

Humanity 361

Chapter 361 The Treacherous Dog is Truly Rich

The first wave of over seventy Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators was caught off guard by the sudden eruption of various Arrays. In an instant, more than twenty were dead or injured, while the survivors struggled to defend against the formidable power of the Arrays, suffering wounds and screaming in agony before being killed.

The protective array that enveloped Lu Ye and Giant Armor had already shattered.

Though the array was sturdy, it had its limits. After withstanding a fierce attack from the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators, it was broken. However, none of the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators had the time to launch an attack on him.

Above the boulder, Lu Ye's hands danced with the array banners, maximizing the power of the surrounding arrays.

The scene was extremely chaotic.

"Quick, use your weapons to break free from the Formation!" someone finally shouted upon realizing the dire situation.

These cultivators came with overwhelming momentum, but many were wounded or killed before even getting close to Lu Ye. The most sensible course of action was to get out as fast as possible. With the uncertainty of whether there were more Arrays around, weapon control-flying was the best option.

There couldn't possibly be Arrays covering the air.

As the man's voice died away, the numerous flustered cultivators finally reacted, summoning their Flying Spirit Artifacts.

In such dense woods, with tall trees and high canopies providing plenty of obstacles, weapon control-flying was not ideal. A false move could result in crashing into a tree, but the cultivators from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge had no better alternative at the moment.

As the Spiritual Artifacts ascended, the surviving cultivators from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge attempted to flee this perilous place.

However, before they could do so, Lu Ye vigorously waved his array banner once more and in the next instant, bright lines evolved on the ground, forming a new Array.

As the Array was activated, all the cultivators in mid-air felt as if a massive mountain bore down on them. Their bodies suddenly became incredibly heavy, and despite their desperate resistance, they couldn't fend off the invisible force pressing down from above.

"Sky Prohibition?" a cultivator cried out in terror.

The Sky Prohibition array was well-known, but it was definitely not something a Spirit Stream Realm cultivator could set up. Thus, facing such an unexpected turn of events plunged everyone into a state of panic.

Indeed, Lu Ye couldn't set up a Sky Prohibition array. A true Sky Prohibition array would completely strip away the ability to fly, but the Array activated now was centered around Hefty Weight Spirit Runes. If a cultivator could withstand that immense pressure, they could still take to the sky and escape. However, the might of a single Array was so formidable that it was not something a Spirit Stream Realm cultivator could withstand.

Cries of alarm and screams of agony rose and fell in succession, as figures tumbled awkwardly from the sky.

Before they hit the ground, powerful magic and spells swept up from below. These took the form of blazing fire lotuses. Below the fire lotuses, Yiyi's figure appeared at some point, arms raised high as surging spirit force flowed around her.

Where the flames swept through, the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators who had not adjusted their falling posture became engulfed in balls of fire.

Giant Armor charged out, snatching a cultivator falling from the sky by the leg. Then, swinging him around like a Wolf Fang Club, he hurled the man at nearby enemies.

Lu Ye leapt down from the boulder, hand on the hilt of his sword, strolling leisurely through the hellish battleground. His supplies box emitted a hissing sound as nine Dao weapon control lights darted back and forth, each leaving a trail of blood, and the Boulder Mountain Saber was drawn from its sheath from time to time.

By his side, Amber had revealed her true form, her agile body darting and weaving through the battlefield. Pale golden Demon Origin roiled around her body, and every time her massive paws struck, heads shattered and bones cracked.

It wasn't that the people of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge weren't strong. Those who dared to venture deep here in pursuit of Lu Ye were all cultivators who had switched to cultivating Heaven Rank techniques, and the weakest among them was at the level of 7th Heaven.

A group of more than seventy people together could even stand up to a Cloud River without falling short.

However, Lu Ye had made preparations in advance. Just the two explosion magic arrays alone caused significant casualties among the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators. The subsequent activation and transformations of many Arrays made it difficult for them to cope.

With all these tactics deployed, the group of more than seventy quickly became a disorganized mob, awaiting nothing but massacre.

One incense stick's time later, the battle subsided.

Around the boulder, the ravaged battlefield was strewn with mutilated corpses, and the unpleasant stench of burnt flesh mingled with the smell of blood. All seventy-some individuals had been cleanly slaughtered in this battle.

A few had the chance to escape, but those who ran a little too late found their escape routes cut off by the suddenly appearing Yiyi. Together with the swiftly arriving Amber, they relentlessly hunted them down.

After cleaning the battlefield and collecting the spoils of war, the group quickly withdrew from the area.

Sometime later, more cultivators from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge converged on this spot. Their investigation yielded shocking results.

All five squads that first located Lu Ye's whereabouts were completely annihilated. Combining the messages transmitted by the dying Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators with the residual signs on the battlefield, it was clear that Lu Ye the Sect Destroyer achieved this inconceivably astonishing feat by leveraging the power of Arrays.

At that moment, the cultivators of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge were heavy-hearted.

Lu Yiye was formidable and elusive. So many cultivators from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge had chased and attempted to corner him without success, allowing him to escape into the vast Fog-shrouded Mountain.

They had thought that here, in this place, there would be a good opportunity to root him out once and for all. Little did they know that he would reveal an extraordinary ability to set up Arrays.

...

From the residual traces of the formations in this area alone, it's clear that Lu Yiye set up no fewer than seven traps here. Many damaged array banners and array bases still remain scattered across the battlefield.

It was only at this moment that many cultivators from the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge realized a previously overlooked issue.

If Lu Yiye could break through the protective array as grand as the one surrounding their base, how could his array setup skills be lacking?

In this vast forest shrouded in mist, where it's difficult to travel through the air and track someone down, who could tell if they might suddenly step into a formation while in pursuit?

Once trapped in such a snare, certain death was inevitable.

For a time, the surroundings seemed fraught with danger, causing a strong sense of unease in everyone.

"Fellow Daoists, there's no need to panic overly,"

At a time when many from the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge were filled with apprehension, someone suddenly stood up and said with confidence, "Even if Lu Yiye has the skill to set up formations, he cannot sustain such tactics indefinitely."

As if to add credibility to his words, the man intentionally displayed his own spirit light while speaking, revealing his 9th Heaven level cultivation for all to see.

"How may we address this elder brother?" someone politely inquired.

"Thousand Wings Sect, Qin Zheng."

Upon hearing this name, many immediately checked their battlefield markings, and soon someone exclaimed, "Is this Senior Brother Qin ranked ninety-eighth on the Spirit Stream Ranking?"

Once a cultivator's cultivation reaches a certain level, they can link their battlefield markings to Heaven's Augury to access information previously out of reach, such as the Spirit Stream Ranking.

At this moment, the name Qin Zheng was listed at the third to last position on the Spirit Stream Ranking.

Even being ranked third to last meant being a figure on the Spirit Stream Ranking, an existence unattainable for ordinary cultivators of the Spirit Stream Realm.

Nobody had realized earlier that among the group pursuing Lu Ye, there was actually a formidable character from the Spirit Stream Ranking. It wasn't that the strong individuals on the ranking were indifferent to the rewards for killing Lu Ye; rather, most of them thought very highly of themselves and seldom joined others.

Qin Zheng was one of the few exceptions, and he was usually low-key. If it weren't for the need to boost morale this time, he wouldn't have revealed his affiliation.

Qin Zheng's cheeks flushed slightly when others brought up the Spirit Stream Ranking.

His rank at ninety-eighth was somewhat baffling because just a few days ago, he wasn't even on the list. Suddenly, the top three on the Spirit Stream Ranking disappeared, and he found himself on the list, quite confused about how it happened.

"What did Senior Brother Qin mean by his earlier words?" the previous speaker asked.

Qin Zheng replied, "Without hiding anything from fellow Daoists, I am somewhat of an array cultivator," holding a half of an array banner in his hand. "So, I have some understanding of the Array Path. This is an array banner used by Lu Yiye in his array setup, and these items were purchased from the Heaven's Augury treasure vault."

"How can you be so sure?"

Qin Zheng smiled, revealing another array banner in his hand: "Because I have purchased them myself. For cultivators like us at the Spirit Stream Realm, creating array banners takes a great deal of effort, so if one has enough merit, it's more convenient and effortless to buy from the Heaven's Augury treasure vault. These array banners cost about the same as a low-grade spirit artifact in the vault. I don't know how many Lu Yiye bought, but there are rumors that he previously purchased orifice repair pills for Li Baxian. I presume many of you have heard about the price of those pills. Therefore, even Lu Yiye probably doesn't have too many array banners at hand."

Someone understood Qin Zheng's implication: "Is Senior Brother Qin saying that once Lu Yiye runs out of array banners, he will no longer be able to set up formations?"

"Unless he goes to purchase more! I observed earlier that there are roughly more than ten damaged array banners around and four array bases. Just these alone would have cost him more than a thousand points of merit. And there must be some undestroyed array banners that he has retrieved."

"That scoundrel is really wealthy!"

"A thousand points of merit... How many aspiring souls of my Ten Thousand Demons Ridge has he slain! Damn it!"

"Don't forget the orifice repair pills; Lu Yiye is like a leech that crawls on the bodies of the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators, sucking their blood to strengthen himself and making our cultivators suffer."

A group of people were indignant, speaking all at once as they criticized Lu Yiye.

Seeing the topic drift, Qin Zheng spoke loudly, "Fellow Daoists, do not let yourself be frightened by Lu Yiye's array setup tactics. If we give up now, then the deaths of the Daoists who fell earlier will be in vain. If we continue the pursuit, we might suffer more casualties, but for the future of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, it's worth it if we manage to kill Lu Yiye. We really can't let him continue to grow stronger, or else no one in the entire Spirit Stream battlefield will be able to deal with him in the future. Surely, fellow Daoists wouldn't want such a person to emerge in the Haotian Alliance, would they?"

"Senior Brother Qin's words make sense."

Another person suggested, "Although we have gathered in large numbers before, there has been no one to direct and command us uniformly, which is why we have suffered such losses. Since Senior Brother Qin is a figure on the Spirit Stream Ranking, why don't we let him oversee the whole affair and follow his command?"

This proposal garnered a lot of agreement and support from the crowd.

After pondering for a brief moment, Qin Zheng nodded, "Indeed, unified command is necessary for success. Since so many fellow Daoists hold me in high regard, I shall not decline. If anyone feels they are more suitable, they may also put themselves forward. I am not one who envies or resents capable people. I will step aside for the more qualified."

Chapter 362 Honey

Previously, no one from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge had stepped forward to command and coordinate because they felt it was unnecessary.

With so many people chasing a few, it was only a matter of time before they would succeed. Why bother having someone to command?

However, after witnessing Lu Ye's array setup capabilities, those from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge realized that if they continued in such a disorganized manner, they would certainly fail.

Therefore, after a brief discussion, a more tightly knit group formed, united by a single purpose.

Eradicate Lu Yiye!

To better motivate the troops, Qin Zheng even named this group.

The Lu Ye Extermination Alliance—anyone who wished to kill Lu Ye could join without condition and share intelligence with others.

"Since Lu Yiye is skilled in array setups, there will definitely be many arrays pre-arranged ahead of us. To reduce casualties, we must try to identify these arrays, and figure out ways to avoid or destroy them! If there are any array cultivators among us, please ensure their safety. Additionally, members of the beast-taming faction and the cover armorer faction, please attempt to use demon beasts and mechanical beasts to scout ahead, to minimize casualties,"

As Qin Zheng's voice rang out, commands were relayed one after another, and the entire Lu Ye Extermination Alliance operated quickly and meticulously.

Teams spread out once more, delving deeper into Fog-shrouded Mountain to track Lu Ye's movements.

Moments later, a loud noise emanated from the depths of Fog-shrouded Mountain, mixed with violent fluctuations of spirit force.

By the time nearby Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators received the message and rushed over, they saw a scene of devastation with traces of destroyed array formations, broken array banners, and the bodies of a dozen cultivators strewn about.

A squad from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge had been annihilated.

One squad after another triggered the arrays that Lu Ye had set up in advance, gradually increasing the casualties. However, the Lu Ye Extermination Alliance was not without its gains.

As the array cultivators and cover armorers exerted their efforts, some arrays were activated or decoded, failing to achieve their intended effects.

As time slowly passed and the chase continued, both parties ventured deep into Fog-shrouded Mountain. The Lu Ye Extermination Alliance had lost nearly two hundred individuals. Such casualties did not discourage them; rather, they were even more resolved to eradicate the threat at its root.

