

## Humanity 2151

### Chapter 2151: I'm So Thrilled

By all logic, Lu Ye shouldn't have to do this; the Talent Tree is both Dao foundation and Dao Bone, but it still isn't truly a part of his own body.

His ability to wield Dao force now is entirely thanks to the Talent Tree — it doesn't quite count as the true meaning of the Dao Realm.

So he thought it best to stay honest and humble.

Essence Qi gently surged, feeding into the Dao Fire, which flared up intensely; if the initially ignited Dao Fire was just a small flame, it now transformed into a large Fireball.

Lu Ye was momentarily stunned.

He felt something unusual about his Dao Fire. He had inquired among Jiu Yan and others from the Star Abyss about the various details when they forged their Dao foundations. Although he didn't know what others' Dao Fires looked like when they first ignited, based on their descriptions, the initial burn shouldn't be this intense. This was nearly the condition when Jiu Yan's Dao Fire burned at the Late Stage.

A fierce, searing sensation spread from within him, and Lu Ye became completely enveloped in heat.

Even though he sensed something was amiss, with the arrow already fitted to the bow, there was no turning back. He had no choice but to continuously pour his inner Essence Qi reserves into the Dao Fire.

The Dao Fire blazed even more ferociously.

The place where he sat emitted a faint glow, as if the whole person was ablaze, effectively incinerating the omnipresent Star Abyss ambience.

Indeed, it was wrong; at this moment, Lu Ye could finally confirm it.

His Dao Fire was far fiercer than others', and the reason likely lay in the Essence Qi he poured into it.

Other people weren't like him; they had achieved their limits in the upper three realms, with blood Qi, Mana, Soul Power — each was extremely pure and refined. Hence, using such Essence Qi as fuel to ignite the Dao Fire was indeed extraordinary.

Gradually, with more Essence Qi fed into the fire, Lu Ye felt like his entire body had transformed into a real furnace, with the terrifying Dao Fire scorching everything inside him.

According to normal procedure, he should now choose a particular bone and burn it with Dao Fire, transforming it into a Dao Bone.

But under the current circumstances, Lu Ye simply couldn't do this, as his Dao Fire was too fierce, impossible to effectively control; it was burning every inch of flesh and bone within him.

Jiu Yan noticed the situation over here, turned with some concern, but dared not leave the vicinity of the Star Abyss Gate.

From afar, she could only see three peculiar symbols alternately flickering at Lu Ye's brow, symbols she had never seen, but soon realized their significance.

"Three Blossoms!"

She knew something about Lu Ye's situation — not in detail, but Lu Ye had mentioned the Three Blossoms to her, allowing her to recognize them at a glance.

The appearance of the Three Blossoms undoubtedly indicated that Lu Ye was utterly mobilizing his Essence Qi, but his current state was significantly different from her own when she forged her Dao foundation.

Jiu Yan didn't know what was happening, but she couldn't intervene at this moment, could only watch things develop.

Lu Ye was struggling, the fierce Dao Fire scorching as if he might be entirely consumed, years of painstaking cultivation suddenly turning into a source of misery, indeed quite ironic.

All he could do was grit his teeth and endure...

As a faint pain streaked through his arm, a quirky voice rang in his ear, "Boy, what are you doing?"

Lu Ye was startled, knowing that at such a critical moment, he couldn't afford distractions, especially with Jiu Yan nearby guarding. He couldn't fathom who would approach him.

But the next moment, he knew who it was.

"Senior Barghest?"

Immersed in this state, amidst the transformation furnace his body had become, the shadow of the Barghest Saber lay, receiving the same burning intensity.

"How did you..." Lu Ye was momentarily dumbfounded, only then realizing that the saber's sheath had been melted by the terror of his body's searing heat.

That sheath was forged years ago when he ventured to the Jade Conch World, inviting Han Dong to craft it, back when both he and Han Dong were only Moon Jade, comparing to the remarkable progress of today's cultivators, and naturally, the sheath was not of good quality.

At this moment, the tip of the Boulder Mountain Saber was pressed against his body, causing a small cut from which blood flowed and marked the blade.

This contact was likely what brought Barghest's projection into his body's furnace.

Barghest was always slumbering; that's the trait of the Combat Race — once they acknowledge a master, they fall into a deep sleep, only awaken when the master dies.

But Barghest awoke now.

Clearly, something stirred it from Lu Ye.

"Though I don't know what you're doing, it seems like something immense..." Barghest chuckled grotesquely, "It feels great, boy, what kind of fire is this, burning me so joyfully!"

Lu Ye couldn't help but laugh bitterly; he was on the verge of life and death here, whilst Barghest was eerily joyous.

"Pour on some more, I feel like I'm about to break through, hahaha, choosing you back then was indeed right, I'm finally going to shatter the shackles and become the number one Combat Race in the world!"

Barghest shouted excitedly, and Lu Ye couldn't help but stir inwardly.

The burning of the Dao Fire seemed to greatly benefit the Barghest Saber, or else it wouldn't have been awakened; if it shattered the shackles, what would that result in?

Since acquiring the Barghest Saber during the Constellation Realm, it had been sealed layer upon layer. But as my own strength increased, the seals gradually opened.

After the Sun Blaze, it reached the level of a top-tier magic treasure.

This should be the state of the Barghest Saber after all seals are lifted, its pinnacle state.

Yet I never expected that the Dao Fire I conjured today could actually assist in its breakthrough.

The Combat Race is indeed a unique race. They are not of flesh and blood and cannot cultivate on their own. All their advancements rely on accompanying their master's growth.

As I enter the Beginner Realm, to what level will the barghest grow? It is likely a level never before reached by the stellar space Combat Race.

Regardless of the barghest's situation, what I need to do now is to endure in this horrifying refining process. If I can persevere, all will be well. If not, everything will be for naught.

Time flowed, the Dao Fire continued to burn fiercely, its intensity unabated. The barghest was still shouting, extremely excited.

At a certain moment, Lu Ye suddenly felt the discomfort slowly diminishing until it completely vanished, replaced by a transparency from inside out.

The Dao Fire burned a while longer before suddenly dissipating into thin air.

"Kid, next time there's such a good thing, remember to call me in advance. Drip three drops of your blood onto the blade, and I shall awaken myself." The barghest's voice echoed in my ears, and then it fell silent.

"Lu Ye," Jiu Yan's voice sounded in the next moment, vaguely worried.

Lu Ye slowly opened his eyes, meeting Jiu Yan's concerned gaze from not far away.

"You..." Jiu Yan stared blankly at Lu Ye, her eyes sparkling, momentarily at a loss for words, because she noticed a significant change in Lu Ye compared to before.

His appearance naturally remained unchanged, but his aura had transformed.

After a thought, Jiu Yan felt that "spotless" was the most fitting description. Lu Ye's aura was as clean as a blank sheet of paper, transparent and flawless.

"Did it succeed?" Jiu Yan asked, but quickly realized how foolish a question it was, because if it hadn't, Lu Ye wouldn't be sitting here calmly.

"Seems like..." Lu Ye raised his hand, clenched his fist, and slightly channeled Dao force, punching the air, "it succeeded."

But it also felt as if something was off...

"That's good." Jiu Yan relaxed, "First consolidate a bit, the Dao foundation has just been established, it still requires much accumulation."

Lu Ye nodded, remained seated in meditation, placing the Boulder Mountain Saber without its sword sheath across his knees, immersing himself in exploring his own state.

This time's Dao foundation construction had some unpredictable elements, mainly because Lu Ye hadn't expected his own extremely pure and concentrated Essence Qi to create such changes in the Dao Fire.

Throughout the process, besides infusing his own foundation into the Dao Fire, he couldn't control anything else.

Let alone use the Dao Fire to refine the selected Dao Bone.

The raging Dao Fire had thoroughly burned him inside and out.

As for the result, this attempt to forge a Dao foundation was a failure since it did not birth a true personal Dao Bone.

But if it was a failure, I shouldn't be unharmed now.

Lu Ye momentarily couldn't comprehend what was happening.

Moreover, he had no way to consult others; the stellar space cultivators had touched these things too briefly, even in cover armor stellar space, it was only several hundred years, no one could answer him if he wanted to ask.

But Lu Ye perceived himself and could affirm one thing, this time he truly stepped into the Dao Realm, unlike before when he could wield Dao force yet was not in the Dao Realm.

This was a genuine breakthrough in realm, from this perspective, it was a success.

However, without a personal Dao Bone being born, Lu Ye felt a bit uneasy. Could it be that in the future, he could only consider his Talent Tree as his Dao Bone?

Can I polish a second Dao Bone?

Lu Ye had pondered this question before because at the Beginner level, the 9th Dao is the extreme; beyond that is Dao Fusion.

But he himself embodies the 9th Dao, with effort, he could wield ten. If he could refine a second Dao Bone, what would it look like?

There was no opportunity to verify before, now having successfully entered the Dao Realm, he could finally test it.

After brief contemplation, Lu Ye selected a bone inside his body, then channeled Dao force and gradually infused it, using the mystique of Dao force to transform the chosen bone into a Dao Bone.

Jiu Yan and others had done this sort of thing more than once, amassing rich experience, by ear and eye, although it was Lu Ye's first endeavor, he knew how to proceed to minimize risks.

Polishing a Dao Bone is meticulous work, if not careful, the polished Dao Bone might shatter. Although such injury is nothing in the Dao Realm, it would inevitably lead to some Dao force loss, and the new bone would need retraining to become more robust, thus reaching the standard for polishing.

In cover armor stellar space, there is a cultivation technique for Dao Bones specifically, which can enhance the toughness of the selected Dao Bone, thereby increasing the success rate of refinement.

## Chapter 2152: Fifteen Daos

The Dao force slowly infiltrated, like water seeping into the soil and disappearing, simultaneously consuming and gradually transforming the chosen Dao Bone, causing some extremely wondrous changes within.

Gradually, a faint golden glow appeared on the Dao Bone, and with more Dao force consumed, the golden glow became increasingly rich.

Just when Lu Ye thought everything was going well and was full of anticipation, a sudden pain erupted within him, accompanied by a clear crackling sound following his blood flow into his ears.

The chosen Dao Bone has shattered!

Under the impact of the uncontrolled Dao force, the entire bone turned into powder.

Lu Ye bore the pain and realized he had underestimated the complexity of the task.

It was indeed the case, during the Dao Bone polishing process for Jiu Yan and the others, which of them did not achieve success through repeated failures?

According to the pattern they calculated, the success rate of polishing the Dao Bone is generally only ten percent, and this is for people like them; those with poorer foundations have undoubtedly even lower success rates.

Some cultivators from Star Abyss might have to polish dozens of times to succeed once by chance, hence Dao Realm cultivation is not simple, and every increment in the Power of the Path requires a huge cost.

This failure caused Lu Ye's Dao force to lose over a hundred, but relative to his abundant reserve of over six thousand Dao force, this loss was still bearable.

An itch suddenly occurred at the site of the pain, and as Lu Ye immersed his mind to observe, he immediately discovered something interesting.

The bone that had turned to powder was actually starting to coagulate again.

It wasn't rebirth of the fractured bone, but coagulation, like time reversing, with the nearly powdered bone recombining, gradually becoming complete.

Logically, this bone, shattered to such an extent, would regenerate; as for the fractured bone, Lu Ye would find a way to expel it from the body, something achievable by cultivators at the Constellation Late Stage, not to mention the current Lu Ye.

Yet, this was evidently not rebirth.

Lu Ye was extremely surprised. Logically, this shouldn't be possible, yet it happened.

Could this be the change brought about by the ferocious Dao Fire refining the self earlier? Lu Ye was unsure, but he was certain that if his bones turned to powder before today, they wouldn't recombine like this.

In just one incense stick's time, the fractured bone restored completely, not only without any scars but also reinforced in sturdiness by the previous tempering of Dao force.

The prior failure was not completely in vain!

Lu Ye quickly realized that this was a positive development; the Dao Bone that failed polishing becomes more resilient, undoubtedly increasing the success rate of the next polish!

He immediately began polishing again.

Unfortunately, despite cautious and careful this time, it still ended in failure at the final moment.

It wasn't until the third polish, which consumed nearly five hundred Dao force altogether, that success was achieved.

Upon close inspection, the Dao Bone polished by Dao force gleamed with golden light, distinctly different from other bones.

With a thought, Lu Ye transferred some Dao force from his Talent Tree leaves to this Dao Bone, causing the golden light to become even brighter.

Normally, Dao force for Dao Realm is stored within the Dao Bones, unlike him, who has Talent Tree leaves for carrying.

