

King Hall 1041

Chapter 1041: The Struggle for the Hedao Fruit!

"A hundred years have passed, yet I never imagined that Huaxia would develop as it has, with dark turmoil and calamity striking fear into hearts. Just recently, such a tragedy occurred, yet alas, I was in Kunlun Ruins and knew nothing of it..."

After half a day, Mu Jinyu and Zhuo Yue arrived at a nearby inn in Yanyu City, where they explained their identities to each other. Mu Jinyu also informed Zhuo Yue of the changes in Huaxia during the hundred years since Zhuo Yue left to cultivate in the Kunlun Ruins.

Zhuo Yue, upon hearing this, was filled with emotion.

Upon learning about the dark turmoil, he was enraged, wishing desperately to travel through time and join Dragon King Hall to obliterate those chaotic demons!

And upon hearing of the dark turmoil, he calmed down only slightly.

Subsequently, Mu Jinyu informed him about the situations involving Li Zhexiong, Yu Shenfeng, Ye Wushuang, and others.

Zhuo Yue learned that Li Zhexiong and Ye Wushuang had perished at the recent Hidden Dragon Conference by Mu Jinyu's hand. His first thought wasn't about how these old immortals could attend a conference meant for the younger generation, but rather he was overwhelmed with a mute sense of desolation.

Two more of his peers had died.

And the once extraordinary Li Zhexiong, who dominated the world with his sword, also died at Mu Jinyu's hand, which truly amazed him.

Afterward, he thought about his own situation—being hunted like a stray dog—and inwardly smiled bitterly, contemplating whether he might be better off retiring early like Yu Shenfeng and enjoying his twilight years.

Then, Zhuo Yue explained to Mu Jinyu the reason he was being hunted.

As it turned out, a secret realm within Chu Kingdom had recently revealed a Hedao Tree, bearing several ripe Hedao Fruits that were about half a month from maturity.

Hedao Fruit, as the name implies, is linked to the Unity Realm Stage.

It's said that consuming this Sacred Fruit can increase the consumer's success rate of merging paths by nearly half.

For example, if someone at the Peak Ninth Layer of the Fanxu Realm wishes to transcend tribulation and ascend to the Unity Realm, they have only a fifty percent chance. But after consuming this fruit, their success rate increases to seventy percent.

And for heaven's prides like Ji Changxin, consuming the Hedao Fruit means a ninety-nine percent chance of breaking through to the Unity Realm!

It signals becoming the patriarch of an Immortal Sect!

Once this news spread, it sparked a tempest in Chu Kingdom. People swarmed like locusts rushing into Chu Kingdom.

If it weren't for the Hidden Dragon Conference happening simultaneously and the Kunlun Dragon Veins being vastly more important than the Hedao Fruit, the conference probably wouldn't have been possible.

With the Hidden Dragon Conference over, members of hidden sects and super clans didn't remain dormant, waiting for the next conference to showcase their mettle—they all came to Chu Kingdom.

Yet gaining entry to the secret realm where the Hedao Tree sprouted is not simply a matter of walking in; one requires a "key"!

Only those holding a key can enter the secret realm and effortlessly pluck the mature Hedao Fruit.

Coincidentally, Zhuo Yue happened to possess a key.

Although he currently is at the Sixth Layer of the Fanxu Realm and far from the Unity Realm, he wouldn't pass up the opportunity to acquire the Hedao Fruit.

He initially planned to quietly wait for the opening of the secret realm, hoping to fish in muddied waters for a chance.

Unexpectedly, news of him possessing the key leaked, and instantly he became a piece of cheese chased by a swarm of mice!

Fortunately, the Hidden Dragon Conference ended recently, and those from hidden sects and super clans hadn't arrived in Chu Kingdom yet, or he might have been dead days ago!

"I see..."

Mu Jinyu, upon hearing Zhuo Yue's words, suddenly understood. Yet, he showed no ardent desire or desperation towards obtaining the Hedao Fruit.

After all, it's merely a fruit that increases success rates by half; it wouldn't make him particularly excited.

Had he not been searching for Soul Shatter Grass in Chu Kingdom and heard this news in Yan Kingdom or the Dayan Dynasty, he would have just laughed it off without bothering to come all this way.

But he was indeed in Chu Kingdom.

If an opportunity arises, he wouldn't mind checking it out.

Lacking a key, he wouldn't stoop to contest the one Zhuo Yue held.

After explaining everything, Zhuo Yue hesitated but ultimately gritted his teeth and took a Stone Command from his Storage Bag.

The Stone Command was ancient and bore an engraving of a Profound Bird, resembling Bi Fang, the Golden Crow, or perhaps even the Vermilion Bird.

He placed the Stone Command on the table before Mu Jinyu, saying, "Brother Mu, take this key. With your talent, you'll probably soon need the Hedao Fruit."

"This..." Mu Jinyu was taken aback.

He hadn't expected an individual who stubbornly refused to give up the key despite risking his life to offer it to him.

Furthermore, he hadn't shown any interest in wanting the key or hinted for its surrender.

Why would he do this?

Mu Jinyu truly didn't understand.

Zhuo Yue noticed Mu Jinyu's confusion and explained, "I thought it over. My chances of fishing a Hedao Fruit using this key are exceedingly slim. I've resisted abandoning it out of sheer denial, but after meeting you, I feel you need it more."

"And have a better chance of obtaining a Hedao Fruit!"

"This is... unnecessary, elder. If I truly wanted it, I would figure out a way to get a key myself..." Mu Jinyu shook his head in refusal.

Zhuo Yue retorted, "Don't feel awkward. I owe my life to you; consider this a thank-you gift. Besides, even though your cultivation is now higher than mine, I'm much older, so calling me elder isn't inappropriate, right? Treat it as an elder's gift to a younger generation."

Listening to Zhuo Yue, Mu Jinyu felt it hard to decline. After pondering, he jokingly replied, "Elder, how about this? I have a way to accelerate the ripening of Spirit Fruit. Why not use the key, enter the secret realm, hasten the maturation, and pick the Hedao Fruit early, leaving others dumbfounded as they wait for the fruit to mature only to discover we beat them to it."

Jian Ruyan and Wen Rou, hearing Mu Jinyu's words, couldn't help but chuckle, their minds conjuring images of the stunned crowds, feeling he was mischievous.

Zhuo Yue, half-believing and half-doubting, asked, "Can you really hasten the ripening of such top-grade Spirit Fruit?"

Mu Jinyu nodded and said, "We're idle now anyway; might as well check it out."

"Alright, let's go take a look." Zhuo Yue hesitated briefly but ultimately agreed.

He thought to himself that if Mu Jinyu could really perform such heaven-defying feats, it would be marvelous.

He wouldn't need to battle others for a Hedao Fruit, simply remaining undetected, and quietly picking the fruit.

Chapter 1042: Forcefully Seizing the Key!

Half a day later.

Zhuo Yue, along with Mu Jinyu and the other two, arrived at the secret realm entrance within the Chu Kingdom's borders.

In the shadows, many people who couldn't find clues about the key secretly watched the entrance.

When they saw Mu Jinyu and his group of four appear, they didn't immediately reveal themselves to seize the key in haste.

Because recently, too many people wanting to watch the commotion had come near this secret realm entrance, wanting to see if there really was the Hedao Fruit inside, and what it looked like...

At first, many such people were killed.

Afterward, those hiding in the shadows naturally wouldn't just attack simply because someone came to watch nearby.

They would assess the situation first before making a move.

Mu Jinyu, with his keen Divine Sense, immediately sensed dozens of Spiritual Thoughts probing around, powerful and terrifying, malicious and cruel...

Once someone showed the key, it would be like blood in the ocean, and these bloodthirsty sharks would rush up to tear them to pieces!

Zhuo Yue's body was tense, extremely nervous, fearing someone might recognize him as one of the ten or so keyholders.

At this moment, he regretted the hot-blooded impulse that led him to follow Mu Jinyu to the secret realm entrance.

Just as Zhuo Yue hesitated, wondering if he should pretend to be a tourist just here for the spectacle, visit the entrance, and leave...

Mu Jinyu spoke, "Senior, take out the key and see if we can enter early."

"Damn it!" Zhuo Yue's expression immediately changed when he heard this, thinking it was bad.

Sure enough, as soon as Mu Jinyu's words came out, the murderous intent of those hidden nearby suddenly intensified.

Some could still hold back, wanting to confirm whether they truly had a key and didn't rush out immediately.

But some impatient ones drew their Divine Weapons and, with a monstrous killing intent, attacked Mu Jinyu and the others!

"Humph, reckless fools."

Seeing this, Mu Jinyu sneered, and the Myriad Phenomena Domain, the Dragon-Elephant Domain, and the Bloody Domain overlapped, releasing a killing formation. The surging murderous aura erupted like a volcano, overwhelming this group!

This group, each powerful, would not dare to linger nearby seeking the key otherwise.

Their lowest cultivation was at the Seventh Layer of the Fanxu Realm.

Most were at the Eighth Level of the Fanxu Realm!

They certainly weren't just people from the Chu Kingdom; they must be forces from various sides of the Kunlun Ruins.