Given the capabilities Lu Ye was displaying, he was terrifying enough, and he was only at the 7th Heaven level of cultivation. If they waited for him to advance to the 9th Heaven, he would become an unstoppable force within the Spirit Stream battlefield.

At that time, he might indeed dominate the vast battlefield alone.

This was something Ten Thousand Demons Ridge could not tolerate. The higher echelons of the big sects also issued orders for the cultivators of the Core Circle to eradicate Lu Yiye at all costs, to prevent future threats.

After seven days of pursuit, the Lu Ye Extermination Alliance had lost three hundred cultivators. Hearing of such heavy losses, even the strong cultivators of the Divine Sea Realm were taken aback.

These three hundred were all cultivators who had transferred to Heaven Rank techniques, likely soon to advance to Cloud River Realm—a blow to any potential growth.

Lu Ye having killed three hundred meant that the ranks of Cloud River Realm cultivators on the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge side had diminished by that many, causing them considerable distress.

Moreover, among them were several at the 9th Heaven level, who had a high chance of advancing to the Divine Sea Realm.

The pursuit did not cease; rather, it intensified.

As the situation unfolded, Qin Zheng's earlier predictions were confirmed. Lu Ye was setting up fewer arrays now, and more often, he was lying in ambush, attacking suddenly when the cultivators of the Lu Ye Extermination Alliance approached.

This undoubtedly indicated that he had few array banners left, no longer able to set up arrays as recklessly as before.

Once this became clear, Qin Zheng immediately ordered the teams that were not far from each other to merge.

They had previously refrained from merging, fearing the power of the arrays, as the loss of one team stepping into an array was always better than the loss of two.

Now that they had merged, the risks they needed to bear were much smaller than before, and with more people, they could gain more advantages if they encountered Lu Ye.

This simple command quickly made Lu Ye's situation a bit more difficult.

Originally, with the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge sides having teams of over ten people each, he, along with Giant Armor, Yiyi, and Amber supporting, still had a significant chance of success in sneak attacks.

But now, with each Ten Thousand Demons Ridge team comprising over twenty people, it had become somewhat difficult to contend.

The array banners and bases he had purchased from Heaven's Augury treasure vault for thousands of merit points had been completely depleted. The only array banners he had left were the thirty-two awarded by the Hundred Arrays Pagoda, which Lu Ye was reluctant to use up.

However, relative to the loss, Lu Ye had also gained a lot. Killing the enemy itself earned merit, and there were various spoils of war to collect. The possessions of the Core Circle cultivators were usually richer than those of the inner circle, and the Spiritual Artifacts they used were of better quality. Lu Ye had four storage sacks hanging around his waist, with three of them fully packed besides his commonly used one.

After a skirmish with the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators, the group quietly healed their injuries.

Lu Ye had chosen to enter Fog-shrouded Mountain because he was not content to merely be hunted; in this kind of special environment, he could turn a passive situation into an active one.

He had bought thousands of merit worth of array banners and bases in advance at the Three Saints Sanctuary for this very reason.

However, Lu Ye somewhat underestimated the tenacity of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge; despite using the arrays to kill so many, Ten Thousand Demons Ridge still relentlessly pursued him, showing an undying resolve.

The current situation was not too favourable for him, but neither was it very bad.

The natural environment of Fog-shrouded Mountain made it difficult for him to be surrounded by large numbers of people. With his skills, as long as he was not surrounded, he could still carve out a bloody path.

The battle he had just initiated was a deliberate move; the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators were relentless, and thus he could not back down. By now, more than three hundred of their cultivators had

died by his hands. If he continued to kill, eventually the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge would reach their breaking point.

The injuries were not too severe, and Lu Ye silently recuperated after taking a healing pill.

However, just a moment later, Yiyi, who had been scouting nearby, sent a message that a group of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators was approaching, and their numbers were not few.

Lu Ye had no choice but to get up and continue deeper into the Fog-shrouded Mountain, accompanied by Giant Armor and Amber.

For an ordinary cultivator, being pressured like this would definitely pose a problem with the depletion of spirit force. Without spirit force to utilize, what good is a cultivator?

But Lu Ye had both the Talent Tree and the Bestial Gluttony Feast, which allowed him to replenish his spirit force very quickly, not to mention he still had over a dozen bottles of Breath Fruit wine to use.

The Ten Thousand Demons Ridge intended to use this method of entanglement to squeeze his recovery time, clearly they had miscalculated.

The only issue Lu Ye needed to consider now was his physical strength.

The time available for recovery was too short, and over these days, Lu Ye felt noticeably fatigued, a feeling that deepened as time passed.

After moving forward for more than ten miles, he stopped again to rest and recover.

Lu Ye took out some dried meat from his storage sack, shared some with Amber and Giant Armor, and slowly chewed some himself.

This chase had turned into a contest of endurance and willpower, to see who would falter first. Lu Ye would never back down voluntarily. If the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators dared to pursue him, then they must be prepared to face his counterattack.

Suddenly, a buzzing sound arose, and Lu Ye turned his eyes to see a three-inch-long wasp circling in front of Giant Armor.

Giant Armor reached out and grabbed the wasp, then opened his palm and pinched the wasp, seemingly busy with something.

By the time Giant Armor released it, the wasp had a nearly imperceptible silk thread tied to it.

Despite Giant Armor's burly appearance, he was actually quite meticulous, especially proficient in handling Flying Spirit Artifacts, often performing maneuvers that even Lu Ye had to marvel at.

Tying such a thread onto a wasp clearly also came from such a talent.

The wasp took off with a flutter of wings, and Giant Armor waved at Lu Ye and followed it.

Lu Ye faintly guessed his intent.

Together with the tiger, they followed the wasp, winding along, and after traveling approximately several miles, they found a beehive resting on the branch of a large tree.

The hive was about ten feet in diameter, oval-shaped, and bone-white in color.

Wasp after wasp returned from their outings and flew into the hive.

Giant Armor summoned his Flying Spirit Artifact and flew up to the hive, plucking the large object down with a sweep of his hand.

Instantly, wasps from inside the hive swarmed out, enveloping Giant Armor in an impenetrable cloud.

But the tough-skinned Giant Armor wasn't bothered by their stings. He waved his hand casually and landed in front of Lu Ye, breaking open the hive to reveal light gold honey that filled the air with a sweet fragrance.

Giant Armor handed half of the hive to Lu Ye and sat down with the other half, treating it like a giant watermelon, scooping out the honey and eating it gleefully with his mouth covered in golden splendor. He chuckled in his joy, clearly a sign that this wasn't his first time, otherwise, he wouldn't be so adept at it.

Lu Ye also scooped a piece of honey into his mouth, and the sweet taste immediately filled his mouth.

What surprised Lu Ye even more was that this substance wasn't just sweet and rich; it also contained some very pure spirit force, which aided in his own recovery.

It became clear to him that this honey was made from the spirit flowers of the Fog-shrouded Mountain, naturally imbued with spirit force.

This was a fine thing; if a cultivator could consume such honey at the beginning of their cultivation, it would greatly benefit their development.

Of course, for someone with Lu Ye's cultivation level, the benefits weren't as significant anymore.

As the two men and the tiger ate their fill, Lu Ye occasionally shared some with Amber, while Yiyi mournfully watched from the side...

Beside the group, the sky was filled with wasps buzzing continuously, as if protesting against the robbers before them.

After a hearty meal, the two men and the tiger lay on the ground, thoroughly satisfied.

Soon, Lu Ye was surprised to find that his fatigue was quickly vanishing, and his physical strength was greatly restored. He knew then that the honey did more than just replenish some spirit force.

This was indeed a wonderful thing, especially given Lu Ye's current predicament.

Although his storage sack was always stocked with some food, both he, Giant Armor, and even Amber had shocking appetites, and the stored food was nearly gone.

Being pursued by the people from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, they didn't even have time to hunt, and even if they did catch game, there was no time to cook it.

This honey came just in time. If possible, they could stock up some more.

Chapter 363 Good Stuff

Thinking this, Lu Ye quickly got up and gestured to Giant Armor to delve deeper into the forest.

A short while later, Lu Ye stood under a large tree, looking up at a bone-white, oval-shaped beehive; he hadn't expected to find the second beehive so easily.

Giant Armor used weapon control to ascend, plucking the beehive and then storing it inside a storage sack.

There were certainly many bees in the beehive, but the space within a storage sack was not conducive to living creatures, and stuffing it directly inside like this meant that, before long, all the bees in the beehive would die.

As they continued, their bounty kept growing.

Lu Ye took out the ten-part map again, checking his location to confirm that this area was not within the territory of an Overlord-class demon beast, and only then did he relax.

He couldn't help but be concerned; such significant gains indicated there was a large number of bees in the area, and with such a vast community, it was inevitable that some powerful individuals would emerge. If an Overlord-level bee happened to exist, he'd be in trouble.

Fortunately, there were no special markings on the ten-part map, which suggested that this area was relatively safe.

After harvesting ten beehives, Lu Ye found himself in an awkward situation—his storage sacks were no longer sufficient. He had acquired many storage sacks after killing so many Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators, but he would generally open the sacks, take their content to consolidate, and then discard the empty sacks.

The space inside each storage sack was limited and they were generally similar in size. Each beehive was about three feet in diameter, some even larger, and one storage sack could fit about three beehives at most.

Stumbling upon such treasures, Lu Ye naturally wanted to gather more. Not to mention that the honey within could serve as food reserves, replenishing his strength and spirit force, it could also hasten the growth of disciples new to the path of cultivation if brought back for them.

It wouldn't be difficult without storage sacks; he just needed to kill some Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators to acquire more.

Once he made up his mind, Lu Ye set up a large Concealment Formation around himself using the Concealment Spirit Runes as the core, hiding his figure and aura, and lay in wait quietly.

There was no need to actively search for the tracks of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators, who stuck around like relentless plasters. He just needed to wait a while for them to fall into the trap.

Less than four hours had passed before rustling sounds approached from all sides, and a team of over twenty Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators appeared nearby.

The over twenty people were neither too clustered together nor too scattered, ensuring they wouldn't be wiped out in one fell swoop if they stepped into the formation, yet close enough to support each other if attacked.

The expressions on everyone's face were vigilant because no one could be sure when Lu Yiye would suddenly launch an assault.

Several Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators had already died in this dense forest, and none of them wanted to follow in those people's footsteps.

Among this group, there was one 9th Heaven level cultivator, and the rest were of the 7th Heaven and 8th Heaven, implicitly revolving around that 9th Heaven cultivator as the core.

While everyone was on high alert, a sudden hissing sound of something tearing through the air rang out.

The 9th Heaven cultivator's face tightened, a profound sense of imminent danger surging in his heart. In his haste to turn around, he saw streaks of Liu Guang attacking right in front of him.

Given this group, with that person being the most powerful, Lu Ye naturally aimed to take him down first, and the distance was close enough to be within the optimal range for a sneak attack.

To ensure a fatal blow, Lu Ye released nine Spiritual Artifacts from his supplies box, almost instantly exerting his strongest force.

That person's reaction was swift; clearly, he was a magic cultivator. With the surge of spirit force, a thick spirit force barrier was deployed in front of him while his body hastily dodged to the side.

Thumping sounds ensued as one weapon after another chased the stars and the moon, colliding with the spirit force barrier. The Spiritual Artifacts, aided by Sharpness Spirit Runes, shattered the barrier in an instant and immediately blood splashed out.

"We're under attack!" shouted the magic cultivator in rage. However, before he could finish his words, he fell to the ground, his body going limp as a pool of blood stained the ground red.

Caught off guard by Lu Ye in such a position, probably only a physique cultivator at the 9th Heaven level could survive.

The remaining Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators swiftly retaliated, a barrage of weapon control and magic and spell attacks raining towards where Lu Ye was.

Lu Ye had already dodged to the side, but Giant Armor was not so fortunate; lacking Lu Ye's speed, he had to raise an arm, mustering spirit force and blood Qi around him to form a turtle shell-like barrier in front of him.

A flurry of impacts resounded, with Giant Armor steadily being pushed backward, struggling to withstand the onslaught from so many Heaven rank cultivators.

The turtle shell-like barrier quickly became riddled with cracks. Despite his continuous efforts to mend it with blood Qi and spirit force, it was difficult to maintain.

