

Humanity 781

Chapter 781 What Bullshit Heaven's Augury

Ying Wuji was undeniably cautious by nature, and even though he arrived here following a faint perception through the unseen forces, he remained vigilant all the while.

Upon entering the forest, he activated a secret technique of ghost cultivators to conceal his form and spirit force, advancing silently forward. Although this reduced his speed quite a bit, it was safer; should any danger arise, he could conceal himself in time.

A full day later, he arrived atop a spirit mountaintop and frowned as he surveyed the scene.

There was someone!

At the summit, there was a figure seated motionlessly on a flat stone, resembling a solid boulder.

The person made no movement and did not reveal any spirit force, making it difficult for Ying Wuji to discern their cultivation level.

However, considering the adversaries on the Cloud River battlefield that he was wary of, there were only a few. Hence, even though he saw the silhouette, Ying Wuji just became slightly cautious without being overly concerned.

He thought to himself, he had reached this place following that faint perception, and curiously, there was someone here apparently in meditative cultivation.

Could it be... after he killed this person, he would gain some unexpected benefits?

The more he thought about it, the more plausible it seemed; otherwise, it wouldn't make sense for him to encounter this person just as he followed the perception here.

As the strongest ghost cultivator in the Cloud River Realm currently, lurking and assassinating were what Ying Wuji excelled in. He made up his mind and stealthily approached the figure.

He was confident that if he could get within thirty feet of the person, with the exception of the top ten on the Cloud River Ranking, he could kill anyone with a single strike!

However, just as he was about to take action, he suddenly halted and looked up to see a flow of light speeding towards him from the horizon, its aura astonishing.

Cloud River Level 9! Moreover, from the newcomer's aura and spirit force fluctuations, it seemed this was no ordinary Cloud River Level 9!

What's happening? Ying Wuji frowned.

This wild deserted ridge held no special natural treasures or resources, even if other cultivators passed by, they would leave quickly.

If it weren't for following the perception, he wouldn't have specifically come to this place.

But now, there was already one person sitting motionlessly here, and another one had arrived, forcing Ying Wuji to become vigilant.

As he thought this, the newcomer had already thunderously landed on the summit, the light receded, revealing a tall figure.

Clad in purple, with strikingly handsome features, exuding a compelling energy.

"This woman..."

Seeing the newcomer's clothes and face, Ying Wuji's heartbeat slowed for a beat, not because of her beauty, but because he recognized this woman.

In recent years, many talents had emerged in Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, but the most famous and most promising was undoubtedly Lan Ziyi from Endless Island.

It was said that this woman was scouted from an 8th grade minor sect by Endless Island, and her background was quite legendary.

Back in the Spirit Stream Realm, she had been touted by Ten Thousand Demons Ridge as a match for Lu Yiye.

Unfortunately, a defeat in the Spirit Stream Ranking battle had caused Lan Ziyi to fade into obscurity for over a year, much to the dismay of many senior powerhouses of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, who thought that her mental fortitude and cultivation were insufficient, negatively affected by Lu Yiye.

But unexpectedly, during the battle for supremacy in Cloud River, this woman made a dramatic re-entry and secured second place, falling just short of Lu Yiye.

Ten Thousand Demons Ridge then realized that Lan Ziyi's silence wasn't due to despair but was her accumulating strength; although she still couldn't surpass Lu Yiye, securing second place in Cloud River was incredibly significant.

"Why would this woman come here?" Ying Wuji's mind was in disarray.

He wasn't a fool. Born into unusual circumstances, he was privy to information that ordinary cultivators couldn't access.

At the moment, he vaguely felt that he might have gotten himself into some serious trouble.

He had thought this was his opportunity, but now it seemed...

On the mountaintop, the moment Lan Ziyi's figure became visible, she noticed the person sitting on the stone. Without a word, she drew her twin sabers and, with a movement graceful as a fluttering butterfly, approached the person on the stone. The blades crossed and loudly slashed down.

When a fiery red light flashed and faded, a clanging sound rang out, and a tumultuous outburst of spirit force sent Lan Ziyi reeling back dozens of feet before she could stabilize herself.

She didn't launch another attack but looked frustratedly and helplessly at the figure in front of her, grinding her teeth and saying, "I figured you'd be involved too!"

Ying Wuji could access intelligence that many ordinary cultivators couldn't, but Lan Ziyi could access even more.

On her way here, following that faint perception, she had speculated about a few things.

If she, being second in Cloud River, was involved in this, then it was certain that the person who placed first couldn't escape either!

In other words, her journey here was highly likely to lead to a meeting with Lu Yiye!

If possible, she really didn't want to come, but that faint perception was so clear and real, that she couldn't stay away even if she wanted to!

In the Nine Provinces, no one could ignore the guidance of Heaven's Augury!

So she had no choice but to come, and sure enough, upon arriving, she saw a familiar figure, a familiar face...

Striking out to test, who else could it be but Lu Yiye?

The twice unsuccessful encounters during the battle for Cloud River supremacy had instilled in her a desire not to meet this person again before she achieved her great ambitions.

But the heavens do not cater to the wishes of mortals, and one must meet those they do not wish to see!

Although she was no match for Lu Yiye, she wasn't afraid; killing her was still a formidable challenge for Lu Yiye. Moreover, she had come here in response to Heaven's Augury, and under its influence, it was impossible for Lu Yiye to actually kill her.

Therefore, her probing was fearless.

Lan Ziyi's sudden arrival startled Lu Ye, and when murderous thoughts surged in his heart, an inexplicable tremor also emerged, seemingly quelling his urge to kill.

It was as if an invisible force did not wish for him to engage in a life-and-death struggle with Lan Ziyi...

"Lu Yiye!"

Ying Wuji's eyes nearly bulged out.

When he had suddenly noticed someone here earlier, he hadn't thought much of it, but recognizing the identity of the person from the sabre strike he just witnessed was unavoidable.

It was none other than Lu Yiye, whom he dreaded immensely!

No wonder the figure looked so familiar; it turned out to be this barghest!

Ying Wuji's heart filled with rage. What nonsense Heaven's Augury? He had failed to reach the top ten, and it was fine not to be favored, but was there any sense in him traveling thousands of miles to court death?

Was he so disfavored by Heaven's Augury?

Fortunately, Lan Ziyi had appeared just in time, otherwise, if he had recklessly charged forward, he might have already become a ghost under Lu Yiye's sabre!

A place of conflict is not fit for a long stay.

No matter what these two were doing here, it was not his place to interfere; it was best for him to quickly return to his sect and calmly aim to ascend to True Lake.

Just as he was thinking this, he suddenly felt an aura lock onto him.

Ying Wuji instantly stiffened, filled with bitterness.

It turned out... he had been discovered long ago.

It wasn't surprising, for Lu Yiye's mental strength was unimaginably strong. He had sensed this when Ying Wuji had ambushed him at Great Reversal Valley; now this fellow was even more powerful than before, and naturally, his mental strength was stronger too.

On a smooth boulder, Lu Ye sat motionless, holding the Boulder Mountain Saber, and looked indifferently towards Lan Ziyi, "It seems you know something?"

Lan Ziyi's statement was unclear, but to Lu Ye, it inevitably provoked some conjecture.

In fact, it wasn't just him and Lan Ziyi in this place. Nearby, there was a recently arrived ghost cultivator lurking, whose aura was extremely familiar to him—most likely that ghost cultivator from Senluo Hall, Ying Wuji.

Not only that, but he could also feel others quietly paying attention to this area, but since his mental strength wasn't strong enough, he couldn't determine exactly who it was.

All these people had arrived in the vicinity over the last day or two, but all had chosen to remain hidden.

Only Lan Ziyi had come up and greeted him warmly.

"So what do you know?" Lan Ziyi didn't answer, but instead threw the question back at him.

Lu Ye's eyelids drooped slightly, and his sabre traced an arc, "If you like chatting this way, then we indeed have much to talk about!"

Lan Ziyi furrowed her brows, knowing she could not test Lu Ye's patience. Although she was fearless and sure that Lu Ye wouldn't actually kill her, if he really made a move, she feared the consequences would be dire.

She hurriedly said, "I merely came here following my intuition; I don't understand the specifics."

Under the mask, Lu Ye gave her a deep look, then sheathed his sabre and declared loudly, "Since you've come, why hide? Come out, everyone!"

As his words fell, a hearty laugh sounded, followed by a person sweeping through the air to land atop the mountaintop, speaking loudly, "Fellow Daoist Lu is right, even an ugly wife meets her in-laws eventually, since we're here, let everyone present themselves!"

"Fong Rulie, if you can't speak properly, then don't speak at all, what is this about an ugly wife meeting her in-laws!" As the voice resonated, a youth dressed in a blue gown, with flowing sleeves and an ethereal demeanor, appeared.

On the other side, as blood Qi surged, a robust man resembling a tiger unchained emerged and revealed himself, looking around with a grin, "Quite the lively gathering with all familiar faces; Fellow Daoists, Yang Yuan greets you!"

Ying Wuji, hiding in the shadows, felt a shiver run down his spine...

First was Lu Yiye from the Righteous Blood Sect, followed by Lan Ziyi from Endless Island, then Soaring Cloud Sect's Fong Rulie appeared; the youth in the blue gown, exuding an ethereal aura, was none other than Lui Qing from the Myriad Magic Pavilion, and the last to appear, Yang Yuan, was a core disciple from Jingkong Mountain.

In the rankings of the Cloud River battlefield, the first, second, fourth, fifth, and sixth positions were all here!

Each was more powerful than him.

He had originally thought, looking across the Cloud River battlefield, except for a few people who he could not ambush successfully, he didn't need to consider the others.

But the few present were exactly those exceptions...

What exactly had happened to bring together Cloud River's strongest here? Had they, like him, followed a faint intuition to this place?

Suddenly, his heart stirred with excitement.

Because looking around, aside from Lu Yiye, everyone else was from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge!

Physique cultivators, magic cultivators, combat cultivators, and including himself, a ghost cultivator, all four major factions were gathered. Such a lineup inevitably led to conjecture.

Moreover, as these people appeared, they subtly surrounded Lu Yiye in the middle!

Chapter 782 Things Are Getting Complicated

Lu Yiye's strength was indescribable without experiencing it firsthand, yet even with his power, he remained within the Cloud River Realm.

One on one, there was no one in the Cloud River Realm who could rival him.

But what if the several individuals before him joined forces?

Plus, with a sneak attack from the shadows... Even Lu Yiye might not be unkillable!

Ying Wuji's mind suddenly became active.

If he could think of this, how could the others not?

To miss today was to fear that it would be very difficult to gather such a force again to deal with Lu Yiye in the future.

On the desolate mountain peaks, Lu Yiye stood alone as several top experts from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge converged.

For a moment, the peak of Nameless Peak was rife with an undercurrent of murderous intent, and the mountain winds were bleak and desolate.

Even in such a scene, Lu Ye was as steady as a mountain, seated unmoving, with the Boulder Mountain Saber placed horizontally on his legs, his eyelids slightly drooping.

This posture, as though he did not regard anyone present seriously, undoubtedly made the several newcomers even more eager to try their hand.

"I advise you to give up whatever thoughts you may have in your minds,"

In the midst of this tension, it was Lan Ziyi who unexpectedly spoke up, her beautiful eyes surveying the surroundings as her red lips lightly parted, "Coming here at this time, I presume everyone has the same reason; it's the premonition of destiny that has brought you together here, not to join forces against him. Not to mention whether if you really started a fight you could kill him, even if you could... there might be some unexpected variables."

Yang Yuan's eyes burned with fighting spirit as he stared at Lu Ye, his gaze unwavering, "How would we know if we don't try?"

Lui Qing's eyes flashed as he looked towards Lan Ziyi, "Fellow Daoist Lan seems to know something?"

Lan Ziyi slowly shook her head, "I don't know any more than you do, but I understand that by following Heaven's will, one can always succeed."

Lui Qing frowned, thoughtful, "Following Heaven's will."

Strictly speaking, all of them had been guided here by the unseen hand of Heaven's Augury, and they believed Lu Yiye was the same.

This was likely related to the fact that they had all shone brightly during the contest for supremacy over the Cloud River, which could be seen as a form of Heaven's favor.

If that were the case, then Lu Yiye, as the number one figure of the Cloud River, certainly received the highest degree of Heaven's favor, so Heaven's Augury would not place him in a predicament without any chance of survival.