And among them, maintaining composure and staying motionless in the shadows was also a Peak Ninth Layer of the Fanxu Realm expert!

However, when Mu Jinyu's multiple domains unraveled, ten figures emerged, striking with punches, kicks, blades, and swords, slaughtering the advancing assassins into withering bones!

The scene suddenly fell into dead silence!

"How is this possible?!"

Those hiding in the shadows, while feeling fortunate, also exclaimed in disbelief.

They couldn't believe that those they viewed as formidable competitors for the key couldn't even withstand a single blow from Mu Jinyu.

And that Peak Ninth Layer of the Fanxu Realm expert stared at Mu Jinyu's face, his pupils shrinking dramatically.

He recognized Mu Jinyu's identity.

The champion of the Hidden Dragon Conference, at eighteen, he wielded the strength of the Seventh Layer of the Fanxu Realm, suppressing contemporaneous Heaven's Pride like Ji Changxin to take the top of the Hidden Dragon List, a peerless monster!

He actually came too!

"Damn, this is tricky, should I retreat?"

This expert, with great self-awareness, knew that though he had Peak Ninth Layer of the Fanxu Realm's strength, he was absolutely inferior to Dayan Genius Ji Changxin, whose cultivation was only at the Eighth Level of Fanxu Realm.

Even such a powerful man as Ji Changxin was easily defeated by Mu Jinyu in domain battles.

And it wasn't single-handed; it was with multiple Heaven's Pride besieging Mu Jinyu, yet he still lost to Mu Jinyu.

It was imaginable how strong Mu Jinyu was.

He didn't think with his Peak Ninth Layer of the Fanxu Realm's strength, he would rival Mu Jinyu either!

He estimated that even with just one faceoff, he'd die at Mu Jinyu's hand!

Without much hesitation, this expert immediately chose to leave.

He didn't dare linger longer, lest Mu Jinyu went on a killing spree, leaving him no chance to escape when the time came.

After Mu Jinyu's decisive slaughter of over a dozen assassins, he naturally noticed a portion of people departing, including that Peak Ninth Layer of the Fanxu Realm expert he paid special attention to.

Unexpectedly, he left too.

Mu Jinyu was somewhat disappointed; he wanted to see how many moves it would take to kill a Peak Ninth Layer of the Fanxu Realm.

Since the other party didn't attack him, and he chose to retreat, Mu Jinyu wasn't bloodthirsty and thus didn't pursue him.

"Senior, take out the key and have a look."

Mu Jinyu gave a cold glance at the ten or so people still hiding in the shadows, not daring to move, and then looked up to the dazed Zhuo Yue.

Though he'd seen Mu Jinyu erase enemies with his domain before, Zhuo Yue was still shocked at witnessing it again, falling into a dazed state.

Upon Mu Jinyu's reminder, he snapped back, somewhat nervously revealing the Stone Command.

Then Zhuo Yue, holding the Stone Command, approached a Stele at the secret realm entrance.

The Stele, standing upright, had a groove of a size matching the Stone Command.

Clearly, when the Stone Command was embedded into the groove, the secret realm entrance would open.

The ten or so people hiding in the shadows, seeing them actually taking out the key, had eyes burning like bachelors who hadn't seen women in a hundred years, suddenly seeing a pretty old sow, eager to snatch it away immediately.

Yet, the previous scene of those dozen or so tragic deaths at Mu Jinyu's hand was still fresh in their minds.

Though they desperately wanted to fly up and seize the key, none dared genuinely to go hands-on for it.

"Click!"

By now, Zhuo Yue had embedded the Stone Command into the Stele groove amidst their unbearable impatience.

"Buzz!"

The Stele suddenly emitted a hazy white light, gentle and holy, without any lethal force.

However...

Mu Jinyu, his group of four, and the ten or so hidden people, after waiting several minutes, still hadn't seen the secret realm entrance open...

"Looks like this secret realm requires time to arrive before the key can be used to open it."

Seeing this, Zhuo Yue sheepishly retrieved the key, turning to Mu Jinyu with some embarrassment.

"Hmm, I know..."

Mu Jinyu slightly frowned, somewhat disappointed.

If holding the key allowed them to enter the secret realm early and harvest the Hedao Fruit mature first, things would simplify a lot.

But without that option, he'd inevitably have to contend with a crowd for the Hedao Fruit.

If it were only Fanxu Realm cultivators, he'd fear nothing.

What he feared was...

Shameless Hedao Realm experts joining the fray for a better chance for their descendants to reach the Unity Realm Stage stage.

Then things would indeed become difficult.

"Let's go."

Mu Jinyu slightly shook his head, thinking he'd wait and see later, and called his three companions as he intended to leave.

"Hmm? The key?! Hahaha, what a windfall! Where do you think you're going!"

Just as Mu Jinyu's four were about to leave, they encountered a heroic-looking middle-aged man, whose cultivation was at the Peak Ninth Layer of the Fanxu Realm, with half a foot into the Unity Realm Stage.

Such a person yearned most for the Hedao Fruit.

The moment the middle-aged man saw the key in Zhuo Yue's hand, his eyes gleamed as he struck, morphing into a massive hand dozens of feet in size, pressing down on Mu Jinyu and his companions!

The surging murderous aura soared to the sky.

If it were ordinary Sixth Layer and Seventh Layer Fanxu Realm cultivators, they'd likely die instantly under such a strike!

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Chapter 1043: Cursed Soul Forest!

"Hmph!"

Mu Jinyu gave a cold snort and likewise raised his hand, conjuring a great palm with his Domain to confront the incoming attack.

"Bang!"

The clash of palms instantly resounded with earth-shattering noise, like thunder rolling across the sky.

Even people in cities a thousand miles away heard the intense sound.

Those secretive observers near the battlefield felt their eardrums sting, almost unable to withstand the pressure, with blood oozing from their seven orifices.

"Boom!"

Mu Jinyu's colossal palm, formed from the Myriad Phenomena Domain, although not truly possessing the "Myriad Forms" power, still wielded the Power of Ten Elephants. Therefore, the other palm conjured from the opposing Domain was unsurprisingly shattered to dust on the spot!

"Puff!"

With the Domain shattered, the valiant man's expression changed abruptly, and then he couldn't help but spit out a mouthful of fresh blood due to the backlash!

'So terrifying!'

'Who exactly is this young man who, at just the Seventh Layer of the Fanxu Realm, can overpower a Peak Ninth Layer of the Fanxu Realm powerhouse?'

'Could he be one of the monsters participating in the Hidden Dragon Conference?' the secretive observers exclaimed in their minds, watching the valiant man's blood-spitting scene in shock.

At that moment, they regretted it.

Had they known Mu Jinyu was so powerful, they wouldn't have stayed and should've left like the others who retreated earlier.

"Die!"

Mu Jinyu's eyes were ice cold, and after his gigantic palm shattered the opponent's Domain with one strike, it continued its unstoppable momentum, covering the sky as it approached the opponent!

He prepared to grasp the opponent completely and crush him into pulp within his palm!

"Aaargh!!"

The valiant man hadn't expected Mu Jinyu to be so overpowering, able to cross several Minor Realms to challenge him, even to the point of suppressing him.

Having spat another mouthful of blood, his hair fell loose, looking disheveled with blood on the corners of his mouth.

Seeing Mu Jinyu's Myriad Form Giant Palm moving relentlessly towards him, he felt immense pressure.

Then, his eyes flickered fiercely, and he let out a mighty roar that shattered mountains and rivers, his whole body's Qi-Blood surging upwards, forcibly urging his Domain again!

As soon as the valiant man's Domain appeared, it immediately transformed into an ancient blood-stained Bronze Spear under his urging, emitting a chilling and bloodthirsty gleam.

"Go!!!"

The valiant man roared angrily, with a voice shaking the skies, causing all kinds of plants within hundreds of miles to turn into dust in an instant, leaving no blade of grass behind!

And those hiding in the shadows all spat blood, looking dispirited, unable to withstand the pressure and almost being crippled!

With his roar, the Bronze Spear erupted in a shower of blood and then shot towards the ever-approaching Myriad Form Giant Palm!

The Bronze Spear howled out and clashed with the giant palm in the blink of an eye.

Until the two sides collided, the surroundings echoed with the sound of the Bronze Spear shooting out and white smoke rings appeared where the spear passed through the air!

This was a peerless strike that broke the sound barrier!

A strong Ninth Layer of the Fanxu Realm, if hit by this carelessly, would be in mortal danger!

However, to the surprise of the valiant man and the secretive onlookers...

When the spear and palm collided, the terrifying Bronze Spear that broke the sound barrier didn't destroy the giant palm or force it back!

Instead, it just stood motionless in the center of the palm.

As if it was not a ferocious weapon but a mosquito's proboscis aiming to suck blood from the palm. Annoying, yes, but was there any threat to life?

"Crack!"

While everyone was in shock, a sudden crisp sound echoed.

The Bronze Spear, formed from the valiant man's violently urged Domain, was collapsing inch by inch as the giant palm closed in, being crushed into starry lights before disappearing.