The hissing sound of projectiles slicing through the air was heard again. While the group from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge was preoccupied with Giant Armor, Lu Ye didn't idle. Nine weapon control artifacts turned into streaks of Liu Guang, weaving through the crowd and drawing their attention, while he himself wielding a blade charged toward the nearest enemy.

"Kill Lu Yiye!" someone yelled as everyone quickly redirected their attacks towards him.

Just then, Yiyi's figure emerged not far from the group. With the surge of spirit force, a massive golden disc appeared above her head. Runes flowed on the disc, spirit force surged, and as it rotated, a barrage of Golden Arc Slashes rained down like a storm.

But that wasn't all. Amber, perched atop Giant Armor's head, let out a roar towards the densest part of the crowd. The palpable shockwave made the group of cultivators from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge reel as if struck hard, causing a moment of dizziness and weakening their spirit force, which slackened their offensive.

Even so, Lu Ye was blasted with blood all over, forced to retreat. If he hadn't quickly constructed a Defense Spirit Rune barrier in front of himself, he would have been severely injured, if not dead, from that one blow alone.

Giant Armor charged forward to support Lu Ye, but the turtle shell barrier that formed again lasted only three breaths before shattering with a loud bang.

The cultivators of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge performed a perfect demonstration of the saying "enough ants can bite an elephant to death."

A powerful magic cultivator of the 9th Heaven level was slain by Lu Ye's surprise attack in a single encounter, but even with the combined effort of Giant Armor, Yiyi, and Amber, they couldn't gain any advantage in the face of so many Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators.

After a cultivator switches to cultivating a Heaven Rank technique, their strength increases significantly. If this had been the inner circle, Lu Ye, with the help of Giant Armor, could have contended against more than twenty cultivators of similar cultivation, but not in the Core Circle.

Giant Armor protected Lu Ye as they fought and retreated, using the cover of trees to fend off attacks from behind while they fled into the depths of the dense forest.

"Don't let him escape!" someone shouted loudly, and the people of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge swiftly gave pursuit.

"Beware of traps!" Another voice called out, as no one could be certain there weren't any formations set up by Lu Yiye ahead.

One side escaped recklessly while the other pursued with caution; they could hardly keep up. After a short while, Lu Ye and Giant Armor had vanished from sight.

Stopping with dirt-streaked faces, the group looked at each other, faces filled with anger and disbelief.

This hastily ignited battle had cost them seven or eight lives. The leading 9th Heaven level magic cultivator died especially quickly, almost at the moment Lu Ye struck, he was dead. Even though it appeared that Lu Yiye was also injured, no one could be sure of the severity of his wounds.

What made them feel even more helpless was that when they returned to the previous battlefield to investigate, they found that the storage sacks of the deceased cultivators had mysteriously disappeared.

The lost storage sacks were naturally filched by Yiyi while the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators were chasing after Lu Ye; she had quietly run back in the meantime.

Two hours later, by the side of a mountain stream, Lu Ye removed his clothes, stained with fresh blood, washed his body, and with Yiyi's help, bandaged his wounds.

The current situation was somewhat troubling for him. He wasn't willing to just retreat while being persistently hunted by Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, but fighting back also came with significant risks. For instance, in that previous battle, if Giant Armor hadn't been formidable enough, they all would have died.

Not many in the Spirit Stream Realm, especially physique cultivators, could withstand that level of ferocious attack—Giant Armor managed two rounds, and their escape was only possible thanks to Giant Armor's protection.

Even so, he had still sustained injuries that were neither light nor severe.

It had to be said, the deployment of a team of more than twenty from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge was indeed a problem he could not solve readily.

If there were enough array banners and bases to set up a formation, it wouldn't be difficult to deal with them. Before, with the help of formations, he could exterminate seventy people—what were twenty more to him?

But all the array banners and bases he had purchased from Heaven's Augury treasure vault were now used up, leaving no options for the lack of ingredients.

There wasn't much he could do now, except to seek good opportunities and create as much loss as possible for Ten Thousand Demons Ridge.

Regaining his composure, he unlocked the restriction lock on the storage sacks, gathered the contents inside, rested for a while, and then set off once more.

Yiyi brought back about ten storage sacks, which didn't mean they had killed that many people; some cultivators carried more than one storage sack on them.

With so many storage sacks, they were almost sufficient for their needs.

No matter how many beehives there were in this area, there would be a limit.

Half a day later, Lu Ye and Giant Armor, who had just collected some beehives and were resting, saw Yiyi suddenly return with excitement and said, "Lu Ye, Lu Ye, I found something great."

As she spoke, she grabbed Lu Ye's hand and pulled him up.

"What great thing?"

Lu Ye's interest was piqued, keenly aware that Yiyi, who had been with him for a while, was no stranger to extraordinary things. Her excitement suggested this was something unusual, and moreover, this deep into Fog-shrouded Mountain, no one knew what kind of heavenly materials and earthly treasures it might conceal.

"You'll know when you see it."

With Yiyi leading the way, they moved rapidly in one direction.

Soon, Lu Ye showed a surprised expression because he could smell a very rich scent of flowers, and it didn't seem like the aroma of a single type of flower but rather like the fragrance of countless flowers mixed together, the layers extremely complex.

It wasn't until the view ahead suddenly cleared, the unchanging dense forest of Fog-shrouded Mountain abruptly gave way, and Yiyi pulled him to the side of a mountain rock, pointing down at a splash of flowers in multiple hues: "Look."

Gazing into the distance, Lu Ye saw the valley below covered in undulating waves of a flowery sea, beautiful as if it were not of this world.

Chapter 364 Poking the Hornet's Nest

Yiyi wanted Lu Ye to see not the enchanting, wind-swayed sea of flowers, but rather the immensely large, bone-white structure standing amid the flowers, as if it were a thing cast from white jade.

Even with some mental preparation, when Lu Ye saw this thing, he couldn't help but suck in a breath of cold air.

In that endless sea of purple and red flowers, this thing that seemed to be cast from white jade was particularly eye-catching.

A beehive, an enormously large beehive!

It stood like a huge palace at the very center of the valley.

A beehive of such magnitude was simply unheard of, and there were wasps about one to two feet in length flying to and fro in the boundless sea of flowers in that valley.

Seeing the size of these wasps and the variegated patterns on their bodies, the corners of Lu Ye's eyes uncontrollably twitched.

The wasps they had encountered before were only two to three inches long, which were quite ordinary, but the wasps in this sea of flowers could already be categorized as demon bees.

What's even more alarming is the number of these demon bees... it's somewhat frightening.

The honey produced in those common beehives was already a covetable treasure; one could only wonder what kind of honey would come from this beehive.

Lu Ye couldn't help but be moved by the thought.

No wonder people say that deep in the mountains there are often heavenly materials and earthly treasures. Many cultivators, after reaching a certain level of cultivation, like to explore the wilderness, often finding some good things.

Isn't this beehive in view a heavenly material and an earthly treasure? Indeed, to obtain the honey from that beehive would require taking some risks, but there are no gains without pains.

After pondering for a moment, Lu Ye instructed, "You guys wait here for me, I'll go take a look."

Yiyi immediately said, "I'll come with you."

"Wait here."

In reality, this kind of adventure was more suited to Yiyi than himself, because she was a Spiritual Body who could directly burrow underground if they encountered any danger, something that no cultivator could compare with.

But this did not mean that Yiyi would never be in danger.

The beehive alone looked quite abnormal, not to mention the countless gigantic demon bees in the valley; Lu Ye couldn't let Yiyi take such a risk.

If he went alone, even if he encountered danger, he had some assurance that he would be able to escape.

Yiyi puffed up her cheeks, looking unhappy.

Lu Ye didn't pay attention to her. With a leap, he descended toward the bottom of the valley, and in midair, he had already activated the Concealment Spirit Runes to cover his body.

In an instant, his figure disappeared without a trace, even his aura had been completely concealed.

If it hadn't been for acquiring these Concealment Spirit Runes from the Talent Tree, Lu Ye wouldn't have dared to act this way. Those wasps, each one or two feet long, looked rather formidable. A few dozen or even a hundred wouldn't catch his eye, but there were far more than that number of demon bees in the sea of flowers.

From high above, the sea of flowers undulated endlessly, but only upon descending into it did he realize the plants here were unusually tall. Lu Ye wasn't well-versed in pharmacology and didn't know if these plants were medicinal herbs.

Maintaining the Concealment Spirit Runes, Lu Ye moved forward silently, with demon bees occasionally flying past him, and the buzzing sound constant by his ears.

After traveling for a considerable time, he finally arrived in front of the beehive. Standing before it and looking up, Lu Ye felt his own insignificance.

There were numerous holes around the beehive, with diligent demon bees coming in and out.

After searching for a while, Lu Ye found a relatively large hole and squeezed through it. However, no sooner had he gone a short distance than a demon bee crawled out right toward him.

Lu Ye immediately pressed his body tightly against the wall to conceal himself. As the demon bee crawled by his side, it seemed to sense something. The bee's head turned, looking in his direction, but upon detecting no anomaly, it continued crawling forward.

He continued advancing, brushing past many demon bees.

The effectiveness of the Concealment Spirit Runes was unexpectedly good; these simple-minded demon bees probably couldn't imagine that someone would be so bold as to venture into their hive.

Before long, Lu Ye had passed through the corridor and entered the interior of the beehive.

The space inside was obviously larger, and the beehive was filled with the unique sweet scent of honey. Simply smelling it evoked feelings of joy and relaxation.

Lu Ye became more convinced that the honey produced here was in no way comparable to the ones he had gathered before. If honey were to be graded by quality, the ones he had previously harvested would undoubtedly be inferior, while the honey from here would be considered superior.

There were even more demon bees inside the beehive. Lu Ye had to dodge the bees that came and went as he followed the sweet scent and moved on.

Soon, he found the storage area for the honey. Chunks of golden, pristine honey, like clusters of yellow crystals, filled the inner part of the beehive, their scent alone enough to make one's mouth water.

About a dozen demon bees, nearly as long as a person, guarded the area, moving back and forth. These fellows were much larger than the ones outside and looked even more intimidating.

Moreover, Lu Ye also found a groove-like object on the side, and the reason he noticed it was that there were several demon bees the size of a human constantly guarding it, not moving an inch.

Lu Ye approached quietly and took a closer look by the groove, his expression slightly shifting.

The groove was not large, about the size of a bowl, and it contained roughly half a bowl's worth of amber-colored, golden liquid.

Lu Ye was not certain what it was but suspected it might be the royal jelly from within the beehive.

It was undeniable that this half bowl of liquid was far more valuable than the bee honey.

Now that he had found the good stuff, the next step was to figure out how to take it away.

After a moment of thought, Lu Ye reached into his storage sack and fished out several Spirit Stones, flicking them toward the four directions.

The unusual noise alarmed the patrolling demon bees, their limbs moving as they quickly rushed toward the source of the commotion.

In the blink of an eye, only the few demon bees guarding the royal jelly remained.

These few demon bees seemed very dutiful and appeared unlikely to leave their post easily.

With no other choice, Lu Ye had to stimulate his spirit force. As the supplies box hummed, nine streaks of Liu Guang shot out, a sizzling sound followed, and those few demon bees standing still each met their end, dismembered.

With these actions, Lu Ye could no longer remain hidden, but at this moment, he couldn't care less. He quickly stirred his spirit force, wrapped up the amber liquid from the groove, and directly stuffed it into an empty storage sack. Then, he dashed to one side, eagerly gathering the crystal-like golden honey nearby.

The buzzing sounds rose near his ears as the distracted demon bees returned, swiftly lunging at Lu Ye.

A moment later, a fiery red streak of Liu Guang broke through the beehive's seal and shot upward into the sky, revealing Lu Ye who had activated his wings rune tattoo to escape.

At this moment, Lu Ye could be described as extremely bedraggled, grimacing within the glowing light; he was struck by at least a dozen bee stings. Each of those stings was half a foot long and embedded in his body like blades.

Moreover, there was a potent poison on the stings, and Lu Ye could clearly feel his body becoming uncoordinated and stiffening up, even his thoughts becoming sluggish.

Normally, a cultivator in such a situation would likely be waiting for death, not to mention the intense poison in those stings, which was more than a cultivator at the Spirit Stream Realm could handle.

And it wasn't just that; right now, a large swarm of demon bees was chasing after Lu Ye, and even the bees that were collecting honey in the valley were alarmed.