That was what Lan Ziyi meant with her words...

In fact, Lui Qing also felt it; when murderous thoughts against Lu Yiye arose in his heart, a profound sense of danger arose as if acting against Lu Yiye would lead to extremely unfavorable outcomes.

"What does Heaven's Augury want with us gathered here?" Fong Rulie frowned, sharing Lui Qing's sentiment. The intense throbbing in his heart prevented him from deciding to move against Lu Ye here, and he found this feeling extremely frustrating!

"Who knows?" Lan Ziyi revealed a smile with deep implications, and glanced at Lu Ye, "Perhaps... it wants us to join forces to resolve some matter?"

"Join forces? Us?" Yang Yuan was surprised.

What could possibly require them to cooperate on the battlefield of the Cloud River?

If that was truly the case, then there must be considerable danger involved.

"What does Fellow Daoist Lu think?" Lan Ziyi looked to Lu Ye.

Lu Ye lifted his eyes to look at her and said indifferently, "What makes you think I would know more than you do?"

During these past few days he had waited here, he had thought a great deal. He had been unable to clear his mind until he sensed several hidden breaths around him, which led to a vague guess, and with Lan Ziyi's sudden appearance, his guess was confirmed.

Lan Ziyi's argument coincided with his own speculations.

"Just because you are the foremost in the Cloud River," Lan Ziyi seemed undisturbed by his gaze as sharp as a hawk's, "The favor of Heaven's Augury is more profound for you than others. So Fellow Daoist Lu, if you truly know something, why not be frank and sit down to have a proper discussion."

Lu Ye slowly shook his head, "I know nothing."

As of now, apart from the four Heaven's Augury Pillars he had previously obtained, he knew no more than Lan Ziyi and the others.

Lan Ziyi sighed, "Fellow Daoist Lu..."

She seemed about to persuade him further, however, she suddenly turned to look in a certain direction.

"Someone else is coming!" Ying Wuji, hiding in the dark, was already numbed.

The presence of the newcomer was exceedingly sharp. As a bright sword light caught everyone's eyes, an overwhelming Sword Intent enveloped the place.

The sword light landed on the spirit mountaintop, revealing a figure as straight as a sword.

"Muk Qingyun!" Upon seeing the newcomer, whether it was Lui Qing, or Yang Yuan, Fong Rulie, all looked solemn.

Before, they had wondered why Muk Qingyun, ranked third on the top hundred list of the Cloud River Contest of Supremacy, had not shown up, unlike Lu Yiye, the first, and Lan Ziyi, the second, followed by the fourth, fifth, and sixth. They were puzzled as to why Heaven's Augury had seemingly overlooked him.

Now it seemed Muk Qingyun was not omitted; rather, he had been on his way, and only now had he arrived.

"Is this the variable?" Lui Qing mused.

Lan Ziyi had said earlier that even if they truly attempted to move against Lu Ye, regardless of whether they could kill him, any success would definitely be accompanied by unexpected outcomes.

That seemed to have come true.

If they had started the fight just now, they surely couldn't have killed Lu Yiye quickly, and if a fierce battle ensued, Muk Qingyun's abrupt entry into the fray would render all their efforts futile.

It seems that, as Lan Ziyi said, Heaven's Augury probably wants them to band together to accomplish some task, otherwise there'd be no reason to guide them all here.

With the top six of the Cloud River Realm's mighty ranking gathering, could there be more people arriving?

A sense of wonder and suspicion arose in everyone's hearts simultaneously, any previous unrest dispersing like smoke in the wind with Muk Qingyun's arrival.

Descending to the ground, Muk Qingyun turned his head to look at the several figures in his surroundings. Sword Qi swirled around him, and his entire being resembled an unsheathed sharp sword, leaving no doubt that anyone daring to harm him would face a thunderbolt retaliation.

He turned towards Lu Ye and bowed his head, "Fellow Daoist Lu."

Even though he had never met Lu Ye before, and despite Lu Ye wearing a mask at the moment, he still recognized him at a glance.

With Cloud River Level 8 cultivation, surrounded by several topnotch Cloud River Realm powerhouses, and displaying such a stable aura, who else could it be in this world aside from Lu Ye?

"Senior Brother Muk!" Lu Ye returned the gesture.

"Are they making things difficult for you?" Muk Qingyun's gaze swept over Lan Ziyi and the others one by one.

Seeing that Lu Ye was encircled upon arrival naturally led to such speculation.

Not to mention that both were members of the Haotian Alliance, even as sect members from Bingzhou, they should assist and support each other when abroad.

Furthermore, the relationship between Li Baxian and the Beixuan Sword Sect was very close, and Lu Ye had no shallow relations with Li Baxian. With such a connection, the two naturally felt affinity towards each other.

"It's a bit complicated," Lu Ye said, unsure of how to explain the current situation, he could only convey Lan Ziyi's previous conjecture.

After hearing this, Muk Qingyun did not express any opinion, merely saying, "If you encounter any difficulty, just give me a sign."

Lu Ye nodded.

Muk Qingyun then turned to look in another direction, "Stop lurking in the shadows, come out!"

A sharp call prompted everyone to hastily look in that direction, all startled to realize there was still someone hiding?

Ying Wuji cursed Muk Qingyun inwardly, but given the situation, there was no longer any room for him to continue hiding.

Lu Yiye had detected his presence, and to be honest, he wasn't surprised because he had already sensed that Lu Yiye's mental prowess was incredibly strong.

But since Lu Yiye never exposed him, he had been able to stay hidden, only for Muk Qingyun to call him out so directly.

With no choice but to reveal himself, he walked forward slowly, awkward yet polite as he cupped his hands towards the group, "Ying Wuji greets all Fellow Daoists!"

Upon his emergence, the crowd recognized his identity, as he was the most fearsome ghost cultivator in the Cloud River Realm. Even if they had never seen him before, they had heard of him.

Now, seeing him in person, his reputation was justified. Aside from anything else, the mere fact that he had stayed hidden nearby for so long without their notice was a skill not possessed by ordinary ghost cultivators.

"He's not in the top ten," Yang Yuan couldn't help but mutter to himself.

With so many powerhouses gathered, everyone speculated whether more would come, perhaps even all top ten of the Cloud River Realm's mightiest ranking.

But now it seemed that this wasn't the case.

Because Ying Wuji was not among the top ten.

However, he was still from the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge faction, and as a ghost cultivator, he could prove more useful than the top ten in certain situations and settings.

"Did Brother Ying also receive guidance here?" Lui Qing asked.

Ying Wuji nodded, "Indeed."

He couldn't help but wonder internally, what did it matter if he wasn't in the top ten? Being sixteenth didn't make him inferior to them, did it?

Lui Qing surveyed the surroundings, recognizing the familiar faces and silently gauging the situation.

Physique cultivators, combat cultivators, magic cultivators, ghost cultivators...

And all were figures who had made a name for themselves in the Cloud River battlefield, including the top two, Lu Yiye and Lan Ziyi.

Now, it seemed very likely that Lan Ziyi's previous speculation was true.

Heaven's Augury had gone to great lengths to assemble them here, they might indeed be needed to resolve some trouble.

Before coming here, everyone thought there was a chance meant solely for themselves. Now, it seemed this opportunity was not unique to them but shared amongst all.

Thus, they would undoubtedly have to join forces.

On the Cloud River battlefield, it wasn't unusual for cultivators of the two factions to join forces. Many secret realms had records of cultivators from both camps working together against enemies.

But... with such an assembly of forces, more people might still arrive, indicating that the issue to be dealt with was something that only those in the Cloud River Realm could interfere with, and it also came with immense risks.

If possible, he would have preferred never to have come here!

But such matters afforded no opportunity for retreat. If he really withdrew now, he might not suffer any substantial harm in the short term, but the favor from Heaven's Augury he had worked so hard to gain would surely vanish, which was something he absolutely could not accept.

To any Nine Provinces cultivator, earning the favor of Heaven's Augury was a difficult feat. Aside from special events like the Cloud River contest, there was no way or method for cultivators to earn Heaven's Augury's favor.

Who else might come?

Not only Lui Qing speculated about it, but everyone else was also curious.

Chapter 783

Atop Nameless Peak, the crowd either sat or stood, the atmosphere quiet; even those from the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge group felt no desire to converse.

As for whether they were secretly communicating through battlefield markings, that remained unknown.

After all, such actions left no trace whatsoever.

Even though suspicions abounded in their hearts, everyone maintained an outward calm, everyone except Ying Wuji, who felt incredibly uneasy.

Being a ghost cultivator, he could only unleash his full strength in the shadows, thus being exposed in this overt manner gave him the unsettling sensation of being stripped naked.

Especially since everyone present was incredibly powerful, and he was the weakest among them...

Trying to mask his unease, he leaned against a large tree, fidgeting with his curved Spiritual Artifact. The artifact, as if infused with life, flipped uncertainly through his fingers, tracing graceful arcs.

As time passed, at a certain moment, everyone suddenly sensed something and looked up in unison toward a certain direction.

Someone else was coming!

In that direction, a stream of light was rapidly approaching. Through the light, one could vaguely see a basket-shaped Flying Spirit Artifact with a graceful figure sitting inside it.

In the Nine Provinces, there were various styles of Flying Spirit Artifacts, with the most common being the sleekly designed spirit arks. Although these basket-shaped ones were less common, they were not rare and were particularly favored by some female cultivators.

Thus, seeing this basket-shaped artifact, everyone knew a female cultivator was approaching.

They then observed the spirit force vibrations she was emitting.

It was just a Cloud River Level 7...

She must be passing by, and everyone immediately lost interest, withdrawing their gazes.

Only Lu Ye, beneath his mask, stared intently at the approaching stream of light.

His heart was fraught with doubts.

Why is she here?

Is she involved too?

That doesn't make sense!

But upon reflection, he realized that among those gathered at the peak, there were physique cultivators, magic cultivators, combat cultivators, and ghost cultivators from the five major sects of the Nine Provinces, indeed missing one sect.

But why her of all people?

As ripples emerged in his heart, Lu Ye managed to keep his expression unchanged.

In an instant, the basket had flown above the spirit mountaintop, the light scattering to reveal a plump figure seated upon it.

Upon looking down, the new arrival was momentarily startled, clearly not expecting so many people to be gathered here, and all seemingly very powerful.

Almost instinctively, she considered fleeing with her artifact.

In a remote area like this, the best strategy is to distance oneself quickly from such a situation, as there's no telling what these people were doing here or whether they were good or bad.

However, her fleeting panic subsided upon spotting Lu Ye's figure.

So, he's here too!

Was he also drawn here by some feeling?

That must be it; otherwise, it's too much of a coincidence.

Her heart fluttered slightly, considering they had only parted two days ago, and she had secretly hustled here half a day after his departure, without any communication in the meantime.

It seems, then, not only had she kept secrets from him, but he had also hidden things from her.

It's an understandable matter, their secrets were not deliberate but rather a vague premonition, impossible to voice.

As many thoughts passed through her mind, the newcomer already maneuvered the flower basket to land on the mountaintop.

In a moment, a pair of doubtful eyes turned toward her, the same thought occurring to everyone there.

This Level 7 female cultivator... is she also involved?

Isn't her cultivation level a bit too low? While Lu Yiye is just a Cloud River Level 8, he is the top of Cloud River, stronger than everyone else present.

What basis does this female cultivator have?

It can't be that her strength matches the others here, can it?

As the female cultivator landed on the mountaintop, she graciously bowed: "Junior Sister Hua pays her respects to all Fellow Daoists!"

Hua Ci...

Those present, whether from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge or the Haotian Alliance, racked their brains for a memory of this name but had no recall; they were sure they had never heard of her before.

On the Spirit Stream battlefield, although Hua Ci had dominated the Spirit Stream Ranking for nearly a year after Lu Ye left, that was purely a matter concerning the Spirit Stream Realm. Unlike Lu Ye, she hadn't stirred up any significant trouble elsewhere, so she didn't draw much attention.

Perhaps some sect elders had heard the name Hua Ci from their junior disciples, knowing this healing cultivator possessed some remarkable abilities, but Cloud River cultivators, not involved in sect management and focused on their hard cultivation, wouldn't pay attention to Spirit Stream battlefield affairs.

To them, Hua Ci was completely an unknown, a stranger whose faction and sect origins were unclear.

