatly diminished, making any subsequent battle unfeasible; on his back, there was an even deeper wound, exposing the bone, the flesh curled and horribly grotesque.

Aside from that, his entire body was riddled with intolerable pain, crippling him.

This was partly due to the aftereffects of deploying the Dragon Throne, a thing that once summoned continually consumed and depleted his foundation, at a terrifying speed. Another reason was the injuries sustained from the Demon Spider's counterattacks. Although the Dragon Throne provided formidable defense, the shock force during the Demon Spider's retaliations was something it couldn't nullify.

At this moment, Lu Ye felt his entire body almost falling apart.

He glanced towards Ban Ci's side, their eyes met, exchanging silent gazes.

Lu Ye took out some elixir pills meant for healing and recovery, stuffed a handful into his mouth, and closed his eyes to regulate his breath and calm himself.

Seeing that he wouldn't die immediately, Ban Ci also relaxed and began to recuperate herself.

Time flowed by; during which Lu Ye noticed some commotion from Ban Ci's side but paid it no mind. In this battle, he had sustained serious injuries, and even though he was at the Late Stage of Constellation, it would take him several days to recover.

When after several days, Lu Ye, full of energy once more, opened his eyes, Ban Ci was nowhere to be seen.

Lu Ye had sensed her leaving but didn't stop her; after experiencing such an event, he was slightly uneasy to face her.

Parting ways like this didn't seem so bad either.

But apparently, Ban Ci hadn't fulfilled her purpose this time because she hadn't reached the top of the staircase, and under the current circumstances, she wasn't suited to continue. Perhaps she might come over again some other day; after all, advancing to Moon Jade wasn't something that could be done soon.

Lu Ye checked his own injuries; basically recovered, he put on new clothes, walked over to the cave entrance, and retrieved the Boulder Mountain Saber.

When the Demon Spider was still alive, the Boulder Mountain Saber was tightly wrapped in spider silk. Now the Demon Spider was dead, those spider silks seemed to have lost their original power and could be easily torn apart.

Having secured the Boulder Mountain Saber at his waist, Lu Ye came before the Demon Spider's corpse.

Demon beasts within the domain have demonic pills, and star beasts in stellar space have crystal cores — they are essentially the same things. Many star beast crystal cores are useful; especially the crystal cores of Moon Jade Realm star beasts — they are always worth some money.

Lu Ye searched around, extracted the crystal core from within the Demon Spider. Despite its enormous size, the crystal core was only as big as a fist.

Lu Ye then looked up towards the stone cauldron at the top of the staircase; despite knowing it was unlikely, he couldn't help but desire to try.

If that thing was a treasure that could be taken, it would be convenient for anyone around him advancing to Moon Jade in the future.

He stepped towards the staircase, initially cautious, because he had seen Ban Ci seemingly endure immense pressure when she moved initially.

But when he moved upwards, he felt no pressure at all.

He easily reached the position at over eighty steps, where Ban Ci stopped previously. Beyond that the mist emanating from the stone cauldron blanketed the area.

When Lu Ye took a step forward again, he suddenly felt a massive pressure enveloping him, forcing him slightly lower, hastily circulating the spirit force within, barely avoiding falling.

The mist on the stairs seemed to be drawn to him, converging onto Lu Ye, flooding into his body.

Lu Ye silently felt it for a moment and was slightly surprised because, at the moment the mist rushed into his body, he felt his spirit force subjected to some strange power, rapidly circulating and condensing.

Chapter 1507 - Changes on Unparalleled Island

Under the influence of that mystical mist, Lu Ye could clearly feel his own spirit force being squeezed and refined. This should be the source that allows a cultivator's internal force to transform from spirit force to mana, and once the internal spirit force fully transforms to mana, the cultivator has the foundation to advance to Moon Jade.

Lu Ye had just recently advanced to the Constellation Late Stage, and since his advancement, he hadn't engaged in much proper cultivation. The essence of his marrow was far from being refined to perfection, and he had a long way to go before reaching Moon Jade.

However, if the spirit force within him could become more condensed, it would be beneficial for him, at least the difficulty of advancing to Moon Jade in the future would be greatly reduced.

Therefore, although Lu Ye felt pressured, he did not retreat and continued to move upward.

Step by step, Lu Ye progressed slowly.

It wasn't until a day later that Lu Ye finished ascending the last dozen or so steps and reached the highest point.

In front of him was the mystical stone cauldron. It wasn't large, only the size of a water tank, just sitting atop the highest step.

Lowering his head to gaze into it, he could clearly see the peculiar mist being derived from the stone cauldron, just as he had thought earlier, this stone cauldron was indeed the source of the supernatural of this place.

He stretched out his arms, hugging the stone cauldron, trying to lift it, but it didn't budge an inch.

Increasing his strength, he still couldn't move it at all.

Lu Ye couldn't help but feel strange, upon observing it closely, it appeared that the stone cauldron wasn't connected to the steps at all, yet it seemed to be grown together.

Not willing to give up, he summoned the Dragon Throne to try again, but still couldn't move it.

Lu Ye felt a bit disappointed. As expected, if such an object could be moved, it wouldn't have been left here all this time. Ban Ci would have found a way to take it away long ago.

The stone cauldron couldn't be moved, and the mystical mist derived from it had already been consumed. It's uncertain when it would be restored again, so there was no reason to linger around.