Then transferring the Dao force from the Dao Bone back to the Talent Tree, without any losses or consumption in between.

Lu Ye was delighted; now he truly had a Dao Bone of his own, so when driving the force of the ten paths...would there be pressure anymore?

The cultivators at the Beginner level polish the second Dao Bone firstly for storing more Dao force, secondly to have more Dao Bones to share the load when driving Dao force, with the latter being the most crucial; thus, the more Dao Bones, the more Dao force can be driven.

Lu Ye himself could easily control nine paths of force; if aided by this Dao Bone...

Activating the force of ten paths, Lu Ye showed signs of pleasure.

Indeed, there was no pressure; he could clearly feel this Dao Bone seemed to transform into an invisible pillar, supporting his control over the Dao force, as the original load could be completely unfelt.

But after the joy, he felt somewhat puzzled.

Both Yin Luo, Uncle Duan, and people like Jiu Yan have proved that at the Beginner level, nine paths are the limit, and only aided with affiliated treasure can the power of ten paths be activated.

What about in his case?

This is only the first true Dao Bone belonging to himself, already polished successfully; does it mean he could polish a second Dao Bone and even a fifth...

Calculating thus, if he successfully polishes the fifth Dao Bone, wouldn't he possess the power of fourteen paths?

Although the power of fourteen paths is still vastly different from Dao Fusion, it's significantly stronger than usual Beginner levels, with nearly half more Dao force, ordinary Nine paths could be easily slaughtered at will.

This is somewhat inconsistent with his understanding.

Where did the problem occur? Is it an issue with the Talent Tree, or did something go wrong when he forged his Dao foundation?

Lu Ye couldn't quite figure it out, and there was no one to ask for advice.

All he knew now was that his path in the Dao Realm seemed a bit different from others...

There was still plenty of Dao force left, so Lu Ye continued to refine his Dao Bones.

After a few more failures, he successfully refined the second Dao Bone, easily wielding the power of the 11th Dao.

Then came the third Dao Bone, the fourth Dao Bone, the fifth...

The 14 Dao Power that Lu Ye predicted truly came to pass!

While he was initially dumbfounded, Lu Ye felt more exhilarated than anything. In the Dao Realm, the more Dao power one could wield, the stronger they became. With this 14 Dao Power, he could almost be considered invincible under Dao Fusion, and even against the weakest Dao Fusion opponent, he might have a chance to survive.

Unfortunately, he was currently in stellar space; if he were at Star Abyss, Lu Ye would like to find some Ninth Dao Star Abyss cultivators to spar with.

Upon examining his own Dao force, after refining five Dao Bones, his original reserve of over six thousand had now dwindled to a bit over two thousand.

Refining Dao Bones has a lower success rate the further one goes. When Jiu Yan and others advanced from the 8th Dao to the 9th Dao, they experienced countless failures. If it weren't for Yin Luo providing so many intact Dao Bones each month, they would never have managed to advance and break through repeatedly over those years.

Lu Ye's situation wasn't as severe, but it generally followed the same trend. However, every chosen Dao Bone became tougher and improved the success rate after each fracture, so his success rate was relatively high. Even so, refining the five Dao Bones consumed three to four thousand Dao forces.

It's important to know that accumulating this much Dao force isn't an easy feat. Lu Ye trained in the Qing Palace for so many years, only to have this much foundation, and now he's spent more than half of it. However, compared to the increase in strength, this expenditure is insignificant, as Dao force can always be accumulated again.

With five Dao Bones ready, Lu Ye didn't stop but chose to refine the sixth Dao Bone...

He wasn't the only one who had tried this; Jiu Yan and others had as well, but without exception, they all failed. Limited by the extreme constraint of the nine Dao at the beginner level, refining the sixth Dao Bone successfully was deemed impossible.

The reason Lu Ye wanted to try was because he had already broken through the constraint of the nine Dao extremities. He wanted to know if he could succeed.

His first attempt ended in expected failure, costing over a hundred Dao forces.

The second attempt also failed.

The third, fourth...

It wasn't until the eighth attempt, after nearly consuming a thousand Dao forces, that he surprisingly succeeded in refining the sixth Dao Bone!

Even though he felt he might succeed before refining, he was still stunned for a long time when the result emerged before regaining his composure.

He harnessed the 15 Dao Power with a calm expression, yet his eyes brimmed with excitement.

The success of the sixth Dao Bone brought more than just an increase in Dao Power; it revealed an infinitely vast future, signifying that he truly wasn't bound by the constraint of the nine Dao extreme and could continue to refine more Dao Bones.

Upon brief consideration, his body has 206 bones, which implies that if all were successfully refined, he could harness over 200 Dao Power?

As far as he knew, even someone like Yin Luo at the Peak Dao Fusion only wielded a hundred Dao Power, yet Dao Power at the Dao Fusion level, for several reasons, is much more potent than the power at the beginner level, capable of exerting stronger offensive and defensive abilities.

But even so, the Peak Dao Fusion is limited to a hundred Dao Power.

Beyond a hundred, that's at the level of Dao Harmony.

In his excitement, a trace of bitterness crept into his heart. Refining the sixth Dao Bone alone cost nearly a thousand Dao forces, and as he progressed, the Dao force required would only increase. If he aimed to refine all the bones into Dao Bones, how astronomical would that expenditure of Dao force be?

Upon further reflection, Lu Ye vaguely felt that this anomaly wasn't related to the Talent Tree. If there was a root cause, it should stem from using the power of the Three Blossoms to ignite the Dao Fire and refine himself. Although lacking direct evidence, Lu Ye instinctively felt this was the case.

The cultivation of the Three Blossoms itself is an extremely challenging process. To ignite the Dao Fire with such flawless purity and extreme foundation, turning oneself into a body transformation furnace should yield some extraordinary results.

It's a pity, though. If it's because of the Three Blossoms, then his path cannot be replicated.

He always felt the cultivation of the Three Blossoms wasn't that simple. If it simply allowed a cultivator to reach the extremity in a realm, the conditions would be too stringent. But if such hardships created this outcome, then all previous efforts and sacrifices would have been worthwhile.

With less than two thousand Dao forces left, Lu Ye thought about it and abandoned the idea of continuing to refine Dao Bones.

With the current 15 Dao Power, he can exert 16 Dao Power under overload, and no one under Dao Fusion can rival him. Adding one more wouldn't make much difference.

Moreover, the Talent Tree requires a reserve of Dao force. Initially, he could exert the power of the Dao Realm because the Dao force reserve of the Talent Tree was ample. If the reserve exceeds two hundred, he can wield six Dao powers; surpassing four hundred, it's seven; six hundred correlates to eight, and nine Dao require eight hundred. If the reserve drops below eight hundred, he can't wield nine Dao strength.

Factoring in the Talent Tree Avatar, his Dao force reserve needs to be maintained at around two thousand so both he and his avatar can perform at their optimal level. Hence, the remaining Dao force must be preserved.

Chapter 2153: Dao Soldier

With a single bout of cultivation, his strength leapt from the 9th Dao to the 15th Dao; such growth was downright terrifying.

Suppressing the excitement in his heart, Lu Ye turned his gaze to the Boulder Mountain Saber resting on his knees.

This time entering the Beginner Realm wasn't just a huge advancement for him alone; the barghest had benefited as well. It had even been startled awake, and judging from the result, this Combat Race fellow seemed to have broken through too.

He had been busy with his own matters before, and only now did Lu Ye have time to investigate.

Looking closely, the outward appearance of the Boulder Mountain Saber hadn't changed much. It was still a pitch-black long saber, but when his Mental Consciousness probed inside, Lu Ye keenly sensed that the inner structure of the entire blade had undergone earth-shaking changes.

It no longer felt like a saber, but more like a piece of Dao Bone.

Only, it was that kind of Dao Bone without any Dao force reserves.

"Dao soldier?" Lu Ye couldn't help raising his brows.

Dao soldier is a general term—above the magic treasure level, it is the implement Dao Realm cultivators use for slaughter or defense. Strictly speaking, affiliated treasures are already at the Dao soldier level.

He'd gotten this information while chatting idly with Uncle Duan in Qing Palace.

Dao soldiers can't be refined; they have to be raised, and they're implements that only cultivators at the Dao Fusion level are qualified to nurture.

That ragged cloth doll in Yin Luo's hand looked utterly inconspicuous, yet in truth, that was her Dao soldier. That cloth doll was akin to a doppelganger and could exert eighty percent of Yin Luo's strength.

The most natural Dao soldiers are the affiliated treasures of various supreme treasures. So an affiliated treasure isn't merely something that increases one's Power of the Path by a single Dao; in the Star

Abyss, any affiliated treasure is an item that can make Dao Fusion experts covet it. They can use their own Dao force to nourish an affiliated treasure, continuously enhancing its power.

Uncle Duan knew that Lu Ye and the others had affiliated treasures. If not for the connection through Yin Luo, he'd likely have already had thoughts of killing them for their treasures, because even to a powerhouse like Uncle Duan, affiliated treasures are highly alluring.

The barghest actually became a Dao soldier!

This result was both expected and unexpected.

Though the Combat Race has no flesh and blood, it's actually still a race—just far too rare. Ordinary people don't even mention seeing one; they haven't so much as heard of it.

The growth of this race relies entirely on the advancement of its master.

Lu Ye used the power of the Three Blossoms to ignite his Dao Fire, turning his body into a furnace to refine himself. The barghest was refined along with him; thus, Lu Ye stepped into Dao Realm, and the barghest advanced into a Dao soldier.

Judging by the result, both man and saber had broken through their original shackles. For the barghest, the Dao soldier level was essentially equivalent to Dao Realm.

Verifying whether the barghest had become a Dao soldier was simple...

Lu Ye slightly urged a strand of Dao force and channeled it into the Boulder Mountain Saber. In the past, when he did this, the Dao force would only coil around the blade, used to strike the enemy. But now, the moment the Dao force touched the saber, it vanished without a trace, like a stone tossed into the sea.

It really had become a Dao soldier!

The ability to devour Dao force is the most obvious characteristic of a Dao soldier, and it is also the method of nurturing one. Continuously allowing the Dao soldier to swallow his own Dao force, the Dao soldier will gradually grow stronger. Through this method of nourishment, the link between master and Dao soldier will keep strengthening, ultimately achieving unity between man and weapon.

So even if you killed some Dao Fusion cultivators in the Star Abyss who possessed Dao soldiers and seized their Dao soldiers, you still wouldn't be able to refine them. In fact, if you weren't careful, you might even get hurt by the Dao soldier.

The Boulder Mountain Saber turning into a Dao soldier was, in itself, a good thing, yet Lu Ye felt no joy at all—instead, he was rather distressed.

If things went on like this, how was he supposed to fight in the future? The moment he urged his Dao force, it would be swallowed by the Boulder Mountain Saber; what would he use to chop people?

He couldn't be the only one facing this problem. How did those at the Dao Fusion level wield their Dao soldiers?

He tried a few more times and found that this was indeed the case. As long as he channeled Dao force into the Boulder Mountain Saber, it was immediately devoured cleanly. Even after swallowing dozens of Dao force, the saber showed no change at all.

With no other choice, Lu Ye used the edge of the blade to cut his fingertip and dripped three drops of fresh blood onto the saber's body.

The barghest's voice immediately rang out: "What's going on? Is there another good thing?" It had just awakened earlier and received huge benefits, and now it had acquired a taste for it.

Lu Ye let out a sigh and explained the current situation.

After listening, the barghest was a bit conflicted too. "Then what do we do? Most of the time, I'm in slumber. Devouring that so-called Dao force is an instinct—I can't control it."

Lu Ye said, "Do you really have to stay asleep all the time, elder?"

"Heh-heh." The barghest chuckled. "Getting me to wake up is easy. You die, and I'll stay awake forever. That's the nature of us in the Combat Race."

Lu Ye said faintly, "If we don't solve this problem, I can only switch to another saber." If he took a blade that would constantly devour his Dao force into battle, that would be no different from courting death. Much as he loathed to, before he found a solution, Lu Ye could only change weapons.

The barghest was instantly at a loss for words. It had finally picked a good master; it didn't want to be replaced. After thinking it over, it said, "When you fight, you don't just rely on Dao force, do you?"

Lu Ye said, "Of course. Dao force gets fused into Mana..."

As he spoke, Lu Ye's eyes lit up, and he immediately did as he'd said. This time, the Boulder Mountain Saber did not devour the Dao force fused into his Mana.

He understood at once and finally knew why those Dao Fusion cultivators in the Star Abyss weren't worried about their own Dao force being swallowed by their Dao soldiers in combat.