Lui Qing frowned: "Junior Sister, why have you come here?"

He didn't ask directly because he was unsure of Hua Ci's reasons for being there.

With a gentle smile, Hua Ci didn't answer but instead asked, "Then senior brother, why are you here?"

Lui Qing nodded, understanding dawning on him as he exchanged a glance with Yang Yuan standing beside him, both feeling somewhat incredulous.

This female cultivator, just like them, had followed that slight premonition to arrive here!

Lan Ziyi looked Hua Ci up and down, contemplating, "Is Junior Sister Hua a healing cultivator?"

Hua Ci responded with a smile, "Sister has sharp eyes, I am indeed a healing cultivator."

As soon as these words were spoken, the expressions of almost everyone present became grave.

According to their original guess, Heaven's Augury had gone to great lengths to gather them here to jointly tackle some trouble, a trouble that only Cloud River Realm cultivators could handle, and it was sure to be perilous.

Thinking back to the previous Cloud River competition, it was possible that this competition was held to address this very issue, otherwise it would not have included the top six ranked individuals.

Now that a healing cultivator had arrived...

It undoubtedly indicated one thing, the issue they needed to solve was likely more dangerous than imagined, hence a healing cultivator was present to tend to their injuries.

Everyone felt heavy-hearted, only Ying Wuji was cheering inside.

At last, he was no longer the weakest one!

Looking at Hua Ci again, he found this healing cultivator quite pleasing to the eyes, just looking at her could brighten one's mood, and being selected by Heaven's Augury, her healing skills must be far from poor.

However, having said that, a Level 7 cultivation was still considered too low. In their respective sects, there were healing cultivators of Level 8 and Level 9, and those weren't chosen, yet this Hua Ci was selected.

No one knew the standards used by Heaven's Augury in choosing people.

A few simple questions and answers at the mountaintop plunged them back into silence; Hua Ci's beautiful eyes swept around the circle, her gaze not resting on Lu Ye, nor did Lu Ye intend to greet her.

Both tacitly treated each other as strangers.

At this moment, given the strange circumstances, concealing their relationship might yield some unexpected results.

Shortly thereafter, Hua Ci walked towards Lan Ziyi.

Among all those present, only she and Lan Ziyi were female cultivators; logically and emotionally, she should seek refuge with Lan Ziyi.

Therefore, no one was surprised by Hua Ci's choice.

Lan Ziyi did not refuse.

She could feel that this affair might be very troublesome and dangerous. Since Heaven's Augury had selected Hua Ci as the healing cultivator for such a team, there must be something unique about her. She would definitely need her help in the future, so her attitude towards Hua Ci was quite warm, although they had just met, they could chat back and forth.

No sooner had this settled when another stream of light streaked from a different direction, the light was earthy yellow, solid and substantial, giving off a unyielding feel. As the stream of light drew closer, an unstoppable aura rapidly approached, as if even if there were thousands of troops in front, the figure within the light could still charge boldly.

Another one arrived!

Everyone immediately perked up and looked towards the stream of light, but before they could get a clear view, the light had already reached them.

The light seemed not to notice the many powerful presences on the peak, or perhaps even if it did notice, it disregarded them, and descended directly.

With a booming sound, the air was swept up, and dust flew into the air.

Everyone frowned, each stimulating their spirit force to clear the clouds of dust around them; when they finally took a clear look, they were all startled.

In the midst of the field, a figure stood tall like a tower, his body swirling with surging blood Qi, half of his garment in tatters, revealing a firm chest and slightly bulging muscles.

All over his body, there was an indescribable sense of power.

Yang Yuan, who came from Jingkong Mountain, was especially struck.

With one glance, he noticed that the newcomer was also a physique cultivator, and from the opponent's physique and the bursting blood Qi, he seemed not at all inferior to himself.

Yet, the spirit force fluctuations emanating from the other's body were clearly only of Level 7!

Another Level 7!

Beneath the mask, Lu Ye's eyes twitched violently.

It was one thing for Hua Ci to suddenly run over here, being a healing cultivator with mysterious and unpredictable methods, he could understand why Heaven's Augury selected her.

But...

Why...

had Giant Armor come too!

Lu Ye really wanted to lift his mask and ask him to his face.

Is this what you meant by 'stay still to harness movement, come out for a walk'?

Giant Armor, this guy, had indeed changed, having his own little secrets!

In the field, as Giant Armor landed, he sensed the many powerful presences around him, as well as two familiar auras.

Almost without needing to look, he knew they were Lu Ye and Hua Ci!

He didn't expect to encounter them here, feeling a surge of joy, he was about to grin at Lu Ye, but saw Lu Ye sitting still, not lifting his head, acting as if he didn't recognize him.

Turning his head to look at Hua Ci, she was standing with a female cultivator he didn't recognize.

In that instant, a spark of understanding flashed in Giant Armor's mind, and he vaguely realized something.

Giant Armor wasn't stupid; he just thought simply and was too lazy to consider complex matters, but this didn't mean he couldn't sense the strangeness of the current situation.

So in just a moment, he figured out something.

Lu Ye and Hua Ci were currently pretending not to know each other, and he mustn't let the cat out of the bag!

After a brief hesitation, he ferociously expelled the turbid air from his body, two visible streams of air gushing out of his nostrils and impacting in all directions, he muttered gruffly, "Giant Armor has arrived!"

Chapter 784 Pleasant Journey

In comparison, Hua Ci at least gained fame on the Spirit Stream battlefield by dominating the top position of the Spirit Stream Ranking for nearly a year.

However, Giant Armor had been virtually unknown since he began his cultivation journey.

In the Spirit Stream battlefield, he had advanced to the Cloud River early on. Once in the Cloud River battlefield, he was alone, following his path.

By the time Lu Ye found him and brought him to cultivate in the Great Reversal Valley of Great Wilderness Mountain, he had almost never left the valley.

Therefore, almost all the cultivators present had never seen him.

However, he was still someone who had made a name for himself on the top hundred rankings of the Cloud River, so even if people hadn't seen him, they recognized his name.

They vaguely remembered that when the Cloud River rankings were set, he was ranked around the thirtieth position.

Being in the Cloud River Level 7 with a ranking around thirty already spoke volumes about his profound foundations, so even if Giant Armor's cultivation was slightly inferior, no one underestimated him.

If such a person were to cultivate to Cloud River Level 9, who knows how much more advanced his strength would become.

Only Ying Wuji's eyes flickered.

Unlike others, he had seen Giant Armor!

Back when he and Song Zhui went to surround Lu Ye in the Great Reversal Valley, he had secretly attacked Lu Ye while this bulky physique cultivator stood not far away from Lu Ye.

With such a distinctive physical appearance, how could Ying Wuji forget Giant Armor?

But now, it seemed that Lu Yiye and this man were pretending not to recognize each other, obviously indicating some plot...

He didn't immediately expose this, but he was on guard in his heart.

More and more people arrived, and soon nine people had gathered at the mountaintop.

Aside from the top six in the Cloud River competition, there were Ying Wuji ranked sixteenth, Giant Armor ranked twenty-ninth, and Hua Ci ranked in the top three hundred. Such an array, such a setup, increasingly confirmed the suspicions of the crowd.

The matters they were about to face were destined to be thorny and dangerous, perhaps even life-threatening.

But now that it had come to this, no one could back down. Everyone had come here following an inexplicable summons that could be said to be the guidance of Heaven's Augury. To back out now, the consequences were not something they could bear.

So, even knowing the perilous road ahead, they had to brace themselves and proceed.

Moreover, these were all outstanding figures of the Cloud River Realm, how could they not understand that risk was also an opportunity?

So, while they were worried, they were also filled with anticipation and excitement.

What exactly did the high Heaven's Augury want them to resolve? They had never orchestrated such a strong lineup before for anything.

At the very least, the records of the top sects had no mention of such an event.

At the center of the venue, Lu Ye was still sitting cross-legged, gently tapping the handle of the Boulder Mountain Saber, contemplating.

Hua Ci was chosen, likely because of her identity as a healing cultivator, probably not related to her cultivation level.

But what about Giant Armor?

In the Cloud River Realm, there were still some stronger than him, so why were others not chosen, and it was specifically Giant Armor?

Lu Ye couldn't help but think back to the incident at Fox Fairy Valley. That time he had resolved the Fox Fairy and received a baptism gifted by Heaven's Augury. Perhaps that incident also accumulated Heaven's Augury's favor?

Was this what made Giant Armor stand out among the many strong cultivators of the Cloud River Realm?

It was just a guess, and Lu Ye had no way of knowing for sure.

But soon, he remembered another matter and suddenly looked up towards Ying Wuji.

At that moment, Ying Wuji was pondering over the trickery of Lu Ye and Giant Armor hiding their relationship. Suddenly feeling a sharp gaze, he looked up to see Lu Yiye staring intently at him.

Ying Wuji couldn't help but feel startled, instantly realizing that this was Lu Yiye warning him, reluctantly he spoke with resentment, "Fellow Daoist Lu, what advice do you have?"

"Behave yourself!" Lu Ye said indifferently.

Ying Wuji's face twitched, how could he not perceive the threatening intent in those words, fuming inside, he hadn't even decided whether to covertly reveal the relationship between these two. If he really did, would Lu Yiye resort to attacking him with a saber?

Boom... Boom...

Suddenly, a dull sound erupted from deep within the earth, as if thunderbolts were roaming the underground depths, followed by the mountain trembling.

This abrupt change made everyone's expressions turn solemn, as they each stimulated their forms, hovering in mid-air.

However, what they saw made them change color.

Because it wasn't just the mountain they were on that was shaking, all the nearby mountains were trembling as well.

"What's happening?" Yang Yuan asked in shock, but who could provide an answer?

The calamity struck so suddenly, no one knew what was actually happening.

Within three breaths' time, mountains across hundreds of miles began to tremble, a vast and majestic aura descended from the sky, followed by a pillar of light erupting from one of the mountains, shooting up into the sky.

More pillars of light followed suit!

In an instant, countless pillars converged into the sky, piercing the clouds, creating a magnificent sight visible even from tens of thousands of miles away.

The sudden eruption of the light pillars, the extensive coverage, was beyond imagination.

After a brief explosion, the columns of light suddenly expanded outward, filling the air with boundless, dense, and pure nature's spiritual energy as the columns grew.

The crowd, still in shock, instantly felt a warm sensation throughout their bodies, as if they were immersed in a sea of Spiritual Energy.

Moreover, this Spiritual Energy was so rich and pure that it was not at all inferior to the energy drawn by using spirit fortune sticks.

In other words, cultivating in this environment was equivalent to continuously using spirit fortune sticks for cultivation, offering a speed and efficiency that every cultivator dreamt of.

So, even though they did not know what was happening, almost everyone instinctively began to breathe in the nature's spiritual energy.

Yet, Lu Ye's gaze was captured by the bands of light floating in the sea of Spiritual Energy, which had formed after the expansion of the columns.

At this moment, not only were the people bathing in the sea of Spiritual Energy, but they also seemed to be bathing in an ocean of light.

And this ocean of light covered an area of a thousand miles!

What caught Lu Ye's attention was not the bands of light themselves, but the way they flowed.

The bands intertwined with each other as if they had intelligence, rapidly spreading throughout the entire ocean of light.

The way they intertwined was a fusion of Ying and Yang Dual Origins!

Lu Ye hurriedly used Insight Spirit Runes to enhance his eyesight and looked around.

Lui Qing, as a magic cultivator, also noticed something unusual. He greedily inhaled Spiritual Energy while intently observing.

In just a short ten breaths of time, a huge pattern formed by the intertwining bands of light appeared in everyone's view, hanging above their heads and shrouding the mountaintop they had been on.

With the huge pattern of Spirit Runes as the center, even more Yin-Yang Dual Origins emerged, quickly spreading in all directions, as if an invisible giant hand was orchestrating everything secretly.

"Lu Yiye!" Lui Qing bellowed, "What kind of Spirit Runes are these?"

Lu Ye's expertise in the Array Path was well known, which closely related to the Path of Spirit Runes. Thus, when Lui Qing could not recognize the large Spirit Rune pattern, he immediately asked Lu Ye for insight.

Lu Ye had already flown up higher, using his Ocular Power to observe his surroundings. After a moment, his expression showed astonishment.

"Lu Yiye!" Yang Yuan also yelled from below, "We are all tied together now; don't hold back any secrets!"

