

Longevity 101

Chapter 101 Cunning Sword Cultivator, Interrogating the Demon

On the mountain path and official road above, the despairing villagers of Wending County, along with a group of soldiers and a host of evil cultivators, were accompanied by the Jiao Demon which had swallowed an Exotic Realm magic artifact, causing its belly to bulge and thus it was still "pff pff pff" spewing maggot eggs, were all now attracted by the shouting, looking on helplessly as a brightly shining sword elixir flew towards them.

They also watched the swaying, clumsy sword cultivator who followed behind.

Tao Qian's demeanor, his choice of words.

On the surface, it appeared flawless, and the intricate precision of the Secret Demon Transformation Technique was not something a mere Jiao Demon could see through.

Yet this Jiao Demon was not of the foolish sort, acting with careful deliberation in its style.

This unexpectedly presented treasure was hardly enough to deceive it.

Until the next moment, in front of everyone, the flying sword cultivator's face suddenly changed, and he shouted, "What's going on, my source Qi is gone; the secret manual in the sword box of that cave didn't say this."

No sooner had his voice fallen than everyone's eyes widened in shock as they saw the sword cultivator's flying movement abruptly halt, and while shouting for help, fell straight down, and in a short while, with a "thud," there was the addition of a corpse with broken tendons and fractured bones on the ground.

A moment!

Two moments!

Whether villagers or the Jiao Demon, all were stunned for an instant.

Clearly, no one could have imagined such an accident unfolding.

The villagers who had foolishly hoped for an "Immortal savior" were now dumbfounded, some even couldn't help thinking at the bottom of their hearts: Are the Immortals cultivating so stupid, and that's why Southern Yue has fallen to such a state?

Fortunately, the Jiao Demon who had decided to become the "King of Wending" naturally had a few sycophants among his troops.

One of them, with glossy black fur and a human face, the Rat Demon, had the quickest response and stood out, his high-pitched voice ringing out in rapid-fire:

"Congratulations to the Great King, best wishes to the Great King."

"Look at that fool, barely entering the Energy-Introducing Realm, showing a youthful face, yet showed no panic or fear towards us, must be a fledgling who luckily obtained a sword cultivator's inheritance, yet knows none of the basic knowledge of the cultivation world, rushing into Energy Introduction and then rushing into treasure refining, recklessly running the Flying Technique without even properly estimating his own source Qi, truly not wronged by his death."

"What's more, the death of this fool is perfect, it's a stroke of luck and opportunity for the Great King. Quickly take that treasure, I will immediately go and search the fool's corpse, and bring the Sword Scripture Secret Manual to the Great King."

This distinctly human-mutated Rat Demon presented his argument with clear logic, quickly convincing the Jiao Demon.

However, the latter did not take the Rat Demon's last suggestion but merely chuckled, and with a strong lash of its tail, intercepted the sword elixir and engulfed it, using its own defenses to neutralize the sharpness of the sword elixir while its huge body rapidly moved in front of the corpse, its seductive and slender eyes fixated on the thoroughly dead Daoist and the continuously flowing blood.

With a slight thought, amid the buzzing sound, dozens of fist-sized fly creatures flew over, turning over Tao Qian's body and searching for a while, soon seeing three fly creatures jointly carrying a book emitting a sharp aura flying over.

Seeing this, the Jiao Demon nodded in satisfaction, and the last thread of doubt in its eyes vanished.

Then its mouth split open again, drooling as it picked up Tao Qian, evidently wanting to indulge in the flesh of the Daoist who had entered the Energy-Introducing Realm.

However, just as it was about to make a swallowing motion, another jaw-dropping incident occurred.

That "corpse," which originally appeared thoroughly dead, at this very moment, suddenly opened its eyes, blinked at the Jiao Demon up close, and the blood-smudged face revealed an extremely brilliant and darkly cunning smile.

Boom!

The Jiao Demon's mind was struck hard, attempting to do something.

Unfortunately, it was too late.

The moment Tao Qian opened his eyes, the long-prepared "Nine True Spirit Sound" had already been released.

And it was a full-force release.

Thus, the whole mountain heard the immense Daoist True Sound in an instant.

Ordinary mortals among the villagers could still bear it, but those evil cultivators present were instantly petrified on the spot, and the numerous fly creatures fell down like rain.

The Jiao Demon took the hardest hit, its body and divine soul both experiencing about a breath's worth of freeze.

At any other time, even in the midst of battle, with its strength, it would still have a chance of survival.

But unfortunately, this was too close.

Not even half a breath was of any use.

From within that seemingly subdued sword elixir, suddenly sprang forth a full "ninety strands of Spirit Treasure Immortal Spirit Qi," and in an instant, they exploded, driving the sword elixir.

Boom!

Visible to the naked eye, an extremely terrifying, robust sword light burst forth, as if it could pierce through heavens and earth.

Under this sword light, the Jiao Demon's much-prided shell was as fragile as paper mache, and those nearby evil cultivators and undying demon soldiers were caught in the aftermath, not even managing a cry of agony before they were thoroughly annihilated.

Even the Jiao Demon could only let out a greatly unwilling roar before its demise.

It couldn't comprehend until its death, if you Daoist had such divine skills, why would you need to employ such a shameless, deceitful tactic?

A fair fight might not necessarily fail to slay him, right?

You righteous cultivators, especially those who refine swords, don't you always favor head-on confrontations?

Unfortunately, Tao Qian had no time to answer his questions.

Only after the sword light's rampage ended did Tao Qian stand amidst a mass of corpse pieces, murmuring with a face full of regret, "The Jiao Demon He Ying, who had just entered the Foundation Establishment Realm and mutated from a Human Cultivator into a demon, was skillful at flattering and won the favor of the 'Naked Saintess' to be bestowed Wending County. He was meticulous by nature but somewhat greedy... Directly killing him would be too difficult, yet getting close and using up most of my Spirit Treasure Immortal Spirit Qi to launch a sword light sneak attack greatly increased the success rate."

"It's just that this 'Selfless Sword' really isn't sentimental, not even leaving a whole corpse, unnecessarily complicating my search for the spoils of war."

While grumbling, Tao Qian reached out with his perception and then extended his hand. To his surprise, the sword elixir that had caused the destructive scene flew back to him, directly sticking to a black and red patch amidst the scattered flesh on the ground, appearing like a piece of Jiao Scale made of glaze.

As soon as he received it, he knew that this acquired scale was actually the storage treasure of the Jiao Demon, its interior space not too large, messily filled with many items, including the exotic realm magic artifact resembling a cannon.

Now was not the time to tidy up the spoils of war, so Tao Qian immediately put away the Jiao Scale.

Just as he lifted his head to do something else, he suddenly saw a vast crowd of thousands, nearly ten thousand civilians, all kneeling before him—the "Immortal" standing amidst the corporeal debris—thanking him.

Despite witnessing everything with their own eyes, they couldn't help but think that this seemingly ordinary Immortal was indeed quite cunning.

But cunning is good, a cunning Immortal is a good Immortal...

Tao Qian naturally could not know the thoughts of the civilians. He let the crowd stand up, then suddenly flew towards the end of the squad, where a heroic-looking young man who was called "Zhang Zhenwu" led a group of soldiers, hesitantly holding their fire guns, considering whether to take the opportunity to finish off the several dozens of Evil Cultivator magicians who were still alive yet frozen.

Seeing Tao Qian fly over, they all prepared to salute him.

However, time was of the essence and Tao Qian had no time for small talk. His Puppet Body rapidly gathered insight into the situation within Southern Yue.

Iron Buddha Mountain was fairly isolated, so the Puppet Body couldn't capture the newly arrived demons to interrogate them one by one, inevitably missing a lot of details.

But right now, the opportunity was perfect.

Tao Qian looked at Zhang Zhenwu and his group, getting straight to the point by asking, "I've been in seclusion for many days, and have not participated in worldly affairs. I hadn't expected the demons to have become so rampant. Tell me, what's the current situation in Southern Yue now?"

At Tao Qian's question, everyone felt an overwhelming sadness, and without regard for the presence of an apparent cultivation expert, they chaotically described their perspectives on the present state of Southern Yue.

Tao Qian quietly listened, silently comparing their words with the information obtained by his Puppet Body and quickly drew a new conclusion:

"The situation in Southern Yue is very bad, indeed, with nearly more than half of the markets and counties suffering from invasions by demons and Evil Cultivators, and numerous ones have already

fallen. However, in certain territories with Major Sects and in the provincial capital region, order still exists, although those areas are also constantly harassed by invading demons."

"Due to these circumstances, in the last half-month, the same voice has emerged from all over Southern Yue, stating that only Governor Ji Xianxian—who has defeated the Devil God Army, Taiping Army, and many other rebellions—can save Southern Yue Province now."

"The court should hand over all powers in Southern Yue, including military authority, to Governor Ji, allowing him to lead his hundreds of thousands of Demon Suppression Army to quell the uprisings."

"Up to this moment, no one in Southern Yue Province has a reputation to rival Ji Xianxian's; he has nearly become synonymous with the 'Savior Governor'."

"Millions of civilians in Southern Yue believe that once the imperial edict is issued, Governor Ji will surely be able to stabilize the chaos."

This thought crossed his mind, and Tao Qian suddenly turned to face the surviving group of demons and Evil Cultivators.

He laughed coldly and said, "You lot who were lucky enough to not die should consider yourselves fortunate. I just so happen to be in need of some information. In a moment, I will free your Divine Souls, and those among you who have the most and most truthful information will be allowed to live. Of course, if you wish to fight me, the choice is yours as well."

As soon as his words fell, Tao Qian indeed gave a low shout, undoing the effect of the Spirit Sound.

However, the sword elixir immediately hovered over their heads.

Originally, a few of the demons were eager to act, but as soon as they sensed the sharp Sword Intent and recalled the extremely tragic demise of their "Jiao Demon Lord," as well as the seemingly ordinary but crafty and shameless Sword Cultivator's terrifying methods before them, they all quickly became as docile as quails.

Among them, the smarter and more cunning Evil Cultivators immediately began to speak up, seeking that slim chance of survival.

"True Master, you may ask me whatever you want; I am a Loose Cultivator by origin. Before being recruited by the Jiao Demon, I would always wander around Southern Yue, so this is where I am most knowledgeable."

"Bah! True Master, don't believe him. I know the most; I am a Cultivator from the provincial capital who had to join the demon forces due to mutation. My heart has always leaned towards the Human Clan."

"True Master, look at me! My big sister's brother-in-law's nephew is a high-ranking member of the 'Abnormal Catcher' in the Devil God Army. I am privy to the inside scoop here."

"With such a distant relationship, who would believe you? True Master, you should look at me. I was once a member of the Devil God Army; it's only because I offended the officials that I became a deserter. If true Master wants to know the internals of the Devil God Army, you should ask me."

Listening to this chaotic cacophony, Tao Qian couldn't help but reveal a hint of a smile.

The Sword Intent radiating from the sword elixir became more and more terrifying as Tao Qian said:

"Don't rush; we'll take it one at a time. I'll first choose one to interrogate, and in the meantime, the rest of you will suffer another bout of the Spirit Sound. This way, I can ensure that all of you speak the truth."

"Let's start with you. You're from the capital, right? Do you know the current situation there?"

The one Tao Qian chose was the Rat-man with a sleek, oily hide.

It was unclear what technique he cultivated to transform into such a state, even his nature seemed to have changed significantly.

The most obviously revealed trait was his "admiration for the strong."

Filled with elation at being chosen, before even waiting for Tao Qian to ask, he started off with a round of pleasant flattery.

But thinking back, he had acted similarly towards the Jiao Demon not long before.

Tao Qian quickly used the Spirit Sound to freeze the rest of the demons, then began his questioning.

And regardless of the questions Tao Qian posed, the Rat-man was sincerely terrified, providing exhaustive answers.

But within the exchange, Tao Qian's brow grew increasingly furrowed.

Chapter 102 Standard Devil God Token, Two Little Zombies

On the imperial road, an interrogation was underway.

Tao Qian pondered before asking, "Now that Southern Yue is in chaos, with Demon and Evil Cultivators rampaging everywhere, what are those Righteous Great Sects doing?"

The Mouse-man replied with lowered eyes and trepidation, "True Master, I am not aware of the other sects as I came from the provincial city, and only know that the Ten Thousand Infant Sect has sent out many Great Cultivators. Under the lead of the Third Prince, they have arrived in the provincial city. They seem intent on helping Governor Ji fight the Devil God Army. Being the strongest sect within Southern Yue, such actions might indicate that they have reached some sort of agreement with Governor Ji."

Tao Qian furrowed his brow and quickly asked two more questions, "Where are all these demons in Southern Yue coming from? And why are they willing to heed the call of the Devil God Army?"

This time, the one who answered was a defiant she-wolf Demon that had just been thawed, oozing evil Qi and in a human form. Although her life was in Tao Qian's hands, she could not contain her nature, sneering as she replied:

"Don't you humans love to say that not even three feet of ice forms in a single day? The Ancestor God Forbidden Technique and Longevity Barrier had kept the Demon and Evil Cultivators hidden, but now that they have no concerns, they all show themselves, and that scares you?"