"Puff!!"

With the Domain broken again, the valiant man suffered a severe backlash, his face becoming as pale as g=Gold paper, and he spat out blood wildly, with blood flowing from his seven orifices.

"Rumble!!"

And as the valiant man was struck by the backlash and couldn't muster any defense, the Myriad Form Giant Palm faced no more obstructions and plunged forward, capturing him in its grasp.

"Sizzle sizzle!"

Fresh blood flowed through the fingers instantly.

The secretive observers were frightened and realized this guy might not survive.

"Boom!"

The Myriad Form Giant Palm flipped over and pressed down on the ground, leaving a palm print, followed by a mass of bloody pulp falling into it.

The giant palm swept again, causing the earth to surge and covering the palm print.

A new grave was added to the place.

"Being able to withstand two moves from me is quite commendable. Such a talented individual shouldn't leave no bones behind." Mu Jinyu stood with his hands behind his back, speaking indifferently.

Zhuo Yue was awoken, looking at the new grave, then at Mu Jinyu, who had almost no energy expended, thinking about how strong this junior truly was?

With the Seventh Layer of the Fanxu Realm's strength, he eradicated a Half-Step Unity Realm expert in just two moves!

Doesn't that imply he already has the initial capability to contend with the Unity Realm?

Mu Jinyu glanced at those hiding in the shadows, those severely injured by the aftershocks of his clash with the valiant man, and said nothing.

But those being swept by his gaze were all as silent as cicadas in late autumn. Although they knew they probably had been spotted by Mu Jinyu, they still suppressed their aura desperately to remain hidden.

Ultimately, Mu Jinyu didn't make a move and then left the entrance of the Secret Realm with Wen Rou and Zhuo Yue.

As Mu Jinyu left, the dozen or so people hiding in the shadows finally breathed a sigh of relief, feeling as though they had just circled around the Ghost Gate, and only then did they realize their clothes had been soaked in cold sweat...

Mu Jinyu departed from the Secret Realm location and then bid farewell to Zhuo Yue, saying that if the Secret Realm opened while he was still in the Chu Kingdom, he would come to have a look.

Zhuo Yue stood by the road, watching Mu Jinyu and the other two leave until their figures disappeared, and only then did he sigh lightly, feeling old for the first time.

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A day later.

Mu Jinyu, along with Wen Rou and Jian Ruyan, arrived at the edge of a dense forest that blocked out the sun.

The trees here were extremely sinister in shape, resembling decayed wood, having human-like forms, akin to Evil Ghosts. As the breeze blew, their branches swayed as if struggling, trying to crawl out from Hell.

Though not yet inside, the trio standing at the forest's edge could feel an uneasy aura pervading the air.

This place, as Hua Yunfei had informed Mu Jinyu, was where the Soul Shatter Grass was located.

The place was called the Cursed Soul Forest, extremely ominous and said to be cursed by Divine Spirits, where even a Unity Realm powerhouse would face a life-and-death struggle.

"Caw caw caw..."

From within the Cursed Soul Forest, there came vague wailing caws of crows, infused with malice and mockery.

"Do we still go in? Or should we find somewhere else?"

Wen Rou shivered as she heard the eerie crowing and couldn't help but move closer to Mu Jinyu, her voice weak as she asked.

Initially, upon receiving the information from Hua Yunfei, Mu Jinyu, though aware of the Cursed Soul Forest's peculiarity, had brushed it off and brazenly brought Wen Rou and Jian Ruyan along.

But at this moment, he dared not be careless.

This Cursed Soul Forest was indeed filled with oddness, and he wasn't sure he could protect Wen Rou and Jian Ruyan if danger arose upon entering.

"You two head back to that inn nearby and stay there; I'll go in alone and take a look."

Mu Jinyu hesitated briefly, then turned and suggested to the two ladies.

Chapter 1044: The Emaciated Old Man!

"It's too dangerous here, I feel terrified. The Soul Shatter Grass may not only be here, it might be elsewhere, or perhaps in the hands of some powerful forces. There's no need to take such a risk."

Jian Ruyan frowned as she heard Mu Jinyu's words, advising him to stop.

She could sense an extremely terrifying aura emanating from within the Cursed Soul Forest, making her feel as if she was facing Death!

She had seen Hedao Realm experts before, even at the late stage of the Hedao Realm.

But none of them had such a terrifying presence!

No wonder there are rumors that even a Hedao Realm expert entering the Cursed Soul Forest is facing a life-and-death situation!

Given this, how could she feel at ease letting Mu Jinyu go in to investigate?

Wen Rou was also uneasy. Hearing Jian Ruyan's words, she quickly chimed in, "Yes, don't go in. The Soul Shatter Grass might not even be here. Maybe someone wants to harm you, knowing how terrifying it is here, they want you to send yourself to death!"

Upon Wen Rou's words, Mu Jinyu's eyes moved, thinking to himself, that seems a bit likely.

Although Hua Yunfei's life was in his hands, with that person's pride, how could they willingly serve him? Become a slave!

It's possible that after seeing him seek these rare spiritual medicines, that person might have deliberately found an opportunity to lead him to such a deadly place, hoping he'd go in and die.

Moreover, Jian Ruyan's words made sense. He had already obtained five spiritual medicines from the Dragon Elephant Sect. Others might have the Soul Shatter Grass too, so there's no rush to take this huge risk to search now.

He could wait until he collected the other eleven spiritual medicines; if he still couldn't find the Soul Shatter Grass, by then, he might already be at the Hedao Realm and could take the gamble again!

"Alright, let's return for now. We can look for other spiritual medicines first, and if we can't find the Soul Shatter Grass any other way, we can come back and check."

Although Mu Jinyu practiced the My Way State of Mind, he wasn't someone who couldn't listen to others' opinions. After weighing the risks and rewards, he felt they didn't match up, and decided to come back later.

"Alright, let's go back for now. I also want to talk to that kid again." Mu Jinyu nodded.

Seeing Mu Jinyu not insisting on going his own way, both Wen Rou and Jian Ruyan let out a sigh of relief.

"Coo, coo, coo..."

At this time, the featherless bird Phoenix in Jian Ruyan's arms woke up and cooed like a dove.

Seeing this, Jian Ruyan took out a few fire attribute spiritual medicines from her storage bag and handed them to the featherless bird's beak.

"Crunch, crunch!"

The featherless bird Phoenix quickly finished eating the medicines, then started flapping its bare wings, cooing as if saying, I'm still hungry, I want more...

Just as Jian Ruyan was handing the spiritual medicine, the featherless bird Phoenix turned its head, looking all around, and then spotted the Cursed Soul Forest ahead!

Instantly, its featherless body tensed and stiffened.

Just like a dead chicken that had been thrown into hot water and plucked of its feathers.

Its red eyes widened, filled with fear and unease.

"Look, even the little Phoenix is afraid of this place!"

Jian Ruyan handed the spiritual medicine to the featherless bird's beak and saw it remained stiff and motionless, and with one glance, she saw the human-like fear in its eyes, quickly telling Mu Jinyu.

She wanted to completely dissuade Mu Jinyu from going in alone.

"Hmm..."

Mu Jinyu responded, feeling a sense of unease rising in his heart.

Then, he hurried the two women to leave the area with him, while also taking out that Heavenly Palace Token to send a message to Hua Yunfei.

To see if this guy really intended to harm him, using someone else to do the dirty work!

If that's the case, then he would just kill him!

Now that he had joined the Heavenly Palace, and entered as the top of the Hidden Dragon List, boosting the Dragon Vein Qi Luck of the Heavenly Palace, his status was naturally significant, and even if he killed Hua Yunfei, the Heavenly Palace wouldn't pursue him.

At most, there'd be a rift with the Hua Family behind Hua Yunfei.

"Coo, coo, coo..."

At this moment, the featherless bird Phoenix suddenly came to its senses, its eyes no longer showing fear and unease, but rather becoming somewhat excited and thrilled, flapping its bare wings, and struggled out of Jian Ruyan's arms!

Then it flapped its wings, seemingly possessed, wanting to charge into the Cursed Soul Forest.

"Bang!!"

Unfortunately, it couldn't fly, and immediately crashed to the ground, dazed, with its head tilting off, passing out.

The featherless little Phoenix had never been able to fly since it hatched.

It's unclear if it's due to its lack of feathers or something else, but it just couldn't fly.

Now Jian Ruyan felt quite lucky; fortunately, it couldn't fly. Otherwise, it would have rushed into the Cursed Soul Forest just now.

Mu Jinyu glanced at the featherless bird, not paying much attention, and retracted his gaze, continuing to walk out and conversing with Hua Yunfei!

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Inside an inn room.

A top-class room with the Earth character.

Zhuo Yue was sitting cross-legged on the bed, quietly cultivating.

Spurred by Mu Jinyu, he urgently wanted to break through to the Seventh Layer of the Fanxu Realm, reaching the late stage of the Fanxu Realm, otherwise, as a senior, he wouldn't be able to tolerate being weaker than Mu Jinyu, a junior.

"Bang!"

At this moment, a shattering sound suddenly echoed.