With such a grand and unusual event happening, something must be about to occur. While others saw no clues, Lu Ye clearly noticed something.

Lu Ye's calm voice came from above, "Based on the spirit mountaintops and rivers as the foundation, fueled by pure spirit force, mysterious and unforeseeable, indeed a grand work!"

In his observation, the area of a thousand miles, including many spirit mountaintops and mountain ranges, under the interweaving of Yin-Yang Dual Origins emanating from the bands of light, had unmistakably become the layout of a big array.

Moreover, it was an array he was extremely familiar with!

Although not wanting to say much, considering Hua Ci, Giant Armor, and Muk Qingyun who were his own, Lu Ye still explained, "Above us, is the Void Spirit Runes!"

"The Void!" Upon hearing this, Lui Qing's complexion changed.

He had of course heard of the Void Spirit Runes, but who in the world could construct such a massive expanse of Void Spirit Runes? Even those strong cultivators in the Divine Sea Realm might not have the ability.

Lan Ziyi, with a serious expression, said, "You said earlier that the spirit mountaintops are the base and pure spiritual force is the source. Could it be that these Void Spirit Runes are at the core of a big array?"

Lu Ye looked at her leisurely, "Exactly!"

Everyone instantly felt a chill run down their spines.

If such a massive Void Spirit Rune was the core, how vast must the array be?

Lui Qing's face turned pale.

As far as he knew, the only type of array that used Void Spirit Runes as its core was the renowned teleportation array!

But why a teleportation array?

Within the Nine Provinces, including both the Spirit Stream battlefield and Cloud River battlefield, teleportation was handled by the Heaven's Augury Pillar under normal circumstances, so normally there was no need for a teleportation array. Hence, even array cultivators didn't focus much on it in their early cultivation stages.

Of course, this was also because setting up such an array was difficult; without sufficient mastery over the Array Path, one couldn't even construct the basic Void Spirit Runes, let alone set up the array.

So far, within the Cloud River Realm, only Lu Yiye was capable of setting up a teleportation array.

If he said it was a teleportation array, then it certainly was one!

The grandeur and scale of everything unfolding was beyond human capability, this was a maneuver of Heaven's Augury!

All along, they had speculated that Heaven's Augury had gathered them here to tackle some very troublesome and dangerous matter. If they were already setting up such a grand scale teleportation array before it even began, it was hard to imagine what awaited them.

Lu Ye was also curious, where did the other end of the teleportation array lead to?

Was it some secret realm?

But the scale of this teleportation array was just too immense!

In a daze, the Void Spirit Runes floating above everyone's heads slowly descended, accompanied by a violent surging of the pure spiritual energy in the air.

The Void began to twist and change, giving everyone an involuntary sensation of weightlessness.

A sense of foreboding arose in Lu Ye's heart, and he looked up at everyone and softly cautioned, "Fellow Daoists, have a pleasant journey!"

Chapter 785 Not the Nine Provinces

"What?" Fong Rulie looked confused, but in the next moment, the Void Spirit Runes had already completely descended, enveloping everyone within.

Faint cries of alarm and agonized screams could be heard, as a boundless sensation of weightlessness pervaded their entire bodies!

If the experience of the teleportation array set up by Lu Ye himself felt like stepping into a bottomless abyss, constantly falling downwards without end,

then the sensation of teleportation at this moment was on a whole other level.

Not only was it like stepping into a deep abyss, but there were also invisible forces constantly dragging from below, intensifying that sense of panic with no foothold, causing one to involuntarily feel as though they were at times being twisted into a sphere and at other times being stretched out long.

Throughout the whole process, the designation of first or second in the Cloud River Realm had no meaning.

Their spirit force was almost completely imprisoned within their bodies, unable to be activated, leaving them at the mercy of that invisible force.

What they saw was a bizarre landscape; time and space blurred their boundaries at this moment.

It was also at this moment when the massive teleportation array, covering a thousand miles in radius, was activated, that a piece of information inexplicably exploded in Lu Ye's heart...

Bright light burst forth, looking from afar like a big sun had fallen amongst these mountains.

Such an anomaly naturally drew the attention of countless cultivators.

But it only lasted for the duration of ten breaths, after which the light burst resembling the big sun disappeared, and along with it vanished the rich and pure spiritual energy of nature that had enveloped a thousand miles.

By the time cultivators arrived at the scene to investigate, there were no traces left, and the events temporarily became the stuff of legends.

...

The dim sunlight shone upon the earth, making the whole world seem like a dusty mirror covered in murky colors.

On the withered old tree, a few scrawny crows with red glints in their eyes stared down below.

Suddenly, as if sensing something, the crows startled into flight, their cawing sounds quickly receding into the distance.

The void suddenly distorted, with violent ripples surging, and as the ripples spread, a vague human silhouette emerged from within.

In just a few breaths' time, the figure went from nonexistence to reality, eventually becoming completely fixed.

The ripples suddenly converged, and the figure in midair, beyond control, fell down, flailing about, and crash-landed heavily on the ground, motionless.

Ying Wuji was somewhat dazed.

Since embarking on the path of cultivation, he had never encountered such a bizarre event.

First, he followed his own sense to that Nameless Spirit Mountaintop, and in total nine people arrived there. Before they could figure out what was going on, a huge teleportation array using the Earth Vein as its force suddenly appeared, and immediately after, the Formation activated.

He did not know how long he had been teleported, but once it ended, he found himself here.

His spirit force was scattered and could hardly be activated.

Falling from the sky, there wasn't the expected pain, as he seemed to have landed on something slightly soft.

There was no relief, only urgency filled his heart.

He did not know where he was, nor if there were any dangers around. What he needed to do now was quickly recuperate his own spirit force, so that even if he encountered any danger, he would have some ability to protect himself.

He closed his eyes and concentrated, silently running his Black Rank Skill.

After a short time, the scattered spirit force within his body slowly converged, and his chaotic senses gradually recovered.

The first thing Ying Wuji noticed was a strong stench, likely the smell of corpses that hadn't been handled in many days.

There were dead people near him!

And they had been dead for a while!

Ying Wuji immediately made this judgment. He wasn't panicked; as a Senior Cultivator of the Cloud River Realm who had personally killed many, how could he fear the dead?

"Caw, caw..." the mournful cries of birds rang out, accompanied by the fluttering of wings. The crows that had flown away earlier returned, alighting on the withered tree trunks, looking down at Ying Wuji from their high perch.

Their blood-red eyes held a yearning as they fixed intently on him.

Ying Wuji opened his eyes and saw the few emaciated crows, which made him laugh sarcastically. Did these feathery beasts really think he was about to die, waiting here to feast upon him?

He was currently recovering rapidly; the teleporting process might have scattered his spirit force and confused his senses, but it certainly did not injure him.

Moreover, even if he could not activate his spirit force, he was not something these crows could covet.

Nonetheless, he also felt some doubts rising in his heart.

There should be corpses near him; why weren't these starved beasts going to feed?

Vaguely, he felt that something was not quite right.

After a little while, Ying Wuji had almost fully recovered. He quickly got up from the ground and flicked his fingers, sending a few blasts of energy into the air, knocking the crows from the trees.

Having vented his frustration, he then took the time to survey his surroundings.

What met his eyes made his expression freeze.

Because in midair hung a murky big sun, as if covered with a thick layer of dust, the light it radiated was not the kind that could dazzle the eyes, but more like the candlelight in the wind.

This is the big sun?

Ying Wuji was stunned.

The light of the setting sun, about to sink below the horizon, was surely brighter than this, wasn't it?

Yet, judging by the position of the big sun currently hanging in the sky, it should be the time when it was most intensely blazing, just after dawn. There was no reason for it to be such a dull light.

This big sun gave him the impression of a decrepit elder on the verge of demise, about to reach the end of his life.

A terrifying thought suddenly rose in his mind.

When the immense teleportation array on Nameless Peak abruptly took shape, although everyone was inevitably panicked, they were also guessing where the array would transport them to.

Ying Wuji naturally had his speculations. He believed that the teleportation array was likely to transport them all into a secret realm, which was a common method of entering secret realms. It was just that this time, the array was somewhat larger in scale and more magnificent in presence.

In his cultivation experience to date, Ying Wuji had entered numerous secret realms, and while each had its unique local customs diverse from the Nine Provinces, there was one constant.

The heavenly bodies remained the same!

Because those secret realms all existed within the grand environment of the Nine Provinces.

The place before his eyes seemed different from the secret realms he had experienced before!

Ying Wuji quickly tapped on his battlefield marking, and his complexion suddenly changed.

The battlefield marking... had no response!

This was something that had never happened before. Tracing its origins, the battlefield marking could be considered a boon from Heaven's Augury. Within the Nine Provinces, whether one was a cultivator from a sect or an independent cultivator, one's entire cultivation life was closely connected to this battlefield marking.

Cultivators could use the battlefield marking to check various personal information, communicate with friends and family, and even indirectly determine a person's life or death.

As long as one was in the Nine Provinces, there would never be a time when the battlefield marking failed to function.

And now, the battlefield marking didn't respond...

The big sun in the sky was so bizarre as well.

Then, thinking about the massive teleportation array that covered a thousand miles...

The terrifying thought in his mind gradually became clear.

Despite feeling it was unlikely, when all other possibilities had been eliminated, the one remaining, no matter how unlikely, had to be the truth.

"This place..." Ying Wuji's mind was shaken, his thoughts in utter disarray, "is not the Nine Provinces?"

If this place was not the Nine Provinces, then where was it?

He forced himself to calm down, silently reassuring himself that perhaps his speculation was wrong.

To prevent himself from overthinking and to ascertain the environment around him, he quickly looked around.

Soon, he identified where he was.

A mass grave mound.

Scattered around were broken bodies, many of which were beyond recognition. The clothes on the bodies varied—there seemed to be wealthy merchants, beggars from the streets, and some appeared to be cultivators based on their attire.

At the tip of his nose was the intense stench of decay. The reason he didn't feel much pain when he fell from midair was not due to his strong physique or confused senses, but because he had landed on one of these corpses.

Looking up, he could see that the mass grave mound was piled with corpses—there were at least eight thousand if not ten thousand. Even someone like Ying Wuji felt a shiver down his spine.

What on earth had happened here to cause so many deaths?

And where were the others?

The nine people gathered by Heaven's Augury, if he appeared here, where were the others?

But then he thought, such a vast teleportation array, moreover transporting over a great distance, it was normal for there to be some deviation that scattered everyone.

It was certain that, even with a deviation, it would not be too far; he should be able to find traces of the others nearby.

He had to quickly regroup with them. Now was not the time to care about the Haotian Alliance or Ten Thousand Demons Ridge.

If things were as he speculated, then the situation was rather dire. Only by breaking down factional barriers and sincerely working together could they find a way out.

With this thought in mind, Ying Wuji spurred his spirit force and was about to leap into the air.

However, just then, a cold sensation suddenly came from around his ankle, followed by a tight grip!

Ying Wuji instinctively looked down and saw a rotting hand tightly clutching his ankle, and beside it was a dead head with eyes wide open, staring at him.

Their gazes met, and Ying Wuji felt his hair stand on end, as if he had fallen into an icy cellar.

"Roar!" The dead head suddenly opened its mouth and let out an angry roar, spewing a thick corpse Qi. Ying Wuji was caught off guard and was enveloped head to face.

He reacted instinctively, swinging his curved blade to decapitate the head, bursting it open.

He floated backward, his soul still trembling.

In the quiet mass grave mound, there suddenly rustled movements, and those bodies that had been lying there, dead for who knows how long, seemed to come back to life, all staring stiffly at him, each one exuding a rich scent of decay.

Even the fragmented bodies, relying only on their hands, began to slowly approach him.

"Ah!" Even someone as experienced and composed as Ying Wuji could not help but cry out in horror.

The revival of the dead, such a thing he had neither seen nor heard of, he swiftly soared into the sky, eager to flee this eerie place.

Chapter 786 He Can Withstand Even if the Sky Falls

The murky big sun hung high, emitting a dull glow that bathed the entire world in a twilight atmosphere.

Atop a bare hill in a desolate wilderness, Lu Ye stood with his hand on his saber, his brows deeply furrowed.

No sign of other people could be seen around, and the battlefield marking had stopped responding, preventing him from contacting Hua Ci and Giant Armor.