On the rocks, Giant Armor and Yiyi watched with wide eyes as a haze rose above the flower sea, with millions upon millions of demon bees chasing after Lu Ye's figure, a scene so spectacular that it was horrifying.

Yiyi's heart was in disarray, and she leaped up, about to give chase, when a message from the battlefield marking came through. She quickly checked it and discovered it was from Lu Ye: "Run!"

Yiyi halted her motion, called out to Giant Armor, and both turned heads to dive into the dense forest.

In the sky, Lu Ye felt a bit better, with the Talent Tree burning the toxins. He was not concerned about being poisoned to death, though some immediate reactions to the poison were unavoidable.

The relentless buzzing in his ears seemed almost continuous as Lu Ye glanced back and got a shock.

This time he had truly stirred up a hornet's nest; the dark mass of demon bees was catching up, like a heavy dark cloud about to engulf him.

No longer caring to remove the poisonous stingers from his body, Lu Ye furiously pushed his spirit force, his wings fluttering behind him as he shot up towards the sky.

He instantly broke through the cloud sea that enveloped Fog-shrouded Mountain, the dazzling sunlight spilling over, causing Lu Ye to squint slightly.

"Lu Yiyi!" someone suddenly called out loudly.

Lu Ye turned towards the voice and saw over a dozen streaks of Liu Guang heading straight for him, with even more streaks in the distance moving closer after hearing the shout.

With Qin Zheng at the helm, the Lu Ye Extermination Alliance had been pursuing Lu Ye for days. Would they not be prepared for Lu Ye's escape through air? Not only were there many people in the forests in pursuit of Lu Ye, but the skies were also constantly patrolled.

With a wide field of view from the air, Lu Ye had just revealed himself when he was spotted by people from the Lu Ye Extermination Alliance.

In an instant, those cultivators, like cats that had smelled blood, converged towards him.

But what puzzled them was, Lu Yiye seemed somewhat in a disarray, with ten or so long needle-like objects sticking out all over him, not knowing what he had encountered.

Even more baffling to them was that upon seeing them, Lu Ye did not evade but instead headed straight for them.

"How bold!" the leader shouted angrily, raising his hand to cast a weapon control at Lu Ye.

In terms of weapon control-flying skills, Lu Ye was not as good as Giant Armor, but he was not flying using weapon control at this moment. Instead, he was using the wings spirit runes, undoubtedly faster and more agile than weapon control-flying.

Facing the Liu Guang heading towards him, Lu Ye weaved and dodged through the attacks, closing the distance rapidly while avoiding their strikes.

"Everyone, be careful!" the leader shouted, aware of Lu Ye's tactics. As the distance between them closed, they immediately spread out to the sides, wary and on guard.

Unexpectedly, Lu Ye had no intention of attacking them; they passed by each other as Lu Ye continued straight toward the distance.

Chapter 365 Truly Crazy

Seeing Lu Ye fleeing in a panic, the cultivators of the Lu Ye Extermination Alliance were somewhat at a loss.

Before they could turn around, a buzzing sound reached their ears.

Someone immediately asked in confusion, "What's that sound?"

As soon as the words were spoken, their vision filled with terror.

Right where Lu Ye appeared, the clouds and mist rolled and writhed as if something was about to break through, accompanied by continuous buzzing sounds, their sight flooded by a swarm of demon bees.

The Lu Ye Extermination Alliance cultivators' scalps went numb as they finally understood why Lu Ye was running so fast—he had somehow provoked a swarm of demon bees and was now being chased by them.

The demon bees were incredibly fast; almost as soon as they appeared, they were upon them.

The cultivators of the Extermination Alliance hastily activated their protective spirit forces to shield themselves and hurriedly descended, but ultimately they were too late. As the protective spirit forces around these cultivators rapidly dissipated within the swarm, they were stung by venomous stingers and screamed as they plummeted from the sky.

Where the demon bees passed, more than a dozen cultivators from the Lu Ye Extermination Alliance vanished without a trace.

The cultivators rushing from a distance, seeing this scene, were greatly shocked. They all stopped in their tracks, watching as the dark cloud of demon bees swept past overhead.

It was not until now that Lu Ye had the chance to pull out the stingers stuck in his body, each one bringing a spurt of fresh blood.

These stingers were very long and had penetrated deep into the flesh, but fortunately, they hadn't hit any vital points.

After removing more than a dozen stingers, Lu Ye looked back and saw the swarm of bees still clinging to his trail like relentless maggots, and what made him feel even more helpless was that these demon bees were even faster than his regular weapon control-flying.

Fortunately, he was currently using the wings spirit runes, so as long as he had a little time, he could shake off the swarm.

That was a close call!

Just as he was thinking this, he felt an unusual sensation from the wings rune tattoo on his back, and the spirit force he sent there seemed delayed.

Lu Ye's expression became grave as he realized he was probably in some trouble.

This wings rune tattoo was inked by Madam Yun herself before he participated in the Spirit Stream Defense Battle. At that time, Madam Yun had said this temporary tattoo could last for a total of six hours. In other words, beyond this time limit, the tattoo would lose its effect.

Having used this tattoo intermittently over time, the cumulative duration Lu Ye had activated it was now close to reaching the limit.

He had also been vaguely aware of this, so since advancing to Level 8 and being capable of weapon control-flying, he rarely activated the wings rune tattoo except when necessary; it was something that could save his life in critical moments.

Unexpectedly, at this crucial juncture today, the wings rune tattoo was reaching its limit.

With no other choice, Lu Ye had to bring out his spirit ark, and before the wings rune tattoo lost its effect, he switched to weapon control-flying.

He also activated the flight spirit runes on his own spirit ark, just barely maintaining his previous speed.

He took out a few elixir pills, gulped them down, and then drank a bottle of Breath Fruit wine, quickly recovering the spirit force he had spent.

Using the wings rune tattoo consumed a lot of spirit force, and maintaining the Move-Like-The-Wind Spirit Runes on the spirit ark was equally taxing, so Lu Ye had to ensure he had enough spirit force endurance.

In the midst of the chase, he pressed on.

Only after two hours did Lu Ye manage to shake off the bee swarm pursuing him. He let out a long sigh and stopped his fleeing light, finding a safe place to rest and recover for a bit.

Meanwhile, the cultivators of the Lu Ye Extermination Alliance all received the news that Lu Ye was being chased by the bee swarm and had already escaped.

This infuriated the group of cultivators from the Extermination Alliance, who had been hunting him down in the Fog-shrouded Mountain for so many days, losing hundreds of people, only to have their quarry escape—how could they accept this calmly?

Although it was unknown why Lu Yiye was chased by a swarm of demon bees, that fellow had many tricks and moved fast while controlling weapons, so he was most likely to escape safely.

Now that the Extermination Alliance had lost track of Lu Ye, there was no point in continuing their pursuit.

After a short exchange of messages among the various parties, they had no choice but to accept the failure of this operation. Streaks of light rose into the air, weaving above the sea of fog, preparing to leave.

However, just then, new news came through—Lu Yiye had actually run back again, still followed by that vast swarm of demon bees. The cultivators he encountered were unable to avoid in time, losing over a dozen men in a most embarrassing predicament.

The cultivators of the Lu Ye Extermination Alliance were somewhat dumbfounded, truly not understanding how Lu Yiye had offended that swarm of demon bees to such an unrelenting extent.

But to them, this was a stroke of luck; it had been only them chasing Lu Ye, and now a swarm of demon bees was lending them aid, bringing great satisfaction to the cultivators of the Extermination Alliance and eliciting feelings that good and evil indeed receive their just rewards.

Even though they themselves had suffered some losses at the hands of the demon bee swarm, hadn't they lost enough people over this time? As long as they could kill Lu Ye, all their previous losses would be worthwhile.

After a brief discussion, those Extermination Alliance cultivators who had been ready to leave decided to stay. Even if they could not kill Lu Yiye with their own hands, they wanted to watch him meet his doom!

If they could coordinate with that swarm of demon bees, even better.

At this moment, Lu Ye was truly at a loss for words.

Perhaps it was because he had killed some demon bees in the beehive earlier, or maybe there was some undetectable scent lingering on him. Even though he had managed to shake off the swarm before, it was not long before the bees were once again hot on his heels.

During his escape, Lu Ye changed all his clothes inside out and washed his body several times with clean water, but still, he could not completely shake off the swarm.

If he could keep reinforcing the flight spirit runes on the spirit ark continuously, allowing him to fly with weapon control, Lu Ye did feel confident about evading the swarm.

However, even as a 7th Heaven level cultivator, he could not withstand such consumption. The energy required to enhance a spirit ark for flight was significant, even more exhausting than activating his wings rune tattoo. With his reserve of spirit force, he simply could not maintain it for a long time.

Unable to get rid of them through weapon control-flying, Lu Ye had no choice but to double back and try to use the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators to delay the bees slightly. This indeed caused some damage to the people of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, but it did not change the current situation.

Having no other choice, he had to turn off his fleeing light and move forward through the dense forest, relying on the natural barriers of the forest to slow down the bees' flight speed.

While running, he suddenly encountered a group of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators.

Both parties were taken aback the moment they met.

But Lu Ye quickly took something from his storage sack and threw it directly at the other party—it was a beehive about one zhang in diameter.

Someone acted, striking the beehive in the air, bursting it open. The sweet scent immediately filled the air, and fragments of the beehive scattered in all directions.

Smelling this sweet scent, many Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators immediately changed color, their expressions turning to horror.

Everyone knew that Lu Yiye was being chased by a swarm of demon bees. Originally, if they encountered him here, as long as they could slightly delay Lu Ye's escape speed, once the swarm of demon bees caught up, Lu Ye's situation would become perilous.

No one expected him to throw a beehive at them first...

The buzzing sound rapidly approached from behind Lu Ye, and looking up, a dense dark cloud appeared amongst the trees...

Lu Ye, who had thrown the beehive, had already fled to the side, leaving them to face the terror of the swarm directly.

"Run!" someone shouted, immediately deploying their Flying Spirit Artifact and soaring into the sky.

Others turned and ran towards the back, causing a chaotic scene.

The swarm chasing Lu Ye suddenly split into several parts. The majority still pursued him doggedly, while the smaller fractions chased after the fleeing cultivators of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge.

Soon after, screams rang out. Not only did those Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators fail to escape, but the cultivators flying through the air were also caught by the bees.

With the strength of Core Circle cultivators, a few dozen or a hundred of such demon bees posed no threat. But once their numbers grew, resistance became difficult.

Once their protective artifacts and spirit forces were breached, bee stings penetrated their bodies, and the bee venom seeped in, death was almost certain.

Lu Ye, who was fleeing, suddenly had a gleam in his eyes. While being chased by the swarm, he had been thinking about one problem—how the demon bees were able to locate him.

He had changed his clothes and cleaned his body, so the only thing left was some scent he couldn't detect himself, like the unique sweet scent of honey...

When he had been looting the golden honey in the beehive, it was inevitable that he would be contaminated with that scent, which was difficult to clean off with normal methods in a short period of time.

Throwing a beehive at the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators was just a test. After all, he had many of these ordinary beehives on him, so losing one wasn't a big deal.

The results were unexpected.

Looking at it now, being relentlessly pursued by a swarm of demon bees did not necessarily seem like a bad thing.

The Ten Thousand Demons Ridge squad he had just encountered had over thirty people. With his strength, he could not have faced them directly, but by using them as a pawn, he could easily solve the problem.

It's just that he didn't know how many squads like that one there were.

Lu Ye also thought of Giant Armor and Yiyi. Amidst the chaos, he sent a message asking them to evacuate the area first and he would find an opportunity to reconvene with them later.

The demon bees were truly maddened now, and it was very dangerous for Giant Armor and the others to stay nearby.

Not long after, Yiyi replied, telling him to be very careful.

Without having to worry about the safety of Giant Armor, Yiyi, and Amber, Lu Ye could act without any concerns.

Traveling through the dense forest, although much slower than flying with weapon control, was actually better due to the natural obstacles and barriers. He just dared not stop for a moment.

The situation suddenly became even more chaotic.

In the Fog-shrouded Mountain, Lu Ye led the swarm on a wild chase, bringing disaster to any Ten Thousand Demons Ridge squad he encountered.

After suffering several significant setbacks and losing hundreds of their number, the Lu Ye Extermination Alliance had to admit that it was no longer feasible to remain. Otherwise, their losses would only grow.