Zhuo Yue opened his eyes to see the door suddenly glowing brilliantly. It was the defensive prohibition engraved on the door, but the brilliance only lasted a moment before vanishing, followed by the door disintegrating!

"Damn!"

Zhuo Yue mentally cursed, fearing his location had been exposed once again, making him a target for the pursuit over the key!

However, he had been constantly on guard. He had a small teleportation talisman prepared under his bed, allowing him to teleport a hundred miles away.

Feeling a great crisis as the door shattered, Zhuo Yue immediately activated the teleportation talisman, sending himself a hundred miles out.

"Phew... Finally got out!"

In the wilderness, floating in mid-air, Zhuo Yue let out a sigh of relief but didn't dare to slow down, quickly preparing to use his movement technique to flee!

"Buzz!!"

But just then, the void in mid-air suddenly rippled, like a calm water surface rippled by a pebble, the ripples spreading instantly.

"Power of Laws?! No... A Hedao Realm expert has arrived!"

Seeing this, Zhuo Yue's soul almost left his body, and he wanted to use the Blood Escape Technique to flee, but suddenly, he felt an overwhelming pressure, like Mount Tai, upon him, immobilizing him.

"Buzz!"

The void ripples vanished, and a shriveled figure appeared before Zhuo Yue.

"You think someone like you could kill my brother? Where's the real culprit?!"

With a shout, a gust of wind hit Zhuo Yue's face, cutting deep bloody marks on his face before he even got a clear look at the newcomer, who grabbed him by the neck, lifting him into the air.

"Elder Ji, the killer isn't him, it's... it's a young man at the Seventh Layer of the Fanxu Realm..."

At that moment, a few trembling voices came from behind.

Zhuo Yue opened his eyes, looking over to see the one gripping his neck was an old man with a corpse-like face, exuding a fierce and sinister aura.

Behind him stood several people.

Zhuo Yue faintly recognized them, recalling they were from the dozen or so people hiding in the shadows at the Secret Realm entrance, afraid to move.

Could it be that they're here to avenge the Peak Ninth Layer of the Fanxu Realm warrior?!

The thought flashed across Zhuo Yue's mind.

Chapter 1045: Going Back on Your Word!

"Elder Ji, I think I know the identity of the real culprit!"

At this moment, someone gathered the courage to raise his head and speak to the gaunt elderly man.

"Hmm? Speak!"

Upon hearing this, the eyes of the gaunt elderly man sharpened. Despite his age, his eyes were not foggy but extremely piercing, as sharp as two drawn swords.

The speaker felt a stabbing pain in his eyes, and blood mixed with tears flowed continuously from his eyes.

Enduring the intense pain, he avoided eye contact, not daring to look directly, and spoke with difficulty: "Someone who could eliminate Ji Bufan with two moves at the Seventh Layer of the Fanxu Realm, I estimate besides Mu Jinyu, the current leader of the Hidden Dragon List, there shouldn't be anyone else."

After he spoke, someone echoed: "Right, whether it's the terrifying combat power of crossing realms to kill, the cultivation at the Seventh Layer of the Fanxu Realm, or the two women accompanying him, they all match Mu Jinyu's characteristics perfectly!"

"Mu Jinyu? Leader of the Hidden Dragon List!"

Upon hearing their words, the gaunt elderly man restrained his fierce gaze slightly, seemingly a hint of apprehension flickering by.

Then he snorted coldly, speaking with unabated fierceness: "I don't care if he's the leader of the Hidden Dragon List. So what if he is? Daring to kill my brother, as long as he hasn't crossed into the Unity Realm, I want his Nine Tribes' relatives buried with him in the Underworld as my brother's servants!"

Zhuo Yue, who was grabbed by the throat and lifted, heard their conversation and thought to himself, 'Elder Ji, Ji Bufan... so he is... Ji Ran?!'

Zhuo Yue guessed the identity of the elderly man, his heart suddenly terrified!

In the Kunlun Ruins, the Unity Realm is the ultimate realm in cultivation, so Unity Realm experts are highly regarded.

Although there aren't only a dozen or so Unity Realm experts, each one is thoroughly remembered by all.

To avoid accidentally offending them and being left without a place to rest in peace.

Yet this gaunt elderly man before them, named Ji Ran, isn't truly a Unity Realm expert!

However, though not a Unity Realm expert, he's not like Ji Bufan in the Half-Step Unity Realm; he can be termed a False Merged Path Realm!

Or say, a Pseudo-Dan expert!

The Unity Realm not only requires a cultivator to unify Essence, Qi, and Spirit, but also to merge Domain, Intent Domain, Divine Skills, Soul, and True Yuan into one, refining a Flawless Golden Elixir!

When the Golden Core forms, the cultivator would grasp a trace of the Power of Laws, teleportation, turning stone into gold, flowers blooming from withered trees, water and fire coexisting... all these incredible immortal methods would be possessed by a Unity Realm expert!

Cultivators below the Unity Realm, when meeting a Unity Realm expert, regardless of how fully they extend their domain and struggle desperately, they would inevitably die when faced with a Golden Core move!

Once, Ji Ran was one of the Flood Dragon-level Heaven's Pride in the top ten of a Hidden Dragon Conference.

He was invited to join the Heavenly Palace, with many expecting him to surely pass the Heavenly Tribulation and refine a Flawless Golden Elixir, becoming a Unity Realm expert!

But unfortunately, he ultimately failed.

He didn't condense a Flawless Golden Elixir!

However, he belongs among the very few who survived the Heavenly Tribulation's bombardment.

Thus, he forcibly condensed a broken Golden Core, becoming a False Merged Path Realm expert.

Possessing a trace of Law power, even seasoned Ninth Layer Fanxu Realm experts facing him are no match; they are crushed into pulp instantly!

After Ji Ran failed to achieve Unity, he wholeheartedly dedicated himself to nurturing his brother, aiming to support him as a true Unity Realm expert!

Yet now, Ji Bufan died at the hands of Mu Jinyu.

No wonder Ji Ran would go insane!

Zhuo Yue didn't expect the valiant man at the Ninth Layer Hedao Realm, easily obliterated by Mu Jinyu in two strikes yesterday, to be Ji Bufan, and felt an endless despair surge in his heart.

Provoking this crazy old man would certainly lead to no good outcome.

The brother he painstakingly raised had died just like that, how could he possibly let Mu Jinyu go, even though he's also a member of Heavenly Palace and the leader of this Hidden Dragon Conference?

Sure enough, after learning Mu Jinyu's identity, Ji Ran didn't immediately execute Zhuo Yue, but instead took out a token engraved with the Heavenly Palace insignia!

He then injected his Spiritual Thought into it, seemingly initiating a conversation with someone!

Soon, he learned Mu Jinyu's current whereabouts from the mouth of an old friend.

The Heavenly Palace Token can be used for communication, issuing tasks, and also determining one's current position.

Ji Ran spoke to that old friend about knowing Mu Jinyu was in the Chu Kingdom, intending to visit and ask for help, but didn't know where he was and asked for his location.

His old friend, a high-ranking member of the Heavenly Palace today, without much thought, disclosed Mu Jinyu's location to Ji Ran.

"Heh heh heh... found you, daring to run near the Cursed Soul Forest; let me send you in to play!"

Ji Ran interrupted the conversation with his old friend, suddenly opened his eyes, and venomously laughed coldly, his eyes glinting with maliciousness.

Upon hearing this, everyone Zhuo Yue brought along shuddered with endless fear and dread in their hearts.

Then Ji Ran prepared to slap Zhuo Yue dead and immediately set off to find Mu Jinyu to send him on his way!

Yet when his dry hand was just raised, his gaze met Zhuo Yue's defiant eyes, and he hesitated.

"Humph, sending you on your way so easily would be too cheap; since you're close to Mu Jinyu, I'll have you suffer endless torment before dying right in front of him!"

Ji Ran sneered.

"Elder Ji, since we've found him, can we... can we leave now?"

At this moment, those people fearfully asked.

Actually, they didn't want to bring Ji Ran over to bother Mu Jinyu.

After all, they had long guessed Mu Jinyu's identity should be the Hidden Dragon Leader, who would want to offend him.

Yet Ji Ran was too ruthless, upon arriving at the Secret Realm entrance, found Ji Bufan cruelly dead, and summoned them to inquire about the truth.

Some later arrivals didn't know how Ji Bufan died and were instantly slapped to death by him!

Thus, compared to offending Mu Jinyu and dying on the spot at Ji Ran's hands, they naturally chose the former and brought Ji Ran to Zhuo Yue.

Ji Ran had promised them before, that finding the real culprit would spare their lives!

"Humph!"

Upon hearing their cautious words, Ji Ran snorted coldly, a cruel and cunning smile appearing on his lips, disdainfully saying: "You want to live too? Just you watching my brother die at that boy's hands, and you are still alive when found by me; you should thank me for my great mercy; actually planning to live?"

"If I spared you, Little Fan, knowing this under the spring, would resent me, his brother!"

Ji Ran roared.

"No!!"

"Run!!"

The few hearing Ji Ran's hysterical words filled with madness and resentment, realized things were dire and immediately turned to flee!