What Ying Wuji could sense, he could naturally sense as well.

And he had made the same deduction as Ying Wuji.

This place... was not the Nine Provinces!

Usually, whether it be the secret realm of the Ten Thousand Beasts Domain or the Soaring Dragon World, they all existed under the large environment of the Nine Provinces, so cultivators entering them could experience a projection of the secret realm's world at a certain time and, under the operation of Heaven's Augury, obtain a natural identity suitable for merging into the secret realm's world.

For example, Lu Ye had once obtained the identity of the Young Master of the Ten Thousand Beasts Sect, Young Master Ye Liu of the Tyrannical Saber Sect.

But this time, he had not obtained any identity and had very little understanding of this world.

The only thing he knew more about this world than Ying Wuji and the others was its name and the purpose of his trip.

Because at the moment the transmission began, a piece of information had exploded in his heart.

"Save the shattered Unparalleled Continent!"

This must be the guidance of Heaven's Augury; Lu Ye was not sure if everyone had received this guidance or if only he had.

A simple guidance, yet it contained not a small amount of information.

At the very least, Lu Ye knew that the world called Unparalleled Continent was in a state of disrepair.

A vast domain can also be shattered?

How was he to save it?

Reflecting on the secret realms he had experienced so far, which revolved around a domain as the backdrop, they seemed to all be related to saving the world.

The Ten Thousand Beasts Domain was like this, as was the Soaring Dragon World, and now this Unparalleled Continent was no different.

In comparison, the Unparalleled Continent indeed felt like it was on the brink of extinction, nearing its end.

Lu Ye reminisced about the four sealed Heaven's Augury Pillars he had received, and a guess vaguely formed in his mind.

It made no sense for the folks from the Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union to wait there to hand over the four Heaven's Augury Pillars to him; the keys to saving this realm must lie in these four pillars.

Moreover, if this place was not the Nine Provinces, then returning to the Nine Provinces would also be troublesome.

The Heaven's Augury Pillars were the only hope for them who were transported here.

However, where to place the Heaven's Augury Pillars was a problem; such items could not be placed arbitrarily, there were surely some rules.

His thoughts gradually became clearer; what he needed to do now was to quickly familiarize himself with this world, gather some basic intelligence on it, and then find the right locations to install the four Heaven's Augury Pillars.

If gathering intelligence was necessary, then he must find the cultivators of this world!

He also needed to look for Hua Ci and Giant Armor.

Lu Ye wasn't too worried about Giant Armor's safety; Heaven's Augury had chosen them, the cultivators of the Cloud River Realm, and transported them here, meaning the problem of this realm could surely only be solved by the Cloud River Realm.

In other words, this world was very possibly like the Soaring Dragon World, lacking any existence above Cloud River; with Giant Armor's abilities, there was no need to worry too much.

Soaring Dragon World was weak due to the absorption of the Blood World, leading to a constant drain of its essence, causing the cultivators' cultivation to decline generation after generation.

This shattered Unparalleled Continent was similarly causing a continuous loss of natural essence; perhaps this domain had more potent beings long ago, but not necessarily now.

However, Hua Ci, after all, was a healing cultivator, and even if his methods of using poisons were unpredictable, finding him sooner could bring some peace of mind.

With a decision made, Lu Ye took off into the air, choosing a direction at random and flew out.

He hadn't flown far when he suddenly felt something and turned his head to look in a certain direction.

Over there, faint spirit force fluctuations were emanating.

Someone was fighting.

Lu Ye immediately redirected and flew towards it.

Having covered no more than thirty li, he looked from afar and saw a person desperately fleeing mid-air, while a large, dense group of figures hotly pursued him.

The pursuing crowd, chaotic and disorderly, each radiated an ominous aura; the auras combined together, creating a yellow cloud that seemed to spill from the sky.

Lu Ye recognized at a glance that the person fleeing ahead was Ying Wuji!

His brows couldn't help but frown; what had Ying Wuji done to be chased by so many upon his arrival here?

Under normal circumstances, Lu Ye would not care about Ying Wuji's life or death.

But now, with the situation on the Unparalleled Continent still unclear, whether it be Ying Wuji or anyone else, they were all brought together by the guidance of Heaven's Augury, which subtly suggested they cooperate.

With this in mind, Lu Ye felt it best not to ignore the situation.

After all, in this foreign land, Ying Wuji was arguably one of his own.

As Lu Ye was pondering this, Ying Wuji had already spotted him and, overcome with joy, cried out from afar, "Lu Yiye! Save me!"

The panicked emotion instantly settled down.

He had thought that he was undoubtedly going to die this time, but unexpectedly, he had encountered Lu Ye here.

If anyone could save his life in such a situation, it had to be Lu Yiye!

Heaven hasn't forsaken me!

Ying Wuji thought so, but soon became uneasy because he did not know whether Lu Ye would come to his aid. After all, they belonged to different camps and had previous disputes. It wouldn't be surprising if Lu Yiye chose to just stand by and watch.

Hoping for a rescue depended solely on a whim of Lu Yiye's kindness.

As Ying Wuji was feeling anxious, Lu Ye had already started moving towards him.

As the distance closed, Lu Ye's eyebrows furrowed.

He had assumed Ying Wuji was being chased by the cultivators of this realm, but what he saw now were not cultivators, but rotting corpses hanging with decaying flesh!

The yellow clouds he had seen earlier, which filled the air with a howling sound, shockingly turned out to be corpse Qi emitted by these bodies.

What are these things?

Ying Wuji had been terrified half to death when he first witnessed these corpses reviving. Although Lu Ye was not frightened to that extent, his mind still tightened sharply.

He had never seen such bizarre phenomena before.

"What is this?" Lu Ye asked, looking forward as Ying Wuji rapidly approached him.

Ying Wuji was almost spitting blood, his expression full of despair. "I don't know, I didn't provoke them!"

He had been transported to a mass grave mound, barely recovering before these bodies revived and started attacking him, forcing him to flee in a pathetic state.

With his mind slightly steadied, Lu Ye charged towards Ying Wuji.

He vaguely felt that these strange beings might be the source of this realm's crisis. Having encountered them, it was natural he would try to gather some intelligence.

At the very least, he needed to understand whether these bizarre existences were dead or alive, and what their strength was.

"Hey!"

As they brushed past each other, Ying Wuji was too late to stop him. Turning his head, he saw Lu Ye had already plunged into the swarm of corpses. His entire body was wrapped in swirling spirit force, the crimson spirit force making him look as if he were ablaze, shining brighter than the big sun in the sky.

"The corpse Qi is poisonous, and it seems they have some kind of combined strength technique!" With no way to stop him, Ying Wuji could only hastily shout a warning.

Had this been in the Nine Provinces, he would have wished to see Lu Ye dead sooner rather than later. But in such a strange place, with Lu Ye being the only familiar face, he didn't want him to die here.

He would rather face Lu Yiye than this group of extremely bizarre entities.

At least, he knew everything about Lu Yiye.

The corpse Qi indeed was poisonous, something Lu Ye realized the moment he plunged into the swarm, as his Talent Tree responded.

He quickly mobilized his spirit force to shield himself, thus blocking the intrusion of the corpse poison.

With the Boulder Mountain Saber in hand, its blade climbed with flames, he alone with his saber, cut a bloody path through the swarm.

The stench of rotting corpses was all under his nose, pus and rotten flesh splattered when the bodies were cleaved apart, and for anyone with slightly worse mental endurance, just the sight of these eerie beings was enough to instill terror and panic.

Soon, Lu Ye also understood the combined strength technique that Ying Wuji had spoken of.

The aura emanating from these bodies was not particularly strong, and some, judging by their attire, were clearly not cultivators but ordinary people. Yet, they still managed to exert tremendous power.

This was indeed bizarre.

Their bodies were covered in rotten flesh that seemed like it would fall off just from moving around, but in reality, their physical defense was very strong!

The issue lay in the corpse Qi enveloping them.

This pooling corpse Qi seemed to allow each of the rotting corpse to borrow strength from others.

So even those who seemed like ordinary people before their deaths could now deliver incredibly powerful strikes.

The shroud of corpse Qi enabled these rotting corpses to unite in battle, and its poisonous nature provided them with a powerful defense...

No wonder Ying Wuji was being relentlessly pursued and was in such a desperate plight.

Although he was a ghost cultivator and not proficient in direct fights, that was only relatively speaking.

His cultivation at the Cloud River Level 9 was genuine, and with his rank at the sixteenth in the Cloud River, he was only slightly inferior in a direct combat to a few others at Level 9.

Had the swarm not been powerful, he wouldn't have fled in such a panic.

In the midst of battling within the swarm, with limbs and rotten flesh flying around, Lu Ye, who was now unleashing a secret technique to hide his form and restrain his aura, soared impressively as Ying Wuji, hidden aside, watched in awe.

He couldn't help but feel, "This guy, Lu Yiye... is outrageously strong!"

The corpses that he was utterly helpless against seemed not immovable in his presence but handled them with great ease, cutting in and out of the vast swarm like a tiger among sheep.

One must say, when enemies, Lu Yiye was a formidable adversary.

Yet, as a companion, he could easily provide a tremendous sense of security.

It seemed that as long as he was present, even if the sky fell, he could hold it up!

Ying Wuji felt a bit bitter. Why was such a person born in the Haotian Alliance and not in Ten Thousand Demons Ridge?

Why did their generation have to contend against someone like Lu Yiye?

With Lu Yiye in this generation, other talents, no matter how outstanding, were just relegated to be a backdrop.

Truly, the ways of heaven are unjust!

Chapter 787 Corpse Herder?

Watching for a moment, Ying Wuji's expression grew solemn, for although Lu Ye demonstrated incomparably strong power, with each saber strike claiming a victim.

However, the number of rotting corpses was simply too many, and by Lu Ye's strength alone it was utterly impossible to eliminate them all.

If the struggle continued, even Lu Ye would exhaust his strength and perish.

Yet, Ying Wuji, looking again and again, saw no sign that Lu Ye intended to flee, only a lone figure with a saber, moving in and out amongst the horde, fighting relentlessly.

Anxious in his heart, he had no choice but to hurriedly consume an elixir pill and heal himself first.

In the midst of the battlefield, Lu Ye slew in all directions, with his powerful mind and spirit stretching out.

After a long battle, he had begun to sense something was amiss.

The rotting corpses undoubtedly lacked any sign of life, in other words, they were dead things, yet they could move as if alive, and under the cover of that yellow corpse Qi, they even burst forth with strength greater than in life.

This was clearly somewhat off.

Lu Ye faintly felt that these rotting corpses were like puppets on strings, someone was controlling them from the shadows.

Moving in and out of the horde, his sole purpose was to trace and find this hidden assailant.

Finding him, perhaps, would solve the issue with this group of rotting corpses.

He had thought the hidden enemy would be hiding in some concealed corner, or have similar ghostly techniques to hide their presence, but now it seemed that wasn't the case.

The person controlling this group of rotting corpses was hidden right in their midst!

Indeed, a bold and skillful move.

Strangely, he felt no trace of life, nor could he find any clues.

Therefore, to find the hidden enemy, he could only resort to this crude method.

Until at a certain moment, when his long saber thrust forward toward a certain direction, his expression subtly changed.

After a long fight, the rotting corpses he had severed with his long saber numbered in the hundreds, but those corpses had never tried to evade his attacks, because being dead things, controlled by someone, they felt no fear, no pain.

Yet this thrust was met with a rotting corpse suddenly lurching to the side, stepping in front of another corpse.

It might seem coincidental, but in the eyes of Lu Ye, who had anticipated such a thing, it was a clear flaw!

He immediately turned his head and focused on an unassuming corpse in the horde, that rotting corpse looked no different from the others, utterly ordinary, its figure emaciated, its body missing large chunks of flesh, enshrouded in thick corpse Qi.

In such a horde, no one would give it a second glance.

But after Lu Ye took notice, its murky eyes suddenly came alive with spirit, and its form rapidly retreated.

"Trying to escape?"

Lu Ye's eyes were sharp as a blade, his aura fierce and tenacious, clinging to the rotting corpse like a leech, his spirit force surging, following the path of his saber.

Even as rotting corpses continuously lunged at him, none could deter him in the slightest.

One man, one saber, brazenly carving a path through the horde, within a few movements he caught up to the retreating corpse.