Mana was the key.

"Look how slow you are—actually needed your grandpa here to point it out. I'm going back to sleep. From now on, don't be calling me for every little thing. Just this one awakening, I already feel a lot more brittle."

After chattering on for a while, the barghest fell silent again.

Lu Ye tried several more times and finally confirmed that if he purely urged Dao force, it would indeed be swallowed by the Boulder Mountain Saber. But if he fused Dao force into his Mana, then the problem disappeared.

With the issue resolved, his heart was completely at ease.

If it weren't absolutely necessary, he wouldn't want to change sabers either.

The gains from this bout of cultivation were unimaginably great; not only had his own strength risen sharply, he had also obtained a Dao soldier.

However, Lu Ye had no intention of nurturing the Dao soldier for the time being, because as far as he knew, the consumption required to nurture a Dao soldier was far greater than the improvement from a cultivator's own cultivation. This was also why only those at the Dao Fusion level could nurture Dao soldiers: first, the cost was too great, and those at the Beginner level simply couldn't bear it.

If he wasn't going to raise a Dao soldier, then his current goal should be to polish his own Dao Bones. As long as he could temper more Dao Bones, Lu Ye would be able to harness more Dao force. Perhaps one day, he could surpass Dao Fusion while still at the Beginner level.

In the end, it still came down to obtaining more Dao force!

The stellar space was no longer viable. Even if he blocked the Star Abyss Gate here and killed every enemy that came through, the Dao force he could gain was limited, because the enemies currently invading the stellar space from the Star Abyss weren't strong.

Since that was the case, he had only one destination!

After bidding farewell to Jiu Yan, Lu Ye returned to Three Worlds Island and had Old Tang find an Artifact Refiner to forge a sword sheath suitable for the Boulder Mountain Saber.

With his current status, having someone make a sword sheath was naturally a trivial matter.

While he waited, Lu Ye ventured alone beneath the All Phenomena Ocean and found Hua Ci, who was in seclusion cultivating, within the Merfolk Territory.

Hua Ci looked at him in puzzlement. "Why did you come over here?"

She thought something must have happened on the All Phenomena Ocean.

Lu Ye strode forward, and amid her startled cry, wrapped an arm around her waist and lifted her up, snorting coldly, "I'm here for revenge!"

Hua Ci was stunned for a moment, then reached out with both hands to loop around his neck, a gentle smile blooming on her lips. "You sure you're up to it?"

Lu Ye flew into a rage. "If this time you don't call me daddy, I'll take your surname!"

Half a month later.

In front of the bed, Hua Ci helped Lu Ye dress, tidied his hair, then patted his chest and brushed away a small crease. "All right, go."

Though Lu Ye hadn't said anything during this half month, Hua Ci had already faintly sensed something.

She didn't know where Lu Ye was heading, only that it would be a long journey. After today, they might not be able to see each other again for a very long time.

Lu Ye nodded, silently walking out with long, vigorous strides.

Some things didn't need to be said; words would only add to the sorrow of parting. Besides, this wasn't the first time they'd parted like this.

Suddenly, Hua Ci's soft, sticky voice came from behind him. "Daddy, come back early!"

Lu Ye's heart gave a jolt. His steps halted; he forced down the urge to turn back and wage another battle, merely lifting a hand to wave before quickly leaving.

From far away, he could faintly hear Hua Ci's triumphant, girlish laughter.

Ten days later, in the Destroyed Illusion Star Cluster, Lu Ye flew straight toward that massive battle city.

He didn't enter the city, but headed directly toward where the Star Abyss Gate was located, because at this time, the person he was looking for definitely wouldn't be in the city.

Very soon, he broke into the area shrouded in Star Abyss ambience.

Judging by the scope and density, the degree of expansion of the Star Abyss Gate here in the Destroyed Illusion Star Cluster wasn't much different from that of the gate under the All Phenomena Ocean. That wasn't surprising; the interval between the opening of these two Star Abyss Gates had only been a few months.

Along the way, he could occasionally sense clashes between cultivators of the native stellar space and invading Star Abyss cultivators.

Lu Ye paid them no mind.

Only when he approached the Star Abyss Gate did he see a familiar cover armor standing there like a towering mountain, just as Jiu Yan guarded the All Phenomena Ocean, steadfastly holding this line for over ten years.

It was Chen Wulei's cover armor.

Not far to the side, there was another familiar figure, sitting cross-legged and cultivating—it was Chang Yu.

These two Dao Realm cultivators from the Cover Armor stellar space bore the last wishes of billions of Cover Armor stellar space cultivators, guarding this place and cutting down powerful enemies for this stellar space.

As for Du Qingsha, she was currently over in the Mystic Frost Star System, overseeing and guarding together with the people of Animitta Palace.

Lu Ye landed directly not far from Chang Yu.

Chang Yu opened his eyes, slightly surprised, and rose to his feet. "Brother Lu, what brings you here?"

"There are some things I want to ask Senior Brother Chen about," Lu Ye said.

Chang Yu understood. "I'll go relieve Senior Brother then!"

With that, he flashed toward the Star Abyss Gate and, in short order, swapped places with Chen Wulei.

Upon meeting Lu Ye, Chen Wulei asked, "Did something happen at the All Phenomena Ocean? Do you need reinforcements?" He clearly thought Lu Ye had come seeking aid.

Lu Ye shook his head. "It's not about the All Phenomena Ocean. I just want to ask you some things."

Chen Wulei understood. "What is it?"

Lu Ye said, "I remember when I followed Sister Qingsha, she mentioned that your stellar space once had an 8th Dao powerhouse who charged into the Star Abyss, but then vanished without a trace. Is that true?"

Chapter 2154: Entering the Star Abyss

Speaking of this, Chen Wulei couldn't help but darken his expression: "It's true, that was the most talented cultivator in our stellar space and was once the hope of the entire stellar space. It's just that we knew too little about the Star Abyss at that time. If we had known earlier that there were so many powerful beings in the Star Abyss... sigh!"

When Chen Wulei had just barely advanced to the 6th Dao, that person was already at the 8th Dao.

He fought his way through the Star Abyss Gate, intending to use his own strength to gather more intelligence from the other side, even if he couldn't directly reach the Yellow Dragon. But who knew he would never return.

In hindsight, an 8th Dao really doesn't count for much in the Star Abyss.

When the Star Abyss Gate opens, it's like a point of light in the dark, attracting countless Star Abyss living creatures from nearby areas. Don't even mention the 8th Dao or 9th Dao, but even at the Dao Fusion level, there are quite a few.

Rushing through at the 8th Dao is basically seeking death!

"Why did you suddenly bring this up?" Chen Wulei looked at Lu Ye, puzzled.

Lu Ye didn't answer, and asked another question: "When that 8th Dao went over, what was the highest Dao level of the Star Abyss living creatures that came through from the Star Abyss?"

"6th Dao!" Chen Wulei replied without hesitation, "I remember clearly, back then I had just advanced to the 6th Dao not long ago, and the strongest enemy I encountered was a 6th Dao, so we all thought the 8th Dao had enough strength to protect himself!"

Lu Ye's eyes flickered: "So, the limitation of the Star Abyss Gate isn't aimed at stellar space cultivators?"

If it targeted stellar space cultivators, then at that time, it would've been impossible for an 8th Dao to pass through the Star Abyss Gate, since the strongest from the Star Abyss were only 6th Dao.

"Brother Lu, you are..." Chen Wulei was somewhat baffled by Lu Ye's implication.

"I want to enter the Star Abyss!" Lu Ye spoke.

To acquire more Dao power more efficiently, he could only go to the Star Abyss.

That's why he purposely came to the Destroyed Illusion Star Cluster. Currently, among all the stellar space fissures, only here was relatively usable for him because Yin Luo was guarding on the other side.

If he went elsewhere, he'd probably get ambushed the moment he showed his face.

But before that, there's still one more issue. With his current 14th Dao capability, can he pass through the Star Abyss Gate?

Judging from the intelligence currently available, the passage through the Star Abyss Gate is limited, only expanding as it continues to grow, allowing stronger Dao Realm cultivators to pass. Presently, those coming from the Star Abyss only have the strength of the 3rd or 4th Dao, only a fraction of Lu Ye's power.

So he wasn't sure whether he could really go through.

Last time he returned with the guidance of the Reincarnation Tree's power, which couldn't be used as a benchmark.

"You want to enter the Star Abyss?" Chen Wulei was shocked, then quickly understood, "If you enter from here, there shouldn't be too much danger indeed."

Although not knowing exactly what Lu Ye did before, the Yin Luo from the Qing Palace seemed to appreciate Lu Ye, even cried when Lu Ye left before.

"When will you come back, so I can arrange for support?" Chen Wulei asked again.

Lu Ye shook his head: "Going to the Star Abyss, I probably won't return shortly." Heaven knows how much Dao power it would take to refine his Dao Bone, and how much time it would consume.

He also had another idea - to go to the Star Abyss to search for a way to save the stellar space.

Maybe there's a way, maybe there's not, but he has to explore to find out.

The lessons from the Cover Armor stellar space made Lu Ye anxious. Once the Star Abyss fully invades, the entire stellar space will be torn into countless pieces, scattered across different locations within the Star Abyss. When that time comes, Lu Ye might never see those he knows again.

This must be stopped before then.

"Then Brother Lu, be careful!"

Lu Ye nodded, asking Chen Wulei just to confirm his speculation, whether he could enter the Star Abyss from this Star Abyss Gate. Testing it himself would reveal the truth.

Not delaying, Lu Ye leaped in front of the Star Abyss Gate and caught a Star Abyss cultivator that had just charged through from the other side.

This guy only had the power of the 3rd Dao, like a chick in Lu Ye's hands, completely terrified, not expecting a strong person to ambush here.

"Look at me!" Lu Ye's voice was low, "Do you recognize who I am?"

The Star Abyss cultivator glanced at Lu Ye and shook his head: "I don't know."

Lu Ye furrowed his brows: "Is the other side still guarded by the Qing Palace?"

The Star Abyss cultivator looked shocked: "How do you know about the Qing Palace?"

Before he could ask more, Lu Ye casually crushed him to death.

In just a few words, Lu Ye confirmed one thing: the other side was still guarded by the Qing Palace, Yin Luo and Uncle Duan should still be there. As for not recognizing him, that wasn't surprising. Perhaps they were drawn in from nearby in recent years, or simply had never seen Lu Ye before.

"Brother Chen, Brother Chang, farewell, I'll rely on you here." Lu Ye clasped his fists in salute.

Chen Wulei and Chang Yu returned the salute together.

Lu Ye turned around without hesitation and plunged into the Star Abyss Gate.

Whether he could traverse depended on this moment. If it really didn't work, he could only stay in the home stellar space and slowly build up his strength, though that would be much less efficient.

His figure broke into the red swirl, but the anticipated difficulties never appeared. Lu Ye only felt light all over, suddenly landing in a nameless land.

He couldn't help but be stunned for a moment.

Looking around, everywhere was crimson, his feet felt like they were stepping on something solid, and the position he was at seemed like a passage!

He never expected that after stepping into the Star Abyss Gate, he would arrive at such a place.

The last time he entered the Star Abyss, the Spectral Sedan Chair took his group in, and when they returned from the Star Abyss, it was the Tree Elder who received them, never had such an experience before.

Where is this place?

Lu Ye turned his head to look back, only to see a red swirl slowly spinning behind him, it was the Star Abyss Gate, he must have entered from there.

At this moment, the Star Abyss Gate distinctly emanated the aura of the stellar space.

Heavy footsteps came from the front, and Lu Ye fixed his eyes to see a Star Abyss cultivator stumbling toward him, as if he was climbing a high mountain. Seeing the Star Abyss Gate, his face was full of excitement.

But suddenly, seeing Lu Ye blocking the Star Abyss Gate, his expression couldn't help but freeze.

"Stellar space trash!" This Star Abyss cultivator showed a look of joy; although he couldn't figure out why Lu Ye was here, the pure aura on Lu Ye was too obvious, a breath not tarnished by the Star Abyss.

He urged his Dao force vigorously and charged toward Lu Ye.

The passage wasn't too spacious, it could accommodate a few people side by side at most, making this a true confrontation where the brave would win.

Lu Ye drew his blade, casually slashing forward, and didn't even bother to exert much Dao force, only facing the enemy using the 5th Dao.

The rushing figure split into two, falling in the passage, with fresh blood flowing from two halves of the corpse.

Lu Ye casually picked up a piece of Dao Bone, holding his blade, he walked step by step forward.