With feelings of helplessness and unwillingness, the Lu Ye Extermination Alliance cultivators ascended into the sky one after another, preparing to withdraw from Fog-shrouded Mountain. As for Lu Yiye, let him bite the dust with the swarm.

Persistently chased by such a swarm, it was impossible for a 7th Heaven level cultivator to survive, no matter what.

Chapter 366 Land of Fiery Flames

Less than half a day later, Lu Ye sensed something amiss; it seemed that there were no Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators in this area anymore. Not only that, but even the demon beasts that originally lived here seemed to have sensed the coming danger and were fleeing the area one after another.

The relentless pursuit of the bee swarm was incessant and unforgiving. Had it not been for Lu Ye's ability to continuously replenish his spirit force with the help of the Talent Tree and the Bestial Gluttony Feast, he would have been unable to hold on.

The honey scavenged from that huge beehive had been a great help; this fine-quality honey had a more significant effect on the recovery of stamina and spirit force compared to the inferior honey he encountered earlier.

At this point, he could no longer be concerned about whether he might attract any scents again. Without properly replenishing his strength, there was no way to continue fleeing.

Lu Ye had tried flying through the air several times, but even if he maintained the Move-Like-The-Wind Spirit Runes regardless of the consumption of spirit force, he could only temporarily shake off the bee swarm. As soon as he took a brief pause, the swarm would quickly catch up to him.

It was endless.

The only plan for now was to take a less conventional route to rid himself of the swarm.

The ten-part map showed that deep within Fog-shrouded Mountain, there was a Land of Fiery Flames, enveloping thousands of miles and with an extremely harsh environment. It could be considered one of the perilous lands within the Spirit Stream battlefield.

In theory, such an extreme environment should be barren, but in reality, while the Land of Fiery Flames was unbearably hot, it still possessed a vitality within its heat. This resulted in the land neither being lush and green nor being a barren wasteland.

Moreover, that place was rich in fire attribute Spirit Plants and minerals.

When Lu Ye initially decided to enter Fog-shrouded Mountain, he had discovered the Land of Fiery Flames and considered visiting it after resolving the issue with those from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge who were after him.

After all, the Talent Tree could devour unclaimed things containing scorching energy; there might be some gains to be had in the Land of Fiery Flames.

Now the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators had vanished, but he was being followed by something even more troublesome, leaving Lu Ye with no choice but to head towards the Land of Fiery Flames.

As long as the environment there was harsh enough, it could block the bee swarm for him.

Of course, the prerequisite was that he himself could withstand it!

After all, he was a 7th Heaven level cultivator, and his body was comparable to a physique cultivator of the same level. His endurance should be stronger than that of the demon bees.

With his decision made, Lu Ye followed the guidance of the ten-part map and headed straight for the Land of Fiery Flames.

He even tried to fly through the air a few times on the way, hoping to lose the swarm of bees behind him, but all attempts ended in failure.

After walking and stopping intermittently, two days later, the tall trees that filled his vision had disappeared, the vegetation became noticeably sparser, and a faint burning heat flowed throughout the surrounding environment.

He had arrived at the outskirts of the Land of Fiery Flames.

Two days of almost non-stop fleeing had been grueling for Lu Ye. Now that he had reached the Land of Fiery Flames and confirmed that the environment matched what was recorded on the ten-part map, a glimmer of hope immediately surged in his heart.

As he continued forward, the vegetation grew even sparser. With no natural barriers and obstacles, the speed of the pursuing bee swarm increased significantly.

Out of necessity, Lu Ye had to bring out his Flying Spirit Artifact, skimming across just a few dozen feet above the ground.

The farther he went, the more apparent the scorching heat became, to the point where even the ground started to become dry and cracked.

However, as recorded on the ten-part map, this scorching heat was not devoid of vitality. On the contrary, it contained a unique life force, which made it possible for certain Spirit Plants to survive in such an environment.

There were rumors that a supreme treasure existed within the Land of Fiery Flames, which was the source of the peculiar environment. Over the years, many cultivators had been attracted to enter the Land of Fiery Flames in search of treasure.

But they either returned empty-handed or their corpses were left to decay in the wilderness.

It must be known that on the ten-part maps sold by the Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union, the Land of Fiery Flames was marked as a perilous land. Every location that was marked as a perilous land was a forbidden zone for cultivators.

The dangers here not only came from the environment itself but also from factors outside of it.

For example... demon beasts!

The special environment of the Land of Fiery Flames attracted many fire attribute demon beasts to live here. Many of them were extremely powerful, and an average cultivator would stand no chance against them.

For instance, the fire lizard that Lu Ye encountered at the moment. This creature crawled on the ground, blending in with the surroundings, its stealth not inferior even to the best ghost cultivators.

When Lu Ye flew overhead, a long tongue shot out, sticking to the flying spirit ark. Had Lu Ye not reacted quickly, deploying several weapon control attacks from his supplies box to sever it, he would likely have been dragged down.

The fire lizard's tongue was incredibly elastic, and Lu Ye's weapon control attacks failed to cut it completely. After being hurt, the creature even spat out flames ferociously.

Lu Ye immediately ascended higher to hastily avoid it.

As a result, the bee swarm that had been chasing him became unfortunate victims; under the raging flames, at least dozens of demon bees perished.

More fire lizards revealed themselves nearby, spewing out bursts of flames, causing swathes of demon bees to fall like raindrops.

Seeing this spectacle, Lu Ye's eyebrows lifted slightly, feeling a sense of relief for the persistent frustration he had been carrying for days.

Yet, were the demon bees so easily provoked? The Lu Ye Extermination Alliance cultivators who had been stung to death by them in the hundreds served as a warning; although these creatures had low spiritual intelligence, their vengefulness was exceptionally strong. Lu Ye had merely scavenged some honey and royal jelly from that huge beehive, and they had chased him relentlessly all the way here.

The fire lizards had dared to slaughter the demon bees— their fate could not be good.

The buzzing became more intense, a blanket of demon bees descending from the sky; the flames they spat out were quickly extinguished. Accompanied by hissing noises, the fire lizards lay stiff on the ground, spasmodically twitching.

After the swarm of bees had whizzed past, only about a dozen fire lizard corpses remained on the ground.

The fire lizards were just peripheral demon beasts, not too strong. The deeper one went, the more fire-attribute demon beasts one encountered, and their strength correspondingly greater.

These demon beasts usually perched within their own territory, occasionally venturing out to hunt. No one had expected that disaster would befall them while they sat at home, brought down from the heavens.

Perhaps having learned from their encounter with the fire lizards, wherever the swarm of bees went, they stung any demon beast they came across, whether provoked or not, causing their victims' bodies to swell and fall dead.

In no time, the Land of Fiery Flames was strewn with countless dead and injured demon beasts.

Perhaps influenced by the scorching environment around them, the demon bees seemed to have lost their minds at this moment, frenziedly retaliating against all living creatures around them.

Perhaps their simple spiritual intelligence had sensed that Lu Ye, the thief who had stolen their treasure, was about to make his escape.

A half-day later, Lu Ye had ventured deeply into the Land of Fiery Flames.

Here, the searing heat of the surrounding environment was more than the average cultivator could withstand, and the high temperature made the surrounding area appear abnormally dark red, as if twisted.

Lu Ye activated his spirit force to protect his body, yet he was still drenched in sweat. His perspiration had barely emerged before being evaporated, rendering his clothes rigid and extremely uncomfortable against his skin.

This was despite his cultivation being at the 7th Heaven level and his practicing of a fire attribute Cultivation Technique; otherwise, he wouldn't have lasted this long.

By this time, the pursuing swarm of demon bees had also suffered heavy losses. Chasing him all this way, countless had been killed by demon beasts along their path. Those that remained seemed to have lost their vitality, not only slowing down significantly but also, many of the weaker bees had fallen out of the chase entirely. Even more were dropping to the ground as their wings were damaged by the high temperature; their limbs melted by the intense heat of the ground, they lost their life force and ultimately combusted into fireballs.

Lu Ye looked back and felt a sense of calm, knowing that coming to the Land of Fiery Flames had been the right choice; otherwise, he wouldn't have been able to shake off this swarm of demon bees.

After flying a bit further, the sounds of pursuit from behind gradually quieted.

Looking back again, Lu Ye saw that the now sparse number of demon bees were no longer advancing but hovered in place, quietly watching him.

A moment later, the remnants of the swarm reversed direction and returned the way they had come.

Lu Ye watched them go.

He had finally shaken off this plague of demon bees.

With a lightened heart, overwhelming fatigue washed over him, and the spirit ark that he was controlling through the air wobbled slightly.

Lu Ye quickly took some good-quality honey from his storage sack to replenish his physical strength and spirit force, and also swallowed several elixir pills.

He neither retreated nor continued onward.

Lu Ye lowered his fleeing light and descended.

He had been relentlessly pursued for several days and hadn't had a chance to properly rest. Although the environment was harsh, there was no longer the pressing danger of being chased, so he could stop to rest for a while and recover somewhat.

He chose not to retreat for two reasons. Firstly, he feared the swarm of demon bees might be waiting for him outside. Having managed to shake them off after so much difficulty, Lu Ye never wanted to deal with that swarm of demon bees again in his life.

The second reason was the abnormality of the Talent Tree.

Since half a day ago, he had had a vague feeling that something was unusual about the Talent Tree; this feeling was very similar to when he used the Talent Tree to absorb Earth's Core Fire.

Upon introspection, he could even see new roots emerging from the Talent Tree anchored in his Root Spiritual Orifice, floating all around.

It looked as though the Talent Tree wanted to absorb something, but couldn't find the spot...

This made Lu Ye certain of something: there must be fire-type treasures in the Land of Fiery Flames that the Talent Tree could absorb!

This was a great attraction for Lu Ye. Over the past few days, the Earth's Core Fire absorbed by the Talent Tree had all been purchased from the Heaven's Augury treasure vault with his own merits, each portion of Earth's Core Fire costing two hundred merits.

For any cultivator, two hundred merits were no small sum, and Lu Ye had spent roughly twenty thousand merits in total on them.

If he could find fire-type treasures in this place for the Talent Tree to absorb, it would effectively save him a substantial amount of merits.

Naturally, this was worth exploring for him.

As time passed, Lu Ye slowly recovered, and the surrounding heat seemed to lessen considerably.

Lu Ye knew it wasn't that the heat itself had diminished, but rather that he had gradually adapted to the environment here, giving his physique some resistance to it.

He hadn't noticed this before because he had delved in too quickly. He had flown in with weapon control, and as he went deeper, the harshness of the environment accelerated too quickly for his body to adjust.

Now that he had stopped, this adaptability was slowly becoming apparent.

Realizing this, Lu Ye abandoned his original plan to continue deeper with weapon control and instead proceeded on foot, stepping forward deliberately.

Chapter 367

The sun bore down, and in the Land of Fiery Flames, which spanned thousands of miles, Lu Ye shed his robe, walked bare-chested with the Boulder Mountain Saber in hand, stepping forward gradually.

He did not activate the spirit force to protect his body, allowing the searing heat around him to erode his form, using this to heighten his bodily resistance to the harsh environment, and simultaneously felt more acutely the limits of what his body could endure.

Back when he was a mining slave in Evil Moon Valley, due to intensive labor and scarce food, Lu Ye's physique had been rather frail.

But after he embarked on the path of cultivation, his physical strength slowly increased, especially after gaining the Scale Armor in Dragon Spring, the enhancement to his physique was visibly apparent.

At this moment, his bare upper body was covered in robust muscles, crisscrossed with scars from sharp weapons.

These scars were all marks from bloody battles with his enemies.

Last time, after returning to the Righteous Blood Sect from the inner circle, Second Senior Sister, with her skills as a healing cultivator, had removed the remaining scars on his body.

But for cultivators, fights and battles were inevitable, old scars faded and new ones formed, a normal occurrence.

Sweat slid down his spine and chest, evaporating quickly, and even for a 7th Heaven level cultivator like him, he had to occasionally take out his water flask to replenish the water his body lost.

His pace was not fast, which allowed the surrounding environment to constantly temper his flesh, continuously enhancing his physical resistance to the searing heat, so though slow, his steps never ceased.

Occasionally, he would stop and engage in a fierce battle with a demon beast encountered along the way.