Lu Ye exited the cave following the path he came, summoned the starboat, confirmed his direction, and flew towards the depths of stellar space.

He came with someone, but upon return, he was alone, which was unavoidable. Speaking of which, Ban Ci invited him over this time to help keep guard, to prevent disturbances while she was undergoing her own spirit force transformation. Unexpectedly, an incident occurred.

The agreed upon reward from before was likely out of the question now...

Fortunately, he intentionally recorded the route on his way here, otherwise he'd be clueless on how to return now.

It took less than three months to come, and a similar amount of time to return.

The journey was monotonous and tedious.

When Lu Ye finally returned to the All Phenomena Ocean and reached Unparalleled Island, he almost thought he had come to the wrong place. Taking out the star map and comparing it carefully, he confirmed that the Spirit Island before him was indeed Unparalleled Island.

Compared to when he left half a year ago, Unparalleled Island had clearly undergone a massive transformation.

On top of the Spirit Island, streets crisscrossed, and shops stood in rows, with cultivators constantly coming and going. While not as bustling as the top-class Spirit Island of All Phenomena Island, it was still quite lively.

Especially outside one particular shop, cultivators were queuing in a long line. Strangely, the shop's doors were closed, clearly not open for business.

Lu Ye looked at the signboard above the shop and saw five large characters written on it.

As-Close-As-Siblings Workshop!

Lu Ye immediately understood what the shop was selling.

Evidently, Chu Shen was implementing the plan he had mentioned earlier, putting the As-Close-As-Siblings Array Disc up for sale to gather popularity for Unparalleled Island. From the current results, it was undoubtedly a success.

In the All Phenomena Ocean, there are countless Constellations, but there aren't many treasures that can significantly enhance a team's strength. The As-Close-As-Siblings Array Disc is the most well-known among them. Though a few top forces have started selling this item, the quantities are limited and the prices are steep.

It's safe to say, any force putting up the banner of selling the array discs can gather a large crowd in a short time. Those cultivators lined up in long queues are here for just this reason.

Unparalleled Island clearly has positioned itself on a fast track, and these cultivators, attracted by the array discs, became the popularity of Unparalleled Island. With popularity, naturally, there would be trade, making it easy to attract major forces to establish shops on Unparalleled Island.

Looking at it now, there are many shops on Unparalleled Island, though most are still vacant, with only a small portion opened for business. This isn't much of a problem; as long as the popularity of Unparalleled Island can be maintained, and more forces keep a cooperating relationship with Unparalleled Island, then it will become increasingly difficult for anyone to target this place in the future.

In countless years of the All Phenomena Ocean, no Spirit Island has ever risen in prominence as quickly as Unparalleled Island, making it a pioneering instance.

Lu Ye also saw docks at three different locations on Unparalleled Island, where cultivators coming from outside must pass through to enter.

However, unlike All Phenomena Island, Unparalleled Island is currently in the phase of gathering popularity, so no spirit jade is being collected at the docks.

Lu Ye naturally didn't need to pass through the docks to enter. With the inscription tablet of Unparalleled Island on him, he was considered one of Unparalleled Island's people and could pass through the protective array to enter directly.

The moment he entered the big array, Chu Shen, who was negotiating cooperation with a group of forces' representatives, sensed it. He couldn't help but feel delighted, although he couldn't leave just yet, so he could only quicken the pace of the negotiations.

After half a year away, Lu Ye discovered that the stellar space energy on Unparalleled Island was much richer than when he left. Although it was still at the level of a mid-class Spirit Island, as long as this momentum was maintained, it shouldn't be long before it reached the level of a high-class Spirit Island.

By then, the value of Unparalleled Island would be even greater.

At this point, Lu Ye's original plan to use the Small Constellation Palace to create a Spirit Island was a complete success. However, what Unparalleled Island would eventually become remains to be seen over time.

A high-class Spirit Island was not far off, but whether it could become a top-class Spirit Island like All Phenomena Island was particularly uncertain. Since a top-class Spirit Island involved a Spirit Jade Vein, Lu Ye was not sure if the Small Constellation Palace could achieve such a level.

Not in a hurry to return to his cave, Lu Ye, being idle, wandered around the shops.

Previously, if he wanted to buy something, he would generally go to All Phenomena Island. However, if Unparalleled Island had enough shops and goods in the future, it would be more convenient for him to purchase whatever he needed here.

After wandering for half a day, Lu Ye found that the variety of shops on Unparalleled Island was already quite diverse, with some atmosphere, although there was still a big gap compared to All Phenomena Island. But this was just the beginning, and at least all the necessities for cultivators' daily cultivation were available here on Unparalleled Island.

There were also quite a few cultivators buying and selling in the shops.

The cultivators of Unparalleled Island patrolled around, maintaining the peace of this island. However, with someone like Tang Jun, a Moon Jade Mid-Stage, overseeing things, no one would casually cause trouble, lest they bring trouble upon themselves.

So, although Unparalleled Island was quite popular now, everything was in order.

After strolling for a while, Lu Ye finally returned to his cave.

Thanks to Chu Shen's prior planning, the latter half of Unparalleled Island was not open to the public, so it remained quiet here.

In no time, Chu Shen ran over excitedly, "Big brother!"

Lu Ye nodded slightly, praising him, "Well done!"

Chu Shen grinned, "It's all thanks to your great support, big brother!"