If he wasn't mistaken, all Star Abyss living creatures invading the stellar space entered through this strange passage, so he just had to kill all the way through to enter the Star Abyss in reverse.

As expected, not far ahead, he saw another Star Abyss cultivator moving with difficulty.

Lu Ye had no idea what kind of resistance they encountered because he felt nothing on his side, moving easily.

Faced head-on, passing by, Lu Ye had already killed and claimed a bone.

All the way forward, all the way slashing.

In a short time, the entire passage was flowing with blood, countless Star Abyss cultivators had died under his blade, and given his current strength, these opponents had at most 3rd Dao power, some hadn't even stepped into the Dao Realm, they couldn't resist at all.

Just as Lu Ye was preparing to rush into the Star Abyss, a small bulge suddenly rose beside the passage.

The bulge quickly grew larger, something seemed to be breaking out.

Lu Ye concentrated his gaze, a mass of Blood Water exploded, revealing a figure several meters tall.

It was a gigantic mosquito, covered in grotesque patterns, its long proboscis like a sharp sword, flapping its wings as it charged at Lu Ye.

Instinctively feeling this sudden giant was not easy to deal with, Lu Ye raised his blade to block, urging the power of the 9th Dao.

With a boom, Lu Ye slid a long way down the passage before he stabilized himself, his heart tightened.

Luckily he was cautious enough, otherwise, he would have suffered greatly.

This sudden giant actually had the strength of the 9th Dao!

What was this thing? He had never seen it before, and since it appeared in this strange passage, why hadn't it entered the stellar space?

The Cover Armor stellar space had fought against the Star Abyss for hundreds of years, yet such a monster had never appeared.

In the previous clash, neither Lu Ye nor the giant had come out well; it seemed dizzy and stumbled.

Before it could recover, Lu Ye already wielded his blade to kill close, this strike without reservation, harnessing the power of the 14th Dao, slashing down.

The giant was instantly sliced apart, falling to the ground.

When Lu Ye was about to search for Dao Bone, he was shocked to find the giant transformed into a pool of Blood Water, quickly disappearing without leaving anything behind, not even a Dao Bone.

He encountered such a strange Star Abyss living creature for the first time.

Suddenly, abnormal noises came from all around; Lu Ye focused his gaze, feeling a chill as he saw the passage bulging one by one, like the precursor when the giant appeared.

Unlike the previous single occurrence, there were now a dozen!

If killing them yielded Dao bones, Lu Ye might have been interested in a massacre, but these things left nothing behind upon death, and the passage wasn't spacious; being besieged would inevitably consume much Dao force.

Lu Ye immediately hurried forward.

A buzzing sound erupted behind him; more than a dozen giants had emerged, in relentless pursuit.

More alarmingly, small bulges kept appearing ahead where Lu Ye fled, clearly more giants were forming.

This passage... seemed alive! A terrifying thought flashed in Lu Ye's mind.

He slaughtered Star Abyss living creatures in the passage, triggering some unexpected changes, what puzzled him more was that these giants were different from the Star Abyss living creatures, showing no signs of restraint.

Fleeing desperately, even when encountering struggling Star Abyss living creatures ahead, Lu Ye had no intention to strike them down anymore.

His only thought now was to hurry and escape into the Star Abyss.

#### Chapter 2155: Stellar Space Devourer

This strange passage is quite long. Lu Ye charged through it relentlessly, and only after several dozen breaths did he see the Star Abyss Gate ahead.

The number of pursuers behind him had grown to dozens. Those giants showed no distinction between friend or foe, crushing many struggling Star Abyss creatures to dust as they traversed the passage.

Dashing to the Star Abyss Gate, Lu Ye leapt forward and burst out.

In an instant, a tight sensation enveloped him, freezing him in place and making him dare not move recklessly, for at that moment, countless gazes converged on him, among which were some that felt like needles on his back.

He had anticipated this situation because he had known what was happening on the Star Abyss side for more than ten years now.

Immediately, he raised his arm and shouted, "Under Lord Yin Luo's command, I have explored stellar space intelligence and returned to report my findings. You all must retreat quickly!"

The restless surroundings suddenly calmed. Numerous eyes filled with suspicion watched him, and upon seeing his face clearly, several Peak Dao Fusion experts who had remained here finally raised their hands and waved him off.

Lu Ye scanned his eyes over them and indeed saw one familiar face after another—those who had been stationed here for the Ten Great Dao Fusion skills back then.

In this place, Yin Luo's name is still useful...

He let out a slight sigh of relief and dared not linger, getting up and rushing toward the direction of the Qing Palace.

Midway through, he turned to look back, wanting to see if the giants that had been chasing him would come charging out, yet, to his surprise, there was no movement at the Star Abyss Gate; those dozens of giants showed no signs of chasing out.

Momentarily puzzled, could it be that those giants can only be active within the passage? Otherwise, why didn't they come out?

Moreover, they were nowhere to be seen in stellar space either.

Suddenly, a very familiar aura rushed towards him from ahead; Lu Ye turned his head and saw a petite figure darting towards him like an arrow from a bow, hitting his chest directly, holding onto him like an octopus, burying its head and sniffing greedily.

Uncle Duan's figure appeared right behind, merely watching from afar.

After a long while, Yin Luo lifted her head, and Lu Ye felt as though his clothes were soaked with her drool.

"Lu Ye, you're back to see me, huh? Slurp..."

Lu Ye twitched his eye, prying her away from himself. "Of course, this was part of our agreement!"

Yin Luo smiled with the corners of her eyes curved, "You're really nice!"

Lu Ye held her hand, "Let's go back to the Qing Palace first." He wanted to inquire about what happened earlier with Uncle Duan, as he might know something about the situation.

A moment later, inside the Qing Palace, Yin Luo licked her lips, wearing an expression of lingering taste; in this brief period, she had devoured three Treasure Blood Avatars from Lu Ye, yet she seemed unsatisfied and kept glancing towards Lu Ye, clearly desiring more.

Lu Ye pretended not to see and continued talking with Uncle Duan.

"Many Star Abyss cultivators spend their entire lives without necessarily encountering the Star Abyss Gate. This is my first time encountering it, and I've never entered before, so I'm unclear about what it's like after entering. But based on your description, it seems to be Stellar Space Devourers."

"Stellar Space Devourers?" Lu Ye frowned.

"Even within the Star Abyss, they are a peculiar existence. They are somewhat like star beasts, yet not star beasts, feeding on stellar space. They possess a unique ability to locate weak spots within stellar space and then break them open, devouring stellar space's essence, during which a Star Abyss Gate will be born."

Lu Ye listened, bewildered, "I still don't quite understand. Uncle Duan means the birth of a Star Abyss Gate is related to these Stellar Space Devourers?"

Uncle Duan said, "Not all Star Abyss Gates are like this, but some are." He paused, then said, "Have you ever been bitten by a mosquito?"

"Of course."

"There you have it. To all stellar spaces, Stellar Space Devourers are like blood-sucking mosquitoes; bitten places will have wounds, and Star Abyss living creatures can follow those wounds and invade stellar space."

Lu Ye tried imagining it: a huge devourer outside of stellar space, its long proboscis piercing into stellar space, instantly making his hair stand on end, "In other words, is there a Star Abyss Devourer biting my stellar space right now?"

"Yes, the passage you walked through is the trace left by its proboscis, so when you killed those Star Abyss living creatures in there, it alerted the devourer; the nine giant figures you saw were merely its mental projections."

That explains why there were no Dao Bone remnants after killing them...

"But if that's the case, why can't I see it?" Lu Ye was puzzled.

Outside the Star Abyss Gate, Lu Ye only saw numerous Star Abyss living creatures but no sign of any devourer.

Uncle Duan looked at him meaningfully, "In the Star Abyss, there are many things you can't see, but your inability to see them doesn't mean they don't exist."

"How can I see them?" Lu Ye asked in a deep voice.

If the birth of a Star Abyss Gate is related to such supposed Star Abyss Devourers, then the solution is simple: just kill it! But how does one kill something they can't see? First, one must be able to see it.

Uncle Duan said, "Cultivate diligently; once your strength is sufficient, you'll naturally be able to see them."

"May I ask, Uncle Duan, to what extent must one be to see them?"

"Dao Fusion? Dao Harmony? Who knows, anyway, I can't see them as of now."

Yin Luo suddenly poked her small head out from Lu Ye's waist: "Are you talking about that big mosquito?"

Lu Ye looked down at her, surprised: "Yin Luo, can you see it?"

Yin Luo nodded, then shook her head: "I can't see it now, but I saw it before."

"Can you help me kill it?" Lu Ye looked hopeful: "You help me kill it, and I'll give you ten doppelgangers!"

Uncle Duan looked at Lu Ye disdainfully from the side, as if looking at a sneaky villain.

"Ten doppelgangers!" Yin Luo's eyes were round and sparkling, but soon her face fell, shaking her head: "No, I can't beat it; it's at Dao Harmony!"

Dao Harmony!

Lu Ye was shocked. Yin Luo was at Peak Dao Fusion, just a step away from Dao Harmony, but indeed she couldn't be a match for Dao Harmony. Just like Enter the Path cannot be a match for Dao Fusion, the difference in Dao force they can wield is too great.

The Stellar Space Devourer was actually at the Dao Harmony level, which makes matters difficult.

But Yin Luo quickly regained her spirit: "Don't worry, Lu Ye, I'll strive hard in cultivation, and soon advance to Dao Harmony; then I'll go and kill it!" Clearly, the offer of ten doppelgangers was very tempting to her.

"Great, then I'll wait for that day," Lu Ye nodded continuously.

Then he remembered a question: "Uncle Duan, why has the Stellar Space Devourer's thought projection with 9th Dao strength never invaded the stellar space?"

Uncle Duan snorted: "Are you stupid? It wants to devour the foundation of the stellar space, so of course, it won't destroy it actively. For mosquitoes, the value in blood-sucking comes from living beings; have you seen mosquitoes sucking dead blood?"

This saying... seems to make sense.

But after hearing Uncle Duan's words, Lu Ye finally understood why the cultivation of stellar space cultivators has become increasingly difficult since the appearance of the Star Abyss Gate. Undoubtedly, it's due to the massive loss of the stellar space's foundation.

"Star Abyss Devourers are known as the claws of the Will of the Star Abyss, but their main role is to open the Star Abyss Gate. Conquering the stellar space is the job of us Star Abyss living creatures," Uncle Duan added.

Lu Ye pondered.

Looking at it now, his decision to enter the Star Abyss was correct, because only here can he expedite his strength enhancement. Staying in the stellar space is temporarily safe but not a long-term plan.

And to enhance strength, he must slay enemies and seize bones.

Lu Ye looked down at Yin Luo, patting her small head: "Yin Luo, do you remember our previous agreement?"

Yin Luo blinked her eyes: "What agreement?"

It's been over a decade; she's almost forgotten what Lu Ye's Treasure Blood Avatar tastes like, let alone any agreement.

"The promise of a hundred Dao Bones every month!" Lu Ye reminded her. Given his current strength, acquiring Dao Bones isn't difficult, but it's naturally better to have additional gains every month.

Anyway, staying here at Qing Palace, he must occasionally provide Treasure Blood Avatars to Yin Luo.

When he came over earlier, he intentionally noted that over the past decade, the number of Star Abyss living creatures gathered here seemed even larger. So many Star Abyss living creatures are enough to satisfy his cultivation needs.

"About that..." Yin Luo looked troubled.

"What's the matter?" Lu Ye was puzzled.

Uncle Duan remarked leisurely from the side: "If you plan to continue obtaining Dao Bones from the young lady, it's best to give up that thought. Times have changed."

Lu Ye frowned: "What do you mean?"

Uncle Duan explained: "Although the Star Abyss is filled with chaos and slaughter, there's one exception. When the Star Abyss Gate opens, all the living creatures gathered around the gate are under an invisible constraint, unable to kill each other, even the young lady cannot break this restraint."

"Is there really such a thing?" Lu Ye was astounded.

Thinking carefully, indeed he hadn't seen any fighting just now. In the past, with so many Star Abyss living creatures gathered, such tranquility would have been impossible.

He hadn't paid much attention before, but now he understood the reason after hearing Uncle Duan's words.

Moreover, Uncle Duan wouldn't deceive him on matters like this.

"What if a Dao Fusion wants to seize the Star Abyss Gate?" Lu Ye asked.

Uncle Duan shook his head: "When the Star Abyss Gate opened, the young lady already integrated her own mark into it. In other words, this Star Abyss Gate belongs to her; no one will come to seize it anymore. All the contention happens before the gate opens; it's the rule!"