The hidden one's trail exposed, the rotting corpse could no longer conceal itself and opened its mouth to let out a beast-like roar at Lu Ye. A visible cloud of thick corpse Qi spewed out, engulfing Lu Ye from above.

Ying Wuji, lurking in the shadows, was shocked and hurriedly cried out a warning, "Lu Yiye, be careful!"

He had previously fallen victim to this, resulting in him being poisoned by the corpse Qi. Otherwise, with his strength, even if he could not defeat such a horde, he wouldn't have been driven to such desperation.

Had he not encountered Lu Ye in time, he would likely have ended up as part of this horde of corpses.

But his warning was still too late. The thick corpse Qi had already enveloped Lu Ye's head and face, wrapping him entirely within it, and Ying Wuji felt his heart sinking.

He never thought that one day he would worry about the safety of Lu Yiye, truly a fickle turn of events.

Lu Yiye was probably done for!

This thought flashed through Ying Wuji's mind, and he immediately thought to retreat.

However, just as he had this thought, a familiar figure burst out from within the thick corpse Qi. The fierce and wild aura was not in the least bit diminished, the violent saber blade piercing the sky, one

strike chopping off the rotting corpse's arms, another severing the legs, and a third piercing the head of the rotting corpse.

The tumultuous battlefield suddenly fell silent.

Like a group of demons frozen by an immobilization curse, the entire horde stood rigid, only the thick, yellow-like-cloud corpse Qi still rolled unpredictably.

Ying Wuji looked up to see, across the way Lu Ye's long saber aimed straight, piercing the skull of the corpse in front of him. At first glance, it appeared as if that rotting corpse was nailed to midair by Lu Yiye.

The howling wind passed by, Lu Ye's clothing fluttering sharply.

This scene shook Ying Wuji to the core, and he couldn't help but silently acknowledge that it was indeed Lu Yiye, always accomplishing what others could not.

Such a formidable enemy that had left the sixteenth domain of Cloud River helpless, was subdued by Lu Yiye so effortlessly, the disparity between them was not just significant.

Lu Ye felt increasingly fortunate that Lu Yiye was not far from him, and that it was a coincidence that he had run into him. Otherwise, he feared his life would really have been lost there.

The Boulder Mountain Saber penetrated three inches into the flesh but did not pierce through the rotting corpse's head, so it didn't cause any fatal damage.

However, with its limbs cut off and its whereabouts exposed, the rotting corpse couldn't stir up any more trouble.

A pair of eyes, fiercely struggling, looked at Lu Ye in disbelief. Its mouth opened and closed, emitting a harsh, grating sound like metal scraping against iron: "How could you possibly have found me?"

He had command over an army of eight thousand corpses, a force that wasn't weak in the entire Unparalleled Continent. Over the years, with his corpse army, he had been invincible, never having been discovered within his undead legions.

Yet today, he had met his match!

Moreover, it was almost the instant he was discovered that he was subdued!

As soon as he spoke, Lu Ye couldn't help but knit his eyebrows.

Although he had confirmed earlier that the corpse army was being controlled by someone, Lu Ye had thought that the one controlling the corpse army would be a cultivator.

Just like in the Nine Provinces, where there was a beast-taming faction, except the cultivators in that faction controlled demon beasts, while the cultivators of the Unparalleled Continent controlled a corpse army.

Or should they be called the corpse-taming faction? Corpse herders?

But regardless, according to Lu Ye's existing knowledge, this person should at least be alive!

But now, it seemed that the situation was a bit off.

Although the individual in front of him, whose limbs had been severed, could speak and showed intense emotions, Lu Ye didn't sense any sign of life from him.

And judging by his appearance alone, this fellow seemed to be a dead man who had been dead for who knows how long.

If it weren't for his strong mind and ability to seize that fleeting moment of vulnerability, finding this fellow in such a vast corpse army would have been truly difficult.

"How could you possibly have found me?" the "corpse herder" roared again, his face full of rotting flesh, but his eyes were filled with intense resentment. If it wasn't for Lu Ye pinning his head down with the saber, he would not be so compliant.

Lu Ye pushed the Boulder Mountain Saber forward by an inch and said tersely, "I ask, you answer!"

Provoked, the "corpse herder" retorted coldly from his cracked mouth: "No matter what you want to know, I will not satisfy your wishes. We of the Corpse Race are spirits of death; death means little to us. It is only your human race who fears death!"

As his words ended, the yellow cloud of corpse Qi covering countless rotting corpses began to squirm as if alive. The rotting corpses, which had been still as if under an immobilization curse, also began to move again.

They came from all directions, emitting a harrowing, sinister growl, bearing their fangs and claws as they lunged at Lu Ye.

Spirit force surged, and flames lit upon the Boulder Mountain Saber as Lu Ye flicked his wrist.

The rotting corpse's head in front of him exploded, and its mutilated body fell to the ground.

The rotting corpses that had reached close to him fell like puppets with their strings cut, tumbling down to the ground, smashing into pieces and splashing into pools of corpse fluid, a shocking sight to behold.

Without the "corpse herder" in control, the majority of the rotting corpses were fragile and easily defeated.

In just a moment, the vast army of eight thousand corpses was reduced to rotten flesh and broken bones, and the large wilderness was filled with an appalling stench.

Howling winds swept through, dispersing the previously dense yellow cloud, which drifted apart and faded away.

"It's settled!" Ying Wuji stood dumbfounded, watching the scene unfold with a surreal feeling rising in his heart.

Thanks to various elixir pills, his injuries had recovered a bit, and the corpse poison that had invaded his body also seemed to be dissipating, which allowed Ying Wuji to breathe a sigh of relief.

Hailing from Senluo Hall, the elixir pills he carried were naturally not ordinary. Detoxification Pills were something he always had at hand.

However, this was Ying Wuji's first encounter with corpse poison. Although his Detoxification Pills were effective, it would still take some time for a full recovery.

After some contemplation, he stepped out of hiding and called out to Lu Ye from a distance: "Lu Yiye, this place is dangerous and not suitable for a long stay. Let's leave quickly!"

If possible, he wouldn't really want to travel with Lu Ye.

Only by witnessing and experiencing firsthand can one comprehend his strength.

But under the current circumstances, if he didn't join forces with Lu Ye, he wouldn't be able to withstand another incident like before.

Between a completely unfamiliar world full of dangers and the barely known but powerful Lu Yiye, Ying Wuji naturally chose the latter.

Especially since he owed Lu Ye a life-saving debt.

Believing that Lu Ye by now would also be aware and would not attempt to harm him.

In mid-air, Lu Ye came back to his senses from deep thought and with a wave of his hand, a lifelike fire dragon flew out, writhing as it descended below.

When the fire dragon struck the ground, flames shot up into the sky, and an even more foul odor spread out. Under the fierce flames, those shattered bodies were enveloped in firelight and quickly turned to charred remains.

After doing all this, Lu Ye turned and flew off in a direction. Seeing this, Ying Wuji hastily followed.

The murky big sun went down, with no bright moon rising, and even the stellar space above was devoid of Myriad Stars' twinkle.

This was a world on the brink of death, and also a world on the verge of destruction. Yet today, nine visitors from beyond had suddenly arrived, bringing a dim glimmer of life to this doomed world.

Chapter 788 Believe Me!

Under the hazy sunlight, two figures were gliding close to the ground, none other than Lu Ye and Ying Wuji.

However, judging by their somewhat distant manner, Ying Wuji remained vigilant toward Lu Ye at all times.

Understanding the complexity of human hearts and suspect of others as of himself, Ying Wuji dared not guarantee that Lu Yiye wouldn't strike him down, despite the latter having shown no such intentions thus far, he couldn't be complacent.

People like him would never entrust their fate to someone else's hands, especially when he and Lu Ye were from opposing factions.

Temporary cooperation was acceptable, but real trust was not something that could be established so easily.

Lu Ye was aware of this and didn't mind; while weapon control-flying, he also carved a Crystal Stone he held in his hand.

After resolving the issue with the corpse swarm yesterday, he had set out on the road with Ying Wuji.

But so far, they hadn't encountered a single living person, which indicated only one thing.

This shattered Unparalleled Continent was either devoid of life or the living were hiding in extremely concealed places.

Lu Ye was more inclined to believe in the latter possibility.

A vast land, even if damaged by some unknown cause, was unlikely to be completely uninhabited.

Therefore, the priority was to find native cultivators of the Unparalleled Continent, try to gather more intelligence, and also to locate those cultivators from the Nine Provinces who had come with him, to meet up with them.

Heaven's Augury had chosen them and gone to great lengths to send them here, hinting that they should join forces, so each of the nine individuals was an indispensable strength.

The journey was undoubtedly monotonous, and Ying Wuji felt somewhat oppressed.

As a ghost cultivator, he was not accustomed to traveling with others; he was mostly solitary, especially traveling with someone like Lu Ye, which subconsciously added some pressure.

He tried to strike up a conversation with Lu Ye along the way, but unfortunately never got a response. After a few attempts, he simply gave up.

He had never known that Lu Yiye was such a taciturn character...

Suddenly, Ying Wuji's eyes brightened as he concentrated on something ahead, his spirit lifted as he exclaimed, "Lu Yiye, it looks like there's a city ahead!"

Lu Ye looked up and indeed saw the outline of a city entering his field of vision. The city wasn't large, but it was the only place they had discovered that day where living people might reside.

The closer they got, the clearer the outline of the city became.

But gradually, the excitement and anticipation on Ying Wuji's face faded.

The city appeared to be in ruins, seemingly uninhabited for many years, and the city walls bore vague marks of a great battle, with many areas still stained with traces of blood, long since dimmed.

Such a city had a minuscule chance of being inhabited by living people.

About thirty miles from the city, Lu Ye suddenly descended.

Ying Wuji paused, following him down and asked, "Aren't we going to explore it?"

Given the rare discovery of such a city, whether there were people or not, it seemed like they should take a look, perhaps they would find some useful clues.

"There could be danger," replied Lu Ye, who surprisingly responded this time and then tossed the Crystal Stone he was holding to him.

Ying Wuji caught it and curiously asked, "What is this?"

Throughout the journey, he had seen Lu Ye carving these Crystal Stones, and although he had asked before, he received no response. Unexpectedly, Lu Ye now gave him one.

"An audio transmission stone!" Lu Ye explained casually while another similar Crystal Stone appeared in his hand, "Keep it with you, and you can contact me at any time. However, it does have a range limit; it's usable within about three thousand miles. Beyond that, it won't work."

This item didn't exist in the Nine Provinces.

Nine Provinces cultivators all had the battlefield marking, which allowed them to communicate with each other as long as they were in the same Heaven and Earth, negating the need for something like an audio transmission stone.

Lu Ye's ability to craft such an item was thanks to his previous visit to the Soaring Dragon World.

In the Soaring Dragon World, cultivators used audio transmission stones to communicate with each other.

Out of curiosity at the time, he had asked Huang Liang for one to study, discovering it was not too complex to make, mainly due to a voice-transmitting spirit rune that played a key role.

On Lu Ye's Talent Tree, there was a spirit rune called "audio message," which wasn't of much use, so he had never used it before.

Audio message and audio transmission shared about eighty percent similarity, so after some research, Lu Ye completely mastered the voice-transmitting spirit rune.

Anticipating a future need for audio transmission stones, he had previously purchased suitable materials for making them from the Heaven's Augury treasure vault.

Now was the perfect time to use them.

In the shattered Unparalleled Continent, the battlefield marking had completely stopped working, which meant they had completely lost contact with the Heaven's Augury of the Nine Provinces. To communicate with each other, audio transmission stones were the only option.

It's just that he hadn't anticipated this situation sooner. If he had anticipated it earlier, before the activation of the teleportation array, he could have left one for each Hua Ci and Giant Armor; finding them now would have been easier.

Ying Wuji's eyes lit up: "What a great item!"

He couldn't stop playing with the audio transmission stone.

Although it was his first encounter with it, being a Cloud River Realm cultivator, he was naturally talented and quickly figured out how to use the item after a brief attempt.

He channeled spirit force into it and casually said something into the audio transmission stone.

Lu Ye's stone immediately reacted, and when he stimulated it with spirit force, Ying Wuji's words from before came out of the stone.

"This is quite interesting," Ying Wuji said with a smirk.

However, his smile faded as he noticed Lu Ye was staring intently at him.

Ying Wuji's heart sank as he vaguely realized something, "What are you implying? Surely you can't be thinking..."