If it weren't for Lu Ye allowing him to bring Little Dumb and Little Crooked to stay here, Unparalleled Island wouldn't concern him at all. Not to mention that the island's current popularity was largely due to the As-Close-As-Siblings Array Disc attracting people.

Without the array disc provided by Lu Ye, Unparalleled Island would just be an ordinary Spirit Island. With the disc, Chu Shen had the opportunity to develop Unparalleled Island into its current state.

Chu Shen didn't come to claim credit but to report on Unparalleled Island's development over the past six months to Lu Ye.

Lu Ye wasn't interested in these matters; instead, he took out a storage ring and handed it to him.

On the way back, Lu Ye did nothing else but derive spirit runes and refine array discs.

Chu Shen received it, checked it, and his face lit up with joy. Without any ceremony, he gladly accepted it and then said, "Big brother, although there's some income from selling array discs and revenue from the shops, I plan to keep these funds to develop Unparalleled Island first. I'll share the profits with you once we have more. What do you think?"

"Unparalleled Island indeed needs money now; you decide for yourself." Although Lu Ye recently needed to spend some spirit jade, the development of Unparalleled Island was undoubtedly more important.

"Then I'll proceed according to my plan!"

Lu Ye seemingly asked offhandedly, "Has Ban Ci returned?"

Chu Shen replied, "Yes, she's back! I asked her earlier why she didn't return with you. She said you were delayed by something."

Chu Shen knew about Ban Ci leaving with Lu Ye. When she left, Ban Ci had specifically informed Chu Shen.

Mentioning Ban Ci, Chu Shen lowered his voice, "Big brother, what's Senior Sister Ban Ci's background? Did you learn anything about her during your journey together? Was she sent by my mother?"

Lu Ye shook his head, "Not sure, and I haven't asked. If you want to know, ask her yourself."

Chu Shen frowned, "It's hard to ask."

Lu Ye didn't understand what he was worried about and asked again, "What about Piao Ke?"

He hadn't sensed Piao Ke's aura. As for the specter...that guy had been sent to the Merfolk Territory by him, and without Lu Ye taking him, he couldn't come back. But Piao Ke, Lu Ye hadn't seen any sign of him and wondered where he had gone.

Chu Shen had a slightly strange expression, "Senior Brother Piao seems to be dodging trouble!"

"Dodging what trouble?" Lu Ye was puzzled.

Chu Shen explained, "Senior Brother Piao has an arranged marriage, and not long ago, the suitor came looking for him, so he ran away!"

Lu Ye was taken aback. He thought, Could Piao Ke's betrothed be unattractive? Otherwise, why run away?

Chapter 1508 - Proposal

As they were talking, Lu Ye suddenly detected the aura of a Moon Jade quickly approaching, and he frowned because he realized that this Moon Jade was not Tang Jun's aura. Chu Shen, however, had a twitch in his expression: "Talk about the devil! Big brother, good luck to you!"

With that said, he hurried to his feet and fled outside as if quite scared.

But as he rushed out of the cave, he was stopped right in his tracks, and then Lu Ye heard Chu Shen's humble voice: "Senior Sister Ruan!"

A cool and clear voice rang out: "Has Li Taibai returned?"

Chu Shen feigned ignorance: "Huh? Uh, I don't..."

"Move aside!"

As the words fell, clothes fluttered in the wind, and immediately Lu Ye found a tall figure standing in front of him.

He looked up and scrutinized, surprised for a moment, for he discovered that this woman was not only not ugly but extremely attractive, with a well-proportioned figure. Even among the cultivators, her beauty was particularly eye-catching.

She had her long ponytail tied high, and her clothes clung closely to her body, giving her a very competent appearance.

Lu Ye even felt an extremely sharp aura from her, and that aura gave him a familiar feeling.

Sword cultivator! Lu Ye immediately understood; this woman was definitely a sword cultivator!

He found it hard to understand why Piao Ke, who usually liked this type of woman, would hide from her, especially given that it was an arranged marriage.

The woman was tall and looked down at Lu Ye from above, her cool voice sounding: "Are you Li Taibai?"

Lu Ye nodded slightly.

The woman said: "I heard that you have the best relationship with Piao Ke here. Do you know where he is?"

Lu Ye shook his head; he had just returned from outside, how would he know where Piao Ke had gone.

"Can you help me ask around about his whereabouts?"

"No way!" Lu Ye decisively refused. No matter why Piao Ke was avoiding this woman, as Piao Ke's friend, Lu Ye naturally couldn't do such things.

"Then help me pass a message to him: he can't run away. No matter where he hides, I will find him!" The woman said, then turned around and left, not intending to make things difficult for Lu Ye.

After she left, Lu Ye frowned and pondered; he didn't feel any malice from her. In other words, she wasn't genuinely intending to do anything bad to Piao Ke, though he didn't know what Piao Ke had done to make her remember him so much.

Surely it was a case of starting without ending properly! Lu Ye guessed in his heart. With Piao Ke's personality, he was likely capable of such things.

He took out an audio talisman and attempted to contact Piao Ke.

In no time, Piao Ke responded: "What's up?"

"A woman came looking for you!"

"Ruan Tu, right? I knew she'd look for you. She didn't cause you any trouble, did she?"

Lu Ye didn't know what the woman's name was; she didn't say, but Chu Shen did refer to her as Senior Sister Ruan earlier.

"No, she was just asking about your whereabouts."