Lu Ye was at a loss for words. In the most chaotic and unruly place, there actually exists such a rule...

If that's the case, his original plan is ruined.

He originally intended to utilize Qing Palace's protection, with a plethora of Star Abyss living creatures available for slaughter here, his strength could grow at an exceedingly terrifying speed.

But now, with no one to kill, how can he enhance his strength? Only through bitter cultivation? That speed is too slow.

Chapter 2156: Departure

Jiu Yan and others had previously told Lu Ye that the more Dao Bones one had, the more efficient cultivation would be in the Star Abyss. However, in the past, he didn't have any Dao Bones, so he couldn't try it out.

Now, upon returning with six Dao Bones polished, he realized through some attempts that it was indeed the case.

However, it was still far less efficient than cultivating with the help of the Talent Tree.

The method of arduous cultivation wasn't feasible.

After staying in the Qing Palace for a few days, Lu Ye made up his mind.

With tears in her eyes, Yin Luo gazed at him, "You're leaving? Where are you going? When will you come back?"

Lu Ye said, "I don't know either, but I will definitely come back to see you."

"Can't you not go?" Yin Luo clutched at his clothes, not letting go, really about to cry.

Finally, Lu Ye had returned, and she thought she could be carefree ever after. Who knew that after just a few days, Lu Ye would be leaving again.

Yin Luo was truly reluctant.

Lu Ye had to play his trump card: "I might as well search for Qing Jun's traces along the way. If I have any news, I will come back to inform you."

"Qing Jun!" Yin Luo's expression brightened. Only then did she slowly release her grip and sniffed, "Then you must be careful. The Star Abyss is very dangerous. If you find Qing Jun, tell him that I miss him very much, and I will be here to guard his stellar space."

"Be good!" Lu Ye rubbed her head.

"Kid," Uncle Duan suddenly spoke from the side, "Take this."

As he spoke, he tossed something over. Lu Ye caught it with his hand and found that it was a pitch-black pearl, and the feeling it gave him was very strange, somewhat filthy.

"What is this?" Lu Ye asked.

Uncle Duan said, "You can call it the Filth Pearl. It's a little thing I crafted back in the day. Keep it with you, and if needed, infuse it with Mana to activate it. It can conceal the aura on you."

Lu Ye tried infusing it with Mana, and instantly, a wave of aura surged out from the Filth Pearl, enveloping him.

Feeling it slightly, Lu Ye was overjoyed and put away the Filth Pearl: "Thank you, Uncle Duan!" Given his presence in the Star Abyss, there was a major problem he couldn't solve, which was aura.

Unlike Jiu Yan and the others, who had stayed in the Star Abyss for many years, refining Star Abyss ambience and numerous Dao Bones, their bodies had been steeped in Star Abyss ambience, making them essentially no different from other Star Abyss living creatures.

However, he was the only one whose aura remained pure due to the Talent Tree.

This was the biggest reason Yin Luo liked consuming his Treasure Blood Avatar.

Normally, it wasn't an issue, but once in a confrontation, letting his aura leak out was like a light in the dark night, attracting lots of attention from Star Abyss living creatures.

This was a problem Lu Ye didn't know how to solve.

But the Filth Pearl given by Uncle Duan could conceal his pure aura, disguising him as a Star Abyss living creature.

Uncle Duan was also a stellar space refugee who survived after some stellar space shattered. This Filth Pearl was undoubtedly crafted by him for himself back in the day, and now that it's useless, he gave it to Lu Ye.

Uncle Duan snorted coldly, "Don't die out there, or the young lady will be heartbroken. Moreover, you'd better disguise yourself; the situation for the human race in the Star Abyss...is not very good."

"Why is that?" It was the first time Lu Ye learned this information. Though he had been surviving in the Star Abyss for quite some time, the information he had interacted with wasn't much.

Uncle Duan shook his head: "Not quite clear. All I know is that most races in the Star Abyss look down on the human race. If you categorize Star Abyss races into high, middle, and low classes, the human race is generally lower-middle tier."

Lu Ye pondered over this.

He understood in his heart, if not for Yin Luo, Uncle Duan wouldn't have said so much to him, and even if the Filth Pearl was useless, Uncle Duan wouldn't have casually given it to him, as there wasn't much friendship between them.

With plans made, parting was inevitable.

Under Yin Luo's reluctant gaze, Lu Ye flew out of the Qing Palace, heading towards the depths of the Star Abyss.

The Star Abyss was desolate, perhaps because Star Abyss Gate had been open in recent years, creatures nearby had gathered, so on this journey, Lu Ye didn't see even a single figure.

Bored while traveling, Lu Ye simply let his Treasure Blood Avatar pilot the starboat while he focused on cultivation.

Though the efficiency was not high, even mosquito meat is meat. To grind all his bones into Dao Bones, he would need an extremely large amount of Dao force, and every bit of accumulation couldn't be ignored.

A month later, he finally reached the place he'd visited before, diving into the big sun, letting the Talent Tree's roots extend and devour freely.

Only after replenishing the fuel completely did he leave, continuing forward, while the sun behind him dimmed a bit.

Continuing forward, Lu Ye finally encountered some scattered Star Abyss living creatures. The numbers weren't large, and their strength wasn't strong. Lu Ye only slightly revealed his aura, which caused these creatures to recklessly attack, as a result, without exception, they all became victims under his saber.

After becoming a Dao soldier, although the Boulder Mountain Saber hadn't received nurturing and was just the lowest level of Dao soldier, its sharpness was significantly superior to before.

Lu Ye suspected that even those top-tier protective magic treasures wouldn't withstand a few heavy strikes from the Boulder Mountain Saber, even if he didn't use Dao force.

Compared to the past when he travelled with Jiu Yan and others, sneaking and hiding, he now had a certain degree of self-preservation power. He dared not claim to be unstoppable, but at least he didn't need to be so cautious.

The further away from the Star Abyss Gate he went, the more Star Abyss living creatures he encountered.

Months of combat, coupled with arduous cultivation, finally accumulated Lu Ye's Dao force to over three thousand.

This efficiency isn't actually low, but relative to his needs, it is definitely not high. Mainly, the strength of the enemies he encountered was not strong. Over these months, the strongest he killed was a 7th Dao cultivator, who only had three Dao Bones, with the remaining Dao force being minimal.

He can try to polish the Dao Bones now.

Finding a place, Lu Ye sat cross-legged, splitting out a Treasure Blood Avatar to monitor the surroundings, and activated the Dao force, slowly injecting it into the chosen bone.

The nurturing and transformation by the Dao force caused some marvelous changes in the bone, even the color gradually became rich with a golden glow.

According to previous experiences, after consuming nearly a hundred threads of Dao force, the bone would no longer withstand the polishing and would shatter.

But this time, it seemed luck was on his side; the Dao force continued to be injected, and the Dao Bone showed no signs of shattering.

It wasn't until two hundred Dao force was consumed, completing the polishing of the Dao Bone, that Lu Ye suddenly came back to his senses.

He couldn't help but be stunned for a moment.

Did he succeed?

He actually succeeded in one go, something that had never happened before.

Counting this Dao Bone, he had polished seven Dao Bones now, the best streak before had taken at least three attempts for success, such a one-shot success was a first for him.

He knew it was possible for this to happen, but didn't expect it to happen to him.

It's a pity the Dice of Fate was devoured by him; otherwise, he would definitely roll it at this moment to surely get an auspicious result.

Luck is on my side, keep going!

Lu Ye gathered his spirits and continued polishing the Dao Bone.

Half a day passed, he rose with a face of pain and heartache, cloak of killing intent covered on him as he rushed out of seclusion, looking for targets to slay.

The so-called luck was, after all, just an illusion.

The eighth Dao Bone consumed nearly a thousand Dao force, yet didn't succeed.

At this moment, he couldn't figure out whether he was lucky or unlucky.

The Void in the Star Abyss is actually a part of certain stellar spaces, with more shattered stellar spaces, the Star Abyss continues to expand.

In the Void, a group of about twenty figures were moving rapidly, led by a mature and elegant woman who appeared to be in her thirties.

The Star Abyss, though filled with chaos and slaughter, still harbors various large and small factions, most comprised of local Star Abyss cultivators, and some from remnants of shattered stellar spaces.

No matter how they were formed, the ultimate goal was to band together for warmth and survival.

The twenty-some figures moved with haste, clearly on a journey.

Suddenly, the leading woman stopped abruptly, raising her hand to gesture.

Everyone behind her halted, faces showing vigilance. Following the woman's gaze, they noticed a lone figure approaching leisurely from that direction.

But soon, that figure seemed to realize they were discovered, hastily turned and fled in the opposite direction.

When the person hadn't started running, they hadn't sensed much; but once he moved, his aura was unmistakable.

"A lost one?" someone exclaimed suspiciously, the pure aura was clearly new to the Star Abyss, not yet tainted by its ambience.

The woman sighed, "A pitiful soul as well."

They all had gone through this phase, knowing how desolate and panicked cultivators were when their stellar spaces shattered.

Only after spending years in the Star Abyss could one truly integrate, but how many cultivators manage to pass this stage smoothly? It could be said, this stage is the most perilous.

"Chen Wu, bring the person over, he seems to be from the human race, although, from which stellar space is unknown."

The emergence of such a lost one undoubtedly indicates a recent shattering of a stellar space, with a fragment drifting nearby.

"Yes!" The cultivator named Chen Wu responded, moving forward to chase the lost one.

As Lu Ye fled, he noticed this and felt somewhat dissatisfied: "Why just one?"

During this time, using his unique aura as bait, he had lured in quite a few.

He thought this time would be the same; once his aura was exposed, the group of Star Abyss cultivators would surely give a frantic chase, but only one was sent over.

This was quite different from his expectation.

If they all came to kill him, he'd stimulate the Blood Sea, ensuring no one escapes, turning all into his power capital!

Currently, he could only first engage this one in battle and then draw others into the trap.

However, he needed to engage them first to gauge the opponent's Dao force strength.

Just as Lu Ye pondered this, a voice reached him from afar: "Fellow Daoist, do not panic, we mean you no harm. You have just entered the Star Abyss and may not know its dangers. Chen, under the orders of the lady, is here to assist."

Chapter 2157: Qing Yu

Whether it was being brought into the Star Abyss by the Spectral Sedan Chair years ago or leaving the Qing Palace this time, it was the first time Lu Ye encountered a Star Abyss cultivator who didn't harbor a killing intent against him.

Of course, one cannot fully trust words, and without specific interaction, he couldn't determine the true intentions of others.

Words may sound pleasant, but a ruthless hand often lurks in the stellar space, especially in the lawless Star Abyss.

But he still stopped himself.

It wasn't trust, but confidence; that group didn't seem to have Dao Fusion capabilities. Given his current strength, beginner-level concerns are unnecessary.

If they did harbor ill intentions, he would simply kill them.

Chen Wu approached Lu Ye slowly, stopped a short distance away, and sighed, "Judging by Fellow Daoist's aura, it seems you've only recently entered the Star Abyss, correct? Truth be told, we are stellar space refugees. If you're willing, you might accompany me to meet Madam. Walking alone in the Star Abyss is arduous; you might not survive long."

After a slight consideration, Lu Ye nodded, "Then I thank Fellow Daoist."

Setting aside Yin Luo, this was the first relatively friendly force he'd encountered in the Star Abyss. It was a good opportunity to blend in and observe how they survive, and he had an interest in the powers within the Star Abyss, hoping to gather some information from them.

"Please!" Chen Wu gestured, not underestimating Lu Ye.

He understood that someone like Lu Ye, surviving despite the stellar space shattering, was definitely a top-tier strong fighter somewhere in the stellar space. Although these so-called strong fighters might not be influential in the Star Abyss, once they enter the path, they are far from mediocre and often have strong potential for growth.

The two walked side by side, soon returning to where the group was.

Chen Wu stepped forward, "Madam, I've brought him."

The leading woman nodded slightly, glanced at Lu Ye, and with a faint smile said, "I am Qing Yu. How should Fellow Daoist be addressed?"

"Lu Ye!"

"Fellow Daoist Lu," Qing Yu nodded slightly, "As fellow humans, meeting by chance in this vast Star Abyss is fate. I noticed you alone with a pure aura, suggesting you've only recently entered the Star Abyss, so I sent someone to invite you. If it offended you, I apologize."

"Madam, you're too kind. I am alone and helpless, grateful for your invitation beyond words."

"Fellow Daoist Lu, have you entered the path?" Madam Qingyu asked again.