But alas, as Ji Ran's broken pill lightly trembled!

"Puff!", "Puff!", "Puff!!"

They all burst forth like fireworks, brilliantly blooming in the air.

Chapter 1046: Coming to Kill!

"We don't dare to go in here for now. We're planning to explore other places to see if we can find the spiritual medicine we need, or wait for Hua Yunfei to find out about more spiritual medicine. Alternatively, we can wait nearby for the Hedao Fruit to mature."

Mu Jinyu and the others gradually moved away from the Cursed Soul Forest. Wen Rou turned and asked Mu Jinyu.

Mu Jinyu thought for a moment and said, "It's not that easy to rely on luck. Let's wait in the Chu Kingdom first, while we wait for Hua Yunfei's news, and for the Hedao Fruit to mature. If the maturity date of the Hedao Fruit is approaching and there's still no news, then we'll go to pick the Hedao Fruit."

"Humph, you still dream of picking the Hedao Fruit? You should join my brother down there!"

Just then, a voice filled with immense resentment and coldness suddenly echoed from beside them.

Wen Rou and Jian Ruyan, who heard it, felt chills down their spine, and goosebumps rose all over their bodies.

"Hoo!"

Thirty meters ahead of them in the void, space began to ripple.

Then, they saw the figure of a gaunt old man holding a familiar figure, glaring at them with poisonous animosity.

"Senior Zhuo!"

"It's Zhuo Yue!"

Mu Jinyu and the others quickly recognized the familiar figure that the gaunt old man was holding; it was Zhuo Yue, whom they parted ways with yesterday.

"Hurry up and leave, this guy is in the False Pill Realm!"

Zhuo Yue's expression was wan, his face as pale as gold paper, and his hands were bleeding, with all ten fingers gone. Evidently, he had suffered inhuman torture from Ji Ran on the way here, and he was already on the brink of death.

But upon seeing Mu Jinyu and the others, he still forced himself into spirit to issue a warning to Mu Jinyu and them!

"Humph! Still dare to talk back!"

Ji Ran saw Zhuo Yue, whom he had tormented nearly to death, still speaking to warn these three people upon seeing them, and he couldn't help but rage. With a fierce hand gesture, he tore off both of Zhuo Yue's arms.

"Ah!!"

Zhuo Yue let out a painful scream and immediately fainted.

His pain was not just of physical torture, but also because all his lifelong skills were in his iron fists. With his fingers twisted off by Ji Ran, his combat prowess drastically decreased, but he could still barely execute moves!

However, with his arms broken, he was considered completely crippled!

"You!"

Mu Jinyu and the others were furious at the bloody scene of Zhuo Yue's arms being torn, their foreheads pulsing with bulging veins.

"Humph, does it hurt? Are you angry? Are you desperate? Are you powerless? My brother before he died was just like you are now. Are you comfortable now?"

Ji Ran saw that Zhuo Yue had fainted and shook his head uninterestedly, then turned his cold and resentful gaze toward Mu Jinyu and the other two, while indifferently questioning.

"Who is your brother?"

Mu Jinyu calmed down, knowing that the more angry he was, the happier it would make the other party.

Conversely, the more he showed indifference to Zhuo Yue's life and death, perhaps Zhuo Yue could survive. Even if he couldn't, he could suffer less before dying!

And if Zhuo Yue died, he would definitely make this guy pay with his life!

"Who is my brother?"

Ji Ran's expression changed dramatically upon hearing Mu Jinyu's question, feeling both angry and hateful, but also somewhat self-mocking, screaming frenetically, "You don't even know who my brother is, and dared to kill him!"

"Seems like you've killed quite a few people. For this revenge to catch up with you, don't even know who's innocently died at your hands. Hahaha..."

Listening to Ji Ran's frenzied screams, Mu Jinyu's mind raced analyzing that no one among those who died under his hand yesterday likely had such a backing, regarding a half-step Great Power in the Broken Pill Realm chasing them.

The most likely possibility was that it was the heroic male who suddenly appeared after Mu Jinyu attempted entering the Secret Realm early and decided to leave, reaching the peak of the ninth layer of the Fanxu Realm.

Mu Jinyu calmly spoke, "Was your brother that fellow from the ninth layer of the Fanxu Realm?"

"Ha, you finally figured out who your enemy was before dying. That's good, I will let you die knowing, so you can kneel in Hell and repent before my brother!" Ji Ran's voice was mockingly cold.

His tone, like a fiercely resentful ghost, and speaking more, he suddenly burst into tears, appearing even more horrifying!

"My poor brother, finally cultivated to the peak ninth layer of the Fanxu Realm, only one step away from entering the Unity Realm Stage I couldn't reach. He just needed a key, adding a chance to charge into the Unity Realm, but got killed by you beasts!"

"My poor little brother..."

"Rest assured, I will definitely kill these heartless beasts to serve you underground..."

Ji Ran rambled on frantically, crying and laughing.

Mu Jinyu, listening to Ji Ran's words, looked indifferent, smirked disdainfully, "Turns out both beasts share the same nature. Birds of a feather flock together."

"What did you say?!" Ji Ran was filled with rage upon hearing Mu Jinyu's words!

Mu Jinyu nonchalantly remarked, "A young beast sees that we have the Secret Realm Key, which is useful to him, and without saying a word, tries to kill and rob us! I counter-killed him. Then an old beast finds out someone has died, disregarding fairness and justice, attempts to reverse facts to justify his actions, and comes for revenge. If they're not two beasts, what are they?"

"You're seeking death!"

Ji Ran erupted in fury hearing Mu Jinyu, like a bloody attempt to rip open a scar.

His murky, backlit eyes almost to emit an evil substantial glow, like a soul-calling ghost fixating on Mu Jinyu.

"My brother wanted to borrow your key, it was your greatest fortune. You three can't even use the Hedao Fruit. Once he succeeded in unifying paths, you'd have a Unifying Paths Great Power standing behind you! Yet somehow, you weren't satisfied or valued the opportunity; dare to brazenly kill him, even trying to reverse black and white facts..."

"Die!"

At the end, Ji Ran issued a thunderous roar!

Then he raised a hand and threw the unconscious Zhuo Yue toward Mu Jinyu and his fellows!

While throwing, his eyes carried a mischievous and cruel cold glow, fixating on Mu Jinyu to observe his reaction!

"Hmm?!"

Mu Jinyu seeing the old man angering to losing reason throwing Zhuo Yue over, initially planned to catch hold of Zhuo Yue.

But suddenly, a shuddering premonition overcame him.

He sensed an overwhelming deadly aura emanating from Zhuo Yue's body; should that release, even if they survived, they'd be gravely injured and dying!

"This old bastard!!"

Mu Jinyu cursed silently, now realizing Ji Ran tampered with Zhuo Yue.

Ji Ran must have infused terrifying murderous intent inside Zhuo Yue, feigning anger and loss of reason before throwing him over, ensuring no one would suspect Zhuo Yue was essentially a human bomb!

Even if discovered, throw him aside to detonate him.

Then how to face this brutal truth afterward?!

Ji Ran would surely use it ruthlessly to humiliate them.

Chapter 1047: The Heaven-reaching Spiritual Treasure Appears!

Even an ordinary person, upon realizing Ji Ran's methods, would inevitably find themselves in a dilemma!

However, that's just for ordinary people.

Mu Jinyu, on the other hand, was not so easily troubled.

Upon noticing that Ji Ran had done something to Zhuo Yue, he cursed silently in his heart, and immediately unfolded the Green Emperor Domain, drawing Zhuo Yue into safety.

He used the Green Emperor Domain to dissipate the terrifying killing intent hidden in Zhuo Yue.

"This..."

Ji Ran was stunned to see Mu Jinyu easily catching Zhuo Yue and avoiding the scenario he had imagined.

But soon, from the green light emanating from Mu Jinyu, he understood what kind of technique this was.

"The Domain of Life, to think there's someone who can comprehend such a domain! No wonder you could kill my brother!"

Ji Ran's face showed a hint of displeasure, but soon, a monstrous malice flickered in his eyes, and he shouted angrily: "But does it matter? Today, since I've found you, even if you kneel down and commit suicide, I won't let you die so easily!"

"Ha!"

Ji Ran shouted angrily, and an invisible killing intent slashed towards Mu Jinyu!

Just after Mu Jinyu had placed Zhuo Yue on his back, his heart skipped a beat, feeling an overwhelming sense of suffocation.

Without hesitation, Mu Jinyu immediately activated the Dragon Transformation Scripture to enhance his cultivation!

This time, he was in luck. The Dragon Transformation Scripture did not just increase his power by three layers as it did during the Hidden Dragon Conference.

Instead, it increased by six layers!

Rising from the seventh layer of the Fanxu Realm, he reached the thirteenth layer!

Of course, in the real realm, a thirteenth layer of the Fanxu Realm doesn't exist, so compared to Ji Ran's Broken Pill in the False Merged Path Realm, his cultivation was only slightly inferior to Ji Ran's.

The gap wasn't absurdly large.

The only remaining gap between the two was a slight mastery over the Heaven and Earth Laws.