"That's good. What did she say?"

"She asked me to tell you something." Lu Ye relayed the message.

Piao Ke remained silent for a long time before replying: "I can't stay at All Phenomena Ocean anymore, Brother Li. I'm planning to run. We'll meet again if fate allows!"

Lu Ye was quite surprised: "I think that woman is nice, exactly your type. Why avoid her?"

"Ah, it's a long story!" Piao Ke's tone was filled with a sense of trouble.

After his explanation, Lu Ye finally understood what Piao Ke was thinking. That Ruan Tu was indeed Piao Ke's arranged marriage partner, and in terms of talent and cultivation, she was in no way inferior to Piao Ke; she might even be stronger than him. However, the woman was about ten years older, and ever since Piao Ke was young, he had been following Ruan Tu around; she was practically the one who raised him.

To Piao Ke, Ruan Tu was like an elder sister from his own family.

If it were any other woman with such looks, Piao Ke would want nothing more, but for Ruan Tu, he had no interest at all; as for starting without ending properly, that was entirely untrue.

"Moreover, Brother Li, you know me. I have great ambitions, seeking more experiences in life, so why would I tie myself to just one tree!"

Lu Ye had long been aware of his ambitions and knew it was true. With Piao Ke's personality, not letting him seek various romantic experiences would be more painful than killing him.

Ending the communication with Piao Ke, Lu Ye left the cave.

Piao Ke's future was beyond his influence. The stellar space is vast, and after this parting, there may not be another chance to meet again. But such is the path of cultivation for a cultivator; life's journey involves encounters with various people and events: meeting, knowing, interacting, and then separation — it's all too common.

Everyone moves forward, and if fate allows for a reunion, it will naturally be joyful. If not, it's just a memory in each person's heart.

Flying out of the All Phenomena Ocean, he found the desolate planet from before and went to a hidden spot to blow the green sea conch, opening the gate to the Merfolk Territory.

Passing through the gate and arriving at the Divine Conch Hall, he ignored the two male merfolk stationed there, and Lu Ye directly exerted his aura, then quietly waited.

In just a moment, Great Elder Yann Miao, sensing the commotion, rushed over, followed by the Soul Race woman with long hair cascading down to her ankles.

This time, Lu Ye came to take the Soul Race woman back; leaving her here indefinitely was not an option.

After greeting Yann Miao, Lu Ye asked, "How is the specter? Has she mentioned wanting to leave?"

Yann Miao smiled and said, "That young girl has been cultivating with Bai Lu all the time now, and she's unlikely to leave anytime soon."

Lu Ye roughly guessed the specter's plan. She clearly wanted to cultivate to the Peak Constellation here and then leave, leveraging the Constellation Palace to advance to Moon Jade. Cultivating with Bai Lu would be highly efficient, and she naturally wouldn't want to waste such an opportunity.

Since the specter hadn't expressed a desire to leave, Lu Ye didn't bother to seek her out. He retrieved the Token controlling the Soul Race woman's restriction from Yann Miao and exchanged a few words with him before returning to the previous desolate planet while the gate was still open.

Looking at the Soul Race woman quietly standing aside without a word, Lu Ye pondered briefly and said, "I have some friends who, for certain reasons, lost their physical bodies, leaving only their psyche spirit bodies. I don't know the nature of your Soul Race and whether it's similar to their state, but I just want to ask for your help in finding their future path."

Wanting the Soul Race woman to cooperate, Lu Ye couldn't hide anything. Yet ever since obtaining this Soul Race woman, apart from the one time she spoke during an attack, she had never communicated with him.

This time was no different. Although Lu Ye intended to have an open conversation, she clearly had no intention of engaging and only looked at him coldly.

Lu Ye sighed helplessly, giving up for now as there was still time ahead, and besides, he had no idea how to return to the Nine Provinces. Even if the Soul Race woman wanted to help, there was no way to act on it.

He summoned the starboat, heading towards the direction of the All Phenomena Ocean.

If the Soul Race woman didn't activate her secret technique, outwardly she appeared just like a normal member of the human race. Given her unique race, Lu Ye wasn't too worried about her deliberately exposing her identity; bringing her along was no major issue.

On the way, Lu Ye took out an audio talisman and sent a message out. A response came back soon enough.

Several days later, at All Phenomena Island's flea market.

Lu Ye met a familiar face at the predetermined place.

Ahn Zhe said with a bitter face, "Fellow Daoist, I've been searching for you for so long!"

Back then, Lu Ye bought up all of Ahn Zhe's Dragon Breath Crystals, and Ahn Zhe returned to his domain to restock. He said it would take half a year for the round trip. He had returned to the flea market three

months ago and had been trying to contact Lu Ye, wondering if something unexpected had happened to him.

Until this time, Lu Ye contacted him proactively, to his great relief, since the Dragon Breath Crystals he brought back in large quantities would take ages to sell without Lu Ye, his big client.

"I went abroad for some matters and just returned a few days ago!" Lu Ye explained.

Ahn Zhe asked, "Do you still want Dragon Breath Crystals?"

"Since I contacted you, naturally, I do."

Ahn Zhe was overjoyed and cautiously asked, "How many can you take this time?"

Lu Ye thought for a moment and said, "I currently have seven million spirit jade on hand. How much can I buy?"