"I have," Lu Ye answered honestly. There was no need to hide this. While speaking, he was observing the group; their average strength seemed quite good, especially the leading Madam Qingyu, who appeared the strongest. Otherwise, in such a place, it wouldn't be possible for such a beautiful woman to lead.

"That's good," Madam Qingyu said to Chen Wu, "Chen Wu, take good care of Fellow Daoist Lu. Let's continue our journey."

Chen Wu blinked and replied, "Yes!"

Shortly after, the group continued moving forward.

Beside Madam Qingyu, a burly man's Mental Consciousness stirred, transmitting audibly, "Madam, is there anything wrong with that person...?"

Having survived together for years, even with less sensitivity, the burly man sensed something off from Madam Qingyu's final instructions.

Her telling Chen Wu to take extra care of Lu Ye likely meant for Chen Wu to monitor him. Chen Wu clearly understood Madam Qingyu's meaning.

Madam Qingyu pondered, "It's somewhat peculiar."

The burly man's expression hardened, "A spy?"

Madam Qingyu chuckled, "Not necessarily. Although the nearby forces aren't strong, who would use a recent Star Abyss entrant as a spy? I just think... he's a bit too clean."

The burly man wasn't dull, and upon hearing this, immediately realized, "Indeed, too clean."

When stellar spaces shattered, they became disheveled; yet Lu Ye appeared neat, as if he hadn't faced hardships.

Is such a thing possible?

Moreover, the person's demeanor seemed too calm.

The burly man said, "If Madam finds him inappropriate, just kill him; a newcomer, even if touched the path, at most the 5th Dao, I can kill him effortlessly."

Madam Qingyu sighed, "Yhing Hu, if I killed you upon first meeting, would we be here today? In this devouring Star Abyss, humans are frail; a rare talent deserves observation. Perhaps he's a worthy seed."

Yhing Hu recalled his past, having been alone and in despair, surviving thanks to Madam Qingyu's group's refuge.

He nodded, "That's fine, but if this kid truly acts, he won't escape my grasp."

In the lineup, Lu Ye walked alongside Chen Wu; if this arrangement was unintentional, Lu Ye wouldn't believe it. He sensed Madam Qingyu's mistrust but realized it's normal. If Madam Qingyu were simplistic, she wouldn't survive in the Star Abyss.

Placing him, a stranger, in the lineup if there were anomalies would invite attack from all sides.

He didn't mind, merely chatting with Chen Wu, trying to gather intelligence.

This group led by Madam Qingyu is primarily composed of stellar space refugees. After the stellar space shattered, Madam Qingyu and others fortunately survived. After enduring many hardships, they finally gained a foothold at Star Abyss. Over the years, they've sporadically rescued some from the human race and integrated them.

Only then did they build up to the scale they have now.

If Lu Ye were just an ordinary human, after encountering this group, he would definitely think of joining them to seek shelter.

In the stellar space, many forces similar to Madam Qingyu's have emerged; in reality, they are all small factions that don't truly make it to the forefront.

Of course, these small factions also have the potential to grow gradually, eventually evolving into major forces that control vast regions, reigning supreme.

"So where are we headed this time?" Lu Ye asked.

Chen Wu, after a brief pondering, seemed to think there was no need to hide it, and stated, "To the Dao Pool!"

"Hmm?" Lu Ye raised his eyebrows, "What kind of place is that?"

This reminded him of the Enlightenment Pool in the Cover Armor stellar space, but the two seem unrelated.

Chen Wu said, "Brother Lu, having just entered Star Abyss, would naturally not be too clear about the situation here. In Star Abyss, there are indeed many incredible things. For instance, there's something called the Stellar Tree, which bears Stellar Fruits. Consuming them can greatly enhance the success rate of refining Dao Bone. However, Brother Lu, do not assume that since it's called a tree, it is literally a tree. It's actually a marvelous energy condensation that takes the shape of a tree, and its fruits are the same."

Stellar Trees and Stellar Fruits, Lu Ye was well aware of them. It was thanks to the Stellar Fruits that figures like Jiu Yan could easily advance to the 6th Dao.

"Also, for example, the Dao Pool, which is another among the many wonders in Star Abyss. Unlike the Stellar Tree, Dao Pools can appear anywhere. By themselves, Dao Pools are nothing special, but at certain times, Dao Fish will emerge within the pool. These are not actual fish but are shaped like them, being pure Dao force condensations. Whoever obtains them can easily absorb and refine them to enhance their own Dao force."

"Oh?" Lu Ye immediately showed interest, "That truly sounds fascinating."

Chen Wu said, "Brother Lu must know, in Star Abyss, Dao force is paramount. Anything associated with Dao force and Dao Bone is extremely precious and will attract fierce competition from all sides."

Lu Ye understood, "So this time we're going to compete for those Dao Fish."

"Exactly!" Chen Wu nodded solemnly, "So this time we're going all out."

"And who are we up against?"

If there's a competition, there are certainly opponents.

"In this area, there are three factions. One is our group of stellar space refugees. The other two are composed of Star Abyss cultivators. Unlike the stellar space forces, many Star Abyss factions are named after regions or leaders. For instance, externally, we are known as Qingyu, and another faction also named after its leader is called Mann Shan."

"Mann Shan!"

"Yes, its leader seems to be a Savage Race member, incredibly powerful, with a terrifyingly strong physique. Over the years, the Madam has confronted him several times, with neither side claiming victory."

For him to say this implies Madam Qingyu suffered losses.

"There's also one faction that occupies a domain shattered like a Dragon Spine, basing their operations there, and thus call themselves Dragon Spine, primarily composed of Demon Race members."

Lu Ye raised an eyebrow, "So this competition for the Dao Fish will be a three-way melee?"

It seems he made the right choice joining this group. To accumulate more Dao Bones and strengthen his Dao force, hunting was the most troublesome part. Though he had taken down quite a few along the way, they were mostly minor opponents.

If he could take down the so-called Mann Shan and Dragon Spine in one fell swoop, the gains would be significant.

"It's not necessarily a melee. When we reach the Dao Pool, everyone will occupy different areas and attempt to capture the Dao Fish. Generally speaking, our overall strengths are quite similar. Having fought several times in the past, we've grown wary of each other."

"What is Madam Qingyu's Dao level?" Lu Ye asked.

"The Madam is at the 9th Dao!" Chen Wu's face filled with reverence.

"Are there any others at the 9th Dao?"

Chen Wu shook his head, "No, but there are three others at the 8th Dao."

Lu Ye couldn't help but frown, "How long has Madam Qingyu been in Star Abyss?"

"It's been several hundred years at least."

In these several hundred years, how could she have only reached the 9th Dao cultivation? Logically, as a figure like Madam Qingyu, she must have been one of the top experts in her stellar space, with remarkable talent. With so much time passed, she should have achieved Dao Fusion by now.

Even if transitioning from Beginner level to Dao Fusion isn't simple, what about the others? Why is there not even one other at the 9th Dao?

Comparing to the cultivation progress of Jiu Yan and the others, this group is starkly different.

But on second thought, surviving and growing stronger in Star Abyss isn't easy. Figures like Jiu Yan were able to advance so quickly due to a combination of favorable timing, environment, and people. Yhin Hu provided a monthly supply of rich Dao Bone, and each piece was filled with abundant Dao force. They could freely hunt Star Abyss living creatures outside Qing Palace and retreat to the safe haven whenever danger arose.

Madam Qingyu and her group did not have such favorable conditions. Most of their Dao force likely came from hard cultivation!

#### Chapter 2158: Something's Wrong

The Dao force gained through arduous cultivation is limited, and it will be depleted during battles, so for ordinary cultivators, improving their strength is not a simple matter.

This is also the situation faced by most stellar space refugees.

"I understand Brother Lu's implication." Chen Wu chuckled, "In fact, if it weren't for Madam's consideration for us, most of the Dao Bones acquired through killing enemies have been shared out. Madam should actually attempt Dao Fusion."

"What about Mann Shan and Dragon Spine?"

"There is only one 9th Dao each."

Lu Ye said, "Aren't you afraid they might suddenly produce a second 9th Dao?"

The promotion in the Dao Realm doesn't follow logic; a successful chance grinding of a Dao Bone might enhance the Power of the Path.

These three factions each have only one 9th Dao, seemingly balanced, but if one side produces a second 9th Dao, this balance will be disrupted.

Chen Wu replied, "Brother Lu, you don't understand. The leaders of Mann Shan and Dragon Spine are not as broad-minded as Madam. Before they achieve Dao Fusion, they won't allow a second 9th Dao under their command. Anyone daring to do so has been killed by them."

Lu Ye understood instantly.

If that's the case, then indeed, there isn't much of a problem.

Engaging in casual conversation intermittently, Lu Ye gleaned considerable information. Chen Wu didn't get suspicious, as he assumed Lu Ye was new to Star Abyss and was naturally curious about various matters here.

Also, the information that Lu Ye sought wasn't confidential, so there was no need to hide it.

"Everyone, be careful, we are nearing the destination." Madam Qingyu suddenly called out from ahead.

Lu Ye promptly looked up and saw a shattered domain ahead, resembling a fruit fiercely bitten into, appearing as a semi-circular form of incompleteness.

Chen Wu's voice sounded near his ear: "The Dao Pool is positioned at the core of that broken domain; it appeared out of nowhere almost a hundred years ago, and every fourteen years, Dao Fish are born."

Initially, the Dao Pool was discovered by cultivators on Qing Yu's side, who relished the first benefits.

Unfortunately, such a matter couldn't stay hidden. Later on, Mann Shan and Dragon Spine obtained the information, resulting in a vigorous contention, leading to Qing Yu's side receiving the least benefits.

Ultimately, the larger fist dictates the words spoken.

Flying across the shattered domain, under Madam Qingyu's leadership, the group landed in front of a pool not too large.

The pool, strictly speaking, is a mere pond, approximately seven or eight meters in diameter, with crystal-clear waters devoid of any living creatures.

Lu Ye couldn't help but scrutinize this pool. Not finding anything special, honestly if he weren't aware of this being a Dao Pool, he probably wouldn't pay it much heed even if he passed by.

But through his previous inquiries with Chen Wu, Lu Ye knew this normalcy was temporary; when the Dao Pool undergoes real changes, peculiar phenomena would indeed manifest.

Then, he raised his eyes toward the other side not far away.

Before the group arrived here, another batch of cultivators was already present.

There weren't many of them, only about a dozen, and the person at the forefront was extremely burly, standing silently as if an iron tower.

Though Lu Ye hadn't seen this person before, based on Chen Wu's earlier description, he recognized at once this iron-tower-like man as the leader of Mann Shan, known as Mann Shan from the Savage Race.

Because the aura from the opponent had a faint resemblance to Arbuluo.

"Madam, the situation is strange." Yhing Hu, standing beside Qing Yu, said in a low tone.

Qing Yu was also frowning, scrutinizing Mann Shan's side; indeed, the situation was unusual. For every occasion involving the Dao Pool, regardless of the side, they typically set out in full force, so they were aware of how many people Mann Shan's side should have.

Mann Shan's cultivators have always outnumbered their own, yet now there are only about a dozen, clearly indicating something amiss.

In Star Abyss, given the frequent slaughter, if Mann Shan's side indeed weakened due to some accident, it would be plausible.

"Madam, are you certain this Mann Shan is only at the 9th Dao?" While Qing Yu was perplexed, an unfamiliar voice entered her ears.

Qing Yu was momentarily stunned before realizing it was Lu Ye talking to her from their earlier encounter.

"Fellow Daoist Lu, what do you mean..." Qing Yu's heart skipped a beat.

"He doesn't seem like a 9th Dao!"

Even without engaging in battle, unable to ascertain the opponent's true strength, Lu Ye still discerned some clues. Compared to Qing Yu and her people, Lu Ye has witnessed more than one Dao Fusion. Mann Shan gave a feeling somewhat akin to Dao Fusion; just the gaze interaction induces a bit of pressure.

But the pressure wasn't as intense as that from Dao Fusions encountered on Qing Palace's side.

Upon hearing Lu Ye's words, Qing Yu felt a chill throughout, now caring little about questioning Lu Ye's judgment. She had survived in the harsh Star Abyss for hundreds of years with keen perception, and this encounter with Mann Shan felt markedly different than previous ones.

Thus, she faintly sensed that Lu Ye might be right.

"When was the last encounter you had with him?" Lu Ye asked again.

"It happened three or four years ago."

Three or four years ago, that means at that time Mann Shan was still the 9th Dao, and in three or four years, the accumulation of a newly promoted Dao Fusion... would not be too rich.