But because of this slight mastery over the Heaven and Earth Laws, the gap between them was still very apparent.

Although Mu Jinyu's cultivation had increased, he still clearly felt it difficult to resist Ji Ran's invisible killing intent, causing his heart to race uncontrollably.

In this critical moment, Mu Jinyu remained incredibly calm and suddenly had a stroke of insight. His eyes gleamed, and without hesitation, he took out the Bi Fang Cauldron from his storage bag, which he hadn't used for some time!

The Bi Fang Cauldron, a top-grade spiritual treasure.

Just a step away from birthing an Artifact Spirit, becoming a heaven-reaching spiritual treasure!

Its power is unimaginable.

Empires like those behind Di Shitian and Di Yin were targeted and overthrown due to this spiritual treasure, showcasing its allure to not only the Fanxu but also the Unity Realm experts.

"Dang!!"

At this perilous moment, Mu Jinyu managed to retrieve the Bi Fang Cauldron from his storage bag just in time, placing it at the position his Divine Sense sensed as extremely dangerous. Instantly, a thunderous explosion reverberated from the Bi Fang Cauldron!

Mu Jinyu pressed a hand against the Bi Fang Cauldron, flooding it with True Yuan to vigorously unleash its vast power.

Despite his physical body's pure strength reaching the power of the seven images, at this moment, he even felt a slight numbness in his arm, a testament to the terrifying power of Ji Ran's attack!

"Hmm? A top-grade spiritual treasure!"

Ji Ran was taken aback upon seeing Mu Jinyu pull out a cauldron to block his lethal strike in a life-and-death situation, immediately recognizing it as a top-grade spiritual treasure!

Heaven-reaching spiritual treasures were exceedingly rare within the Kunlun Ruins, with only a handful in existence. Even many hidden sects and super clans did not possess a single heaven-reaching spiritual treasure.

Naturally, the majority of major powers' treasured possessions for protection and prestige were top-grade spiritual treasures!

Ji Ran, with his broad insights and keen discernment, quickly deduced the origin and name of the cauldron Mu Jinyu held from the top-grade spiritual treasure of the furnace type!

"The Bi Fang Cauldron that caused a great empire's downfall decades ago?!"

Ji Ran spoke with a mix of suspicion and uncertainty.

Mu Jinyu did not answer upon hearing this. Since he had already taken out the Bi Fang Cauldron, he intended to send this old beast along with his brother to the netherworld today!

"Rumble!"

As Mu Jinyu poured True Yuan furiously into the Bi Fang Cauldron, it immediately emitted a terrifying sound akin to a volcanic eruption.

Then, the dark red cauldron body shone with brilliant crimson light, turning the entire dark red Bi Fang Cauldron bright and fiery.

An immense and terrifying aura was brewing inside the Bi Fang Cauldron.

Finally, the Bi Fang Cauldron erupted like a restless volcano, unleashing the might of world destruction!

"Rumble!!"

The surging Bi Fang's Fire coalesced into an apocalyptic sea of fire, pouring endlessly from the Bi Fang Cauldron, sweeping towards Ji Ran ahead.

"Screech!"

Amid several indistinct avian cries, Mu Jinyu could faintly see the silhouettes of several Bi Fang Birds manifesting within the sea of fire.

Mu Jinyu knew that given time, and with continual refining and nurturing with Essence Blood, the Bi Fang Cauldron would eventually nurture an Artifact Spirit.

"Hmph, do you think you're the only one with top-grade spiritual treasure?"

Witnessing the Bi Fang Cauldron spew an endless and terrifying sea of fire, conveying an apocalyptic scene heading towards him and turning stones and vegetation along the way into ashes in an instant, Ji Ran snapped out of his astonishment and sneered.

He then gently patted the storage bag at his waist.

"Boom!!"

In an instant, a sinister black light illuminated a thousand miles!

Everything within the wilderness for miles, whether grass, trees, or small animals, turned to powder!

"Rumble!!"

With the appearance of that sinister black light, the once continuous Sky Burning Fire faced an impenetrable stone wall, halted by that black light.

Mu Jinyu, suppressing the discomfort in his eyes, strained to identify what was emitting the terrifying black light.

He persevered, tears of blood streaming down, forcing his eyes open wide until he finally discerned what resisted the Bi Fang Cauldron within the black light.

It was a small bone tower constructed from white bones.

Its appearance was sinister, composed of five layers, and at its pinnacle, encased a small skull roughly the size of a human thumb, uncertain whether it belonged to a shrunken human skull or a humanoid creature.

The skull's originally hollow eye sockets were now embedded with two black gemstones glimmering with sinister light, their origin unknown.

The black light resisting the apocalyptic sea of fire likely emanated from these two black gemstones.

"What is this bone tower?!"

Mu Jinyu, staring at the bone tower, felt his heart race, sensing an immense threat, and he faintly felt the skull at the tower's top seemed sentient, turning to meet his gaze.

Not daring to be careless, desperate to know its origin, Mu Jinyu quickly pressed a hand against Jian Ruyan's forehead, projecting the bone tower's image into her Sea of Consciousness.

Jian Ruyan, being much weaker, couldn't discern the bone tower within the black light by herself, so Mu Jinyu directly imprinted its image in her Sea of Consciousness.

"This is... the Demon God Tower?! Hurry, it's a heaven-reaching spiritual treasure!!"

Jian Ruyan, living up to Mu Jinyu's expectations, instantly recognized the bone tower's origin, but her words left Mu Jinyu slightly stunned.

This bone tower is actually a heaven-reaching spiritual treasure?!

Chapter 1048 - 1048 Forcing into the Cursed Soul Forest!

"Boom!!"

When Mu Jinyu was still dazed, the black light that shielded them from the overwhelming sea of fire suddenly vanished, followed by an ethereal white bone light emanating as the small bone spun a few times before swiftly spreading out.

Accompanied by a violent roar, the raging sea of fire was immediately bombarded back by the bone light.

If Mu Jinyu hadn't snapped back to his senses in time and wielded the Bi Fang Cauldron to gather the world-ending flames within it, the four of them would have perished by his own hand.

"Something's wrong, this isn't a Heaven-reaching spiritual treasure!"

At this point, Jian Ruyan realized and urgently transmitted to Mu Jinyu, "I remember, the Demon God Tower was originally an extremely terrifying Heaven-reaching spiritual treasure, forged by a great demon in the Kunlun Ruins using precious bones from various top-grade demon beasts and human special constitutions!"

"However, because it was too malign, it was finally destroyed during a great battle and its artifact spirit fell into the Endless Abyss!"

"Though it's unknown how this old man obtained it, the Demon God Tower, with its spirit destroyed, no longer qualifies as a Heaven-reaching spiritual treasure; nevertheless, its power still far exceeds that of a top-grade spiritual treasure!"

Jian Ruyan quickly transmitted the details of the Demon God Tower to Mu Jinyu!

Mu Jinyu's heart sank, though the Demon God Tower was no longer a Heaven-reaching spiritual treasure without an artifact spirit, even a damaged one was far stronger than a top-grade spiritual treasure, causing him to feel immense pressure.

Firstly, his cultivation was already inferior to Ji Ran of the False Merged Path Realm, and now his magic treasure couldn't compare to the opponent's either.

With both factors combined, against Ji Ran, the treacherous old man, he had no ability to retaliate.

'Shall I use the Dragon Resentment Evil Poison?'

The thought involuntarily surfaced in Mu Jinyu's mind.

The Dragon Resentment Evil Poison, obtained from the Dragon Vein of Yinlong Mountain, was Mu Jinyu's greatest trump card, which he had never used, only considering its use recently when scouting the Demon Beast Mountain Range.

Facing the current crisis, he again thought about using it.

But quickly, he shook his head internally, feeling unsure.

Even if Ji Ran were a true power of the Unity Realm Stage, without the damaged Heaven-reaching spiritual treasure, the Demon God Tower, he might dare to try defending against the opponent's magic treasure with the Bi Fang Cauldron, followed by delivering a lethal strike with the Dragon Resentment Evil Poison!

However, the opponent possessed the Demon God Tower, and from how easily Ji Ran defended against the Bi Fang's Fire, Mu Jinyu felt unsure about using the Dragon Resentment Evil Poison successfully.

Instead of the Dragon Resentment Evil Poison being blocked outside by the Demon God Tower.

"Hmph, you little brat, what other tricks do you have? Show them all now!"

Under the protection of the Demon God Tower, Ji Ran remained unharmed, taunting Mu Jinyu with a venomous tone.

"Go!"

Without hesitation, Mu Jinyu enlarged the Bi Fang Cauldron, immediately carrying Jian Ruyan, Wen Rou, and Zhuo Yue inside, then maneuvered the cauldron trying to fly to the left to escape.

"Buzz!"

As Mu Jinyu moved, suddenly, a radiant, colorful brilliance erupted from the White Bone Tower, instantly spreading towards Mu Jinyu's position.

"Gah!!"

Seeing this, Mu Jinyu hastily controlled the Bi Fang Cauldron to stop, yet a part still fell into the colorful brilliance, giving him a sensation as if trapped in a quagmire.