"Of course, most of them still come from the surrounding great provinces of Southern Yue. After all, Tang the Divine General of the Devil God's Army is the most likely to accomplish something significant these days. Don't you humans also love to attach yourselves to the government and sects?"

"Having received rewards from Tang the Divine General, we Devils acknowledge him as our king. We simply wait for him to utterly dominate Southern Yue and establish the Earth Devil Country. Naturally, our status will then rise as the tide lifts all boats, so we no longer have to struggle for Cultivation Resources. Our food is everywhere; not only do I have plenty to eat, my children do as well."

...

Soon after, Tao Qian concluded the interrogation.

The information from the minds of these dozens of Demons and Evil Cultivators had all been extracted.

The details of the situation were slightly better than expected.

However, for ordinary people, the current situation in Southern Yue was indistinguishable from a Human World Purgatory.

Tao Qian frowned in thought for a moment, then he suddenly took out the peculiar Exotic Realm Magic Artifact from the Jiao Scale.

He now knew that the local militia leader, who called himself "Zhang Zhenwu," although a resident of Wending County, had actually just returned from studying in the Western Countries and had also joined a secret society called the Western Study Society. The organization's primary advocacy was to introduce Western Extraordinary Power into Tian Chao to save and rejuvenate the nation.

The Magic Artifact called No.1 Red Sun was one of the outcomes of the Western Study Society.

Judging from its Power, it was indeed extraordinary, especially since even ordinary people could use it. If it could be popularized, it would pose a significant threat to almost all Cultivators in the Cultivation World, whether they be Daoist, Buddha, or Demon.

However, for Tao Qian, it was of little use.

After handing the Magic Artifact back to Zhang Zhenwu, Tao Qian instructed:

"Based on the confessions of this group of Demons, most nearby towns have already fallen. Only Shanli County remains unharmed for the moment due to the protection of a Great Cultivator. You can lead the civilians there."

"As long as you eliminate all the living captives, the Demons of Iron Buddha Mountain will not react until tomorrow at the earliest. They should not be able to catch you."

As he uttered the last sentence, Tao Qian winked at him, gesturing to the contemptible demons that were again frozen beside them.

Afterward, Tao Qian no longer dawdled.

He released the prohibitions binding the demons, then his Evasion Light flashed, and he disappeared without a trace.

Strangely, after Tao Qian had lifted the prohibitions and left,

The expected commotion—whether it was the demons fleeing in disorder or the civilians screaming in terror as they ran—

None of it happened.

Instead, the dozens of Demons and the mortal soldiers led by Zhang Zhenwu all stood their ground, revealing smiles full of killing intent towards each other.

Just as the Demons and Evil Cultivators were about to act, Zhang Zhenwu and a few others at the forefront revealed sneers of mockery. They suddenly leaped to the side, exposing the terrifyingly glowing red cannon behind them.

At the next moment, amidst a deafening boom, the demons wailed in terror.

On another mountain, Tao Qian, who had returned to his original appearance and regrouped with Little Age and Lian Jing'er,

Was counting the spoils of this battle, specifically, the treasures within the "Jiao Scale,"

While also pondering the very detailed information he had obtained by prying into the mouths of the dozens of Demons and Evil Cultivators.

"What on earth happened? If Master Xiao had reported the plans of Qin Wuxiang, Ji Xianxian, and Tang Xianzong, the Ten Thousand Infant Sect would not have possibly reacted this way."

"Sending the Third Prince to lead a group of Infant Sect Elders to fight the Devil God Army—isn't this just delivering Southern Yue into Ji Xianxian's hands completely?"

"Master Xiao must have met with trouble,"

A thought in Tao Qian's heart was exceedingly certain.

Then he let out a bitter smile.

What could he do even if he guessed that Master Xiao had encountered trouble? If even a Great Cultivator of that level could be compromised by getting involved, what could he, Tao Qian, a mere Qi Refining Realm Cultivator, possibly do with such frail arms and legs?

"Better to quickly take the two little ones and flee this place. It's still feasible to leave the Puppet Body within the Demon Cave to act accordingly."

"Also, it seems necessary to replan the escape route. If I follow the old route, I will inevitably crash into the Ten Thousand Demon Blood Mosquito Formation and Gathering Evil Bone Demonic Array set up by the two Great Demons from the neighboring province. By then, the Small Innate Nascent Soul Escape Technique won't be able to save my life, and death will be certain."

"Right, I'll also need to find a way to disguise Little Age and Lian Jing'er. Lian Jing'er is fine, but Little Age is too tempting – anyone who sees her would want to take a bite."

"Wow, delicious!"

"Detecting consumable alien remains... identified as the bones left after the death of a creature known as 'Jiao', capable of absorption."

Tao Qian was pondering when suddenly, two exclamations came one after the other.

Looking over, Tao Qian saw Little Age's chubby face brimming with the kind of joyous smile unique to food lovers. In his hands, he held a jade box larger than his body, filled with a black-red semi-solid substance resembling marrow.

And Lian Jing'er was even more exaggerated, holding a ten-meter-long mottled spine with his bronze arm, his gem eyes twinkling with red light.

Tao Qian reached out with both hands to sense, and quickly understood that the true foundation of the Jiao Demon, He Ying, was due to a serendipitous encounter with the cast-off skin of a young Devil Flood Dragon in his youth. He cultivated sorcery with a human body, which explained why he ultimately turned into an aberration, neither human nor devil.

As for these two items, they were precisely the marrow and spine of the Devil Flood Dragon.

No sooner had he sensed this, than Tao Qian's gaze met two pairs of eyes filled with longing.

Both Little Age and Lian Jing'er seemed to have a strong desire to devour these two items. However, both of the little things restrained themselves, merely tilting their heads upward and blinking at Tao Qian.

After a few seconds of eye contact, Tao Qian couldn't bear it any longer.

"Eat, eat, it's all for growing up."

The two little ones had been waiting for Tao Qian's permission. The moment they got it, they immediately sprang into action.

Little Age had the most satisfying way of eating, his chubby face buried directly in the Jiao Marrow as he slurped it down.

Lian Jing'er's way of eating was a bit more bizarre. The two bronze arms shone with a ghostly light, and the spine, rich with the essence of evil qi, began to dim, turn brittle, and ultimately transformed into powder that fell in showers.

Seeing this scene, Tao Qian couldn't help recalling the "last words" left by Lin Xiaohua before her demise.

"The two little things are actually very easy to nourish. They're both very obedient and kind-hearted. They don't need cultivation or food normally. Only when they come across some rare treasures that they instinctively recognize as edible do they need to eat. There are no other alien species easier to care for in the Cultivation World."

Initially, Tao Qian believed this statement.

However, looking at it now, Tao Qian felt there was more to Lin Xiaohua's words. How could it be easy to provide care with a diet of Jiao marrow and bone?

"Hmm?"

As Tao Qian was simultaneously watching the two little ones eat and muttering to himself, he seemed to have stumbled upon a pleasant surprise and couldn't help the joy spreading across his face.

It wasn't some precious treasure or elixir and cultivation resource.

Instead, it was a blood-red token engraved with the ancient seal characters for "Heavenly Demon" on the front, and on the back was a blurry pattern that seemed to be composed of countless blood-red tadpoles, causing dizziness when looked at for too long.

The moment he touched it, Tao Qian's mind was instantly aware.

Although an alien item as well, this token had a different function and possessed no extraordinary power.

Devil God Token!

A formal token granted as a reward and owned only by those who were awarded it, a sort of internal identity proof. With this token, one could move freely in many areas controlled by demons within Southern Yue.

"Good, this rank of token is just right. If I received one from a high-level entity like the Naked Saintess or the giant troll baby demon, it wouldn't be good. Not only would it not be convenient to travel, but it would also likely lead to being targeted with casting."

"This standardized one, on the other hand, is worry-free."

"Still, if I need to use it, I must act according to the situation and avoid recklessness."

As these thoughts passed through his mind, Tao Qian saw the two little ones had finished eating and quickly gathered up everything.

He then rummaged in the "Mustard Seed Talisman Seed" for a moment, eventually pulling out two pieces of talisman paper known as "Illusion True Talisman" from Lin Xiaohua's legacy, and placed them on the heads of Little Age and Lian Jing'er.

With a flash of light, the talismans disappeared, and at the same time, the two little ones transformed into two "Little Zombies" wearing vestment robes with yellow talismans on their foreheads and round but eerily pale faces.

Seeing this, Tao Qian smiled in satisfaction and began to use the Secret Demon Transformation Technique.

His body swayed, transforming into a Corpse Chasing Daoist wearing a Daoist robe, ordinary-looking and plump, holding a Zombie Banner in one hand and a Soul Summoning Bell in the other.

The art of corpse chasing was the simplest to enter, requiring no talent or qualification, situated between righteousness and evil, belonging to heresy and heterodoxy. Therefore, among the lower echelons of the Cultivation World, the number of such cultivators was vast, especially in a large province next to Southern Yue where Corpse Chasing Daoists were everywhere.

They often drifted into Southern Yue territory, which was why Tao Qian chose such a disguise, as it would not attract any attention.

"As a Corpse Chasing Daoist leading two little zombies around, this is quite a reasonable thing to do."

Muttering this to himself, Tao Qian promptly took the two little things by hand.

After determining the direction, he immediately activated the Small Innate Nascent Soul Escape Technique.

At the speed of "One Thought Hundred Miles," they moved continuously towards the border region of Southern Yue.

Chapter 103 The Bizarre Fragrant Meat Collection, Tao Qian Suddenly Encounters the First Disaster

In the wilderness forests, along a narrow trail.

Suddenly, there appeared a delicate fragrance, unique to that of an infant's body, followed by a faint glimmer of light.

Tao Qian appeared, a Soul Summoning Banner and Soul Summoning Bell floating in front of him, leading on either side Little Age and Lian Jing'er, who were dressed as "Little Zombies."

After briefly determining his bearings and comparing them to the map of Southern Yue etched in his mind, Tao Qian couldn't help but frown slightly.

Despite traveling all day, he was still within the boundaries of Southern Yue.

It wasn't that the Small Innate Nascent Soul Escape Technique was lacking in strength, but rather the current situation in Southern Yue was complex, filled with Demon Arrays and traps laid by demons everywhere; some were set up to capture mortals, others were aimed directly at cultivators, the former were considered blood food, the latter akin to resources.

Tao Qian himself possessed formidable combat potential, but it would not be wise to become entrenched in a demon ambush, so he had to resort to using the Escape Skill amongst the narrow margins, hence the slow progress was to be expected.

Even so, his speed of travel was far beyond that of an ordinary person.

"With another day or two, I should be able to leave this Purgatory of the human world behind," Tao Qian thought to himself, deciding to take Little Age and Lian Jing'er to find a secluded area to rest and recuperate.

The Source Qi used for travel had been stored in an Exotic Treasure given by Master Xiao during his time in Peach Blossom Spring, and it didn't consume a single breath of Tao Qian's own Spirit Treasure Immortal Spirit Qi.

But frequent use of the Escape Skill, whether for Tao Qian himself or for the two youngsters, had left them all feeling fatigued.

Just as Tao Qian was about to use his Divine Thought to search for a place to rest,

suddenly, he sensed two faint pulsations not far away, followed by the occasional striking of a copper gong and a bangzi, as well as a duet of voices taking turns singing.

Their lyrics, however, instantly made Tao Qian feel a sense of discomfort.

Deep within the forest's secret path, two Pig Demons, wearing only a strip of human skin around their waists and with fat cheeks and bodies covered in bristles, each carried a copper gong and wielded a hardwood bangzi.

They walked while banging and striking in rhythm,

and the Pig Demon holding the bangzi sang a Strange Mantra with an absurd tune.

The words were outlandish tales of cruelty that actually contained Buddhist teachings,

meant to be recited by a high monk of the Buddhist Sect, yet now they oddly came from the mouth of a Pig Demon.

The other, ignorant in scholarly arts, praised,

"Great poetry, great poetry!"

"Pig Demon Third, I heard you were a down-and-out scholar before you turned into a demon. You really have talent!"

"Ha ha ha, too kind, too kind."

"Who's there?"

The two self-praising Pig Demons abruptly turned towards the dense woods, their tusks gleaming with a ghostly light under the moon, their foul saliva sprayed by their snouts, both pairs of pig eyes glowing a faint green as they stared intently at the three figures emerging from that area.

Those three were indeed a Corpse Chasing Daoist and two seemingly adorable Little Zombies.

Seeing that they weren't "fresh humans," both Pig Demons simultaneously showed a look of disappointment, clearly annoyed that their night-time snack had escaped.

However, it seemed they thought of something else, as they both eagerly turned their gaze towards Tao Qian.

The Pig Demon that was just on good terms with, seeming as if they would share a waist strap, were now jostling each other, their greasy pig faces beaming with smiles as they approached together.

Even at a distance, the foul stench of their breath wafted over while they spoke.

"Yo yo, what a dark and windy night. I didn't expect to run into a Daoist friend," one said.