He still had eight million spirit jade left, but he had to keep one million as a reserve. As for the spirit crystals... he preferred not to use them unless necessary; they'd be invaluable when advancing to Moon Jade later, far more valuable than spirit jade.

"Seven million... that's quite a lot!" Ahn Zhe said while organizing the Dragon Breath Crystals. After a little while, he handed Lu Ye several storage rings. "Please check the quantities, Fellow Daoist."

Lu Ye checked and quickly counted, realizing Ahn Zhe had given a bit extra, a friendly gesture indeed.

"If you ever need more Dragon Breath Crystals in the future, just send me a message. I don't have much of anything else here, but there are plenty of Dragon Breath Crystals!" Ahn Zhe said, smiling brightly.

Lu Ye's heart stirred, and he asked, "Fellow Daoist Ahn, are you interested in acquiring a storefront?"

Ahn Zhe replied, "I'm certainly interested; having a physical store is always better than selling at the flea market. But as you know, shops aren't something just anyone can establish — we can't just step into those populous Spirit Islands from our domain. And those with little traffic might open a shop, but it would be pointless — better to stay in the flea market."

Those words ring true. For top-class Spirit Islands like All Phenomena Island, the rent for every shop is extremely high, and it's not just about having money — connections are needed, and Ahn Zhe's domain couldn't secure a place there. Not to mention All Phenomena Island, even shops on high-class Spirit Islands are beyond what Ahn Zhe's domain can aspire to, lacking the capital and strength.

Low-traffic Spirit Islands might not have too expensive rent, but then what's the use of going there? Just wasted effort.

Lu Ye said, "If there was an island with decent foot traffic and it's still growing, poised to rival those high-class Spirit Islands in the future, would Fellow Daoist be willing to settle in?"

Ahn Zhe hesitated and asked, "Won't the rent for such a Spirit Island be high?"

"I'm not clear on the specifics, but that Spirit Island is currently developing, so the rent shouldn't be too expensive," Lu Ye replied.

Chapter 1509 - 1507: Summons

Ahn Zhe pondered, "Could the place you are referring to be Unparalleled Island?"

Currently, among the Spirit Islands on the All Phenomena Ocean, if there's any place that's developing and gaining popularity, it's definitely Unparalleled Island.

"Indeed, it's Unparalleled Island."

Ahn Zhe seemed to have heard of Unparalleled Island, which made things easier.

"Unparalleled Island is certainly remarkable, showing a lot of potential. I had visited it before, but renting a shop there comes with certain conditions. Honestly, my domain's power is not sufficient to meet the requirements of Unparalleled Island."

Chu Shen was seeking cooperation with well-established forces, so that their interests could be intertwined, thus enhancing the security and stability of Unparalleled Island. Since the strength of Ahn Zhe's backing domain wasn't enough, he wasn't really considered by Chu Shen. Hence, even though Ahn Zhe had once thought about getting a shop on Unparalleled Island, he gave up after an inquiry.

"If you have this intention, go to Unparalleled Island and find the Island Master Chu Shen, tell him it was I who referred you, and he will make the arrangements."

Ahn Zhe's eyes brightened, "You know Island Master Chu Shen?"

Lu Ye nodded.

Ahn Zhe was immediately intrigued, understanding that if Lu Ye dared to say such a thing, it certainly wasn't just mere acquaintance. Moreover, considering Lu Ye's generous actions here, it was clear that Lu Ye came from an extraordinary background, and it wouldn't be unusual if there was some connection with Chu Shen.

With a word of thanks to Lu Ye, he then flew enthusiastically in the direction of Unparalleled Island.

Lu Ye didn't leave, but turned his gaze to not far away, at a stall where a graceful woman was sitting. Visiting cultivators stopped at her stall, exchanged a few words, and then shook their heads and left.

When the stall was empty, Lu Ye stepped forward.

"Do you need elixir pills? Fellow Daoist can have a look." The stall owner warmly greeted him, but after speaking, she looked at Lu Ye with surprise, "It's you!"

This stall owner was the same woman selling elixir pills whom Lu Ye had encountered last time. Her alchemy skill was quite proficient, and the quality of her elixir pills was excellent, although the prices

were slightly higher than the All Phenomena Merchants Guild. Last time, Lu Ye bought all her elixir pills, and now she had crafted some more to sell.

Previously, Lu Ye had also asked Chu Shen to send someone to look for her, but according to Chu Shen's subsequent feedback, she hadn't been found.

Unexpectedly, they met again by chance this time.

Lu Ye squatted down, casually picked up a jade vial, opened it, and gently inhaled. The scent of the pills wafted over.

The woman said, "Rest assured, Fellow Daoist, the quality of the elixir pills I craft is guaranteed."

Lu Ye believed her because, thanks to the Talent Tree, he could more intuitively judge the quality of the elixir pills than others.

"I'll take them all," Lu Ye said.

The woman was very pleased. Last time, Lu Ye had bought all her elixir pills, and now he was doing it again with such generosity; clearly, he didn't lack money.

She quickly counted her elixir pills and quoted a price. Lu Ye paid without haggling.

With the spirit jade in hand, the woman smiled sweetly, "Would you like to exchange audio talisman markings? If you want to buy any elixir pills next time, you can directly contact me. If you need any special elixir pills, I can craft them for you as well."

"Can you craft every kind of elixir pill?" Lu Ye asked.

"I can craft most of the elixir pills available on the market," she replied.

Lu Ye nodded and asked, "Are you interested in opening a shop?"