Exerting considerable effort, he finally broke free from the restraint of the colorful brilliance!

"Come on, keep running! Little brat, why aren't you running anymore?"

Ji Ran's sneering continued.

Mu Jinyu remained calm, testing several times, attempting to escape skyward and underground, yet couldn't evade the blockade of the Demon God Tower.

Seeing Ji Ran's expression, akin to a cat playing with a mouse, Mu Jinyu sighed internally with resignation, turning to charge towards the Cursed Soul Forest!

During the process, Mu Jinyu also considered changing direction, leaving via a different route.

But Ji Ran had anticipated this, blocking each position as Mu Jinyu was about to change course.

Ultimately, with one chasing and one fleeing, Mu Jinyu wielded the Bi Fang Cauldron, Ji Ran controlled the Demon God Tower, arriving before the ghostly shadows of the Cursed Soul Forest.

"Come, escape! Keep fleeing, keep charging ahead! Little brat, why aren't you running anymore?"

Ji Ran looked at the Bi Fang Cauldron ahead disdainfully, tauntingly repeating.

He intended to force Mu Jinyu out of the Bi Fang Cauldron to kneel before him, begging for a quick end, then slowly torturing him to death.

Eventually pulling his soul out, sending it into the Demon God Tower for spirit refining!

Condemning him to eternal damnation!

Ji Ran wasn't worried at all about Mu Jinyu daring to charge into the Cursed Soul Forest for a gamble.

In the Kunlun Ruins, as long as someone was sane, even ordinary mortals who couldn't cultivate, knew the horror of the Cursed Soul Forest.

Given the choice between venturing into the Cursed Soul Forest or having their soul extracted and refined, the vast majority would choose the latter.

Because having one's soul extracted and refined by the enemy still held a slight chance of survival, despite certain death, it wouldn't implicate others; whereas entering the Cursed Soul Forest not only led to absolute doom, their soul would be refined by the Ghost King onto one of the Ghost Trees inside, eternally cursed, dragging their relatives and friends outside to suffer the mysterious curse force, all ending in tragic deaths!

This is the bloody lesson summarized from people's mysterious deaths of those who entered the Cursed Soul Forest!

"Old bastard, when I get out, I will skin you alive!"

Mu Jinyu's cold voice echoed from within the Bi Fang Cauldron, and then without hesitation, he wielded the cauldron and charged into the Cursed Soul Forest!

Compared to falling into Ji Ran's hands, he'd rather gamble by rushing into the Cursed Soul Forest for a chance to survive!

He truly hated Ji Ran, the old bastard, at this moment!

Since his debut, apart from being somewhat desperate during the dark turmoil forced by demons in Huaxia, he had never been driven to such a degree!

But Ji Ran, this old thing, was much older than him and much stronger, holding a magic treasure that restrained him, leaving him truly helpless!

Watching Mu Jinyu maneuvering the Bi Fang Cauldron, rushing headlong into the Cursed Soul Forest without looking back, Ji Ran was somewhat stunned.

Originally in his imagination, Mu Jinyu should have been forced to a point of desperation, jumping out from the Bi Fang Cauldron to kneel and beg for mercy!

How could he be this stalwart?!

No, this isn't stalwart, it's foolish!

Being stalwart means you'd rather die yourself than implicate others.

And entering the Cursed Soul Forest could likely bring collateral damage, causing their relatives and friends to suffer. Generally, no matter how stalwart, one would rather have their soul extracted and refined than dare to enter the Cursed Soul Forest!

"This guy, does he have a grudge against his family and friends?"

Ji Ran muttered in confusion.

Then his brows relaxed, saying, "No matter, anyway entering the Cursed Soul Forest ends up being a hundred times worse than me torturing them myself, now let's see how he survives!"

Saying so, Ji Ran sat cross-legged outside the Cursed Soul Forest, waiting ruthlessly.

To prevent Mu Jinyu from rushing in not long before escaping again, missing the curse on them!

...

Chapter 1049: The Sinister Cursed Soul Forest!

In the Cursed Soul Forest, the chilling winds howled, filled with a ghostly aura.

The barren trees swayed, as if demons from Hell were about to crawl out from the ground, appearing particularly menacing and terrifying!

Mu Jinyu was inside the Bi Fang Cauldron, urgently flying inward, too preoccupied to pay attention to the sinister scenery along the way.

"It seems that old guy didn't follow me in."

Mu Jinyu had been constantly aware of the situation behind him, originally thinking that upon rushing into the Cursed Soul Forest, that old fellow Ji Ran should also follow him in.

He had always been on guard.

Unexpectedly, the other party seemed to have no intention of coming in at all.

'Could it be that he just wants to force me in? Is the Cursed Soul Forest really that terrifying?'

A bad premonition suddenly arose in Mu Jinyu's mind.

In his view, the Cursed Soul Forest was just a place of nine deaths and one life, not one without any way to survive.

Having rushed into the Cursed Soul Forest, Ji Ran, that old bastard, should also follow in, at least at the forest's perimeter, it shouldn't be that dangerous.

But that old bastard didn't even dare to enter the outskirts, which inevitably made Mu Jinyu feel an unspeakable unease.

Mu Jinyu had no idea that the Cursed Soul Forest was not only a place of great danger, it could also implicate those around.

If he knew these details, he probably wouldn't dare to recklessly charge into the Cursed Soul Forest just to seek a way out.

"What kind of danger does the Cursed Soul Forest hold? Even that old bastard didn't dare to enter."

Mu Jinyu's expression changed a few times, faintly sensing something as he questioned Jian Ruyan.

Jian Ruyan's face was pale, holding the comatose Little Phoenix, and after frowning for a moment, shook her head, saying she was not clear about the situation in the Cursed Soul Forest.

She indeed wasn't very knowledgeable about the Cursed Soul Forest, only understanding that it was extremely dangerous, nearly a place of certain death with no survivors, and that occasionally those who came out alive died miserably not long after.

After learning of these circumstances, she didn't continue to read further.

Such a warning was sufficient for her.

Damn it, it's a place of certain death! How could she be so stupid as to want to continue rushing into the Cursed Soul Forest?

But she really hadn't expected that one day, she would still be forced into the Cursed Soul Forest.

If not, previously when she warned Mu Jinyu outside of the forest not to venture in recklessly, she wouldn't have just provided such minimal caution.

"Sigh..."

Mu Jinyu let out a light sigh, then stopped the Bi Fang Cauldron, attempting to circle around and leave the Cursed Soul Forest.

But after circling several times, he still couldn't find a way out, as if the Cursed Soul Forest was a self-contained world, boundless, with no real entrance or exit, trapping anyone inside for a lifetime.

Having no other choice, Mu Jinyu relied on the markers he had left along the way and returned to the original point.

Then he retraced his steps, intending to see if that old bastard Ji Ran was still outside.

He had been circling the perimeter of the Cursed Soul Forest for over an hour; if Ji Ran wasn't guarding outside, he could leave the forest unimpeded.

During this hour of circling, Mu Jinyu felt increasingly uneasy, with a vague sense of impending doom, making him unwilling to linger there if he had any means.

Soon, Mu Jinyu navigated the Bi Fang Cauldron to the entry point quietly and saw Ji Ran sitting cross-legged at the entrance.

Mu Jinyu's heart sank instantly.

Just as he was contemplating whether to hide there and engage Ji Ran in a prolonged standoff,

"Whoosh!"

Ji Ran suddenly opened his eyes, filled with a vengeful and cruel light, and then the Demon God Bone Tower suspended above his head burst with multicolored rays, slashing towards him like a fan!

"You little bastard, still not dead by now and really trying to escape from me!"

Ji Ran had a cruel and sinister smile at the corner of his mouth, his eyes mad, recklessly bombarding the Cursed Soul Forest with the Demon God Tower.

"Damn! Old bastard, just wait!"

Mu Jinyu hurriedly controlled the Bi Fang Cauldron, quickly leaving the area.

As he fled, he didn't notice...

The multicolored evil light that Ji Ran unleashed surged into the Cursed Soul Forest. The several ghost-like withered trees at the front immediately emitted a brilliant glow, and the human face-shaped tree hollows began to emit an eerie glow.

The tree hollows suddenly expanded like mouths opening wide, swallowing the multicolored evil light.

Then, the withered trees smacked their lips, shook their decayed bodies, and with a snapping sound, pulled their tree roots from the ground.

They shook their trunks, moving like humans, intending to attack Ji Ran, who launched the assault from the outside!

Seeing this scene, Ji Ran was terrified, his scalp tingling, his soul nearly leaving his body, and hurriedly controlled the Demon God Tower to let streams of shimmering bone light protect him as he hastily retreated.

The ghost-like, demon-like withered trees trembled at the boundary of the Cursed Soul Forest, clearly showing their eagerness to step out.

But for some reason, perhaps the outside world lacked space for them to survive, or for other reasons, they finally turned back, pursuing the Bi Fang Cauldron fleeing inward!

Seeing this, Ji Ran felt a lingering fear, nearly having messed up.