"We are all cultivators of life, surely, Daoist friend, you won't discriminate against our non-human forms, right? If you don't discriminate, that would be wonderful. You seem travel-worn, so you must have come a long way. If you don't mind, why not follow us to Fragrant Meat Collection and rest a while?" the other offered.

"Indeed, indeed, our Fragrant Meat Collection is very hospitable, located at the crux of the road downhill. We welcome visitors from all around with the world's most fragrant meat and the most joyful feasts."

"Daoist friend must be tired from a day's travel. Just right, enter the market to drink some beverages, eat some fragrant meat, then head on over to Soul-destroying Shop to lie down, embracing devils and ghosts for a night of joyful pleasure. Ah, truly an immortal's delight, and not expensive at all, much

cheaper than those Joyful Pavilion Market shops. And our Fragrant Meat Collection, well, we take all sorts, but the best is meat for meat."

"These days, our Fragrant Meat Collection has hosted countless Human Clan Daoists. Our reputation has long surpassed that of Joyful Pavilion Market."

While the two Pig Demons were giving a practiced sales pitch, Tao Qian clearly saw them making small gestures with their hands behind their backs.

Clearly, if Tao Qian refused to go to the market or showed any sign of aggression,

it would indicate a Righteous cultivator with malicious intent towards demons, and the two Pig Demons would have to call for reinforcements.

A few thoughts whirled in Tao Qian's mind, and he suddenly made a decision. A lewd smile appeared on his deliberately fattened face, and then he nodded and said,

"That sounds good. Indeed, I am weary from a day's journey and it is time to rest. Please, lead the way, fellow Daoists."

With those words out, the two Pig Demons, knowing they had successfully snagged a customer and that a commission was on its way, responded with joy.

In order to secure a higher commission, the two Pig Demons were eloquent as lotuses, eagerly pitching their wares.

"Here you go, come with us, folks."

"Daoist, do you have any preferences for the parts? Are you interested in a hearty heart, a fresh liver, or warm bone marrow? Whatever it is, I recommend you to my friend Zhu Wanquan's meat shop for the fairest prices."

"Wanquan Meat Shop is indeed good. Daoist should try it out. After all, Zhu Wanquan came down from the Iron Buddha Mountain and is rumored to have roasted meat for Bodhisattvas. His culinary skills are unparalleled."

"After tasting the fragrant meat, I recommend that Daoist to visit the Soul-destroying Shop run by the Snake Demon Bai Jingjing for an enjoyably unique experience. The shops offering foxy charm may be more popular, but for sheer pleasure, Sister Bai Jingjing's techniques are supreme. Once she's entwined around you, the tight, slippery sensation is unforgettable."

...

Tao Qian half-heartedly responded as these words reached his ears.

Along the way, they encountered other patrolling Pig Demons; most had not found customers, while a few who had clung to their high-end catches, afraid that other Pig Demons might snatch them away.

These so-called "customers" were mostly passing Demon and a lesser number were like Tao Qian, showing signs of heresy and heterodoxy or even being an outright Evil Cultivator.

A group of Demon Evil Cultivators quickly descended the mountain.

As they passed through a dense forest, Tao Qian suddenly felt the darkness recede and a flood of light rush towards him.

Before him was an utterly flat wasteland, but astonishingly, there was a bustling and exceedingly long market.

Cramped small booths or makeshift shops huddled together, thousands of lanterns hanging at all heights. From above, it would appear as though a bloated fire dragon had appeared on the Earth's surface.

As they approached, Tao Qian and everyone in the group smelled an incredibly potent alien fragrance.

It smelled like the feasts in the Mortal World, but with entirely different types and intensities of aroma.

Tao Qian was led into the market by the two Pig Demons and looked around.

On the right, a black-maned Pig Demon was holding a shining Bone-cutting Knife, skillfully butchering a fresh corpse on a chopping board like a chef carving an ox, with various parts being placed neatly in front as the blade fell rapidly.

On the left was a smoked and barbecued meat shop with a scavenged iron stove full of hanging meat pieces or entire corpses. Underneath it, pine firewood burned fiercely, and the smoke mingled with the meat's fragrance wafted out together.

Tao Qian struggled to suppress his thoughts and looked down slightly, only to inadvertently notice the ground.

Unidentifiable flesh mingled with skin and bones, mixed with blood, had become a layer of vile-smelling sludge. Vicious maggots writhed within, while red-eyed flies swarmed over it like clouds. Bones piled up in the ditches along the sides, occasionally blocking the blood streams trying to wash over them, and intestines occasionally floated past on the water's surface...

At that moment, Tao Qian seemed to lose all sensation.

He simply followed the two Pig Demons and was led to the so-called "Wanquan Meat Shop," the true Wanquan's establishment.

Inside the large tent, there was both raw and cooked meat, their combined aromas nearly piercing the heavens.

With about a dozen helpers inside the tent, including Pig Demons and Dog Demons, a bristle-haired Pig Demon came up to greet the new customer, handing Tao Qian a "menu" made from two-legged sheepskin.

Before Tao Qian could discern the items listed, the helper began to proudly introduce the bestsellers:

"Daoist has chosen wisely by coming to Wanquan Meat Shop—our Fragrant Meat Collection is second to none when it comes to selling meat, no one dares to claim the first place."

"Our boss has recently grilled meat for the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva on Iron Buddha Mountain and poured wine for the Naked Saintess. The great giant troll baby demon has even gifted our boss a Bone-removing Magical Artifact Knife, so powerful and heaven-piercing it is."

"Look at these customers, they're all regulars who keep coming back."

"Well then, Daoist, would you like me, Zhu Tiedan, to recommend you some of our signature dishes?"

Following the Pig Demon's guidance,

Tao Qian looked inside the shop, where rows of tables were neatly arranged, almost all filled. Half were occupied by Demons, the other half by Cultivators coming from unknown places. Aside from the obviously mutated and Fallen Demons, there were also various Side Door practitioners like "fortune-telling masters," "Fengshui Mages," and "Ghost Refining Daoists."

Those seated at the tables were feasting ravenously, eating with abandon and dripping with grease.

Their eyes emitted a green glow, devoid of any trace of humanity—just raw, primal, fervent desires remained.

Seeing Tao Qian taken aback by this scene, the Pig Demon guessed that the Corpse Chasing Daoist might be experiencing this for the first time.

He gave a sinister smile, moved closer, and then said:

"Daoist need not be too troubled. This is how the world is nowadays. Smell this soul-capturing fragrance; don't tell me you haven't felt an appetite."

"Inside the word 'meat,' there are 'two people,' with one wrapped around another. All living beings are eating the flesh of others."

"You should give this some careful thought—isn't this the way it is?"

Hearing these words, Tao Qian's Divine Soul trembled violently.

An inescapably firm thought emerged in his mind.

"Catastrophe has arrived!"

"My first calamity is surely here in this place."

Chapter 104 The Cannibal Scripture contains the Great Dao, Sword Out No Self Slays the Group of Demons

This journey to the Spirit Treasure would surely bring disaster.

Tao Qian had imagined the kinds of disasters he might encounter, but none included the scene before him now.

The images before him were not threatening his life, but were interrogating his soul.

At this moment, as Tao Qian watched these scenes, watched beings like him from the Human Clan being dismembered, roasted, and fed to the demons and others, especially the latter, the scenes of cannibalism suddenly stirred the Immortal Spirit Qi within him.

In a trance, Tao Qian saw a "future."

If he were willing to heed the advice of the Pig Demon, to merge into it, he could instantly achieve an unimaginable promotion in both his Cultivation Realm and his Divine Power Skills, leaping from a Qi Refining Realm cultivator to a Foundation Establishment Realm or even a more powerful Great Demon, roaming the world at will.

The cost?

No, there was no cost, just a mere integration into this way of the world.

Beneath his Daoist robe, changes had already begun to manifest; fine flesh buds emerged, emitting a strange fishy meat scent, and a faint green light started to appear in his eyes...

The Pig Demon, seemingly very familiar with this scene, mysteriously smiled, pulled Tao Qian to sit down, and said with a stinking breath,

"Those few verses of Buddha's verse were specially obtained by our Fragrant Meat Collection's own Mr. Zhu Wuxin from the Bodhisattva. Many Daoists just can't let go of their obsessions, hence the discrimination between this meat and that meat. Meat is just meat; its fragrance and appetite don't lie. Many Daoists have gained a lot after hearing these few lines."

"Daoist, since you're new here, I suggest you stay a few more days at our Fragrant Meat Collection, thoroughly enjoy yourself, and then truly understand what the Dao that you cultivate really is?"

"Look up there, our Mr. Zhu Wuxin was once a human seeking immortality too. He happened to acquire a 'Cannibal Scripture' and truly understood the Great Dao. Now his cultivation has reached the Foundation Establishment Realm, and even in the main hall on Iron Buddha Mountain, he has a place."

"Our master enjoys arena battles, especially those that involve wild demons and those conflicted Human Clan cultivators fighting each other."

"Daoist, look over there. The disobedient cultivators all end up just like that."

While speaking, the obviously malevolent Pig Demon gestured to Tao Qian.

Not far away stood a tall platform.

On it sat a monstrous Devil Pig with overwhelming demonic energy. Its retained human features, or rather the traces of humanity left in him, belonged to a fat man clad in armor, his coarse yellow mane framing a huge and ugly head with rotten teeth showing and a ghastly pale complexion.

A pair of blood-red eyes could shatter the courage of anyone who met his gaze.

Many Fox Demons and Snake Demons surrounded him, leaning on him, feeding him or fanning him, busy as bees.

Below the platform, there were clearly ten huge cages lined up.

Within every cage, a merciless slaughter was unfolding.

Men and women, old and young, of the Human Clan, were all present, and their opponents were demons of various bizarre shapes.

When Tao Qian looked over, all the Human Clan cultivators in the cages had been defeated and even killed; Tao Qian did not even have time to clearly see the true appearances of those ten cultivators.

What was happening in the cages was not a fight but a unilateral massacre.

As soon as the ten Human Clan cultivators died, the surrounding demons, those Evil Cultivators who had tasted human flesh, all cheered and howled in unison.

Especially when they watched the demons inside the cages start to gnaw on the corpses, their excitement escalated to madness.

Among them were three female cultivators, who, even in death, could not find peace.

The beasts around the cages began urging the frenzied demons on, even throwing aphrodisiacs into the cages, their faces crazed as they shouted, "Quick, get on with it... come on, perform for me... hahaha."

While Tao Qian was watching this, the face of the Pig Demon, grinning grotesquely, came closer again.

He was incredibly eager, hoping that this "Corpse Chasing Daoist" who had mutated into a follower of heresy and heterodoxy would easily fall under this maniacal atmosphere.

If the Daoist resisted, that did not matter.

He just needed to shout loudly, and soon the Daoist would be thrown into the cage, and he could also get a bonus for it.

To make it more exciting, the Pig Demon stuffed a human skin menu into Tao Qian's hands and then boasted proudly:

"Daoist can watch while eating. This Fragrant Meat Collection is performed daily. Oh, if Daoist finds it hard to choose, just go for our meat shop's signature dish."

"You look travel-worn, Daoist; you must start with a pot of child wine. This is a treasure wine brewed from the blood of hundreds of children with added many precious herbs. Just a sip, and you'll be reminiscing for days."

"They say child wine soothes the throat, and the beauty's flesh fills the stomach. Another signature dish of our shop, freshly sliced beauty meat. Although the method is primitive and simple, it wins in the freshness of the ingredients. A pure, raw cut, Daoist should try it; the taste is indescribable. However, this raw dish will take another half an hour. The fresh humans in the collection have just run out, and the Meat Transport Official is hurrying in more. They say good food is worth waiting for. Daoist can order first, then wait a bit."

"In the meantime, Daoist can start with the most popular dish from our shop, 'Buddha Jumps Wall'. The preparation is exceptionally complex; just the ingredients require dozens of the tastiest parts like human heart, marrow, brain, tongue... and so on. They are put into a porcelain jar and stewed for a full seven or eight hours. In the end, a drop of a Human Clan cultivator's heart blood is added. Wow, the aroma, even Buddha's son would jump over the wall to have a bowl."

"Our boss, ah, initially won great praise from the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva with this dish..."

He was about to continue, suddenly realizing that the Daoist had fallen inexplicably silent.

And then, he saw Tao Qian suddenly rise up, not even giving him a glance, directly heading towards the high platform.

With every step he took, terrifying transformations visibly occurred on his body: The skin exposed outside was not only densely covered in small buds but also continuously bulged with lumps. These lumps surfaced with twisted faces that continuously changed expressions. His originally clear eyes also began to exhibit a bloody ferocity, and anyone could sense the devilish aura soaring into the sky from him.

Thus, as Tao Qian passed by, all the demons and Evil Cultivators laughed loudly and cleared the way.

As he approached the platform and was stopped by the guards, Tao Qian took out the "Devil God Token" and threw it over.

Soon, Tao Qian was able to step onto the platform, which offered a panoramic view of the bustling scenes within the Fragrant Meat Collection and the cruel, disgusting spectacle within the cage.

Upon setting foot on the platform, he saw the mutated Pig Demon of the Foundation Establishment Realm sitting on a giant chair, who burst into laughter and said,

"This brother carries the Devil God Token and comes from Iron Buddha Mountain, is there any message from the mountain for me?"