He didn't ask if she was interested in joining him, because her alchemy skill was quite outstanding. If she wanted to pledge to any force, she would have done so already. By choosing to set up a stall here, it indicated that she wasn't a person who wanted to be tied down.

There were many such cultivators.

However, not wanting to pledge to a force didn't mean she wasn't willing to open a shop and do business.

The woman smiled, "Of course I'm interested, but I don't have money."

Lu Ye said, "Go to Unparalleled Island and find the Island Master Chu Shen. He will give you a shop. You won't need to pay a single spirit jade. Just sell your elixir pills there."

The woman looked warily at Lu Ye. Although she hadn't been in the All Phenomena Ocean for long, she knew that no goodwill comes without a reason. If Lu Ye just wanted to do business with her, she welcomed it, but if he had any ulterior motives, she would naturally be cautious.

Perceiving her thoughts, Lu Ye explained, "I have a few friends who are healing cultivators. In the future, they might want to consult you about alchemy matters. I hope you can share some of your experience and insights with them."

Healing cultivators from the Nine Provinces will come here sooner or later, like the Second Senior Sister and Hua Ci. Without guidance, it'd take them much longer to figure things out themselves. After all, the varieties and properties of medicinal herbs in the stellar space can't be compared to those produced in the Nine Provinces domain. There are many herbs and elixir pills in stellar space that don't exist in the Nine Provinces. The woman's alchemy skill is commendable; if she can provide some teaching, the Second Senior Sister and others would find it much easier to get started.

"Is it really just like this?" The woman was clearly still in disbelief.

"Just like this!"

"Then... may I consider it first?" The woman asked cautiously.

"No problem!" Lu Ye did not pressure her. After speaking, he turned and left.

Watching his departing figure, the woman felt a bit at a loss. Unparalleled Island had recently gained quite a reputation. After all, it was a newly risen Spirit Island, and its rise was astonishingly fast, having already spread across All Phenomena Ocean. Since Ahn Zhe had heard of Unparalleled Island, it was only natural that the woman had heard of it too.

She never imagined she could own a shop of her own, especially in a place like Unparalleled Island. Now that such an opportunity was in front of her, it naturally made her tempted. However, she decided to first go to Unparalleled Island and see the situation before making plans. If she could truly obtain a shop without any troublesome conditions, it would indeed be a good thing.

The woman set out for Unparalleled Island, and Lu Ye was already on his way back to Unparalleled Island.

Halfway there, he contacted Chu Shen and told him about Ahn Zhe and the woman. Chu Shen naturally agreed without hesitation.

There were still some vacant shops on Unparalleled Island, and as the Island Master, keeping two in reserve was certainly not a problem.

Back in the cave on Unparalleled Island, Lu Ye prepared to begin his cultivation matters.

It had been almost a year since he advanced to the Constellation Late Stage. Over this past year, his cultivation had been stagnant, primarily because his cultivation progressed too quickly before, and he intended to consolidate.

A year's time is not long, but Lu Ye felt he had settled enough and it was time to move forward again. Even if he started cultivating, he could control his cultivation pace. As long as he didn't delve deep into

All Phenomena Ocean and only refined spirit jade, his cultivation efficiency, no matter how high, had a limit.

Lu Ye had no plans to delve into All Phenomena Ocean for now. Firstly, the Soul Race woman was by his side, making it inappropriate to delve deep into All Phenomena Ocean; secondly, cultivating in All Phenomena Ocean consumed too much.

Even though he had just acquired seven million spirit jade worth of Dragon Breath Crystal from Ahn Zhe, if he truly entered All Phenomena Ocean, it might not last long.

There was no need for him to worry about the development of Unparalleled Island. He increasingly felt that leaving Chu Shen in charge back then was a wise decision. Otherwise, managing it alone would have required an enormous amount of time and energy.

Moreover, he did not have Chu Shen's background. Currently, Unparalleled Island could cooperate with various powerful factions, largely due to Chu Shen's background. Although Chu Shen hadn't flaunted his background, who among those powerhouse experts didn't know about the Jiu Yan backing him? With such a connection, Chu Shen could accomplish twice as much with half the effort.

Only the crowd from Koi Island, unaware of Chu Shen's background, rashly launched an offense and ended up suffering heavy losses.

Day by day passed, and besides refining spirit jade to cultivate, Lu Ye let the Talent Tree absorb the power of the Dragon Breath Crystal. He also crafted many As-Close-As-Siblings Array Discs, handing them over to Chu Shen periodically for sale.

Occasionally, he would seek opportunities to converse with the Soul Race woman, but she consistently showed no intention of responding, as if determined to remain silent forever.

Lu Ye found this woman exceedingly difficult to understand and didn't know how to break through her defenses. Until now, he didn't even know what her name was.

One day, while Lu Ye was cultivating in the cave, he suddenly frowned and looked down at the back of his hand.

That spot was burning hot, and just as Lu Ye was unsure of what was happening, a marking inexplicably appeared.

Seeing the shape of this marking, Lu Ye was initially stunned, then delighted, because the marking was in the shape of a green leaf!

There were two types of markings on the back of his hand; one was the battlefield marking. However, this only worked within the Nine Provinces. Since leaving the Nine Provinces, it had shown no reaction, being a marking bestowed by Nine Provinces Heaven's Augury, connected to it.

The other marking was the Reincarnation Tree marking!