"You are a ghost cultivator!"

Ying Wuji was left feeling frustrated...

He had just asked Lu Ye if they should scout out the city, to which Lu Ye said there might be dangers before tossing him an audio transmission stone.

The intent in those fixed stares was all too clear.

It was obviously his task to scout out the situation!

And as a ghost cultivator, this was indeed his duty to fulfill.

The corners of Ying Wuji's eyes twitched a few times as he silently assessed the gap in strength between himself and Lu Ye, ultimately deciding to accept the task.

One's fist can't be bigger than others', and a true man knows when to bend and when to stand tall...

"If something unexpected happens to me..." Ying Wuji looked as though he wanted to leave some last words.

But Lu Ye cut him off, "Don't worry, if something goes wrong, you just need to shout 'Righteous Blood Flows Forever', and I'll immediately come to rescue you!"

Ying Wuji's twitching intensified: "Are you serious?"

Lu Ye nodded solemnly, "Trust me!"

Ying Wuji took a deep breath.

Do I dare not trust you?

Can I afford not to trust you?

With complex emotions, Ying Wuji activated his stealth method and silently approached the dilapidated city.

After he left, Amber, who had been crouching on Lu Ye's shoulder, shook its body slightly as Yiyi, like a spectral apparition, flashed out and moved through the ground.

To gather intelligence, Lu Ye naturally couldn't rely solely on Ying Wuji; Yiyi following along should allow for a more thorough investigation.

As for himself... his ability to conceal was not necessarily inferior to Ying Wuji's, but one shouldn't put all their eggs in one basket.

Whether there was danger in the city, no one knew. If there really was some unavoidable danger, remaining outside would allow him to think of a way to coordinate a response.

He continued to take out materials to craft new audio transmission stones.

Lu Ye's mind inevitably recalled what the corpse herder he killed yesterday had said.

He had intended to extract some useful information from the man, but that fellow's character was so unbending that he didn't give Lu Ye any chance, forcing him to kill him unwillingly.

Although he didn't wring much information out, the man's last words unintentionally revealed something.

Corpse Race!

Undead!

The man must have thought he and Ying Wuji were cultivators from the Unparalleled Continent, hence he didn't avoid these basic details.

Ying Wuji might have heard those words too, but what he thought, Lu Ye didn't know.

Yet many thoughts arose in Lu Ye's mind.

The destruction of the Soaring Dragon World was due to the attachment of the Blood World, which caused the Heaven-Earth Origin to constantly dissipate until the world met its demise.

And it was the Blood Race, a peculiar race that invaded the Soaring Dragon World.

The Unparalleled Continent didn't have a Blood Race but had a Corpse Race!

Compared to the Blood Race, the Corpse Race seemed to be more eerie.

Although the Blood Race was somewhat taller and slender than normal people and mastered many strange Blood Path Secret Techniques, at least they were alive.

The Corpse Race, however, was not living at all!

In terms of danger, the Corpse Race seemed harder to deal with than the Blood Race.

The corpse group that was destroyed yesterday had only one true member of the Corpse Race; all the other rotting corpses were mere puppets controlled by it, similar to how the beast-taming faction's cultivators commanded demon beasts.

This race could become an army on its own. If not for Lu Ye's sufficiently strong willpower and prompt identification of the Corpse Race member in that group, such an enemy would have been impossible to confront.

How did the Corpse Race come to be?

Could there be a realm such as the Corpse World?

Lu Ye had no answers to these questions.

However, comparatively speaking, the inherent strength of the Corpse Race didn't seem very formidable. As long as one could precisely locate the Corpse Race members, slaying them wasn't difficult, and once a Corpse Race member died, the puppet corpses they controlled would lose the ability to move.

From this perspective, from Lu Ye's stance, the Corpse Race was somewhat easier to handle than the Blood Race.

The vast Void, so many domains – why such calamities?

And what about the Nine Provinces?

Under the seemingly stable conditions of the Nine Provinces, what hidden dangers lurked?

Lu Ye couldn't help thinking of the Insect Race in Xianyuan City.

For ages, the continuous opposition between the two major factions... did it relate to these hidden dangers?

Within the Nine Provinces, did those Divine Sea Realm strong cultivators know of this intelligence?

Living longer or having a higher cultivation didn't necessarily mean knowing more.

It was indeed because of Lu Ye's last trip to the Soaring Dragon World that he observed and understood so much.

That mysterious and omnipresent Heaven's Augury even manifested directly before him, engaging in numerous communications!

Among the cultivators of the Nine Provinces, even the strong cultivators of the Divine Sea Realm might not have received such treatment!

Chapter 789 Is This Also the Corpse Race?

His mind raced with numerous thoughts, but Lu Ye's hands never stopped moving.

Ying Wuji had already entered the city with Yiyi following in secret, silent for the time being.

However, Lu Ye estimated that there probably weren't any useful clues in the city.

If the native cultivators of this world really had to hide due to some crisis, they definitely wouldn't choose such an obvious place. It's more likely that they would hide in some remote mountains or forests, or some other secluded location.

As time passed, at a certain moment, Lu Ye suddenly looked up and cast his gaze in a particular direction.

There was a fluctuation in spirit force coming from over there—it seemed someone was engaged in combat.

Just yesterday, that was how he had discovered Ying Wuji, and upon detecting the commotion, his heart stirred.

Could it be a fellow from the Nine Provinces nearby?

He quickly packed up the unfinished audio transmission stone he was working on and spurred his body to rush toward that direction.

As he drew closer, Lu Ye slowly realized his speculation was wrong; one of the parties involved in the combat was not from the Nine Provinces, as their spirit force fluctuation was not strong.

Upon approaching the battlefield, Lu Ye leaped onto the trunk of a large tree, overlooking the area from above, and finally saw the parties involved in the fight.

One side was a group of one man and two women. The man undoubtedly had the highest cultivation among them, with spirit force emanating from his body around the level of Cloud River Level 5.

The two women, one around thirty years old and the other a young girl of seventeen or eighteen, both had just barely reached the Cloud River Realm.

Among the three, the man was severely wounded, with a huge gash across his chest and abdomen, his flesh mangled, and even his face covered in an ominous aura.

Yet he fought desperately to protect the two women, preventing even the slightest harm from coming to them. Therefore, although the women looked disheveled, they weren't seriously injured.

Lu Ye then turned his gaze to their opponent, and his eyelids slightly narrowed.

Because that being could no longer be considered human.

With a shriveled and withered figure, it seemed like a corpse that had dried up for countless years, its exposed skin full of cracks. Yet such a seemingly long-dead corpse exuded an aura even stronger than the injured man's!

Moreover, its combat style was extremely brutal, and the force it could exert seemed unimaginably strong. It held no Spiritual Artifact in hand, but its sharp fingertips were the most practical weapons—the man's chest and abdominal wounds were inflicted by its nails.

Besides, Lu Ye noticed that its physical defense was astonishing. Facing the joint attacks of the three opponents, it showed no intention of dodging. The Spiritual Artifacts fell upon its body yet failed to cause any real harm, leaving only shallow marks on its dried-out flesh.

This... could it be a member of the Corpse Race?

A suspicion arose in Lu Ye's mind.

The member of the Corpse Race he had encountered yesterday was not very strong in itself, but capable of commanding tens of thousands of rotting corpses, somewhat resembling the style of a beast-taming faction.

But the one he encountered today was completely different from yesterday's.

This one had no rotting corpses under its control, relying solely on its unbelievably strong physique to overpower its opponents with brute force.

This style of the Corpse Race bore a faint resemblance to physique cultivators.

But compared to the physique cultivators of the Nine Provinces, this member of the Corpse Race seemed to have an even more remarkable physique.

By comparison, the Corpse Race that commanded swarms of corpses relied on the power of numbers, but this one relied on its own strength.

"Quick, run! I'll hold him off!"

As the situation worsened, the injured man shouted fiercely and, disregarding his own safety, charged at his opponent with reckless courage.

Their team originally consisted of six members, two of whom were even stronger than him.

However, after encountering this member of the Corpse Race, their group crumbled like tofu, and within moments, three had fallen in battle. He too had been injured, and only the two women remained unharmed, perhaps because they were well-protected, or because their lower cultivations drew less attention from the Corpse Race adversary.

But if they kept this up, they were bound to be utterly destroyed.

He was undoubtedly facing death. If he could delay the Corpse Race foe before dying, perhaps his companions would have a chance to escape.

In these end times, human nature was complex, full of deceit and constant betrayal, with fights among one's own people being all too common. However, there were also many who were sincere and genuine at heart.

"Husband!" As the man charged at the Corpse Race adversary, the woman couldn't help but let out a cry, as heart-wrenching as the call of a cuckoo.

The young girl urgently grabbed her wrist and said, "Aunt Shen, we must hurry!"

The woman looked back, with tears sliding down the corner of her eye. Despite her reluctance and anger burning like flame, what else could they do but flee in such circumstances?

"None of you will escape!" Noticing their attempt to flee, that corpse-like figure coldly snorted, its voice harsh and inhuman, more like ghostly wails and wolf howls from Deepest Hell Purgatory.

A claw-like hand stretched out, grabbing the male cultivator in a ferocious grip.

The rich corpse Qi, accompanied by a strong wind, made it nearly impossible for the male cultivator to breathe. The Corpse Race's claw dug into his chest, ruthlessly tearing off a chunk of flesh.

Struck by another punch, the man was flung into the air like a paper kite, only to crash heavily in front of the two women.

Just as the young girl, who was determined to leave with the woman, saw this, she knew there was no escape. She hurriedly helped the man up and as she rose, the Corpse Race had already closed the distance.

Facing imminent death, the woman seemed to find some peace, the hatred and fury in her eyes disappearing, replaced by a soft and tender gaze directed at the blood-coughing man.

After all, she couldn't leave her husband behind. Even if they could not stay together in life, dying together was an acceptable conclusion.

"Ah!" Just at that moment, the girl let out a shocked cry.

The Corpse Race member who was preparing to kill them thought it was the girl's terrified scream before death, but something felt off.

Because the girl's gaze wasn't looking at him, but rather over him, towards something behind his back.

Right then, a sound of something tearing through the air came, accompanied by strong fluctuations of spirit force.

There was someone else!

The Corpse Race member no longer cared about dealing with the three people in front of him and brashly turned around. What he saw was a fiery-red figure plunging from the sky, a long knife in hand not yet unsheathed, poised and ready to strike.

When locked by the opponent's sharp aura, for the first time in a long while, the Corpse Race member actually felt a tingling sensation on his skin.

This was very unbelievable for him because the Corpse Race didn't experience the sensation of pain.

He immediately understood that this tingling sensation of the skin was not conveyed by his body, but through his mind!

The newcomer was very strong!

"Roar!" The Corpse Race member roared in anger. His dessicated flesh tightened abruptly. His physique was already formidable, and with such actions, it became even tougher, almost invulnerable. Even cultivators of the human race who were stronger than him might not be able to injure him.

And as long as they couldn't harm him, he would be able to kill his enemies!

Clang...

The long knife was unsheathed. The fiery-red blade light sliced through the air, and Lu Ye had already brushed past the Corpse Race member, standing in front of the two women and a man.

The girl and the woman had looks of startled uncertainty, completely failing to understand what had just happened.

The middle-aged man, who was coughing up blood, had a slightly higher cultivation level, but even he hadn't been able to fully capture the trace of that strike.

Yet under that single strike, the Corpse Race member who had almost wiped out their entire team stood frozen in place, not moving at all.

Vaguely, a gurgling sound could be heard coming from the Corpse Race member's throat.

Lu Ye had already sheathed his knife.

The sound of the blade rubbing against the scabbard rang out, and as if startled by this small sound, the Corpse Race member's head suddenly rolled off his shoulders. The wound was as smooth as a mirror, with greenish Corpse Race blood spurting into the air, an utterly foul stench.

Lu Ye's body erupted with spirit force, and any splatters of Corpse Race blood were incinerated into nothingness before they could even draw near.

"Ah!" The girl cried out in shock again, her eyes brimming with astonishment and disbelief. Looking at the Corpse Race member who had now fallen to the ground, and then at the cold-faced Lu Ye in front of her, she couldn't believe that such a powerful member of the Corpse Race had been slain by a single strike!

And the one who had made the move seemed to be only a year or two older than her.

It felt as unreal as a dream.