"No hurry, no hurry, let's enjoy ourselves first."

Tao Qian, now exuding the aura of a demon and claiming to be from Iron Buddha Temple while holding the Devil God Token, naturally didn't arouse any suspicion in 'Zhu Wuxin,' a demon also from Iron Buddha Mountain.

As Tao Qian approached step by step, only a few steps remained between them.

But Zhu Wuxin realized that this fallen Daoist, though staring directly at him, was actually looking beyond him at the brightly lit, extremely bustling Fragrant Meat Collection spanning several miles.

He thought the Daoist must be envious and was about to boast about it.

But in the next moment, he suddenly heard the Daoist, as if speaking to him yet seemingly talking to himself,

"Ever since I entered the Dao, I've meddled in affairs too large, often feeling restrained and without freedom."

"This Fragrant Meat Collection holds a concept that's indeed right. One needs to open one's mind; if there are desires, they need to be vented out."

"So, I ask all of you to deal with this heart full of murderous desire of mine now."

"Boom."

As Tao Qian uttered the last phrase and suddenly lifted his head, releasing all the killing intent within him.

The "Nine True Spirit Sound", which had been brewing for a long time, also erupted at that moment.

It was not only Zhu Wuxin, the Foundation Establishment Realm Pig Demon in front of him, but the entire Fragrant Meat Collection heard that majestic and vast Daoist Spirit Sound.

In an instant, numerous bodies and Divine Souls froze.

Then, with a thunderous roar, a sword light swept out, as if it could pierce mountains, instantly turning the platform into dust. A huge hairy pig demon, the size of a hill, let out a heart-wrenching scream, its body, overflowing with demonic Qi, was impaled midair by the sword light.

From its mouth, piercing through its devil body.

Even with its Foundation Establishment Cultivation, it was severely wounded in an instant.

Half of its body was directly sliced off by the unrivaled "Selfless Sword Intent," and with two loud crashes, two mountain-like chunks of pork fell into the market, along with giant millstone-like pig entrails and an extremely foul-smelling large intestine gushing out.

This sight was tremendously shocking; the agonizing screams of the pigs even managed to awaken many of the demons and Evil Cultivators frozen by the Spirit Sound.

They woke up with their eyes bulging, hearts shattered, looking unbelievably at the terrifying human figure that had appeared above the entire Fragrant Meat Collection.

Though the Pig Demon "Zhu Wuxin" was still howling in agony, his combat strength was clearly stronger than the previously defeated "Jiao Demon" and his skin much tougher.

Suffering such heavy injuries, he sprouted large quantities of "pork tapeworms" from within his body, acting like stitches, attempting to sew the body halves back together.

This magic skill learned from the Naked Saintess, though extremely painful to apply, had Zhu Wuxin howling heartbreakingly. Despite this, he was still glaring at Tao Qian with bloodshot eyes.

However, Tao Qian merely glanced at him casually, the murderous intent in his eyes not diminished by the severe wounding of the prime evil.

Hovering in the air, he looked down at the brightly lit, bustling meat market below, watching demons and numerous Human Clan Cultivators eating people scatter and flee.

They were not dumb, knowing they had to split and run.

It was a pity, though, all futile.

Now, Tao Qian had completely unleashed himself, breaking free from his shackles.

With a sudden snicker, he produced a stack of dark blue talisman paper in his hand.

Throwing it around the market, the Spirit Treasure Immortal Spirit Qi immediately triggered it.

Accompanied by the eruption of one hundred and eight Xuan Yin Invisible Sword Intents, a vast Sword Array instantly formed, enveloping the entire "Fragrant Meat Collection."

All the demons and Evil Cultivators within the market were trapped in the formation.

"Whether they're Humans or demons, since they've eaten the meat and drank the wine, let's all go to Huangquan together."

"This first calamity, I, Tao Qian, willingly accept, hahaha..."

"Boom!"

Amid the loud noise, as Tao Qian completely vented his killing intent, he suddenly merged with the Hundred Refinement Sword Pill, quickly channeling all remaining Spirit Treasure Immortal Spirit Qi within him.

A previously unseen, gigantic column of sword light that seemed to be able to pierce the ground burst forth from the sky. Along with it, the endless Xuan Yin Invisible Sword Qi within the sword array also erupted.

The Fragrant Meat Collection?

No, at this moment, it was merely a meat grinding execution ground.

Chapter 105 Fragrant Meat Tragedy, Shockwave Spreads to Southern Yue

"Ah, spare us."

"Quick, scatter and flee! That devil can't clone himself; he can't kill us all."

"Run towards the Iron Buddha Temple! Has this Human Clan Cultivator gone mad? How dare he slaughter us?"

"He's doomed. Even if he's a cultivator from the Ten Thousand Infant Sect, he's bound to die."

"Such sword techniques, he must be one of those destitute Sword Cultivators from the Taisu Sword Sect. Wait until we report to the Devil God Army, one day we will flatten their mountain gate."

"Boom! Hiss, hiss, hiss!"

The Selfless Sword Light, along with the endless Xuan Yin Invisible Sword Qi, drowned out all those noisy sounds completely.

Tao Qian, who was caught up in it, slowly opened his eyes at that moment.

What he saw was a scene more terrifying than a mountain of knives and the depths of hell:

Whether it was the sword light fueled by Immortal Spirit Qi or the invisible sword Qi, both were lethal existences for all the Demon Evil Cultivators present. Some of them, with strong origins, could withstand a few breaths, but for the lesser demons, like those Pig Demon butchers and their assistants,

didn't even have the time to wail, their stinking demonic bodies instantly sliced into fine, dense mince, dripping down bit by bit.

Just like in the "Wanquan Meat Shop," where that master chef named Zhu Wanquan and the assistant named Zhu Tiedan, who once tried to tempt Tao Qian into becoming a demon, the latter even holding a jar of fragrant "Buddha Jumps Wall," were subjected to the invisible sword light that surfaced thousands of bloodstains on their bodies, immediately dissecting them into hundreds of pieces, flesh or bone, crashing to the ground.

All the Demon Evil Cultivators here were undergoing a punishment more horrific than lingering death.

A sea of corpses and blood wasn't sufficient to describe the horror of the scene, as a sea of corpses implies the presence of whole bodies, but there were none here.

The only one who had a hope of preserving its whole body was that "Foundation Establishment Realm" Pig Demon.

Unfortunately, it was ravaged by the Selfless Sword Light.

No matter how much it resented or struggled, and no matter how hard those "pork tapeworms" tried to stitch them back together, it was all in vain; in an instant, its huge body capable of breaching city gates and crashing mountains also turned into mince.

Tao Qian watched this hell-like scene and listened to the wails of those man-eating demons and Evil Cultivators, feeling not a hint of pity in his heart but rather a sense of complete liberation from all constraints.

"The wine soaked in child's blood, the fresh cuts of beauty's flesh... Demons chaos the world, truly a grand momentum."

"You all kill, I also kill. If I let even one of you escape today, then I, Tao Qian, didn't kill thoroughly enough."

"Hahaha!"

With that said, Tao Qian laughed wildly and let out a long roar, his Sword Intent and sword light raging even more violently, seemingly venting all the injustices and frustrations he experienced along his path.

True enough, the sword light was like a net, leaving no gaps, turning demon flesh into mud.

A few breaths ago, this place was, for the Mortal Human Race, a stinking purgatory.

Now, the situation has turned; for these Demon Evil Cultivators, this place has become the true purgatory.

...

It's unknown how much time had passed, but the endless sword Qi finally ceased.

In Southern Yue territory, "Fragrant Meat Collection," which had a huge reputation, and even surpassed the Joyful Pavilion Market in the banquet field, no longer existed.

The brightly lit area spanning several miles had turned into utter ruins.

If that were all, it'd be bearable, but the real horror was the shattered huts and building debris mixed and coated with various shredded flesh, bone fragments, and viscous blood.

Visible clouds of demonic energy and blood mist mingled and rose, forming patches of blood clouds that shined under the moonlight of the sky dome. No matter how strong one's mental fortitude, seeing this scene would probably make them vomit everything in their stomach and pass out delightedly.

And amid the ruins, a figure was seated.

Tao Qian managed just in time to assign the two youngsters to gather the spoils; he himself glanced at the horrific scene before him, then closed his eyes to meditate, feeling the sudden changes in his body after actively embracing the first calamity and releasing all the pent-up frustration and murderous intent.

The Hundred Refinement Sword Pill was swirling around him.

In order to completely destroy the Fragrant Meat Collection, Tao Qian not only set up the "Xuan Yin Invisible Sword Array" but also exhausted all ninety-nine paths of Spirit Treasure Immortal Spirit Qi within his body.

Now that the slaughter was over, Tao Qian expected to fall into a state of fatigue and weakness.

Who would have thought?

After exhausting the ninety-nine paths of Immortal Spirit Qi, the Spirit Treasure Nine Truths Diagram echoed spontaneously in Tao Qian's mind, and the "Innate Dao Seed" actively leapt out, directly ascending and breaking open the intangible door of the Great Dao, accompanied by a "boom" in the depths of his heart.

An immense surge of Source Qi poured down, then instantaneously purified by the Dao Seed into the purest Spirit Treasure Immortal Spirit Qi, obediently entering Tao Qian's body.

In the blink of an eye, the ninety-nine paths of Immortal Spirit were replenished, and the process was still not ceasing.

It continued until the number of Immortal Spirit Qi in Tao Qian's body jumped to one hundred and eight, then the door of the Great Dao closed, and the Dao Seed also retracted.

"Has my cultivation really risen this easily?"

Clearly, even Tao Qian hadn't anticipated this change.

He had simply embraced the calamity willingly and vented his murderous intent, yet he had unintentionally aligned with the true essence of the Spirit Treasure Method.

At this moment, Tao Qian could clearly feel that it was an excellent opportunity for cultivation, his mind clear and inspiration bursting. He merely needed to sit down, recite the diagram, and wouldn't make any mistakes; the quantity of Immortal Spirit Qi could continue to rise, potentially leading to comprehension of new Divine Power Skills.

Tao Qian simply shook his head, not resuming his cultivation.

"Destroying the Fragrant Meat Collection just means that I voluntarily faced the first disaster, but it doesn't mean I have overcome it."

"In fact, the calamity that has fallen upon me has just begun."

"This place is perilous, and it's not suitable for a prolonged stay."

With that thought, Tao Qian suddenly opened his eyes and immediately retracted the Xuan Yin Invisible Sword Array.

This array wasn't a one-time use but could be reused. Even if the sword light within the Xuan Yin talismans were exhausted, as long as Tao Qian replenished it with Xuan Yin spirit stones, the power of the Sword Array could be restored.

If that were not the case, Lin Xiaohua would not have relied on it as a significant weapon to compete for a spot as a True Cultivation Disciple.

Having just used it for the first time, Tao Qian was quite satisfied with its power and coverage range.

As soon as the Sword Array was stowed, Little Age and Lian Jing'er, who had been busily collecting alien objects, hurried over at his call.

The two little beings seemed oblivious to the terrifying purgatory around them and were instead quite excited, precisely picking up usable exotic trophies from the scattered flesh and ruins and stuffing them into various picked-up treasure bags and storage magical treasures.

When they came before Tao Qian, their small bodies were laden with various storage magical treasures.

They then lifted their heads and opened those magical treasures one by one, displaying the plentiful spoils they had collected for Tao Qian to inspect.

Although the destructive power of the Xuan Yin Invisible Sword Array was astounding, destroying many magical artifacts and exotic treasures, especially books and secret texts, the number of Evil Cultivators in the Fragrant Meat Concentration was alarmingly high, and the majority of the survivors were likely high-quality items.

Thus, Tao Qian had some expectations of the amount of spoils.

Yet at this moment, as he observed the contents of over a dozen storage magical treasures filled with various exotic treasures and cultivation resources, he was still startled.

However, he quickly realized something, and his expression became suddenly solemn.

"Fragrant Meat, having extended for several miles of meat shops and desires spreading, is far more renowned in the Southern Yue's Devil and Evil Cultivator groups than even the Joyful Pavilion Market."

"This would surely draw Evil Cultivators from across Southern Yue, many of whom might not have strong cultivation but might be connected with convoluted powers, including powerful Evil Cultivators, and Zhu Wuxin who cultivated the Cannibal Scripture, clearly backed by the Iron Buddha Temple."

"Now that these beasts have been annihilated by me in one fell swoop, I have instantly offended many big and small Devil and Evil Cultivator powers across Southern Yue."

"If there's no accident, will I now face various pursuits and attacks?"

"So it seems, this is indeed my true first calamity; if I cannot weather it, I fear I might perish along with my Dao."

When he uttered the last line, a grave expression momentarily swept across Tao Qian's face.

What followed, however, was an eagerness to face the challenge.

On his own volition, Tao Qian, who had broken his restraints and was unbridled in action, had already begun to exhibit some subtle changes in temperament.

After some thought, Tao Qian reached out and patted the heads of the two small beings, asking, "Little Age, Lian Jing'er, were you afraid of that recent scene? If you keep following me, such incidents might often occur in the future, and you might even die."