The demon beasts that lived here were all of the fire type, drawn by the unique conditions of this place, as they could grow faster here than elsewhere.

The deeper he went, the stronger the demon beasts he encountered, yet none were a match for Lu Ye.

The demon beasts he killed were not wasted, their blood collected, and their unique body parts were useful for Artifact Refining; even their skins could be sold, and their flesh was highly nourishing for cultivators.

Amber loved eating these the most.

After communicating with Yiyi, Lu Ye learned that Giant Armor had taken her and Amber away from Fog-shrouded Mountain, hiding in a secluded location; he instructed them to stay hidden and wait for him to finish his matters here before joining them.

Night fell, and the full moon rose, but the Land of Fiery Flames did not cool off with the arrival of darkness; it remained unbearably hot.

He kept moving forward.

On the third morning after escaping the swarm of bees, Lu Ye had ventured deep into the core of the Land of Fiery Flames. According to the ten-part map, he was less than about 30 miles from the heart of the Land of Fiery Flames.

Even for someone with Lu Ye's strong constitution, such deep penetration was becoming unbearable.

Using the pervasive heat of this place to fortify his body's resistance had its limits; since last night, Lu Ye had begun to activate his spirit force for protection, barely managing to reach this point.

At his current location, even with the protection of the spirit force, it was hard to progress further.

In such an area, no demon beast could survive; even those of the fire type couldn't endure the extreme conditions here.

The name 'perilous land,' a forbidden zone for cultivators, was not given lightly.

This made Lu Ye somewhat unwilling.

If there truly were fire-element treasures in the Land of Fiery Flames, they must be at the very center; if he were too far, he wouldn't insist, but now he was less than about 30 miles away...

Giving up here would render all his previous efforts in vain.

But he had indeed reached his limit; to persist would only be inviting misery.

He examined himself, looking for any possible items or methods he might use, and it seemed that the Talent Tree might help.

The Talent Tree could devour the power of the fire attribute; using its power to withstand the heat here shouldn't be a problem.

But the key point was that this object was rooted in his Root Spiritual Orifice, somewhat virtual yet somewhat real, never manifesting externally; how could he utilize it?

After some thought, Lu Ye realized a problem: since the environment here was so intense, it meant it was rich in fire attribute Spiritual Energy, invisible to the naked eye but certainly within the scope of the Talent Tree's absorption...

Why did he need the Talent Tree to manifest externally to protect himself, when he could just stimulate the Talent Tree to devour the surrounding blistering power?

With this realization, Lu Ye suddenly found that his understanding of the Talent Tree had always been misled; if this were the case, then facing enemies who had cultivated a fire-element technique later on would give him an immense advantage.

A thought flickered through his mind, and he stimulated the power of the Talent Tree; the next instant, the roots of the Talent Tree in his Root Spiritual Orifice suddenly multiplied significantly, then disappeared as if they had reached into some unknown space.

Lu Ye sensed something and immediately activated his Insight Spirit Runes, enhancing his eyes.

He looked down at his hands, and the sight in his field of vision caused him a moment of surprise.

The vision enhanced by the Insight Spirit Runes was different from normal vision, for the Insight Spirit Runes could reveal things invisible to the naked eye, like the flow of spirit force.

Under the enhancement of Insight, the world Lu Ye saw was full of multicolored brilliance, these were the rich colors displayed by the various attributes of Spiritual Energy.

At that moment, the scene within his field of view was a fiery red color, with no other colors present.

This was because the fire attribute spiritual energy of this area was excessively dense.

The spirit force flowing in his hands was also a fiery red, mixed with a faint shade of gold, as Lu Ye's own spirit force was primarily fire-supported by gold.

However, atop the flowing spirit force in his hands, there now appeared countless root-like things, swaying with the flow of the spirit force.

Those roots were clearly the roots of the Talent Tree.

Not only were they on his hands, but everywhere within sight on his body.

At first glance, Lu Ye looked like a furry humanoid monster.

In the past, when he had activated the Talent Tree to devour the Earth's Core Fire, Lu Ye had never used the Insight Spirit Runes to observe, and only at this moment did he understand how the Talent Tree devoured the Earth's Core Fire.

It clearly used its own body as an intermediary, with the roots acting as a bridge.

No wonder he never felt the heat of the Earth's Core Fire when the Talent Tree devoured it, even if he held the Earth's Core Fire in his hands, because his hands were covered with invisible roots of the Talent Tree.

As the Talent Tree's devouring showed results, the intense heat around rapidly receded, and the sudden change in the environment gave Lu Ye an unreal feeling of coolness.

Having verified his thoughts, Lu Ye strode forward.

Activating the Talent Tree in this way did not consume much of his own spirit force, but it greatly exhausted his mental power, a fact Lu Ye clearly felt, so he needed to quicken his pace, as lingering too long would not be to his advantage.

After walking some distance and confirming there were no problems, Lu Ye simply summoned the spirit ark and flew forward.

The speed of weapon control-flying was much faster than walking, and he quickly crossed about thirty miles.

Lu Ye, traveling through the air, suddenly halted his movement and stood on the spirit ark, looking down.

On the dark red land below, a figure lay prostrate diagonally, her exquisite curves visible, her snow-white skin forming a stark contrast with the dark red of the earth, jarring his vision. She was wearing only a beast skin bustier and a beast skin miniskirt on her lower body, her elongated figure not only aesthetically pleasing but also emanating an explosive sense of power.

There's actually someone here? Lu Ye felt extremely surprised.

Since yesterday, he had not seen a single demon beast, yet here he encountered a person.

She must still be alive, as Lu Ye could feel her vitality.

She was likely here to search for treasures in the Land of Fiery Flames, and considering she managed to traverse this harsh environment, her strength was imaginable.

But based on her current posture, she was clearly at her limit, otherwise, she would not be lying prostrate here motionless.

Just as Lu Ye was preparing to activate the Insight Spirit Runes to closely observe the extent of her cultivation, the woman suddenly sat up straight, and a pair of chilly crimson eyes met Lu Ye's gaze.

Lu Ye immediately felt something was amiss, without any hesitation, the spirit ark rapidly ascended, leaving a lingering image below as it moved to a nearby location. The spirit ark trembled slightly, nearly throwing Lu Ye off.

Lu Ye turned his head to look to one side, the woman who had just been lying on the ground was now on all fours, her body ignited with flame-like spirit force, her fiery red hair billowing, baring her teeth at Lu Ye as if she were a cheetah ready to pounce.

The wildness of the spirit force on her body and the brilliance of the spirit light startled Lu Ye.

Even in Feng Yuechan and Li Baxian, he had not seen such brilliant spirit light.

And the spirit force on her body... that wasn't spirit force, that was boiling demonic power!

This woman was a demon, and a big demon at the Overlord level!

A grave sense of danger sprouted in his heart, causing Lu Ye's heart to contract sharply, a stinging pain emanating from his chest as his strong mental power alerted him to her imminent attack.

Almost at the moment he sensed danger, Lu Ye instinctively constructed a Defense Spirit Rune in front of his chest.

His vision blurred, and the female demon, who had just been on the ground, was now close at hand, her hand transformed into a claw, aiming for his chest.

A snapping sound followed, as the sturdy Defense Spirit Runes were punctured by sharp nails, creating cracks, and Lu Ye could even feel the pain of her claws piercing his chest.

If it weren't for the Defense blocking it, her claw would certainly have dug out his heart.

A sonorous sound followed, as nine rays of light burst forth from the supplies box at Lu Ye's waist, striking towards the female demon.

The female demon retracted her hand, her body spinning nimbly; without any obvious movement, she dodged all attacks while her long legs, like whips, lashed out in the air.

Lu Ye's Boulder Mountain Saber was drawn from his waist, a blow with Double-Sharpness spirit runes hacked towards her leg whip.

The blow struck air; her ability to change moves was extremely fast, probably having sensed the sharpness of that slash, she instantly shifted from a whip to a kick, the speed of which left no time to react.

Chapter 368 Overlord-level Female Demon

The female demon's kick landed squarely on Lu Ye's chest, almost knocking him off the spirit ark.

Facing such an Overlord-class big demon, if he didn't have a Flying Spirit Artifact, Lu Ye would have undoubtedly died. Thus, right after he took that kick, Lu Ye almost instinctively hooked his legs around his own spirit ark, propelling both his body and the ark forward.

He barely steadied himself before hastily scanning his surroundings, only to find no trace of the female demon.

A sense of crisis descended from above, and Lu Ye swiftly looked up.

Under the scorching sun, the female demon's figure rapidly dived down. Nine Flying Spirit Artifacts, transformed into Liu Guang, headed straight at her, accompanied by a clattering sound, but all were repelled by the female demon's twin claws.

The sight left Lu Ye trembling with fear as he keenly felt the gap between himself and an Overlord-class big demon.

He had encountered two Overlord-class demon beasts before; one was Little Gray at his residence, and the other was the quasi-flood dragon he had met in the territory of the Sky Supporting Sect. However, Lu Ye had never directly confronted either Little Gray or the quasi-flood dragon.

The female demon was the first Overlord-class demon beast he had faced head-on.

With his 7th Heaven cultivation, he had slain quite a few 9th Heaven cultivators recently. However, even 9th Heaven cultivators were insignificant in front of such an Overlord presence.

Being called an Overlord meant ruling supreme over the entire battlefield.

This sudden battle was not because the female demon had ambushed him. Apparently, she had become aware of someone approaching while she was resting and burst forth in fury.

Lu Ye felt unlucky. If he hadn't been curious and returned to check, he wouldn't have encountered this situation.

Facing the downward attack of the female demon, Lu Ye had no escape. He just took a deep breath, raised the Boulder Mountain Saber, and as the light flashed over the blade, a double Sharpness was imbued.

A straight stab!

This was a stab from Lu Ye at the furthest limit of his reach, exerting his full strength, holding great expectations for this one strike.

However, the female demon merely tilted her head slightly. The Sharp edge of the Boulder Mountain Saber drew a bloody line on her fair neck, but before Lu Ye could make a cross-cut, she landed another kick straight to his chest.

Lu Ye's entire chest went numb; after a brief hesitation, he crashed heavily to the ground, and the spirit ark under his feet couldn't withstand such a tremendous impact and broke apart directly.

Boom...

The dark red ground cratered, and Lu Ye fell heavily onto it. That wasn't the end; the female demon, like a bone-burrowing maggot, followed and dived down, claws striking.

As dust flew and the ground split open, Lu Ye had already gotten up and was fleeing. Flight spirit runes enhanced his legs, and his mouth and nose were filled with blood.

He had never been in such a dire state as he was today.

The disparity in strength was too vast, and he was completely outmatched.

The Flying Spirit Artifact was also destroyed. Lu Ye felt the breath of death like an invisible ferocious beast chasing after him.

Gradually, that feeling of hanging by a thread disappeared.

In his busy escape, Lu Ye turned his head only to find that the female demon stood at her original spot, silently watching him with her crimson eyes. She hadn't pursued him further and even gracefully stepped back several tens of meters to the position where Lu Ye first spotted her.

Assured that she had no intention of pursuing him, Lu Ye finally sighed in relief.

Soon, he realized it wasn't that she didn't want to kill him, but rather she couldn't.

The deeper one traveled into the Land of Fiery Flames, the more intense the environment became. With Lu Ye's own strength, he could only reach about 30 miles from the center and could go no further.

Despite being an Overlord-class entity, the female demon also had her limits.

Her limit was right at the current location. Any deeper, and even she couldn't bear it; that's why she had retreated several tens of meters just now.

Realizing this, Lu Ye completely let go of his apprehensions.

From nearly 30 meters away, Lu Ye looked down at his chest, which was a bloody blur at the heart, punctured by the female demon's sharp claws earlier. The wound was not deep, and the chest had caved in a bit. Pressing his hand there, his ribs were sore, probably fractured by the sheer force of her kick.

Placing the Boulder Mountain Saber beside him, he retrieved the Spiritual Artifacts back into his supplies box, and then Lu Ye took out several healing pills and swallowed them.

After regulating his breath for a while and confirming he was not in grave danger, Lu Ye picked up the Boulder Mountain Saber once more and stepped toward the direction of the female demon.

Compared to earlier, the hostility in the female demon's crimson eyes had lessened, replaced with curiosity, seemingly puzzled how a much weaker creature could withstand the harsh environment and walk even further than her.

Cocking her head, she watched Lu Ye approach, her eyes filled with scrutiny.