This was given by the Reincarnation Tree when he and Yang Qing visited it. When they left, the Reincarnation Tree bestowed it upon them.

At that time, Lu Ye had hidden two fairies, intending to bring them back to the Nine Provinces. Unfortunately, the Reincarnation Tree saw through his plan, forcing Lu Ye to release the fairies. As compensation, the Reincarnation Tree granted him this marking.

According to Yang Qing, the Reincarnation Tree's marking wasn't given lightly. While it was said to compensate Lu Ye, it was more of a bet by the Reincarnation Tree.

The Reincarnation Tree undergoes a cycle every ten thousand years. At such times, it becomes extremely weak, possibly attracting unwanted attention. By then, the Reincarnation Tree could invite those strong individuals granted the marking to protect it.

With this marking, a cultivator could enter the Reincarnation Tree at any time and place.

Thus, the Reincarnation Tree marking is only given to cultivators highly favored by the Reincarnation Tree, and it might take hundreds or thousands of years to see even one.

The Reincarnation Tree granting a marking to Lu Ye indicated its favor towards him.

When he was lost in the All Phenomena Galaxy and couldn't find his way home, Lu Ye had considered using this marking to directly visit the Reincarnation Tree and ask for help.

The Reincarnation Tree's doppelgangers are scattered across major star systems, and since the Nine Provinces has one, the Reincarnation Tree surely knows the specific location of the Nine Provinces.

Chapter 1510 - Farewell to the Reincarnation Tree

In the end, Lu Ye didn't do it because he feared the Reincarnation Tree's location was too far from the Nine Provinces. If he discovered the way home, what if it took hundreds or thousands of years to fly back? That wouldn't be worth it.

The mark of the Reincarnation Tree can only be used once. Once used, it disappears. It can be seen as a last means of preservation, so Lu Ye naturally cherishes it.

Unexpectedly, the mark reacted on its own at this moment.

Lu Ye had not activated it; there was only one possibility for this!

The original owner of the mark had triggered it! This clearly meant the Reincarnation Tree hoped he would go over there.

Though he didn't know what would happen, it was a good opportunity to inquire about the way home from the Reincarnation Tree. Moreover, since the tree itself triggered the mark, he should easily be able to obtain another one later.

Various thoughts turned in Lu Ye's mind, but the green leaf mark on the back of his hand suddenly seemed to come to life and floated away.

The lustrous green light lit up the entire cave, layering it in green.

The Soul Race woman who had been quietly sitting not far from Lu Ye was startled. She looked up and saw that peculiar green leaf, and couldn't help but be slightly dazed. Then, as if recalling something, her eyes suddenly widened, looking at the green leaf in disbelief.

Because if her thoughts were correct, the meaning the green leaf represented was intriguing.

Lu Ye was currently looking at the Soul Race woman. The Reincarnation Tree had summoned him over, and he had no objections. It was a good opportunity to ask for guidance. But if he left, what would happen to the Soul Race woman? Lu Ye wasn't comfortable leaving her here. If she ran away while he was gone, even the restriction token he held would be useless.

He wondered if he could take her along. If possible, it would save a lot of trouble.

The lustrous green light grew increasingly bright. The green leaf suddenly fragmented into a cluster of green light, which twisted and transformed rapidly into the shape of a large tree. The branches hung down and intertwined to form an oval-shaped archway. The aura of the portal emanated from inside the archway.

This was evidently a portal!

Seeing this, Lu Ye realized he could take the Soul Race woman with him. His mind settled, and he quickly sent a message to Chu Shen, informing him that he had to leave for a while with an uncertain return, before rising and calling to the Soul Race woman, "Let's go!"

The Soul Race woman had always been cold and unapproachable, even though she hadn't resisted Lu Ye recently, she never showed him a friendly face. But this moment, she obediently stood up and was the first to step into the portal.

Lu Ye followed right after.

Once Lu Ye's figure disappeared, the green light filling the cave suddenly vanished, returning it to darkness.

In the Unnamed Land, when Lu Ye appeared, the Soul Race woman was right beside him, curiously observing her surroundings.

Lu Ye also looked around, discovering it seemed to be a void space, yet very bright, not knowing where the light came from.

Besides him and the Soul Race woman, there was no one else.

But soon, a phantom suddenly appeared before the two of them. It was a large tree, identical to what Lu Ye had just seen in his cave. Presumably, the Reincarnation Tree's true form looked the same. What appeared before Lu Ye now was definitely not the true form, rather a special manifestation, convenient for communication between them.

The branches on both sides of the tree hung down like arms, and its roots were densely packed. On the trunk was a clear visage; at first glance, it resembled an elderly face with benevolent features. Its fluffy crown looked like hair.

The Soul Race woman, cold as ice, solemnly paid respect, "Soul Race's Lih Shang greets the Tree Elder!"

Lu Ye glanced at her. Despite spending so much time together, he never knew her name until now when he found out she was called Lih Shang.

Without dwelling on it, Lu Ye also bowed.

The Reincarnation Tree looked at Lih Shang with a gentle smile on its aged face, "How is Hun Que?"

Lih Shang was somewhat agitated, "Thank you for remembering, Clan Leader is fairly healthy!"

"Good, that's good." The Reincarnation Tree showed a hint of nostalgia, "When I met him long ago, he was merely a Constellation. In the blink of an eye, two thousand years have passed."