Lu Ye couldn't help but sigh, thinking that this trip might allow Mann Shan and Dragon Spine to be cooked together in the pot, but such an accident occurred.

Even a newly promoted Dao Fusion wouldn't be a match for him, because the weakest Dao Fusion can wield the Power of the Path of the 20th Dao!

And now even at overload, he can only wield the Power of the Path of the 17th Dao, three Dao forces; not too big, not too small.

"Let's go!" Qing Yu was also a decisive woman. Realizing something was wrong, she immediately gave the order. She knew that this time they were probably in trouble, but such things couldn't be prevented. How could one predict that they would quietly advance to Dao Fusion?

"It's too late!" Yhing Hu's expression changed because almost at the same time Qing Yu gave the order, another batch of figures descended from the sky, gathered above, blocking their escape routes.

"Dragon Spine!" Qing Yu's face turned pale.

This situation was obvious, Dragon Spine had been subdued by Mann Shan sometime ago, which also explains Mann Shan indeed advanced to Dao Fusion, otherwise Dragon Spine wouldn't obey him.

Right now, Mann Shan undoubtedly set his sights on Qing Yu and her group. If he took care of these stellar space refugees, then he would be the Overlord of this region.

"Madam, try to delay the time as much as possible." Lu Ye's voice reached Qing Yu's ears.

Qing Yu frowned, not knowing what his intentions were, but she didn't expect Lu Ye to do anything.

Qing Yu pursed her red lips and looked at the leader of Dragon Spine: "What does Demon Venerable mean by this?"

Dragon Spine was mainly composed of the Demon Race, and the leader of Dragon Spine was a big demon.

The big demon merely looked at Qing Yu, silent and expressionless, seemingly in a bad mood.

It was no surprise; someone who was once equal to him, Mann Shan, suddenly advanced to Dao Fusion, not only beating him up but also subjugating his Dragon Spine, with a towering mountain over his head from now on. It's surprising if he's in a good mood.

While Qing Yu was speaking, Lu Ye already closed his eyes, urging his Dao force to refine his 8th Dao Bone!

Previously, he had expended nearly a thousand Dao forces, yet had not succeeded with the 8th Dao Bone, but each time the Dao Bone shattered, it became tougher.

So this was an opportunity; sharpening one's spear at a critical moment might not work elsewhere, but here with Lu Ye, it might be possible!

Facing a Dao Fusion, even one more Dao force is beneficial. Lu Ye didn't believe they could leave smoothly this time; either way, there would definitely be a fight.

This was why he asked Qing Yu to delay the time as much as possible. Whether Qing Yu could do it, well, it depended on fate.

Even in this critical moment, Lu Ye's Dao force infusion was steady and slow; refining a Dao Bone still demanded care, only this way could there be a higher chance of success.

Overall, he didn't feel too much of a crisis; even if the refining of the Dao Bone failed, with his overloaded capacity of the Power of the Path of the 17th Dao, even if he couldn't defeat Mann Shan, self-preservation might not be a big problem.

The expressions of the people behind Qing Yu were all extremely tense.

With the big demon from Dragon Spine acting mute, Qing Yu could only turn her gaze to Mann Shan: "Fellow Daoist, what do you mean?"

Mann Shan looked at her indifferently: "From today onwards, Qing Yu shall submit to me and acknowledge me as lord, only then can you live!"

"Fellow Daoist, why are you so confident?" Qing Yu's face was solemn.

"What do you think?" Mann Shan glanced at her with a smirk, without waiting for her response, continued: "I have already advanced to Dao Fusion; below the Dao Fusion, you who have Enter the Path submit to my life and death decree!"

Qing Yu forced a stiff smile: "Dao Fusion? Fellow Daoist truly advanced to Dao Fusion?"

"If you don't believe, you can ask Dragon Spine, or... try yourself!"

Qing Yu's expression flickered. Although knowing this shouldn't be fake, if she didn't test it, she'd never be reconciled. She gently exhaled and shouted: "Then... forgive me!"

As she spoke, she flashed forward to attack, and a long whip appeared in her hand, the Power of the Path of the 9th Dao activated, without reservation.

In an instant, the long whip twisted like a spirit snake toward Mann Shan.

Directly wrapping him up like a dumpling!

But Qing Yu showed no joy, her expression instead became even more solemn because in the past, Mann Shan would never stand still to let her succeed, yet now he did so, which means he didn't place her attack in his eyes at all.

"Humph!" Mann Shan snorted coldly, shook his body.

Qing Yu let out a cry, her figure couldn't stop retreating, and the long whip that accompanied her battles for years broke inch by inch.

Standing firm in haste, she looked at Mann Shan with an incredibly complex expression: "Dao Fusion!"

Mann Shan had indeed merged to Dao Fusion; her power of the 9th Dao was completely powerless in front of him. If Mann Shan had the intention to kill just now, he could have easily taken her life.

"Alas!" She sighed inwardly, realizing this calamity was unavoidable.

For now, she could only temporarily submit, perhaps there would be a chance to survive.

Chapter 2159: Sharpening One's Sword at the Last Moment

Madam Qingyu wasn't worried about being killed by Mann Shan herself, because Mann Shan had been eyeing her for not just a day or two. Though the human race was indeed weak in Star Abyss, female cultivators of the human race were cherished by many factions.

Especially female cultivators with her kind of beauty, they were rumored to be considered rare resources in many places, used for transactions.

With this thought passing her mind, Qingyu pulled out a stiff smile once more: "Fellow Daoist, you've truly advanced to Dao Fusion. Congratulations are in order. We Qingyu are willing to submit to you, from now on, we'll look to you for guidance!"

Surviving with a group in Star Abyss for hundreds of years, though she was a woman, she did not lack the decisiveness needed in critical moments.

No matter how, today's situation could not be resolved peacefully. Aside from submission, there was only a fight to the death. In a real fight to the death, face to face with Dao Fusion, how many of them could survive?

She regretted, feeling she hadn't been careful enough, the situation painstakingly maintained for hundreds of years was now crumbling.

But with others advancing to Dao Fusion, it was really unpredictable.

Behind Qingyu, the expressions of the human race were all humiliated, yet they could only forcefully endure.

"Good." Mann Shan was undoubtedly pleased with Qingyu's attitude and then changed the subject, "Then offer twenty Dao Bones as compensation for your earlier offense!"

Qingyu's face changed drastically, urgently saying, "Fellow Daoist!"

Twenty Dao Bones weren't too many, but at this time, where would she get twenty Dao Bones to offer Mann Shan? So Mann Shan's intention was clear; these Dao Bones were to be taken from Qingyu's people.

Qingyu never expected that after conceding so much, Mann Shan still wouldn't let them go.

The so-called price was just a pretense. Even if she hadn't tried to test just now, Mann Shan wouldn't have accepted all of them. To Dao Fusion, those 4th-5th Dao cultivators were of little use and were better off dead to obtain the bones.

"You offer them yourself, or I'll take them myself!" Mann Shan was unmoved, just looking at Qingyu indifferently.

As these words fell, the Dragon Spine cultivators, led by the big demon, stepped forward a few paces, in a threatening posture.

Qingyu lowered her head: "Fellow Daoist, please wait, allow us to discuss."

"Ten breaths!"

Qingyu turned around, scanning the people who had followed her for years, eyes full of guilt.

Yhing Hu grinned: "Madam, no need to blame yourself. When the stellar space shattered years ago, I was supposed to die. If it weren't for Madam's shelter, how could I have lived these years? Dying here today is still a profit."

Chen Wu also said: "Yes, Madam's kindness to us is as heavy as a mountain. If Madam needs, what's the harm in us dying?"

Others didn't speak, but each had a determined look. Everyone here more or less owed Qingyu a favor.

Over the years, Qingyu had been just and impartial in her leadership, something everyone had witnessed.

"I am deeply sorry to all of you." Qingyu's eyes were full of bitterness.

The ten breaths quickly passed, and Mann Shan's gaze became dangerous.

The bitterness in Qingyu's eyes suddenly disappeared, replaced by determination, and she shouted: "Scatter and escape!"

She turned and lunged towards Mann Shan's side, clearly intending to stall Mann Shan. She knew the great difference in strength between herself and Mann Shan, but she was the strongest on her side, even if there was no hope, she had to try.

She never had the thought of offering twenty Dao Bones to Mann Shan. If Mann Shan had simply wanted her to submit, she could have accepted that, even if it meant suffering some humiliation in the future, but to offer Dao Bones was absolutely impossible.

She'd rather die fighting here.

It was unrealistic for everyone to escape at once; now, she only hoped that even one might manage to escape.

However, what she didn't expect was that just as she made her move, everyone under Qingyu's command rushed forward at once, Yhing Hu simultaneously shouted: "Madam, run!"

Over twenty people, varying in strength, but each showed determination, prepared to face death.

Qingyu's expression turned to astonishment, and then relief, suddenly feeling that all these years of effort had been worth it. She was surrounded by a group of brothers and sisters willing to lay down their lives for her. Though not relatives, they were closer than family.

"Seeking death!" Mann Shan snorted coldly and gestured: "Except for the female cultivator, kill all the others!"

The cultivators around him immediately charged forward.

Not only that, but the Dragon Spine cultivators who had been hovering around also swooped down.

A great battle was imminent.

The Dragon Spine's big demon leader charged straight toward Lu Ye. He had noticed earlier that this human had been keeping his eyes closed, not knowing what he was up to.

The anger of being subdued by Mann Shan had no place to vent. He was unwilling to waste his Dao force fighting Qingyu, so he fixated on Lu Ye, preparing to vent his frustration on him.

Lu Ye's tightly closed eyes suddenly snapped open!

A flash of bloodlight spread from him as the center, instantly transforming into a sea of blood, engulfing all around.

"Blood Race?" The Dragon Spine big demon was momentarily stunned.

Qingyu's group were all humans, so how did a Blood Race suddenly appear?

The thick, churning sea of blood blinded his vision, and the Dragon Spine big demon instantly lost sight of Lu Ye, but he didn't change his attack course and continued to charge downward.

Vaguely, a figure rushed from the front. Judging by the form, it was the Blood Race, though he found it puzzling that for some reason, this Blood Race's clothes were all gone.

Why take off clothes to fight? He couldn't quite figure it out.

At the moment of collision between their figures, the Dragon Spine big demon's eyes widened, and his whole body exploded.

In the final instant of his sinking consciousness, only one question surged in his mind: How am I, at the ninth Dao, so fragile?

The suddenly erupting Blood Sea not only caught the Dragon Spine people off guard but also left Qing Yu and the others at a loss, instinctively thinking it was the cultivator from Dragon Spine who had done something, because among them there was no Blood Race, only Dragon Spine had one, even though predominantly Demon Race, there were also other races of cultivators.

This Blood Sea probably was unleashed by a cultivator from Dragon Spine.

Suddenly losing their target, Qing Yu and the others were in a dilemma.

"Retreat!" At the moment when Qing Yu was at a loss, a voice reached her ears, followed by Lu Ye's figure flashing past in front of her.

"You..." Qing Yu reached out to grab, but caught empty air, watching Lu Ye dash towards Mann Shan's position.

Dazed in her heart, where did this guy get such courage?

But soon, she heard from behind the Blood Sea, piercing screams echoing one after another, with powerful life forces continuously being extinguished.

Qing Yu turned her head sharply, completely unaware of what was happening.

An earth-shaking roar suddenly came from the front!

A figure approached, it was Yhing Hu, speaking uncertainly, "Madam, it's Mann Shan's voice, is he... injured?"

That roar was filled with boundless pain, clearly due to an injury, and apparently not an ordinary wound.

With an incredible look, Mann Shan had already proved himself to have entered Dao Fusion, who here could injure him?

While speaking, from the depths of the Blood Sea in front, intense fighting noises erupted again, the sweeping Dao force shockwaves were extremely fierce, evidently beyond the level of beginner level confrontation; it was an encounter between two Dao Fusions!

Qing Yu's expression changed several times, and Lu Ye's face involuntarily floated into her mind, if there was a variable in this journey, it was only him!

Just now, it was him who had rushed towards Mann Shan.

But... how could a cultivator who had just entered Star Abyss possess such powerful strength?

Unable to comprehend, but she knew this was an opportunity, she immediately ordered, "Retreat for now, find a chance to kill out!"

Originally thinking it was a dead-end, yet unexpectedly finding a chance for survival, claiming not to be delighted would be false, but more so was confusion.

At this moment, Lu Ye himself had already clashed with Mann Shan several times.