Stopping sixty meters away from the female demon, Lu Ye looked her in the eye expressionlessly. In the next instant, his supply box shivered, and nine streaks of Liu Guang, faster than thunderbolts, slashed towards the female demon.

As she dared not venture deeper, her strength might as well make her a target. After witnessing the agile skills of the female demon that he could hardly counter, Lu Ye would never dare to engage her in close combat again. But, using weapon control, he had no such concerns.

After being beaten so brutally for no reason and nearly losing his life, Lu Ye was not about to let things go easily.

With a whoosh, the nine streaks of Liu Guang almost simultaneously reached the female demon. Lu Ye, with precise control, struck from all angles.

Then, Lu Ye witnessed what it meant to move like a Thunderbolt.

Standing in place, the female demon didn't even flinch. Her claws streaked through the air, leaving a trail of afterimages. After some clattering sounds, most of the Liu Guang were deflected, leaving the female demon completely unharmed.

Not only that, but three Spiritual Artifacts were grasped in the female demon's hands, struggling like living things, yet they could never break free.

The female demon seemed to be seeing Spiritual Artifacts for the first time, looking down at the struggling objects in her hands.

Lu Ye's eyes involuntarily twitched.

The fact that the opponent had dodged and even sent his weapon control flying was acceptable, considering she was an Overlord-class being, whose strength had reached the limit that the Spirit Stream battlefield could accommodate, but to directly seize his three Spiritual Artifacts like that was somewhat embarrassing.

Under her restraint, Lu Ye found it extravagant even to think of reclaiming his own Spiritual Artifacts.

Attempting to steal a chicken only to lose the rice.

With a slight thought, a glint passed over the three Spiritual Artifacts being examined by the female demon, and Explosion Spirit Runes instantly took shape.

Since returning from Xianyuan City, Lu Ye had been able to add spirit runes to weapon control, but he had not actually tried adding Explosion Spirit Runes to weapon control before.

He had previously only used these spirit runes as the core to set up an explosion magic array.

The female demon's perception power was undoubtedly extremely keen. Just as the Explosion Spirit Runes took shape, she casually raised her hand and threw the three Spiritual Artifacts out.

With three loud bangs, the three weapon controls significantly lost their spirit, their luster dimmed, and their internal restrictions were completely destroyed, losing their original functions.

Lu Ye roughly calculated; since encountering this female demon, he had first lost a spirit ark, then three weapon controls, and had even been beaten to a fracture...

A huge loss!

Without hesitation, he turned and left. The power difference was too great, and Lu Ye had already given up on the thought of slaying the female demon.

Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union was not lightly harmful; the ten-part map had clearly marked only three Overlord-class demon beasts in the entire Fog-shrouded Mountain, yet a fourth one appeared in the Land of Fiery Flames, clearly a misinformation, definitely not his own fault.

"Wait a moment!" The female demon suddenly spoke, her voice a bit hoarse yet carrying a hint of seductiveness.

Lu Ye was a bit surprised, not expecting that she could actually speak human language.

This female demon was not a demon cultivator. Lu Ye had specifically observed before, there were no Spiritual Artifacts on her, nor any traces of having cultivated any Cultivation Technique, fighting purely with instinct and overwhelming demonic power.

A true demon cultivator is different from her, perfectly coexisting with the human race, transforming into human form, pursuing the path of orifice-opening cultivation. Many sects have demon cultivator disciples, who aside from minor physical differences, are no different from the human race.

This female demon could be considered of the Demon Race.

The Demon Race and demon cultivators are slightly different, the former's life and cultivation are more primitive, no different from demon beasts.

Lu Ye did not know what the original form of this female demon was, as the traces of the Demon Race on her were few, but from her agile figure, it should not be too big.

In the previous fight, the female demon did not speak and was so curious about Spiritual Artifacts, Lu Ye had thought she had no contact with the human race, but it seems that was not the case.

At least this guy could talk.

Lu Ye stopped, turned around, and looked back.

Their eyes met, and the female demon spoke again, "Bring me what's inside!"

"What's inside?" Lu Ye asked.

"A ball of fire, I can feel it, a very powerful ball of fire."

It seemed this female demon too wanted to enter the heart of the Land of Fiery Flames in search of the legendary fire-type treasure. Although her strength couldn't reach the very heart, she could feel the presence of that ball of fire.

A treasure coveted even by an Overlord-class being definitely wouldn't be mediocre.

Lu Ye thought again of Quasi-Flood Dragon, who greatly desired his Scale Armor. In this light, that ball of fire in the depths of the Land of Fiery Flames was to the female demon what the Scale Armor was to Quasi-Flood Dragon.

He turned around and continued forward.

"I'll wait here for you!" The female demon's voice came from behind him.

Lu Ye acted as if he hadn't heard it.

He had traveled a long distance to get here, targeting the same thing as the female demon. Not only had she beaten him up, she now expected him to bring the items back and hand them to her—probably not thinking straight.

A ball of fire—it seemed that the ball of fire was indeed the source that created the Land of Fiery Flames. Lu Ye was very curious about what exactly it was that could transform such a vast area into such a perilous land.

As he moved forward, Lu Ye rummaged through his storage sack.

The original spirit ark was destroyed; he needed to refine another Flying Spirit Artifact quickly.

The previous spirit ark was from Yuan Guang of Sky Supporting Sect. Yuan Guang's ordinary Level 9 cultivation meant the quality of the spirit ark was passable, but recently Lu Ye had killed so many Heaven-rank cultivators and naturally captured quite a few Flying Spirit Artifacts.

He chose one from among them, whose shape was similar to the previous spirit ark, activated his spirit force to refine the restriction within. With Lu Ye's current cultivation and the purity of his spirit force, refining such a Spiritual Artifact didn't take much effort.

After about one incense stick's time, another spirit ark-shaped Flying Spirit Artifact appeared under Lu Ye's feet, undoubtedly of better quality than the previous one, flight spirit runes enabled, and the spirit ark swept forward transformed into flowing light.

Chapter 369 IQ Problem

More than a hundred miles from the center of the Land of Fiery Flames, with Lu Ye's current speed of weapon control, he arrived in less than one incense stick's time.

In the very center, there was a gigantic pit, from which the high temperature caused the surrounding space to become distorted.

Lu Ye circled around the entrance of the cavern with his spiritual artifact, peering inside for a while; he could vaguely make out a group of raging flames at the bottom of the pit.

The female demon had been right, there truly was a group of fire here, but the power of this one was incredibly extraordinary, as if it could even burn through the earth.

No one had ever known what the center of the Land of Fiery Flames looked like.

The cultivators active on the Spirit Stream battlefield were merely at the Spirit Stream Realm level; even powerhouses like Feng Yuechan and Li Baxian could not possibly safely reach this place.

Such Overlord existences as the female demon could only stay more than a hundred miles away.

Had it not been for the power of the Talent Tree, Lu Ye would certainly not have been able to come here.

His head felt somewhat groggy, which was a sign of excessive consumption of mental power, a sensation he had experienced many times while challenging the Hundred Arrays Pagoda.

Taking out the last half bottle of Soul Cleansing Water, he consumed one drop, and the fatigue on his mind rapidly dissipated.

He could tarry no longer; cracking sounds emanated from the spirit ark under his feet, as if even this Spiritual Artifact could not withstand the erosion of the high temperature.

Urging the spirit ark forward, he flew down into the huge pit, plummeting several miles before finally reaching the bottom.

After stowing away the spirit ark, Lu Ye looked towards the group of flames ahead, marveling in his heart.

There was a circle of fire about the size of a washbasin, presenting a noble and pure orange-red color, exuding not only a wild destructive power but also an indescribable sense of vitality.

Lu Ye did not know what kind of fire this was, and he had no interest in exploring further; he had come here to have the Talent Tree devour these flames.

Within the Root Spiritual Orifice, the Talent Tree became noticeably more active; if one were to enable the Insight Spirit Runes, one could even see that the roots of the Talent Tree covering Lu Ye's body surface were constantly twisting and extending, seemingly wanting to plunge into these flames.

Never before had the Talent Tree sent him such a strong message of desire.

Lu Ye reached out towards the orange-red flames; covered by the roots of the Talent Tree, he did not feel too much searing heat.

On internal inspection, he saw a continuous flow of orange-red energy being absorbed through the roots of the Talent Tree, pouring into the trunk.

Lu Ye focused his attention on the leaves of the Talent Tree, curious to see how many leaves would ignite if the Talent Tree devoured this fire.

A strange scene unfolded; the orange-red power flowed through the trunk, but instead of methodically igniting the nearest leaf, it bypassed many unignited leaves and reached the upper part of the trunk.

In an instant, a large number of leaves lit up, no less than a couple hundred of them.

Lu Ye was taken aback.

This was an unprecedented occurrence; previously, when he urged the Talent Tree to absorb the Earth's Core Fire, the leaves on the tree would ignite one by one, and the next ones would respond in turn.

Never before had he experienced such a reaction where one or two hundred leaves responded all at once.

He wondered if it could be due to the extraordinary strength of this fire?

But soon he realized something was off; the unknown fire was indeed strong, otherwise it wouldn't have caused the environment within thousands of miles of the Land of Fiery Flames to become so harsh. However, those reacting leaves were not igniting, they just lit up their patterns.

As the Talent Tree continued to devour the power of the flames, the shining leaves became brighter and more dazzling.

Until at a certain moment, those many leaves burst into vigorous flames.

Unlike the other leaves of the Talent Tree, these leaves burned with an orange-red flame, indistinguishable from the devoured flames.

And Lu Ye had the faint feeling that the coalesced flames seemed to sketch out a mysterious pattern.

At first glance, it looked like a bird engulfed in flames squatting on the Talent Tree, with the flickering flames evolving the bird's lifelike movements.

Its appearance bore a striking resemblance to the Vermillion Bird of the Four Auspicious Sacred Beasts, its long tail feathers trailing behind, exquisitely beautiful.

Lu Ye could not determine if this was a mere coincidence.

Not in a hurry to investigate what spirit runes the leaves might contain, with so many ignited leaves this time, he could slowly investigate when he had the time.

The orange-red flames that had been there before had now vanished, completely devoured by the Talent Tree, and only then did Lu Ye let go of his tightly wound mental state.

Urging the Talent Tree had been relentless, and holding on until now was an accomplishment.

Just as he was about to leave, the sound of something tearing through the air came from above; a figure fell directly not far in front of him.

The figure was slender and graceful, with a prominently rounded chest, and its crimson eyes in this dim pit were like two drifting spectral fires.

Lu Ye's expression tightened as he laid his hand on the Boulder Mountain Saber.

...

The underground cavern was not small, but it definitely wasn't large, and the surrounding rock walls had become glazed due to the constant high temperatures year-round.

Confronting a lord-level existence in such an environment was evidently unwise.

With a heavy heart, he focused solely on devouring the ball of fire, forgetting that without the fire's suppression, the one before him could come over on her own.

She had stayed over a hundred miles away before because it was hard for her to endure the pressure any closer, but now that the fire was gone, naturally, so was the pressure.

Her crimson eyes glanced around, "Where's the thing?" She hadn't realized that Lu Ye had never actually agreed to anything.

"Haven't seen it." Lu Ye's fingers rubbed the hilt of his saber, his eyes grazing over the opponent's slender neck, pondering whether launching a surprise attack and decapitating her would likely kill her. In the end, he realized that if he did take the initiative, he probably wouldn't end up with anything good.

"Impossible." The female demon shook her head, "I sensed it before."

"Why don't you look for it yourself?"

The demon didn't speak, instead bending down to search, her claws dancing rapidly, immediately shattering the crystallized ground, and in an instant, dust flew everywhere.

"Let's take off first!" said Lu Ye as he summoned his spirit ark.

At the same time, he kept an eye on the female demon out of the corner of his eye, guarding against the possibility of her suddenly attacking him.

To Lu Ye's surprise, she was so fixated on finding the ball of fire that no longer existed that she had no time to pay him any attention.

This female demon... strong as she is, seems to have some issues with intelligence; she probably couldn't imagine that there would be someone in this world capable of devouring such a powerful ball of flames.

Recalling past encounters, Lu Ye was gradually convinced of this. Her fight with him seemed more like beast-like instinct rather than true hostility.

The spirit ark soared into the sky, and the female demon, seemingly oblivious, continued to furiously dig at the ground.

Only after digging for a long time and finding nothing did she belatedly realize something was amiss.