Compared to when they first met, the two alien beings had undergone some changes, seemingly growing a bit.

At least in Little Age's eyes, the color of panic and fear was hardly visible anymore.

Hearing the question, both little beings almost immediately shook their heads.

Then, Little Age boldly said, "I am not afraid. I am the Lord of Taisui, and I must grow up sooner to protect my subjects, Uncle Xiao Hua, and Brother Tao."

Lian Jing'er, with his ruby eyes sparkling red, also said, "A body of flesh and blood must have weaknesses... Estimating under current conditions, about four thousand three hundred eighty hours from now, Lian Jing'er will possess the power to protect... Please ensure the resources needed for Lian Jing'er's growth..."

Hearing these two responses, Tao Qian smiled broadly, nodded, and said nothing more.

He then gathered the various large and small storage magical treasures into the Mustard Seed Talisman Seed. Holding the hands of the two little beings, he concentrated for a moment and then lightly stomped his foot. Instantly, clouds and mist rose beneath their feet, and soon, an auspicious cloud filled with a fragrant aroma formed around them.

This was the "Auspicious Cloud Skill," a method of utilizing Spirit Treasure Immortal Spirit Qi.

Of course, it could also be called a Divine Power Skill.

If there were any Spirit Treasure Sect Cultivators here, they would immediately recognize that this lad was progressing from the early stage of the Qi Refining Realm to the middle stage.

The hallmark of this stage was the proficient use of Immortal Spirit Qi and the development of at least three Divine Power effects.

Tao Qian, having entered the Qi Refining Realm for three days, had advanced so swiftly to the next stage truly without violating the benefits brought by the "Innate Dao Seed."

"Spirit Treasure Auspicious Clouds, soaring through the sky, this is indeed an immortal means."

As Tao Qian's words fell, the auspicious cloud directly lifted the three figures into the air, blending into the clouds in the sky in an instant, soon disappearing without a trace.

...

About half an hour later, many Devils and Evil Cultivators that had come far and wide, discovered everything inside the Fragrant Meat Collection.

Various screams filled with terror and disbelief echoed under the night sky throughout that area.

By dawn, a piece of news that shocked many Devils and made half of Southern Yue incredulous, spread rapidly.

"An unknown Sword Cultivator, last night, ruthlessly slaughtered the miles-long 'Fragrant Meat Collection,' killing over a thousand Devils and Evil Cultivators, including a Great Demon from the Foundation Establishment Realm who had emerged from the Iron Buddha Temple and was endorsed by a Bodhisattva and conferred by Devil Gods."

"This in the Fragrant Meat Massacre is an unforgivable collective provocation by the Human Clan Cultivators against us. All Devils and Evil Cultivators in Southern Yue, if anyone has information about this Sword Cultivator, report it to the Devil God Army for a substantial reward."

Chapter 106 Qi Refinement Level 2, Wanted Throughout the Region

Within the territory of Southern Yue, there was a place called "Black Water Fort," formed by several craggy mountain peaks with gaps filled by peculiar, dense forests. Even during the day, the miasma was thick, making it impossible to discern directions, accompanied from time to time by the howls of wild beasts and the hissing of venomous insects.

In such a poor and evil place, ordinary people naturally dared not approach. It was occupied by a group of mountain bandit sorcerers who were bloodthirsty and extremely vicious, practicing a heterodox scripture called "Five Poisons Scripture." They had built the Black Water Fort and usually fed on the five poisons, inhaling and exhaling the miasma of the mountains and forests. Although each of them had gained extraordinary power, they had also turned into things neither human nor ghost.

Unable to reproduce naturally, they often descended to nearby villages and towns to kidnap infants and children, and to plunder wealth. Anyone who resisted would have their village slaughtered.

After the chaos of the Great Demon era, these sorcerers became even crazier, and the Fort's inner scene was no different from a Demon Cave.

However, just half a day ago, these evil men had the misfortune of encountering someone even more ferocious.

After seeing their ways, he opened his mouth and spewed forth a rampage of sword light, swiftly slaughtering them and their stronghold completely.

Now, sitting on a broad stone square within Black Water Fort, Tao Qian was seated on a large slab of bluestone, deeply engrossed in cultivation.

The Xuan Yin Invisible Sword Array was laid out as a guard in all directions, with sword Elixirs revolving around him, ready to unleash a terrifying Sword Intent that could sweep across the battlefield at any moment.

Little Age and Lian Jing'er were each sitting like two little protectors to the left and right of Tao Qian, vigilantly looking around while constantly eating the spoils of the Fragrant Meat Collection. Although most of the abnormal creatures had been destroyed and nothing as good as Jiao Marrow and Jiao Bone was found, there was no lack of things for them to devour.

The two little things feasted joyfully. If it weren't for fear of disturbing Tao Qian, Little Age would surely cry out how delicious it was, while Lian Jing'er calculated how much longer he could receive protective power.

After willfully facing disaster, the Spirit Treasure Method within Tao Qian's body was eager to move, and the Immortal Spiritual Qi continued to grow. He was now wholeheartedly refining his cultivation, as the genuine spirit sound of the Spirit Treasure kept echoing in his mind. The Innate Dao Seed broke open the invisible portal, pulling in vast amounts of Source Qi, which were then refined into Immortal Spirit Qi.

He quickly broke through the number one hundred and eight, and continued to climb upwards.

While he was entering such an exquisite state, suddenly, there was a thunderous noise in the miasma-filled Black Water Fort; no clouds, no fog, yet out of nowhere, there was a gentle and steady sweet rain. Following that, a clear wind abruptly blew outwards in all directions with Tao Qian at the center.

The many corpses of the sorcerers in the Fort had been disposed of cleanly by Tao Qian, leaving behind only traces of blood fog and miasma, and many resentful souls, demonic qi, etc.

But at this moment, all of these were cleansed and dispelled by the sweet rain and the clear wind, turning the desolate Demon Fort into an abode mimicking a Daoist pure land on a Spiritual Mountain.

Even Tao Qian himself did not realize that, following the "Auspicious Cloud Skill," he had unconsciously developed two new Spirit Treasure Divine Powers during his cultivation.

They were the "Sweet Rain Skill" and "Clear Wind Skill." According to the description in the Spirit Treasure Nine True Diagram, Tao Qian had now ascended to the mid-stage of the Qi Refining Realm. If he were to attain the "Spirit Treasure No-leak Body," he could directly reach the Perfection of the Qi Refining Realm. The speed of his advancement in cultivation was so fast that even among the talents of the Major Sects, it was considered rare.

Another thirty minutes passed, and Tao Qian slowly came to his senses.

As he opened his eyes, the sweet rain and clear wind also reached their peak, thoroughly transforming the formerly foul and demon qi-filled Black Water Fort into a marvelous place of clear mountains and beautiful waters.

Tao Qian looked at the scene before him, and a smile appeared at the corner of his mouth as he understood the addition of two new divine arts to his abilities.

However, what pleased him even more was the quantity of Immortal Spirit Qi within his body, which had now reached one hundred and sixty-eight strands.

"Although the Qi Refining Realm doesn't categorize stages by the quantity of Immortal Spirit Qi," he reflected, "having more means greater combat prowess and a better chance of advancing to the Foundation Establishment Realm."

"I won't speak of anything else. Now, if I were to cast sword technique, I could slash with one hundred and sixty-eight swords. If I were to fight against that Jiao Demon or Pig Demon again, even in a head-on battle, it wouldn't necessarily be impossible to slay them."

With thoughts of that Pig Demon in mind, Tao Qian's heart stirred, and he retrieved an object from within the Mustard Seed Talisman seed.

It was a meaty sac, incredibly pungent, and a fresh, vibrant pink, faintly glowing with a pale light. A strong and abnormal aura was also emanating from it.

Faintly visible among the crevices of the flesh, there remained some ancient seal script characters, small as black tadpoles.

These characters were originally covering the meaty sac, but they had been eroded by the Sword Qi, having lost eighty to ninety percent of their integrity. If it weren't for Tao Qian's heightened perception, he might never have discerned the significance of these characters.

This was the Basic Method cultivated by the Foundation Establishment Realm Demon called Zhu Wuxin, known as the "Cannibal Scripture," a Secret Technique.

This demon had also been a member of the Human Clan, who by chance obtained this Lifebound Scripture and could not resist the temptation to cultivate it.

Over a hundred years, he devoured countless humans, mutated and fell into corruption, and also advanced to the Foundation Establishment Realm.

As vicious as he was, he had transformed his stomach into a Storage Treasure Bag, and even branded his Basic Method on it, so he could contemplate and practice cultivation at all times.

However, it was precisely because of this that the object had a significant defensive power. Though every other part of Zhu Wuxin turned to mince, the pig's stomach had remained intact. It was merely that most of the Cannibal Scripture had been destroyed, combined with being sticky and gooey, it was even three times smellier than pig dung.

As for the destruction of that Evil Demon Magic, Tao Qian naturally did not regret it at all, casually calling forth the Sweet Rain to wash it clean, and sent his Divine Thought to probe inside.

As soon as he entered, his expression took a turn for the worse. Most of what lied inside were the food and drink Zhu Wuxin had stored, even more complete and disgusting than the goods in the Wanquan Meat Shop.

He directly took them out for disposal, only then, in the deepest part of this object, he found two items of value.

One artifact was called "Pig Demon Sand," palm-sized, blood-colored, vivid and dripping, seemingly composed of individual grains of red sand, appearing bizarre to an extreme. But upon contact, Tao Qian understood this artifact to be a kind of Exotic Treasure, possessing many wonderful uses; it could be used to refine Elixirs and practice certain Power Divine Skills, among various other applications.

Yet the other item was what truly caused Tao Qian to show a look of astonishment.

It was a massive Magic Artifact, the weapon with which Zhu Wuxin fought, called "Cannibal Rake," a nine-tooth nail rake made from a mineral called Wuchen Iron, weighing a thousand jin and exuding an extremely terrifying oppressive aura. The blood-red inscriptions engraved on it indicated if wielded, it could unleash some frightening spells.

"It's also fortunate that I first used the Nine True Spirit Sound to freeze that creature's Divine Soul Body, and then dispatched him with the Selfless Sword Intent. Had he actually taken up this nail rake to fight me head-on, I would have had to resort to the Xuan Yin Invisible Sword Array to force him down."

"However, if that had happened, many of the Demon, Evil Cultivators inside the Fragrant Meat Collection would have surely escaped..."

"Hmm?"

Tao Qian was contemplating at this point.

Suddenly, an unexpected change occurred that he had not anticipated.

His complexion drastically transformed, and in his mind, a thumping as intense as war drums surged forth.

Accompanying it was a shiver.

Tao Qian, sitting on the bluestone, now seemed as if chilled to the bone, his body involuntarily shaking with cold tremors.

Such a familiar sensation immediately informed Tao Qian of what he was experiencing.

Waive the price!

Tao Qian's soul was abnormal, and every time he skipped the price related to cultivation, he would shiver with cold.

Normally, one shiver was enough.

However, unlike ever before, shivers came one after another, as if he had no intention of stopping.

A massive influx of abnormal information exploded in Tao Qian's mind at that moment.

"Under the attack of 'Demon Crystal Soul Searching Technique,' waiving the price."

"Under the attack of 'Blood Shadow Reflection Divine Skill,' waiving the price."

"Under the attack of 'Rashamon Demon God Soul Capture Technique,' waiving the price."

"Under the attack of 'Gathering Evil Soul Searching Technique,' waiving the price."

...

It took dozens of breaths before Tao Qian stopped shivering.

At that time, his expression was extremely solemn, and thoughts were tumbling in his mind.

"I seem to have chosen the most suicidal way of transcending disaster. That day, whether it was killing a few pig butchers or waiting for half an hour to save a few fresh humans when new ones were brought to the market, while it would have triggered corresponding consequences, it was still a way to lead disaster and transcend it, and the tribulation wouldn't be so serious."

"I didn't do any of that, I just followed my heart, and slaughtered the entire meat market, hence my first disaster is terrifyingly fearsome."

"Just now, those were all Prediction Techniques targeting my soul. I indiscriminately slaughtered those demon and evil cultivators, and indeed many of them had strong backgrounds. When their descendants or disciples died, they all started using divine powers like Prediction and Soul Search to directly pursue and capture me."

"Thankfully, my unusual soul can exempt some of it, but not all of it. For the next two days, although the demons won't be able to know my exact location, a very vague idea of my whereabouts, I'm afraid, can't be hidden at all."

Thinking of this, Tao Qian immediately communicated with the Puppet Body still on Iron Buddha Mountain.

Sure enough, it wasn't long before Tao Qian received a surprising new message:

He was being hunted.

More precisely, it was the image of the "Corpse Chasing Daoist" that Tao Qian had transformed into, which was wanted by many demon and evil cultivator forces within Southern Yue.

A Human Clan Cultivator, relying on some magical treasure, dared to slaughter the demon market?

In the eyes of the Devil God Army and other demon and evil cultivator forces, this was an intolerable provocation.

Moreover, many of the little demons and little cultivators who were sliced into mincemeat in the market were tied to many powerful people.