Afterward, he secretly retreated several hundred meters and continued monitoring the situation.

...

Mu Jinyu, unaware of the peculiarity at the entrance of the Cursed Soul Forest, left that area.

He began contemplating what to do next.

In the short term, it's likely that the old bastard Ji Ran won't leave the entrance.

And he had this constant unease, feeling that lingering in the Cursed Soul Forest, whether deep inside or at the perimeter, would lead to something bad, with disaster looming.

"Forget it, since it has come to this, might as well take this opportunity to search for the Soul Shatter Grass in there! Meanwhile, see if there might be another exit deeper inside."

Mu Jinyu's eyes flickered indecisively, but finally turned resolute, making his decision.

Then he looked down into the Bi Fang Cauldron at Zhuo Yue, still unconscious.

Earlier, he had been seeking a chance to exit the Cursed Soul Forest, so he hadn't had any time to heal Zhuo Yue.

Since he had given up on leaving through this entrance, he could spare some time to heal Zhuo Yue's injuries, further equipping them in this mysterious Cursed Soul Forest.

"Phew!"

As Mu Jinyu's Life Source Energy surged in, Zhuo Yue's severed arm began to reform with white bones and regenerate flesh.

Zhuo Yue's arms were demolished, making it seemingly difficult for others to save him without divine medicine to enable rebirth of limbs.

But Mu Jinyu, having previously used limb regrowth on a severed elder of the Heavenly Sword Faction, found it convenient to treat Zhuo Yue's freshly severed arms.

With Life Source Energy continually flowing into Zhuo Yue's body, not only did his arms regenerate, his severe injuries also healed.

His once pale and bloodless face started to gain a healthy flush.

However, he hadn't yet woken from his coma.

"Bang!!"

Just as Mu Jinyu was focused on healing Zhuo Yue, suddenly, the Bi Fang Cauldron trembled violently.

It was as if someone outside was striking the cauldron with a weapon.

Chapter 1050: Evil Beings Retreat!

"Bang Bang Bang!!"

The sound of knocking on the Bi Fang Cauldron grew increasingly intense, each strike louder than the last!

"What is that thing?"

Mu Jinyu abruptly woke up, his Divine Sense reached out to the Bi Fang Cauldron, and he felt a wave of horror!

Outside the cauldron, several trees resembling evil ghosts were standing there, continuously lifting their ghost hand-like branches to strike the Bi Fang Cauldron.

With their rotten tree bodies, striking the Bi Fang Cauldron should shatter them to dust.

Yet now, their withered branches appeared so indestructible, causing the cauldron to shake violently with each hit.

"What kind of ghostly thing is this?"

Jian Ruyan and Wen Rou also extended their Divine Sense outside the Bi Fang Cauldron, and seeing this scene, couldn't help but turn pale and feel at a loss.

"This is impossible."

Mu Jinyu cursed under his breath, realizing that since entering the Cursed Soul Forest, the source of his constant unease had been these specters.

If even these seemingly insignificant deadwood could turn into such terrifying forms due to intruders, wouldn't the living beings inside be even scarier?

"Boom!"

Mu Jinyu didn't dare to hesitate and quickly activated the Bi Fang Cauldron.

In an instant, ferocious flames burst forth from the cauldron!

The Bi Fang Flame was exceedingly terrifying; even a strong practitioner at the Late Stage of the Fanxu Realm caught off guard by one hit might suffer severe injuries.

But at this moment, as the flames surged out, they only made the ghost trees retreat anxiously instead of burning them to ashes!

"Let's go!"

Mu Jinyu dared not linger, maneuvering the Bi Fang Cauldron to delve further into the forest!

He was rushing toward the location of the Soul Shatter Grass as per Hua Yunfei's information!

He was already in the Cursed Soul Forest and couldn't leave at the moment, so why not take this chance to see if the Soul Shatter Grass was here, rather than risking another dangerous search later?

Furthermore, he genuinely doubted whether Hua Yunfei's information was true.

Didn't Jian Ruyan say this was a place of nine deaths and one life?

Could someone have left the Cursed Soul Forest alive and spread this information, which was then known to the Heavenly Palace?

Mu Jinyu felt it was dubious, suspecting Hua Yunfei was deceiving him.

Therefore, he wanted to go and check, and if he couldn't find the Soul Shatter Grass, he would directly end Hua Yunfei's life!

"Huff huff..."

While steering the Bi Fang Cauldron toward the recorded direction, Mu Jinyu also kept a close eye on the surroundings.

Soon enough, he gloomily noticed that following the attack from a few ghost trees, any remaining ghost trees that were hiding and escaping notice burst out from the ground and chased after them.

This made the path ahead full of ghost shadows, with fierce winds blowing!

"If I weren't inside the Bi Fang Cauldron, I'd definitely let you taste the true power of the Bi Fang Flame!"

Mu Jinyu was enraged as he cursed inwardly.

Now that Zhuo Yue was unconscious and Jian Ruyan and Wen Rou were weak, he dared not let them out in the open because it was too dangerous, so he had to keep them inside the top-grade spiritual treasure, the Bi Fang Cauldron to protect them.

This also meant that he couldn't unleash the most terrifying Bi Fang Flame from the cauldron.

As they were all inside the cauldron, if he were to activate the Bi Fang Flame, they would be the first to get burned!

At this moment, Mu Jinyu desperately wished for a heaven-reaching spiritual treasure.

If the Bi Fang Cauldron were a heaven-reaching spiritual treasure, he wouldn't need it to be much more powerful, just possess an Artifact Spirit so the Bi Fang Flame wouldn't need to be activated from inside the cauldron, making them less vulnerable!

"Screech!"

"Boom Boom Boom!"

"Crash!!"

The decayed ghost trees chased around the Bi Fang Cauldron, continually raising their branches to strike it, producing a dreadful cacophony.

If not for the Bi Fang Cauldron being a top-grade spiritual treasure, it wouldn't have been able to withstand the assault; even as it was, the cauldron periodically trembled, feeling like it was about to fall apart.

They flew for nearly an hour.

Mu Jinyu felt that they were very close to the location of the Soul Shatter Grass.

But they were also gradually venturing deeper into the Cursed Soul Forest, causing Mu Jinyu to feel increasingly uneasy and alert.

Because not long ago, all the sinister ghost trees attacking the Bi Fang Cauldron suddenly stopped, remaining in place and turning into decaying wood, devoid of movement.

This made Mu Jinyu suspect that a great danger lay ahead!

However, having reached this point, he was in a dilemma but finally steeled himself to keep flying forward.

"Puff!"

"Swish!!"

At this moment, an area resembling an abandoned graveyard appeared before Mu Jinyu, and as he maneuvered the Bi Fang Cauldron over it, the slightly raised mounds on the ground all cracked open, releasing fierce Yin energy!

The blasts made the Bi Fang Cauldron wobble in the air, nearly crashing from the sky.

"Roar!"

Then, skeletons and rotten corpses jumped out of those graves, their eye sockets flickering with green light, eerily staring at the struggling Bi Fang Cauldron above!

Mu Jinyu observed these evil beings and found them far more vicious than the ghost trees, no wonder the ghost trees stopped short and wouldn't dare venture near this area.

"What should we do? The Bi Fang Cauldron seems unable to fly over this cemetery!"

Wen Rou and Jian Ruyan noticed this scene, their hearts racing, faces turning pale, feeling even more helpless.

Mu Jinyu's frown deepened, and then he gritted his teeth, preparing to have everyone jump out of the Bi Fang Cauldron, intending to use the full power of the Bi Fang Flame to burn these evil beings!

At that moment!

"Tweet tweet!"

The bald little Phoenix in Jian Ruyan's arms stirred from its coma, letting out a few distinct chirps.

It quickly became fully awake, flapping its small wings energetically, trying to jump out of Jian Ruyan's embrace.

As this little creature's chirping echoed outside the Bi Fang Cauldron.

Those evil beings eager to move on the graveyard below suddenly showed signs of fear, then without hesitation, jumped back into their graves.

With their retreat, the storm-like Yin energy was also pulled back into the graves.

Instantly, the Bi Fang Cauldron, trapped by the Yin energy and unable to move freely, regained its maneuverability.

Under Mu Jinyu's control, it swiftly flew away from the graveyard!

"What just happened? Why did they suddenly hide away?"

Having left the graveyard, Mu Jinyu felt somewhat relieved but also mused with doubt.

"It seems... when the little Phoenix woke up and chirped, those monsters hid away?"

Wen Rou timidly supplemented from the side.

"Impossible, could it be so powerful?"

Upon hearing, Mu Jinyu turned to look at the bald little Phoenix nestled in Jian Ruyan's arms.

He looked at it for a few moments, thinking it totally resembled a featherless chicken, lacking any semblance of awe.

Nevertheless, the creature had once transcended the Heavenly Tribulation becoming the Demon Emperor of the Unity Realm Stage.

Perhaps its cry indeed scared those evil beings away.

Especially since it possessed a trace of Phoenix Bloodline; even though it no longer retained much power, the innate supremacy within its bloodline may have caused the evil beings to retreat on instinct, which wasn't impossible!