She tilted her head in thought for a moment, then feathers grew on her arms, and in the blink of an eye, her arms turned into wings. With a flap of her wings, she shot up into the sky, emerging from the pit and looking around, clearly trying to locate Lu Ye.

But having delayed for so long, how could she find Lu Ye?

At that moment, Lu Ye, maintaining the Move-Like-The-Wind Spirit Runes on his spirit ark, was flying like the wind.

The demon's intelligence might be lacking, but no one should expect her to be completely foolish. Having narrowly escaped the jaws of death, the natural thing to do was to flee quickly.

After flying straight ahead for most of the day and exhausting too much spirit force, Lu Ye finally landed and found a place to rest in the forest. He summoned array banners and set up several connected formations around him before he finally felt a bit secure.

Previously, without the skill of setting up arrays, he often had to rely on Yiyi to keep watch when resting in the wild, but now that was no longer necessary. With some proficiency in the Array Path, he could easily set up simple warning, concealment, and protective formations with the help of array banners.

Thinking about his experiences during this period: first, he was hunted by a group of cultivators from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, then chased by a swarm of demon bees, and finally, driven to the Land of Fiery Flames where he used the environment to shake off the bees, only to encounter a lord-level being...

Life had truly been full of thrills.

He took out several elixir pills, swallowed them to calm his nerves, activated Bestial Gluttony Feast, a humming began in his belly, the effects of the pills quickly dispersed, and his depleted spirit force began to replenish gradually.

First, Lu Ye contacted Yiyi to ensure they were safe, then turned his attention to the Talent Tree.

This time, the Talent Tree lit up more than a hundred leaves; the gains could be called tremendous, and he had no idea which spirit runes were carried on so many leaves.

He didn't rush to explore it, figuring it was not too late to look after he had recovered.

Lu Ye then turned his attention to a storage sack, which held all the good things he had scavenged from that giant beehive.

There were about a thousand jin of fine honey alone, which he had tried while on the run; its effects on physical recovery were particularly remarkable, and it replenished spirit force quite quickly, though not as fast as Breath Fruit wine, and was less convenient than consuming elixir pills.

Perhaps it had other effects as well, which could be thoroughly researched by Second Senior Sister once he brought it back; there might be some unexpected discoveries.

Besides the honey, there was the half-bowl of royal jelly.

Lu Ye hadn't yet tasted the jelly to know its effects.

He strongly suspected that the demon bees' relentless pursuit was not just because he had stolen their honey; the most likely reason was this half-bowl of royal jelly!

From such a large beehive, with so many bee demons, only this small amount of royal jelly was produced; its preciousness could be imagined.

If it weren't for Lu Ye's Concealment Spirit Runes, even a 9th Heaven-level ghost cultivator might not have been able to succeed.

He took out an empty jade vial, filled it with royal jelly, and drank it down, sweetly coating his mouth...

Depleted spirit force and physical strength were quickly restored, much faster than with the fine honey, and then there didn't seem to be any other particular effects.

Lu Ye silently sensed for a while and soon noticed something was off. An indescribable energy began to circulate through his limbs and bones, making his flesh quiver and become denser, blood Qi circulated faster, and even the flow of spirit force inexplicably sped up a bit.

The royal jelly seemed to have a significant enhancement on the circulation of blood Qi and spirit force!

Chapter 370 Legacy

Blood Qi and spirit force were two major directions in the cultivation of Spirit Stream Realm cultivators. Being abundant in blood Qi meant having a robust physique, which was beneficial for cultivators of all sects, while spirit force was fundamental for cultivators engaging in combat.

The speed of flow of both elements directly related to the strength of a cultivator.

Why would a cultivator become much stronger after switching to a Heaven Rank technique? First, because after adopting a Heaven Rank technique, the control over one's spirit force improved greatly. Second, the speed at which the spirit force flowed within the body also underwent a qualitative change.

This royal jelly could enhance the flow speed of blood Qi and spirit force, effectively strengthening the physique of physique cultivators while also enhancing the strength of the cultivator.

Take Lu Ye, for example, after consuming a bottle of royal jelly, his cultivation level remained unchanged, yet the strength he could exert was stronger than before.

It was uncertain whether this effect was permanent or temporary. If it were temporary, then it wasn't very valuable—some elixir pills could achieve this, like the Explosive Qi Pill, which could temporarily

enhance a cultivator's strength, however, its side effects were severe. Carelessness could result in serious damage to the spiritual orifices.

If it were permanent, then the value of this royal jelly would be immeasurable.

The efficacy of the royal jelly would have to be verified over time; for now, it was unclear.

Lu Ye focused his thoughts on the Talent Tree, looking at the area of the tree burning with orange flames, which increasingly resembled a bird perched on the tree, even when he changed viewing angles.

It was quite peculiar indeed.

With a settled mind, Lu Ye randomly chose a leaf, focusing his attention, wanting to see clearly the spirit runes carried by the Talent Tree.

A sudden anomaly occurred!

In his field of vision, the bird-like figure perched on the Talent Tree seemed to come to life and suddenly flew from the tree, the orange flames burning fiercely. As the bird fluttered its wings, dragging a long tail feather, its noble and sacred silhouette momentarily filled Lu Ye's vision and overwhelmed his psyche.

A clear and melodious chirping sounded in his mind, loud yet lingering.

Lu Ye, without uttering a sound, promptly fainted.

Back in Evil Moon Valley Mine, when the Talent Tree was activated and Lu Ye received his first spirit rune, he encountered this very event, only that time he had not undergone orifice-opening and was exceedingly weak, so his psyche could hardly bear the many complex informations carried by the leaf.

But as his cultivation gradually increased, incidents of fainting while examining the Talent Tree never happened again, especially after returning from Xianyuan City, his psyche had greatly strengthened.

Researching the Talent Tree then, the immense information from the leaves felt like a gentle breeze on his face.

Lu Ye never expected that a day would come when he would faint again from the impact while examining the Talent Tree, without even a moment to react.

...

In the tranquil and dim land of legacy, a pool of green water rippled, and a graceful figure emerged, clear water cascading down her radiant skin.

She inhaled greedily, as if reborn.

Looking at the clear pool before her and recalling the torment and pain she endured these days, she couldn't help shivering.

She didn't know how she managed to endure through those days.

The water in this pool wasn't always so clear but was a greenish color. She learned from the legacy that this was a poisonous pond, and without a unique secret technique to protect the body, even a Divine Sea Realm cultivator would be severely injured if they fell into it.

While cultivating in the pool, many times she narrowly escaped death, but fortunately, she always turned danger into safety at the last moment.

Thinking back to when she chose to inherit this legacy, she couldn't understand where she got such courage from. If she had to choose again at this moment, she might not have the same courage.

Having tried it, she knew the agony and torment of inheriting this legacy, enduring not only physical but also psychic torture with agonizingly clear consciousness.

Fortunately, it was all over now.

She stepped out of the Ten Thousand Poisons Pond, the pool water sliding down her exaggerated curves. She stimulated her spirit force to dry off the moisture on her body, and took out her robes from her storage sack.

She was of a calm and dignified nature, normally wearing mostly white robes, but now looking at the white robe in her hands, for some reason, she didn't like it. After some thought, she changed into a green robe.

Now she was satisfied.

Dressed neatly and having combed her hair, she touched her battlefield marking, ready to share this joy.

Suddenly she remembered, this place was the land of legacy, isolated from the outside world and existing as its own space, so messages couldn't be transmitted to the outside.

Thinking of that guy, she smiled slightly. The next time he dared to casually grab her hand, she would definitely make him regret coming into this world!

Taking out a Great Array Jade Cluster, she activated its power, and her view quickly shifted. Under a sky bright with the moon and sparse with stars, she spread her arms to embrace the moonlight, feeling an unprecedented sense of relief and lightness.

She no longer worried about not being able to keep up with his steps.

That day, the most formidable healing cultivator of the Nine Provinces came out of seclusion!

...

His consciousness foggy, Lu Ye did not know where he was, only feeling that the environment was extremely cramped and oppressive. He tried to stretch his body, but something seemed to be restricting him all around.

Soon, he realized that he had been unconscious, but what was this consciousness that had awakened?

This was very strange, like being aware that one is dreaming while in the midst of a dream.

Lu Ye treated his current situation as a dream, eager to wake up, yet he was unable to do so.

His consciousness gradually grew clearer, but his surroundings remained unchanged.

After an unknown amount of time, a light click sounded, and a sliver of brightness pierced the darkness. Looking up, the sky seemed to have cracked open a gap.

Then, the gap widened, and the world around crumbled.

A fluffy little creature suddenly appeared, surrounded by fragmented eggshells...

Only then did Lu Ye realize that everything he had experienced was not his own. Instead, he was observing from a spectator's perspective as a little chick emerged from its shell...

It didn't seem like just any chick. The little creature was much larger than a normal chick, more spirited, and upon birth, it gobbled up all the broken eggshells into its belly until it was round. The chick burped and expelled a burst of flame that flashed and disappeared...

Time seemed to accelerate countless times. Scene after scene flowed quickly through Lu Ye's vision. The chick grew, transforming into a bird ablaze with orange flames, clad in colorful feathers, with long plumes trailing from its tail.

The Four Auspicious Sacred Beasts, Vermillion Bird!

Lu Ye's vision followed this Vermillion Bird, witnessing its growth, watching as it vanquished its powerful enemies, invincible. One day, the world could no longer contain its burning desire for exploration.

It soared into the sky, flying beyond, venturing into the vast and boundless stellar space to explore a broader world.

Time slipped by indeterminably, until a mass of orange flames fell from the sky, burning through the heavens, streaking across the sky, and crashing into the earth.

Where the flames landed, the ground was scorched through, and the entire world shook. The fire obliterated everything within thousands of miles, turning all to ash.

...

Lu Ye suddenly opened his eyes. In an instant, indescribable pain surged from the depths of his mind, causing his entire body to curl up and shake violently, his complexion as pale as paper.

Given the strength of his psyche now, although it might not compare to someone in the Divine Sea Realm, it probably wasn't far off. Yet to have such an intense reaction after receiving information from the leaves of the Talent Tree indicated the vast content of that information!

Shivering, he took out the Soul Cleansing Water, no longer minding how much he drank, and gulped it down.

The agony in his psyche slowly subsided. Exhausted, he lay on the ground, his mind fuzzy, eyes unseeing, and he fell into a deep sleep.

When he woke, he still felt a residual horror. Shaking his head, it seemed as if his brain was rocking along with it. It had been a long time since he'd experienced such sensations, yet he did not expect to encounter a pain far exceeding any he had suffered before.

Lu Ye vaguely suspected that had his psyche not been so strong, he might have been utterly overwhelmed by the massive influx of information.

Sorting through the chaotic information in his mind, he finally understood why he had undergone such an ordeal.

This time, the burning leaves were not isolated; they were part of a whole, containing such massive information that each leaf carried a fraction of it.

Inspecting any single leaf was essentially inspecting the entirety.

In other words, the information from one to two hundred leaves rushed into Lu Ye's mind all at once. And even though his psyche far surpassed the Spirit Stream Realm, there was ultimately a limit to what he could bear, which had caused him to faint.

The peculiar scenes he saw while unconscious were not information from the Talent Tree leaves, but from the flames previously devoured by the Talent Tree.

Those flames, emanating from the Vermillion Bird of the Four Auspicious Sacred Beasts, were a fragment of the incomplete Phoenix True Fire. Because of the vast lapse of time, that already incomplete Phoenix True Fire had weakened considerably, which is why the scenarios Lu Ye witnessed were intermittent.

He had no idea what the Vermillion Bird encountered after leaving his world, so devastated that only a cluster of Phoenix True Fire remained, ultimately drifting to the Spirit Stream battlefield and creating the Land of Fiery Flames.

There were rumors that the phoenix could undergo Nirvana and be reborn. Lu Ye did not know if this rumor was true, but now it seemed highly unlikely...

Since the Phoenix True Fire had been devoured by the Talent Tree, how could it possibly undergo Nirvana?

The information contained in the one to two hundred leaves combined into a single spirit rune, which was also a magic and spells.

Spirit runes and magic and spells fundamentally do not differ too much; it's just that the former is more diverse and widely applicable, while the latter focuses on combat.

If one must compare, then magic and spells are simplified spirit runes.

The new spirit rune that Lu Ye acquired was called—Fire Phoenix!