Thus, the bounty order concerning him was spread throughout most of Southern Yue within a mere half-day.

Although the Warrant listed information such as "Human Clan Sword Cultivator, Qi Refining Realm," the level of the rewards offered was outrageously high.

As long as he was killed or captured and brought back.

Whoever it was would receive a reward that could even be compared to slaying a Transcend Mortality Realm Human Clan Cultivator.

Not to mention the invisible benefits of getting in good terms with those great demons and evil cultivators.

In this half-day, many wandering demons and evil cultivators within Southern Yue were all boiling with excitement.

Chasing a Qi Refining Realm Human Clan Cultivator!

And they even provide a location!

Many demons saw this as a pie falling from the sky.

Such an opportunity had to be seized.

The message from the Puppet Body was that many demons and evil cultivators had already set out toward the area where Tao Qian was currently located.

If they were swift on foot, perhaps they'd already arrived?

Just as this thought crossed his mind, Tao Qian's mind once again felt a palpitation.

But this time, it was a genuine sensation of "abnormal creatures" feedback.

Looking through the not too distant space, there were at least a dozen strong strands of demon and demonic qi, speeding toward Black Water Fort at an incredible pace.

Tao Qian suddenly stood up and retrieved his Sword Array and sword Elixir.

Recalling the content on the Warrant, as well as some exemptions his strange soul had made from the price.

He couldn't help but smile wryly, then touched the foreheads of the two little ones, and with a twinkle of light, they simultaneously transformed into a rosy-cheeked, innocent young novice monk.

As for himself, he swayed and turned into a shabby old monk wearing a patched monk's robe.

The three of them did not flee but sat down directly.

"Amitabha!"

As soon as Tao Qian chanted this Buddhist name, the mountains and forests roared, and clumps of devil fog and demon clouds surged over, revealing demons, behemoths, and various figures of sinister sorcerers who looked like humans but lacked humanity, inundating the Stone Square in a rustle.

Just upon landing, one beast immediately stood up, measuring three meters tall, glaring with crimson eyes and a human skin pelt around its waist. The fierce tiger demon leaned close to Tao Qian and asked in a deep and gruff voice,

"Old monk, how long have you been sitting here?"

"Have you seen a Corpse Chasing Daoist pass by this place?"

Chapter 107 Xuanzhen Soul Capturing, Assist My Cultivation

Tao Qian, with his unusual soul, resisted many soul-searching techniques using just the humble Qi Refinement Realm, although he inevitably revealed a general location.

But the exact location, as well as his real appearance, the presence of Little Age, and Lian Jing'er, were all kept secret.

Thus, at this moment, the more than a dozen Qi Refinement Realm demons and evil cultivators in front of him did not consider this poor old monk and two little novices to be that daring Human Clan Sword Cultivator.

This was also a stereotype, as most in the Cultivation World believe that those who practice sword cultivation are rigid and inflexible.

Though their combat power is terrifying, they disdain changing or using exotic skills or divine skills.

Who would have thought?

He, Tao Qian, was not an orthodox sword cultivator.

The old monk he had transformed into, raising his head to look at the demon evil cultivators, was just about to shake his head in refusal.

Suddenly, the tiger demon turned his head to stare at the small novices transformed by Little Age and Lian Jing'er, baring his teeth to reveal the fresh red flesh in the gaps, saliva drooling down as he directly threatened with a hiss, "Old monk, it doesn't matter if you don't speak, I was thinking of having a tooth feast meanwhile, these two novices smell absolutely delicious."

Upon this utterance, the group of demon evil cultivators behind the tiger demon also showed red in their eyes and drooled profusely.

The old monk immediately turned pale in fright, quivering and showing a face full of guilt, then pointed in one direction.

This should have been the end, but unexpectedly, the group of demon evil cultivators didn't leave immediately. Particularly, the tiger demon continued to move forward, its massive jaw growing larger while simultaneously laughing,

"Don't be afraid, old monk. As Mountain Master, I intend to share a fortune with you. I possess a divine skill called 'Chang Ghost.' Once I devour the useless skins of you three monks, your souls can follow me in cultivation. When the Mountain Master achieves enlightenment, such as a chicken and dog ascend to heaven."

He finished speaking, followed by a burst of laughter from behind.

The demons, echoing one after another,

"Mountain Master, don't think of hogging it all to yourself. You may kill them and take their souls for Chang Ghosts, but share the flesh."

"Absolutely right, a bit of a tooth feast on the road would be splendid."

"Indeed, chasing that fellow has too many comrades, our luck may not be so good, but to eat such tender novices is also a feast."

"I want the one on the left; he smells more delicious, the one on the right doesn't smell enough, probably won't be as tasty."

"Hurry up, we still have to chase that fellow, don't delay us."

This stream of words terrified the old monk and the novices, all shivering.

It seemed the old monk quickly resigned himself to his fate, addressing the demons, "Noble lords, the sea of suffering is boundless; this mortal coil is indeed useless to us Sramanas. It is better to be reborn into Utmost Happiness early, but let me first recite the Rebirth Scripture, also considering it a prelude to transcending myself."

"Go ahead, recite yours, I'll eat mine, not interfering with each other."

Unaware of any consequence, the tiger demon opened its huge mouth and bit towards the novice behind Tao Qian.

But, in the next moment, including itself, the more than a dozen Qi Refinement Realm Late Stage demons, and those evil cultivators of equivalent realm, simultaneously heard a sound like a huge bell, a Daoist True Sound that said,

"Nine Heavens Truth, the secret is great."

Initially, when this Dao-infused Spirit Sound entered their ears, the demons were puzzled why the old monk would recite a Daoist spell.

Then, deep in their minds, an alarming bell thundered, frantically screaming the words "Tricked."

Unfortunately, it was too late.

Their divine soul bodies were instantly frozen.

No matter their own brilliant divine skills, at this moment, they were all meaningless.

They could only watch helplessly as the body of the old monk swayed, transforming into the Corpse Chasing Daoist, who then spat out a Sword Elixir. The fierce sword light turned into a bending stream of light, avoiding the tiger demon first and then, accompanied by a hissing sound, cleanly chopped up the remaining demons and evil cultivators.

Accompanied by "puff, puff, puff" sounds, more than a dozen foul-smelling corpses now lay on the green stone platform.

Each one had been capable of causing a storm of blood and violence in the Mortal World, whether they were Qi Refinement Realm demons or inhumane evil cultivators.

But here they couldn't even resist or lament, and with their divine souls frozen in an instant, they lost their lives, regardless of how many years they cultivated or how many hidden tricks they had; a slight mistake led to such an end.

The only surviving tiger demon, however, couldn't harbor any joyous thoughts.

For now, he could only watch with bloodshot eyes as the Daoist rummaged through various Storage Treasure Bags, those artifacts, from their shape to their aura, didn't seem like something a Human Clan Cultivator would use, rather more like Storage Treasure Bags of demons, but this Daoist had dozens of them.

Where did they come from?

The answer was obvious.

What drove the tiger demon almost to madness was that the Daoist finally pulled out a heterodox strange skill called "Xuanzhen Soul Capturing Technique."

The Daoist wasted no time, studying the thin booklet right in front of him.

The two novices at his side jumped up adeptly, moving to the left and right, beginning to search the bodies of the demon evil cultivators for useful loot and Storage Treasure Bags, even starting to erase the divine thought and heart blood imprint from those artifacts on their own.

This whole set down was almost enough to make one wonder, who in this scene was truly the murderous plunderer?

At this moment, the Daoist's voice abruptly penetrated into the tiger demon's ears:

"As a proper Daoist disciple, I shouldn't learn such soul-searching and soul-capturing heterodox magic, since it harms the harmonious heavens and also involves my own soul suffering all sorts of messy consequences."

"But since I need some memories from your mind, tiger demon, if I asked you, you would not only refuse to honestly tell me but also struggle and resist with petty schemes, why bother?"

"Better to search the soul, then kill together, also fulfilling this brotherhood of demons accompanying each other to Huangquan."

To the tiger demon, these few sentences sounded like a soul-calling demon sound, eliciting fear that allowed it to escape with a shred of divine thought.

He was about to beg for mercy, swearing he would truthfully confess.

But in the next instant, he only saw the Daoist in front of him revealing a sinister smile and pointed directly at his brow with a finger shaped like a sword.

Immediately, the tiger demon felt as if countless sharp claws were frantically stirring inside his skull, the intense pain unbearable, causing his eyes to roll back and pus and blood to spray from his seven orifices. His three souls and seven spirits shattered into fragments, and just like that, a Qi Refining Realm Perfection tiger demon was reduced to an idiocy with brain damage.

In the last second before losing his self, the tiger demon remembered the humans he had tormented and killed. Many times, he had used his own claws to stir their brains, occasionally tasting bits of it.

"The Heavenly Dao favors reincarnation," he realized.

After a while, having retrieved the memories he wanted, Tao Qian withdrew his finger, stood up, and expertly began to dispose of the corpse.

Almost immediately, his mind sensed pounding war drums from all directions.

Various soul-searching divine powers swept over from far and near.

"They really are investing heavily, surrounded on all sides; this disaster is indeed hard to navigate."

"But this is good; as long as that group of demons isn't mad enough to send a Transcend Mortality Demon for a small fry Qi Refiner like me, these things can actually aid my cultivation."

During his speech, Tao Qian took Sui and Lian Jing'er by the hand.

With a flicker of light, the three underwent a transformation.

This time, Tao Qian turned into a black-haired Ape Demon, formidable and ferocious in appearance, with two small Ape Demons perched on each shoulder.

Just then, various demonic clouds and mists surged over Black Water Fort, revealing all sorts of demons and ghosts among the clouds.

The mountains that had begun transforming into a Daoist Spirit Land due to Tao Qian's presence immediately reverted to a demon-like territory.

Various unrestrained divine thoughts swept through, but none could see through Tao Qian's transformation.

Secret Demon Transformation Technique!

Truly unparalleled in mystery.

However, Tao Qian dared not linger too long, to avoid any accidents, especially since Sui and Lian Jing'er's disguises were not as magical as the Ten Thousand Transformation Technique.

Glancing swiftly around, Tao Qian quickly chose an oddly-shaped flying boat made of various materials, featuring a steam engine puffing black smoke for added style, manned by dozens of bare-chested, rotting sorcerers with various poisonous insects encircling them.

Besides these Magicians, the boat also carried numerous stinking, terrifying demons and some offensive alien species.

From below, Tao Qian shouted to the flying boat, "Honored Daoists, are you also hunting that Human Clan Cultivator? Take me with you; I'll pay."

Shortly after he spoke, Tao Qian, along with the two small Ape Demons, appeared on the flying boat.

Whether the fare was expensive was of little concern; he had just plundered a dozen or so Qi Refining demons and evil cultivators, and Tao Qian's claim to being wealthy was not without merit.

This flying boat's crew was indeed after him.

They had even received an Exotic Treasure from the Devil God Army that could receive "real-time messages."

Held by the boat's owner, a two-meter-tall female mage—in strange hemp clothes, wearing a beaded crown, with an alluring makeup and revealing much of her body.

Dangling from her greasy chest was a fist-sized, white bone bead.

Once aboard, Tao Qian wandered around, occasionally offering pointers to the decaying Magician steering the boat, claiming he had an exotic skill that could locate the Human Clan Cultivator's position more accurately.

With Tao Qian's interference, the flying boat gradually veered off course, heading toward a wild mountain with a harsh environment.

Initially, the "Qi Refining Realm Perfection" monster female mage was somewhat puzzled and dissatisfied, but soon, when not surrounded by any demons or Magicians, a faint light suddenly emanated from the bone bead on her chest.

Then, as if she had received some exciting news, her androgynous, booming voice echoed through the flying boat:

"Quick, the Devil God Army has sent news; an alien species master who just lost his only son has made a new prediction—the insensible Human Clan Cultivator is very close to us."

"This Human Clan Cultivator possesses a Sword Array among other magical treasures; we must be very cautious not to fall into it. Let's kill him from outside the array and claim our rewards together."

After she spoke, excitement surged among the demons on the flying boat.

Especially the "Ape Demon" with two young ones, who, very agitated, cried out and leapt in front of her, asking loudly, "Very close, how close?"

Just as she was about to reply loudly, she suddenly seemed to see some unimaginable terrifying scene, her cloudy yellow eyes bulging round.

Her divine thought immediately surged wanting to cast a spell, but before she could, Tao Qian had already made his move.

"Boom!"

It was again the Nine True Spirit Sound.

Those on the flying boat, who had watched the Ape Demon cry out from time to time after boarding, saw that at this moment, what came out was not the unpleasant ape cries, but an incredibly pure and magnificent Daoist True Sound.

After hearing that sound, their Divine Soul Bodies momentarily lost control.

By the time they regained themselves, they saw a mercilessly erupting terrifying Sword Array.

Endless Xuan Yin Invisible Sword Qi not only shredded the flying boat into rubbish but also sliced every Magician and demon on it into fine strips of flesh, mixed with machinery, steam, blood, crushed bones, and brain matter, becoming a unique rain pouring down onto the savage forest below.