Sharpening his saber in a hurry, he successfully polished out the eighth Dao Bone, allowing him to wield the power of seventeen Dao, under overload, it's eighteen Dao!

Just now, taking advantage of the Blood Sea's concealment, he reached Mann Shan's front, almost taking Mann Shan's life in one strike.

Because this guy was too complacent, he didn't put Lu Ye in his eyes, when the Boulder Mountain Saber descended, Mann Shan merely raised an arm for defense, estimating he had mobilized about the power of ten Dao.

Not surprising Mann Shan, who could have thought among Qing Yu's group, an anomaly like Lu Ye would exist? The power of ten Dao was invincible under Dao Fusion.

He thought he could effortlessly block Lu Ye's attack.

Who would have known this strike directly severed one of his arms, such an injury, although not critical for a Dao Fusion, was definitely unpleasant.

If he hadn't hurriedly mobilized more Dao power, just this one strike, Lu Ye could have torn him apart!

Even so, Mann Shan's chest center line at this moment was also dripping with blood.

At this moment, within the Blood Sea, he raised his only remaining arm, no longer daring to hold back, frantically urging Dao power to compete with Lu Ye.

Yet Lu Ye's figure leapt back and forth in the Blood Sea, slippery like an eel, in the few collisions, he couldn't do anything to Lu Ye.

In his heart, anger burned like fire, yet filled with bewilderment.

Having lived in Star Abyss for so many years, he had never seen a freak like Lu Ye.

Yes, a freak.

He had only been in Dao Fusion for half a year at most, almost the worst Dao Fusion one could have, any Dao Fusion with a bit of accumulation could defeat him, not to mention he's currently injured.

He had thought Lu Ye was a Dao Fuser, amidst the anger even more was fear.

But gradually, he found Lu Ye wasn't a Dao Fuser at all, because from those few collisions, the Dao power Lu Ye mobilized wasn't cohesive, giving a feeling of being scattered.

This was the hallmark of beginner level!

But how could there be such a strong beginner level in this world? According to his judgment, this beginner level wielded Dao power of seventeen or eighteen Dao!

This was completely illogical.

At the beginner level, nine Dao was the limit, beyond that was Dao Fusion, where could there be seventeen or eighteen Dao, unheard of.

Compared to Mann Shan's bewilderment, Lu Ye at this moment was instead mentally active.

His original plan was actually very simple, just to protect Qing Yu's group, although they met by chance, with no deep ties, Qing Yu's group left a good impression on him, despite being from different stellar spaces, they were of the same human race, if he could assist, he would.

So he initially only planned to block Mann Shan, to create an escape opportunity for Qing Yu and others, nothing more.

Chapter 2160: Insatiable Ambition

The power of the 18th Dao against a newly ascended Dao Fusion, even if he can't win, holding them off shouldn't be an issue. Lu Ye is confident in this.

Moreover, he has the Talent Tree Avatar to slay the Dragon Spine cultivators, thereby creating conditions for Qing Yu and others to escape.

What he didn't expect was that due to Mann Shan's underestimation, his first strike severed an arm.

Furthermore, after a few clashes, he discovered that although he was not the opponent, the enemy was not as strong as imagined.

This made him have more ideas!

The group with Qing Yu is quite decent; he wouldn't stay here forever. Even if he protects them this time, if Mann Shan doesn't die, Qing Yu and others won't have peace in the future.

Moreover, with the Dao Fish about to emerge, how could he take over the Dao Pool without killing Mann Shan?

So only by killing him can he obtain these benefits.

The thought passed, firming up his resolve. He moved his form increasingly agilely, trying to avoid direct clashes with Mann Shan and instead slaughter his subordinates.

In the Blood Sea, with each life extinguished, the screams gradually ceased.

More than twenty human race cultivators, led by Qing Yu, finally made their way out!

The reason it went so smoothly was, of course, because Lu Ye allowed it. If he hadn't, Qing Yu and the others wouldn't have left so easily.

Turning around, they saw the vast Blood Sea covering the Void. In a certain area, there was still violent turbulence, causing the Blood Sea there to churn like boiling water.

"Madam, what exactly is happening?" Chen Wu asked, looking bewildered.

Not only he wanted to know, but the others also wanted to know what was happening.

They were prepared to die, yet they came out unscathed.

"Whatever it is, it's best to leave for now!" Yhing Hu said with a serious expression. Inside the Blood Sea, there were definitely two Dao Fusions clashing, a level they couldn't reach.

Qing Yu glanced around the group and indeed noticed that Lu Ye was missing. Recalling the recent events, she became more convinced that the person clashing with Mann Shan now was that man with the pure aura.

"Wait!" Qing Yu said in a firm voice.

Under normal circumstances, Yhing Hu's suggestion would be correct; it's not a place to linger, but Qing Yu was unwilling to just leave like this. She wasn't sure of Lu Ye's true strength or if he was a match for Mann Shan. Staying might be able to aid him.

The fierce battle continued, making the Blood Sea boil even more.

Qing Yu observed at a glance that the Blood Sea wouldn't hold for long, as the waves of conflict between the two Dao Fusions had already turned the inside upside down.

At a certain moment, the commotion suddenly calmed, and the surging Blood Sea began to converge toward a spot.

"Is it over?" Chen Wu stared, anxiety written all over his face.

As the blood color faded, the scene that unfolded made the pupils of over twenty people including Qing Yu constrict sharply.

Because within the range once enveloped by the Blood Sea, corpses lay across, each death more horrific than the last. Some bodies had shattered, leaving only golden Dao Bones floating.

The big demon leader of Dragon Spine was nowhere to be seen, only some scattered clothing fragments remained.

These bodies, numbering at least thirty-four, were clearly underlings of Dragon Spine and Mann Shan. In less than the time of one incense stick, they were all dead!

On the other side, three figures stood in a triangular standoff.

One was a sturdy figure, who else could it be but Mann Shan?

But compared to his previous arrogance, Mann Shan now appeared much more haggard, missing an arm, with bloodstains covering his chest, and fresh blood still seeping from the wounds on his severed arm and chest.

It's hard to imagine that a Dao Fusion expert couldn't even suppress his own injuries.

At this moment, his eyes bulged, face full of anger, like a volcano ready to erupt at any moment, glaring viciously at a figure in the distance holding a long saber.

"It's Brother Lu..." Chen Wu exclaimed in surprise.

Since Lu Ye joined them, Chen Wu had interacted with him the most but never inquired about Lu Ye's Dao level, feeling it unnecessary to ask. A stellar space refugee with such a pure aura, even if he had Entered the Path, couldn't be very powerful.

Everyone had grown little by little; who didn't know this basic truth?

Not until now did he realize how gravely mistaken he was!

To clash like this with someone like Mann Shan, who was a Dao Fusion, Lu Ye must also be a Dao Fusion!

Moreover...

"There are two Brother Lus."

Indeed, there were two Lu Yes. One wielded a saber, and the other held a gourd, wearing ill-fitting clothes seemingly stripped from some corpse.

"It must be a doppelganger!" Qing Yu's eyes flashed with a strange light.

In the blink of an eye, Mann Shan suddenly roared, "I will kill you!"

Before coming here, he thought it would be a wonderful moment to conquer Qing Yu and unify this area, but who would have thought a stranger would ruin it, and he'd suffer injuries because of it.

In the heat of contention, he had roughly figured out Lu Ye's strength, knowing that even though he was injured, the opponent was no match for him.

As for his entire subordinates dying in battle... that wasn't an issue at all. With his status as someone who achieved Dao Fusion, recruiting new subordinates was easy.

He charged toward Lu Ye, not even bothering to glance at the doppelganger.

The Clone Technique exists in all stellar spaces, including Star Abyss, but a doppelganger usually possesses only a portion of the original's strength. Lu Ye's original was not even his match, let alone a doppelganger?

In his perspective, if this doppelganger dared to approach him, he could crush it with ease!

He only needed to deal with Lu Ye's original body.

As soon as he moved, Lu Ye's original body nimbly evaded, while the doppelganger raised the gourd in its hand, aiming the opening at Mann Shan. The next instant, an uncanny fire shot out, winding like a fire serpent.

He had three affiliated treasures; the sword gourd had been left with Ma Bin to assist his cultivation and had not been reclaimed. The Heavenly Net Umbrella was given to Hua Ci, leaving him with only the fire gourd.

However, compared to wielding the fire gourd's power before, this time the ferocity was far greater.

This uncanny fire, powered by the force of nineteen Daos, was just one step short of Dao Fusion!

The flames surged, and in an instant, Mann Shan was turned into a man of fire, fiercely burning.

Startled, Mann Shan never expected a doppelganger to unleash such powerful might, causing his attack on Lu Ye to falter momentarily as he frantically urged his Dao force to shield himself.

Taking advantage of his distraction, Lu Ye's original body had already charged with his saber, the saber light shining as brightly as the moon, heavily slashing down!

Mann Shan roared in anger, disregarding the burns on his body, and punched out.

The moment they collided, the saber light shattered, Lu Ye's hands cracked open from the tension, his figure tumbling backward, while Mann Shan's big frame shook slightly.

As before, in a direct clash, Lu Ye was no match.

On the surface, they were only two Dao apart in strength, but in reality, the biggest difference between entering the Path and Dao Fusion lay in the manipulation of Dao force.

Having learned something about Dao Fusion from the azure bird, Lu Ye understood that the Dao force controlled in Dao Fusion was more cohesive; in comparison, at the beginner level of entering the Path, the Dao force appeared somewhat scattered.

Manifestly, while Mann Shan could only manipulate the power of twenty Daos, the special nature of Dao Fusion allowed him to unleash an extra ten percent in damage or defense.

Equivalent to the power of twenty-two Daos.

So while the apparent difference in power was two Daos, in fact, it was actually four.

A two Dao difference isn't significant, but four Daos is no small gap.

This was why Lu Ye kept suffering in their direct confrontations.

Fortunately, he wasn't alone; he had his doppelganger. Otherwise, he wouldn't have dared to target Mann Shan, and by now he should have already fled.

As his original body retreated, the doppelganger advanced to attack. Just as Mann Shan steadied himself, he was forced to engage once again.

In the rapid exchange, Mann Shan's eyes widened because he realized he'd gotten something wrong — this doppelganger and the original displayed identical strength!

What kind of unreasonable doppelganger was this in the world?

Outside the battlefield, Qing Yu and others watched, dazzled.

The two Lu Yees, one retreating as the other advanced, launched continuous attacks on Mann Shan like a relay, with no pause, their rhythm flawlessly synchronized. Though the uncanny fire on Mann Shan had extinguished, he had seemingly become a target, forced to defensively withstand both Lu Yees' relentless assaults, with no room for carelessness.

In such a situation, even fleeing became a luxury, because if he turned his back on Lu Ye, the situation would only worsen.

The scene was somewhat comical: the stronger one was in a terrible plight, while the weaker one exuded unstoppable aggression.

Qing Yu's eyes lit up, and she shouted, "Assist in battle!"

She recognized Lu Ye's intent, clearly aiming to eliminate Mann Shan here. But due to the strength disparity, to kill Mann Shan, they first needed to deplete his Dao force; hence the persistent hard clashes.

No one knew how much Dao force Mann Shan had, but the fact was he hadn't been in Dao Fusion for long, so he could not have accumulated much.

Once his Dao force was exhausted, even as a Dao Fusion, he would become an easy target.

In a direct clash, Qing Yu and her group had no chance to intervene, but if just assisting from afar, over twenty people could make a difference!

At Qing Yu's command, the group followed, rushing near to the battlefield, spreading out, each unleashing their techniques against Mann Shan.

At any other time, such an assault would mean nothing to Mann Shan, easily broken, but at this very moment, it was the straw breaking the camel's back.

More than twenty were at beginner level; even if not strong, Mann Shan's necessity to fend off their attacks consumed his own Dao force too.

Not to mention the two Lu Yees jumping around, relentlessly annoying!

Seeing the situation turning unfavorable, Mann Shan finally calmed down, deciding to retreat.

Bitterness welled up within, lamenting that his subordinates were entirely slain; otherwise, how could he be humiliated by these petty nuisances!

Blocking one more of Lu Ye's assault, Mann Shan took the chance to drift backward, instantly breaking free of Qing Yu's encirclement, ready to flee.

Lu Ye wouldn't permit such a thing to happen. In this battle, he had expended nearly three hundred measures of Dao force, marking his biggest expenditure of Dao force to date in a battle. He had painstakingly driven Mann Shan to this desperate situation and was determined not to let him escape so easily.