Even Zui Shan, the strongest in the stronghold, wasn't this powerful, right?

"You've been poisoned, do you have a Detoxification Pill?" Lu Ye looked at the man among the three and asked.

The corpse Qi from the Corpse Race contained corpse poison, which he had noticed yesterday during his fight with many Corpse Race members. However, for cultivators, this level of corpse poison wasn't really a problem; generally, as long as they stimulated their spirit force to form a protective barrier around their bodies, they could prevent the corrosion from the corpse poison.

Even if corroded, the circulation and flow of their own spirit force would slowly dissolve it.

The man before him was severely injured, but with his cultivation level, recovery was not a difficult task.

What was critical was that he had been poisoned with corpse poison and needed to quickly detoxify, only then would he have the strength to recover himself.

Hearing Lu Ye's words, the middle-aged man gave a wry smile and shook his head weakly, "It's useless, I've been poisoned with the Primordial Corpse Poison of the Corpse Race, there's no need to waste a Detoxification Pill."

Lu Ye frowned, not understanding, "Primordial Corpse Poison?"

Was there a distinction between Primordial and non-Primordial corpse poisons?

But from the man's words, it seemed that once infected with the Primordial Corpse Poison, there was no cure.

Even on the brink of death, the middle-aged man's reaction made him seem puzzled.

The Primordial Corpse Poison was a direct means for the Corpse Race to transform their people. There was no cure for it; had this young man never heard of it?

Not in a hurry to inquire further from Lu Ye, the middle-aged man turned his head to the tearful woman, "Go deal with their bodies."

The woman kept shaking her head.

The middle-aged man said, "I can hold on for a while; I will wait for you to come back!"

Only then did the woman stand up, and casting back a reluctant glance at the man, she said, "You must wait for me to return!"

With her spirit force spurred, she soared into the sky, heading back the way they came to deal with the bodies of several companions.

After she left, the man sat down slowly with the help of the girl, panting. It was clear he was exerting his spirit force to suppress something, and looking at Lu Ye he asked, "Young brother, from which secret realm do you hail?"

Such a young age and yet so capable, only a few secret realms on the shattered Unparalleled Continent could cultivate such a person. People like them, scattered in strongholds struggling to survive, to raise someone like the girl next to him was tremendously difficult.

Chapter 790 Various Intelligence

"I don't know anything about any secret realm."

He had just arrived here and apart from a few bits of information, he could say that he knew virtually nothing about the Unparalleled Continent.

This was not the same as when he entered the Ten Thousand Beasts Domain and the Soaring Dragon World.

Those two domains were considered to be under the larger environment of the Nine Provinces, and when cultivators entered them, under the operation of Heaven's Augury, they could get some basic information about these two domains and even acquire an identity suitable for blending in.

But now, Lu Ye and the others had lost contact with the Nine Provinces' Heaven's Augury; how could they get information from it?

However, from the tone of the man's words, this secret realm seemed to be different from the one he understood, and it sounded more like a power with the characteristics of the Unparalleled Continent.

"Young brother doesn't come from a secret realm?" the man asked, surprised.

Lu Ye shook his head.

The origin of his identity was inevitably a problem. He could try to hide it as much as possible, but since he wanted to look for someone to inquire about information, there would inevitably be some slips. So, Lu Ye spoke the words he had thought of in advance.

"I don't know where I'm from; I've lived there since I was little. This is my first time leaving home."

The man suddenly realized, "So that's why!"

It wasn't all that strange. Although after the apocalyptic changes, the big sects of the cultivation world had abandoned their prejudices to stick together for warmth, human hearts are complex. After all, some powerful individuals stayed away from the sects for various reasons, adopting a homeless orphan as a companion and carefully mentoring them. It was a common occurrence.

So when Lu Ye explained it like this, the man didn't think too much about it because people like Lu Ye, who suddenly appeared in the Unparalleled Continent, would often burst onto the scene and then disappear just as quickly.

"Cough, cough..." The man's injury acted up, and he started coughing violently, with Blood Water flowing out of his mouth. But that Blood Water was no longer the color of blood red; there were clear signs that it was turning into corpse blood.

The man was enveloped in a visible layer of corpse Qi.

"There are two types of corpse poison."

After learning that Lu Ye was the kind of person who had not experienced the toxic onslaught of the current Unparalleled Continent, possessing strength but completely unaware of the human race's current state, the man gasped for air and explained, "Ordinary corpse poison has an effect on cultivators, but as long as it is resisted and resolved in time, it's not a big problem. But Primordial Corpse Poison is different... it is the transformation of the Corpse Race's Origin power. Whoever is afflicted by it finds it incurable, and after death, is bound to turn into one of the Corpse Race."

He looked down at the wound on his chest with a wry smile, then looked up at Lu Ye, "So I'm beyond saving."

This was also why he was unwilling to take the Detoxification Pill.

In the apocalypse, elixir pills were valuable; not to mention Detoxification Pills, even the most basic elixir pill for cultivation was something that couldn't be wasted.

This was something that cultivators in the Nine Provinces could never understand.

"Young brother, as a member of the human race, I ask you for one thing," the man said, his chest heaving violently. "Take them back to the stronghold. You must be without a place to go as well. It just so happens that the stronghold can provide a place of refuge."

"All right," Lu Ye nodded, but still took out a Detoxification Pill from his storage sack and handed it to the man, "Take this pill first."

With the Talent Tree by his side, he was basically immune to poisons, so naturally, he didn't carry Detoxification Pills. However, he had killed so many Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators and seized various kinds of spoils of war, among them quite a few Detoxification Pills.

"This elixir pill..." The man stared blankly at the Detoxification Pill in Lu Ye's hand, feeling that its quality was beyond imagination, higher than all the elixir pills he had ever seen.

In a post-apocalyptic world, various aspects of the cultivation world had suffered great shocks and impacts, with many inheritances lost and the standard of Alchemy long since fallen from its former glory.

Although there was a Pill Master in the stronghold, the elixir pills that the Pill Master refined couldn't hold a candle to the one Lu Ye now presented.

While the man was in a daze, Lu Ye flicked the pill with his finger, and it went straight into the man's mouth.

Only when he swallowed on reflex did the man regretfully express, "My young friend, you... ah!"

He was still inexperienced after all. Even though he had told Lu Ye that Primordial Corpse Poison was incurable, he couldn't help but try. It was truly a waste for such a fine elixir pill to be spent on a man who was certain to die.

Nevertheless, he felt somewhat at peace.

Human hearts are complex, it's easy to judge by appearances but hard to see the heart. The young man was so generous, likely indicating that his nature wasn't bad. Entrusting the two girls to Lu Ye, he felt more relieved.

Having ingested the elixir pill, a glimmer of hope seemed to light up in the man's eyes as he began to mobilize his energy to refine it.

Lu Ye watched closely.

He didn't know if the Detoxification Pill would be effective. It was a shot in the dark, but what if it worked?

Moreover, he had countless such items in his storage space. While the man treasured it as if it were precious, Lu Ye could eat them like beans if he so desired.

Shortly after, the man's breath became chaotic, and another mouthful of Blood Water sprayed out, now turning towards a greenish hue.

The Detoxification Pill was useless!

Lu Ye frowned; it seemed true as the man had said, Primordial Corpse Poison was not something a mere Detoxification Pill could resolve.

If only Hua Ci were here; with her abilities, she surely could have worked miracles.

"Uncle Yooi!" the girl rushed forward immediately, gently patting the man's back, her eyes brimming with tears. She had been weeping by the side while Lu Ye and the man were talking.

As the hope for the future who had been vigorously cultivated by the stronghold, this was her first time leaving with others, and she didn't expect such a calamity to occur.

For a girl who had not experienced much hardship, the disasters within a span of just two hours felt as if the sky were collapsing.

"Husband!"

The woman who had left earlier now returned and rushed to the man's side.

The man revealed a smile, "I'm glad I made it in time, I didn't break my promise."

The woman incessantly shook her head, tears falling like pearls off a broken string, unable to stop sliding down.

"You must live well, surviving in this world is not easy now, you have to live on for both of us!" the man extended his hand, seemingly wanting to touch the face of his beloved woman one last time, yet as he raised his hand halfway, it dropped powerlessly.

The spark of life dissipated!

He was gravely injured, already at the end of his tether, having held on only to see the woman one last time.

The girl covered her mouth, standing aside as she tried to hold back her tears, stricken with grief.

However, the woman's expression strangely calmed down, she grabbed her husband's hand, gently caressed her face with it, showing a trace of a tragically beautiful smile, "My husband, what meaning is there for me to live without you?"

The girl was shocked, cried out in horror, "Aunt Shen!"

In the midst of speaking, she rushed over, but ultimately it was too late.

After speaking, the woman released the spirit force that was protecting her body, concentrating all her energy into her other hand, she raised her hand and fiercely struck down towards her own chest.

With that blow, her chest caved in, her heart's veins severed, the woman spat out a mouthful of Blood Water as her life force flickered away.

Lu Ye hadn't expected this woman to be so deeply infatuated, and her actions were decisively extreme, evidently having made her decision on the way back, and by the time he reacted, it was already too late to stop her.

"Aunt Shen!" The girl threw herself onto the woman's body, wailing loudly.

The woman was not yet dead, and in a voice as faint as a mosquito's, she gave her last instructions to the girl, "Remember... to properly handle the bodies."

Her head slumped down, resting in the man's chest.

The girl sobbed bitterly, while Lu Ye stood silently aside, for the first time truly feeling the hardship of the human race's survival in this apocalyptic world.

It took quite a while before the girl gradually subdued her weeping, hiccupping as she stood up, her swollen eyes looking at Lu Ye, "Senior Brother... is your spirit force of the fire element?"

Earlier, when Lu Ye emerged out of nowhere and beheaded that Corpse Race creature, the girl had clearly seen the element sign of his spirit force.

At that moment, Lu Ye was enveloped by a fiery red spirit force, appearing like a blazing Fireball.

Lu Ye nodded.

"Could I trouble you to cremate Uncle Yu and Aunt Shen's bodies? Those who die because of the Corpse Race have a certain chance of turning into one of them, especially those infected with the Primordial Corpse Poison, they are almost certain to convert into the Corpse Race, I don't want Uncle Yu and Aunt Shen to..."

She hastened to explain, fearing Lu Ye might misunderstand her reason.

This was also why the woman had left earlier, to handle the bodies of her fallen companions.

There are many rules for survival in the apocalyptic world, and if possible, promptly dealing with the dead bodies is one of them.

Only by doing that can we curb the increase in the Corpse Race's numbers, so as not to let former companions become enemies who attack each other.

This small matter was something Lu Ye agreed to without question, raising his hand and releasing a fire dragon, engulfing the man and woman's bodies, quickly reducing them to ashes.

The girl then dug a pit not far away, placed the cremated remains into the pit, and buried them, finally finishing the task.

Lu Ye stood quietly aside, contemplating the various pieces of information he had acquired thus far.

At this time, Ying Wuji returned from the ruined city.

As Lu Ye had anticipated, he found no valuable clues inside, not a person's silhouette to speak of, not even the shadow of a ghost.

Nothing was left but pieces of broken walls...

Hastening back, he found no trace of Lu Ye where he had left him.

Ying Wuji at first rejoiced, then was immediately startled.

He rejoiced because he had finally gotten rid of Lu Yiye, to speak frankly, as a ghost cultivator, accompanying someone like Lu Yiye felt very insecure.

He always had the nagging feeling that Lu Yiye might suddenly draw his sword and strike him...

But the thought occurred, in such a dangerous domain, when he arrived he had nearly suffered a fate of life and death, had it not been for Lu Yiye's timely assistance, his prospects would have been slim.

Being on his own might not be as safe as following Lu Yiye.

But now, he couldn't see him anywhere.

Probably Lu Yiye had shaken him off?

Ying Wuji couldn't help feeling a bit chagrined, but then he reconsidered, thinking something was wrong.

If Lu Yiye truly wanted to shake him off, all he needed to do was to say a word, and with no real friendship between them, Ying Wuji, a person of some standing, would not have the thick skin to persist in following him.

What's more, hadn't Lu Yiye given him an audio transmission stone before?

Could it be that something had come up, and he had to leave temporarily?

With that thought in mind, Ying Wuji took out the audio transmission stone, poured his spirit force into it, and asked, "Lu Yiye, where are you?"