In this rain, a voice faintly transmitted:

"Sui, Lian Jing'er, quick, gather the spoils."

Chapter 108 Tao Qian Slays the Demon in Jinfu County, the Great Demon Descends from the Iron Buddha Temple

Within the boundaries of Southern Yue, Jinfu County.

This is a remote county town encircled by mountains on three sides, with a population of less than one hundred thousand. Hindered by poor transportation and scarce resources, the livelihood of the inhabitants only depended on lotus cultivation, paddy farming, and some mountain goods. With close contacts between the Longevity Heavenly Dynasty and the Western Countries, and the blending of

information, the local magistrate of this county had originally planned to introduce machinery and build a factory to rejuvenate the region. He had even settled trade deals with those fair-haired, blue-eyed barbarians.

Tragically, as Southern Yue descended into an era of "Great Demon Chaos", all of these plans had become nothing but a pipe dream.

A Great Demon passed through this land and, in a fit of madness, executed an evil technique. It extracted the souls of nearly all the one hundred thousand citizens, simultaneously turning them into a type of abnormality known as "Dream Corpses".

Dream Corpses were beings that had lost most of their souls and wandered in a daze around their hometown, tirelessly like Earth-bound Spirits, until their bodies ran out of Essence Blood and they died, transforming into skeletons.

After that night, Jinfu County was utterly devoid of any fresh humans.

Whenever one entered, they were met only with ruin and gloom, and tens of thousands of wandering Dream Corpses; it had become a city of the dead.

On this particular day, demon clouds and fog suddenly appeared from all directions, along with various flying vessels and massive demons capable of sky-controlling. Amidst the thunderous noise, these demons, Evil Cultivators, and heartless Magicians appeared above the deathly city.

Oddly, despite the harmless Dream Corpses below.

Not one of the demonically-auraed Evil Cultivator demons seemed eager to descend just yet.

Instead, they gathered in the sky, watching one another, each remaining on guard.

Such a scene should not have occurred within Southern Yue.

After all, among the many provinces of the Longevity Heavenly Dynasty these days, Southern Yue was somewhat special. Here, Evil Cultivators, magicians, and all sorts of Mutated Fallen beings joined forces to war against the Human Clan and Human Clan Cultivators. Except for the Human Clan Cultivators, whether you practiced some Daoist Skill or were born differently, if you belonged to the demon class, you should be seen as an ally.

Sincere cooperation was the logical course of action, not this wary vigilance.

In other places, indeed, this was the case.

But in this area, the demons and Evil Cultivators had no choice but to act this way.

The standoff didn't last long before a White Bone Demon wreathed in scarlet demonic qi stepped forward. After scanning the surroundings, it rattled and asked, "Gentlemen, let me pose the question. If anyone cannot answer or answers incorrectly, you all know what must be done, right?"

As soon as these words left the White Bone Demon's mouth, a Daoist with a huge Red Gourd on his back and surrounded by hundreds of Fire Crows, himself with red hair and beard, laughed heartily, volunteering, "If the answer is unknown, it's either someone trying to reap the benefits midway or simply that cunning, shameless Human Clan Sword Cultivator. It is better to execute one by mistake than let one escape. When the time comes, we shall strike together and settle the score."

"Indeed!"

"So, gentlemen, do you know how many princesses our Devil God has?"

As soon as the question was asked, myriad Divine Thoughts intermingled and swept across the area, and the owners of these Divine Thoughts simultaneously voiced their answer.

"One hundred and two!"

Somewhat unexpectedly, they all answered at the same time, and all of them were correct.

This outcome thrilled the group of demons, especially the Red Gourd Daoist who laughed even louder, "Correct, our Devil God has recently acquired a new princess, a fact those cunning Sword Cultivators must be unaware of. Clearly, this time he wasn't able to infiltrate our ranks. That Daoist's transformation is indeed troublesome, but now that we have a method of identification, we are completely secure. Let us enter the city together and hunt down that Daoist's hiding place. Once we surround and kill him, the rewards will be shared. What do you say?"

"Good!"

"Excellent idea!"

"Let's enter the city then; that fellow must have transformed into a Dream Corpse again, hoping to slip by unnoticed."

"Pay particular attention to those accompanied by little Dream Corpses; we lost so many of our fellows before we realized that this Sword Cultivator, not only excels in transformation but also follows two strange Alien Life Forms of unknown true nature."

"The Sword Cultivator's Cultivation Realm is quite average, but he has mastered a Sword technique from the Secret Demon Sect with terrifying power, and also controls a lethal Sword Array. Coupled with his cunning nature and mastery of transformation skills, in the past two days alone, he has killed many of our peers, building quite the notorious reputation for himself."

"Now that we have him cornered in this city, we just need to kill him to dissolve his growing fame."

"Hmph, Southern Yue is our territory now; we cannot tolerate the provocation of a Human Clan Sword Cultivator."

With these voices, the group of demons simultaneously descended from their Evasion Light vessels, entering the desolate Jinfu County.

Upon landing, they tacitly occupied different areas and began employing various Soul Searching Techniques, determined to capture the cunning Sword Cultivator hidden among the tens of thousands of Dream Corpses.

However, none of the demons noticed that the red-haired Evil Cultivator carrying the giant Red Gourd that appeared to practice the "Fire Crow Daoist Skill" had, by coincidence or accident, chosen a section of the city wall almost devoid of Dream Corpses, thus unlikely to catch anyone.

No sooner had the Evil Cultivator landed atop the city wall than he let out a sneering chuckle.

With a swift move, he produced a copper bell engraved with Tadpole Runes, lacking a clapper but still emitting an abnormal presence.

Lifting the bell slowly to his lips,

He stomped his foot violently, and a layer of imperceptible earth-yellow brilliance erupted, instantly forming a gigantic dome that enveloped the entire Jinfu County.

Then, Tao Qian's voice echoed throughout the county, "Gentlemen, this place is called Jinfu County. This Array is the Earth Prohibition Array, precisely the burial ground I've chosen for you."

"Don't be shy, meet your end with composure."

As these words pierced the ears of the throng of demons and Evil Cultivators who were intent on unearthing Tao Qian from amongst the tens of thousands of Dream Corpses,

They all turned their heads in collective horror to gaze at the red-haired Evil Cultivator on top of the city wall.

And before they could even turn, Tao Qian had already made his move.

It was still the Nine True Spirit Sound, only this time, the sound was amplified by a copper bell.

The truly grand and resonant sound, like the ringing of a great bell, filled every corner of the county town the next moment.

For tens of thousands of dream corpses, as well as for this group of evil demons, the most destructive invisible storm surged in.

"Boom!"

In an instant, a visibly shocking scene unfolded.

Those tens of thousands of civilians, turned dream corpses who had been relentlessly moving for quite some time, found liberation in the grand Daoist sound, their tortured bodies disintegrating into powder and lightly falling to the ground.

The weaker demons scattered around, such as a few that had just advanced to the Qi Refining Realm, were directly shaken to death.

The rest, likewise, lost control of their divine souls and bodies.

Yet Tao Qian did not cease his efforts, holding the magic artifact known as the "Small Leiyin Bell," he bellowed several more times.

Not until he had liberated all the dream corpses in the county and also killed a few more demons.

Tao Qian spat out his sword Elixir without revealing his true form, leaping up to merge with it, and in an instant, transformed into a terrifying sword light as he slashed towards the demons and evil cultivators in the city.

The hundreds of fire crows behind him suddenly vanished, leaving only two small ones that simply puffed and turned into two quick-moving little ape demons, skillfully crying out as they closely followed the sword light Tao Qian had become.

Tao Qian slayed demons, and they collected the spoils of war.

Their routine was practiced to perfection, without any waste.

...

With a "thump", a "White Bone Demon" who had reached the peak of the Qi Refining Realm and was just one step away from entering the Foundation Establishment Realm, fell apart into a pile of broken bones under the unstoppable sword light and rattled to the ground.

One of the little ape demons that Lian Jing'er had turned into, apparently very fond of the White Bone Demon's corpse, excitedly rushed over.

Upon touching the bone as smooth as jade, it made a satisfied mechanical noise and then began devouring the remains.

The death of the White Bone Demon also meant that this long-abandoned county had finally attained complete peace.

Tao Qian surveyed his surroundings, first with a sigh, then with a satisfied smile.

It had been nearly two days since he had been marked by demons and hunted by all manner of demons.

Throughout these dozens of hours, to avoid the demons predicting his path and setting traps, Tao Qian had led Little Age and Lian Jing'er in continuous detours, setting up traps in turn and killing wave after wave of demons that ventured too close.

Due to the large number of demon casualties, the evil demons had also come to know through various means that Tao Qian was adept at transformation and that he was accompanied by two uniquely gifted alien species.

To kill him, the bounty-seeking demons even came up with a system of "passwords."

If Tao Qian truly were a cultivator preoccupied with evading capture and without the luxury of attention to spare, he might have really fallen.

Unfortunately for them, Tao Qian had insiders on Iron Buddha Mountain.

Moreover, to deal with these issues, he had specifically learned the Soul Capturing and Soul Searching techniques.

At the same time, many of the spoils he had collected were put to good use by Tao Qian.

Like a set of Array Flags that could be used to set up the "Earth Prohibition Array," effective only against Qi Refining Realm demons and evil cultivators, which Tao Qian had obtained after killing a demon.

There was also the "Small Leiyin Bell" that could be used to amplify the Nine True Spirit Sound, coming from a devil monk who had defected from a major temple under Vajra Temple. That copper bell was actually a replica of the Vajra Temple's treasured Thunder Sound Bell.

Although it was more suitable for amplifying Buddhist chants, its effect on amplifying spirit sounds was also quite extraordinary.

With a series of actions, he successfully trapped and killed these dozens of demons.

Incidentally, he also helped liberate tens of thousands of pitiful civilians within Jinfu County.

"As the two days are coming to an end, just holding out for a few more hours, I should be completely exempt from those prediction and soul-searching evil techniques."

"Then, the sky's the limit, and I'll just leave Southern Yue behind."

"My mastery of divine powers has improved quite a bit, and I should be able to safely make it through this first calamity."

With this thought in mind, Tao Qian couldn't help but smile, then planned to take Little Age and Lian Jing'er, who had collected their spoils, and escape elsewhere.

But suddenly, a change occurred.

Just as Tao Qian was about to activate his Nascent Soul Escaping Skill, his body abruptly froze as an urgent message from the puppet body deep within the Iron Buddha Temple entered his mind.

"This Human Clan Sword Cultivator has repeatedly evaded capture and has even retaliated by killing many fellow evil demons."

"The Devil God Army, occupied with confronting the Demon Suppression Army, has been unable to spare attention, but eventually, the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva from within Iron Buddha Temple was alerted."

"The Bodhisattva dispatched a Transcend Mortality Demon from the mountain to capture or kill the sword cultivator, and to prevent his escape, specially granted a trapping magic artifact."

"Within one hour, the Great Demon will arrive."

"Boom"

Like a bolt from the blue, this news appeared in Tao Qian's mind.

Chapter 109 Mistaking Spiritual Treasure for Secret Demon, there is a Spark of Life in the Ten Thousand Demons Record

The smooth slaughters of past days had not only allowed Tao Qian's cultivation to surge, mastering many Divine Power Skills and accumulating vast spoils of war, but had also boosted his confidence.

Relying on the wonders of the Secret Demon Transformation Technique and his soul that was exempt from prediction.

For most cultivators in the Qi Refining Realm, a pursuit that was deemed a "dead end" could not touch him at all.

However, he hadn't expected that just as he was about to truly overcome this first calamity.

The flag that Tao Qian himself had planted still ended up stabbing him.

"Not the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva again!"

Tao Qian spoke resentfully, silently holding a grudge against her once more.

Then, Tao Qian immediately communicated with his Puppet Body to confirm even more details.

Had he learned two days earlier that he was being hunted by a Transcend Mortality Demon, perhaps even Tao Qian would have panicked for a moment.

But now, he was only surprised momentarily before immediately beginning to devise countermeasures.

"According to the information explored by the Puppet Body, although the Great Demon can discern my rough location, it still can't pinpoint my exact whereabouts, let alone my true appearance, or that of Little Age and Lian Jing'er."

"The only trouble is the magical treasure granted by the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva, which can tie me down and snatch my real body within a certain range, without needing to know these things, relying merely on some reflected images."

"That is to say, there is nowhere for me to escape, as my subterranean evasion speed is far too inferior to that of a Transcend Mortality Demon."

"If I hide in places crowded with demon cultivators and evil cultivators, there might still be a slim chance of survival. But if I just focus on fleeing desperately and get cornered in the wilderness, that would truly mean a certain and absolute death."

"Trouble, those old demons skilled in multiple methods are particularly troublesome."

"How can I prevent being captured by that magical treasure? The Spirit Treasure Method is clearly ineffective, perhaps some of the heretical and heterodox practices and Evil Demon Secret Methods I've captured are useful... Hmm?"

As Tao Qian pondered, an inspiration arose unexpectedly and was immediately seized by him.

A trace of joy quickly appeared on his face.