After a brief sigh, the Reincarnation Tree finally turned to Lu Ye, "Young friend, we meet again."

Lu Ye said, "I do not know why the Tree Elder summoned me, is there an urgent matter?"

The Reincarnation Tree wouldn't summon him here for no reason, and the portal created by the mark wasn't mandatory. If he were unwilling, he could choose not to go. But he did have questions he wanted to ask the Reincarnation Tree.

"Indeed, there is something I need your help with," the Reincarnation Tree slowly began, "My young friend should know that I have housed many displaced tribes within my Tree World."

Lu Ye understood this; he remembered that when he first arrived at the Reincarnation Tree, he was tossed into the Fairy Tree World.

These tribes had complex backgrounds and were of various races, most having lost their homes and had nowhere to survive. The Tree World could provide them with a relatively peaceful living environment.

Of course, it would be even more peaceful without the Insect Race causing trouble.

The Insect Race had once found a Void Beast's core from somewhere, used its power to connect with other Tree Worlds, and invaded to capture some rare races. Unfortunately, Lu Ye ended up taking them down entirely, even snatching the core of the Void Beast.

"Has something happened to the Tree World?" Lu Ye instinctively asked.

The Tree World was only suitable for beings of the Divine Sea Realm and below. For someone like him, who was now a Constellation, it was typically not his place to handle such issues.

"It's not the Tree World," the Reincarnation Tree explained. "There is a domain currently suffering from war, and the beings there have no hope of surviving. They wish to migrate to the Tree World, but first, the invading enemies must be repelled. I have heard their plea, so I am attempting to find a way to aid them."

Lu Ye roughly understood: "So the Tree Elder hopes I'll go help them solve their trouble and then bring them back to the Tree World?"

"Exactly!" replied the Reincarnation Tree.

Lu Ye was puzzled: "Surely, Tree Elder, you have more than just me to summon? If the enemy faced by that domain is too strong, one Constellation like me might not be enough. Why not summon someone from the Moon Jade or Sun Blaze levels?"

Though the Reincarnation Tree's mark might not be bestowed for centuries, many have still received it throughout the years. Those who gained its favor undeniably possessed extraordinary talent. There were plenty of individuals at the Moon Jade and Sun Blaze levels, leaving Lu Ye baffled as to why the Reincarnation Tree chose him, a mere Constellation.

The Reincarnation Tree replied, "Everything must adhere to rules, especially for an old being like me. Rules are the foundation of my existence. Without rules, the stellar space would be in chaos long ago. The strongest level at that battleground is Constellation, so I can only summon a Constellation."

Over the recent centuries, the Reincarnation Tree had only given a mark to Lu Ye; hence, he was the only Constellation that met the requirements.

Lu Ye roughly understood that if the battle's strongest level was merely Constellation, then he had no qualms about this.

The Reincarnation Tree continued, "As the stellar space supreme treasure guarding this realm, I must treat all beings with equality." Saying this, it winked at Lu Ye, indicating that this so-called equality had its preferences.

Just like in the Tree World; if the Insect Race wanted to reside, the Reincarnation Tree wouldn't refuse them — this was equality. Yet it could arrange for Lu Ye to be in the Tree World, causing significant losses and trouble for the Insect Race.

Lu Ye recalled the Constellation Palace; initially, he was bewildered by its intentions when he was thrown inside. After much contemplation, he realized the palace wanted him to clear the seaweed clinging to its exterior, yet it provided no guidance, leaving Lu Ye to manage on his own.

Back then, Lu Ye thought the Constellation Palace was acting contradictory, but after listening to the Reincarnation Tree, he suddenly realized that the Constellation Palace, like the Reincarnation Tree, was bound by the same constraint: treating all beings with equality. Seaweed, too, was a living entity; it couldn't provide guidance for removing it. However, if Lu Ye comprehended it himself, that was beyond its concern.

From this perspective, these stellar space supreme treasures, though immensely powerful, were under a unique restraint, unable to act entirely at will.

"Originally, I feared you might struggle alone, but with your Soul Race ally, the chances of success are greater."

The Reincarnation Tree evidently misunderstood the relationship between Lu Ye and Lih Shang.

Lu Ye had no intention of explaining.

"I need some detailed information!" Lu Ye said. Even within the Constellation Realm, he feared no one, but this venture wasn't solo combat; it was a domain engulfed in war, a full-scale conflict. Before taking action, Lu Ye needed to gather as much intelligence as possible.

"Of course," the Reincarnation Tree didn't deny Lu Ye's request. If Lu Ye hadn't asked, it couldn't have said anything, but since he did, it would be forthright and forthcoming.

A moment later, Lu Ye's expression turned peculiar.

He hadn't expected such a coincidence. If the beings in that domain were facing this kind of enemy, there was much he could accomplish.

Yet, it wasn't truly coincidental; in this world, few races maliciously invaded other domains. Besides those infamously notorious in the stellar space, there weren't many others to be found.

When the Reincarnation Tree finished speaking, Lu Ye said, "Tree Elder, regardless of success or failure, if I accomplish this, I have a small request!"

The Reincarnation Tree chuckled, "Whether successful or not, as long as you return alive, I will grant you one wish."

With its pleasant assurance, Lu Ye felt there was no need to speak further, and his request wasn't anything troublesome — merely to inquire about the way back — something that wouldn't cause the Reincarnation Tree much inconvenience.