Without any pause, Tao Qian directly led Little Age and Lian Jing'er, and as they moved according to his thoughts, the bodies of the three quivered and began to transform.

This time, Tao Qian transformed into a four meters tall evil ghost with a green face, tusks, and bone spurs fiercely protruding; the two little ones each transformed into a small red-faced and a small white-faced ghost, lightly leaping to perch on Tao Qian's left and right shoulders respectively.

In any other province, especially one where the Human Clan Cultivators still predominated, wandering around in such a guise would surely spell disaster for Tao Qian.

But in Southern Yue, it was actually quite suitable.

"Humph,"

The evil ghost grunted, then Tao Qian was seen continuously deploying the Small Innate Nascent Soul Escape Technique, speeding towards a particular area remembered in his mind.

With just a fraction of an hour's leeway, Tao Qian dared not delay at all.

About several breaths later, Tao Qian, in the body of the evil ghost, appeared at the lively foot of a mountain called Chenghuang Mountain.

Unlike other quiet and deserted wild mountains, this one surged with various demons and cultivators.

Even some Human Clan Cultivators, who were clearly from a heterodox direction and not evil demons, appeared on the mountain, not encountering attacks from those demons.

The reason?

It was simple; Joyful Pavilion, one of the heterodox sects of Southern Yue, had set up another large market here, nearly twice the size of those near Seeking Immortal County and Wending County in Tengshe Square.

Thus, at the foot of the mountain stood two pavilions, each housing a Plague Golden Toad covered in festering sores.

After feeding the two spoilt toads some Joyful Money, Tao Qian, along with other demon cultivators, smoothly entered the massive market. Similar to his past experience at Tengshe Square, before stepping into the market, he first passed through numerous Banquet Buildings that could intoxicate and entrap one in dreamlike states.

Though the many items inside the banquet buildings were often revolting enough to turn one's stomach.

But Joyful Pavilion was, after all, a major heterodox sect, not overdoing things too much, certainly not comparable to places like Fragrant Meat Collection.

Clearly, Joyful Pavilion had bet early on the Devil God Army, yet also feared the potential cleansing by the righteous should the Devil God Army fail. Moreover, due to foundational principles, they feared falling from the heterodox path to the Demon Path, which could lead to irrevocable disaster.

Thus, they also essentially maintained a fundamental bottom line.

Before long, Tao Qian once again stood before Joyful Pavilion Market.

Perhaps because his manifestation as an evil ghost was too terrifying, the green-scaled demons dared not approach to illuminate the scene.

They huddled together, shrinking back and wailing, "Oh, so terrifying."

Tao Qian paid them no mind and directly stepped into a splendid building on the side of the market.

This place, akin to hotels in the Mortal World, offered cultivators places to rest, rejuvenate, or conduct short-term cultivation, and also provided gathering and pleasure grounds for demon and evil cultivators.

Before the chaos with demons, the overly ferocious appearance of Tao Qian's evil ghost body would surely have caused a stir.

But now, there were many types of more terrifying alien species freely visible in the building.

Tao Qian went straight to the manager and requested a high-quality quiet cultivation room; he had come here not to fence stolen goods, but to refine techniques.

As he followed the attendant to the quiet room, the loud conversations and boasting of the demons and evil cultivators kept infiltrating his ears along the way.

Tao Qian suddenly realized that many of the topics being discussed were about himself.

For example, just ahead on the left, around a desk, several Qi Refining Realm magicians were entertaining beautiful ladies, bragging about their vast experiences.

One red-nosed evil cultivator with a mysterious expression cautioned the others in a serious tone:

"Just now, you mentioned taking on some postings in the market. Take on others if you must, but don't meddle with the posting regarding that nameless sword cultivator."

"He is like a harbinger of death. In the past two days alone, there are demons among us who have perished by his hand—no fewer than several hundreds."

"I heard from a senior who visited the scene that he seems more like an evil demon than us. His fierce sword technique is formidable enough, but what's more terrifying is his sword array. Once activated,

infinite sword lights sweep across everything. Even our magically fortified bodies would be sliced into tiny pieces."

"Have you heard about the tragedy at Fragrant Meat Collection? Tsk tsk, it was first witnessed by a Pig Demon who reportedly died from shock on the spot."

"The most bizarre thing is that this person has yet to be captured. It's been two days of manhunt and still, more reports emerge of fellow practitioners encountering him and being effortlessly slaughtered, leaving behind gruesomely bloody scenes."

"There's a rumor that he is not a cultivator from the right path, but a fierce person who inherited the legacy of the Secret Demon Sect. The day he wiped out the Fragrant Meat Market, it is said that he coveted the Pig Demon Heart of 'Zhu Wuxin, the Foundation Establishment Realm Great Demon' for its flavor. When Zhu Wuxin refused, he brutally made his move."

"There's proof too. The sword technique he used is the Secret Demon Sacrifice Body Sword Technique. He is also adept at the Secret Demon Transformation Technique, a very difficult Divine Power Skill to cultivate."

"Tsk tsk, though our Devil God Army controls a large area within Southern Yue, there are still many formidable human clan cultivators about. The battle has just started; our foundational methods are not particularly evil, so it's better to keep a low profile."

As this person concluded the secret, a few beautiful ladies at the table immediately displayed looks of alarm, greatly satisfying his vanity.

Seeing this, a few nearby magicians also started to show off.

One of them, a hairy-chested magician, murmured mysteriously:

"We mustn't provoke those devilish brats, nor those cultivators from the righteous path."

"Everyone knows the Devil God Army has captured most areas in Southern Yue, but who knows that more than a dozen counties in the southeast direction were recently taken back by two emerging forces?"

"I just came from there. Just telling you, but keep it to yourselves."

"The leaders of these two forces, one named Gu Zhichang, claims to be a loose cultivator and has gathered a bunch of so-called heroes. Ha, his methods—he can't fool my ghost eyes. Gu Zhichang is definitely a direct disciple from the Shenxiao Sect, his Thunder Skill is terrifying."

"The other force is led by Zheng Wufu, also claiming to be a loose cultivator with a group of heroes. Ha, that kind of mountain-moving Divine Power Skill, his brutal flesh-recycling methods—he's definitely from the Xiu Family, and no low-ranking member at that."

As this magician finished speaking, another magician dressed in a bright red magic robe, appearing to come from the South, continued the topic.

"I've also heard about these two new forces. Moreover, I know that behind them is another organization providing support."

"That seems to be a special force; they don't call themselves a sect but rather the 'Western Study Society.'"

"This blasted Western Study Society has gotten hold of many powerful Western magic tools and started fires everywhere, already beginning to disrupt the plans of the Devil God Army."

"I've heard Tang the Divine General is very irritated about this and has vowed to wipe out everyone from the Western Study Society."

...

In just a dozen or so steps, a conversation brimming with substantial information permeated Tao Qian's ears.

At another time, his curiosity would have undoubtedly made him sit down and gather more intelligence.

However, at this moment, time was critically pressing, and he could not afford a delay.

Putting these messages aside for the moment, Tao Qian quickly entered the quiet room, sent the attendant away, and initiated the Forbidden Technique.

Then, he immediately sat down to meditate.

No preparation was necessary; he just took a deep breath and entered meditation.

As before, his primordial spirit sat atop the Secret Acupoint Platform.

With a mere thought, a book with seemingly infinite pages materialized before him.

This book, called "Ten Thousand Demon List," derived from the All Heavens Demon Summoning Secret Technique, a method Tao Qian had mastered long ago.

Thus, there was no need for Tao Qian to flip through it personally; as it appeared, the list began furiously turning pages by itself.

And quickly, it halted on the page Tao Qian needed.

Then the names, appearances, origins, and Divine Power Skills of several Outer Realm Heaven Demons began to evolve into vivid images, flashing before Tao Qian's eyes.

The first one alone caught Tao Qian's attention.

"Substitute Demon: This demon is naturally special, seeing all beings as though seeing itself. It can imprint any living being's distinct characteristics within moments, integrating them into itself and forming a soul connection with the imprinted being, serving as each other's substitute... This demon is extremely adept at body seizing, escaping, and surviving. Not only is it cunning by nature, but it is also difficult to track. Even cultivators skilled in the Secret Demon Refining God Skill might not encounter a Substitute Demon in a hundred refining attempts, and even if they do, they might not manage to refine it."

"Summoning Demon Technique can forcibly summon it."

"But without the Demon Control Refining Technique, one must be wary of the demon's backlash and its forced body seizing."

Chapter 110 Tao Qian intends to formulate a strategy and refines the Corpse Demonic Sky Demon Elixir

Why was the Secret Demon Sect able to challenge the Daoist and Buddhist Major Sects repeatedly with the power of one sect alone?

One of the reasons was this "Summoning Demon Technique."

Great Cultivators who had refined this method could, with a mere thought, summon All Heavens Demons to assist them, completely neutralizing the advantage that the Daoist and Buddhist grand temples had of summoning Exotic Realm Guardian Vajras, or even Arhat Bodhisattvas.

Although Tao Qian had not obtained the crucial Control Demon and Refining Demon Methods, this "Ten Thousand Demon List" was also extremely valuable.

Each of the All Heavens Demons had its uses.

The Substitute Demon was merely the first kind Tao Qian had chosen.

Following this Demon, he then saw "Empty Demon," "Illusion Demon," and "Star Zha Demon" emerge one by one.

These Outer Realm Heaven Demons were much more powerful and rarer than inferior demons, so rare that even luring them with Dao Seeds might not guarantee a sighting.

Their Divine Powers were rare and bizarre.

Like the Substitute Demon that saw "All Living Beings as Oneself," or the Empty Demon that could carry people through the Void and ignore constraints, the Illusion Demon that could create lifelike illusions, and the Star Zha Demon that could use the light of the zodiac stars as an Escape Skill.

"If I could wield these Demons at my will, not only could I handle the crisis at hand, but also greatly enhance my combat abilities and tactics."

"Although this would make me seem more like a member of the Secret Demon Sect, now that I've diligently cultivated the Cultivating Spirit Treasure Skill, and with Dao Seeds in me, plus having survived the Heart Inquiry Three Calamities, who could say I am not a Spirit Treasure Cultivator?"

These thoughts flashed through Tao Qian's mind.

Then, he started to ponder over the Control Demon Technique.

Having seen the successful example of Jade-faced Lady Lan Qing'er, Tao Qian didn't think that controlling Outer Realm Demons would be monopolized entirely by the Secret Demon Sect.

As long as he could follow the patterns, delve into the hidden secrets, he might also be able to uncover other Control Demon and Refining Demon Methods.

"Lan Qing'er, a Foundation Establishment Realm cultivator managed to do it, there must be many cultivators in the Cultivation World who could, to greater or lesser degrees, control Demons for their own use, though perhaps none could match the techniques of the Secret Demon Sect, especially the methods of Lan Qing'er, who used allure and body companionship with demons; despite eventually managing to manipulate them, she had little initiative."

"The fundamental method is still to gain control over these Demons."

"Outer Realm Heaven Demons are cunning and fickle by nature, even if they agree to serve you at one moment, they can't be guaranteed not to go back on their word halfway, ruining the grand plan, and what's most troublesome is them turning against and devouring their master."

"What method could make them obediently comply, just like my Puppet in the Iron Buddha Temple..."

When the last thought flashed through his mind,

Tao Qian seemed to gain an inspiration and abruptly came out of the meditative state.

He spat out a Mustard Seed Talisman Seed, which flashed anew, revealing a large quantity of Storage Treasure Bags, obviously carried by Evil Cultivators, including several dozen magic artifacts just collected by Little Sui and Lian Jing'er in Jinfu County.

If an outsider were present at this moment, they would surely be struck dumb.

It was terrifying!

Even the Joyful Treasure Pavilion didn't have such a rich and extensive stock.

Clearly, amassing Cultivation Resources through such violent means was the fastest way.

While Tao Qian appreciated the work of the two youngsters, he swiftly scanned each artifact with his Divine Thought.

For the past two days, being constantly pursued, Tao Qian had only a rough idea about the contents of these artifacts, which included exotic treasures and books, and hadn't closely studied most of them.

The inspiration he had just had brought some memories to the forefront, and he began searching quickly.

Before long, the quiet room lit up again, and all the Storage Treasure Bags were taken back into the talisman seed, except for two items purposefully left behind by Tao Qian.

These two items were:

A strange talisman paper made of an unknown creature's skin, covered in dense, scripture-like writings!

A bronze tripod only seven inches tall, exquisitely hollowed, emitting a weird, sharp, pungent and demonically chilling shriek.

"This talisman is indeed a 'Netherworld Demon Contract,' an extremely ancient contract used specifically for signing with Demons, demonic creatures, Fierce Ghosts, and other exotic beings, which binds them much more strongly than vows like Dao vows or heart vows; virtually guaranteeing their willing service once signed, while this Demon Contract also bears some of the costs of Outer Realm Demons and Netherworld Ghosts manifesting in this world, preventing them from dissipating too quickly."

"However, the cost of using it is also extremely high; although the Demon Contract does not limit the number, typically only one person and one Demon, or one person and one Ghost, will sign, binding their Divine Souls and sharing life and death."

"Of course, I can waive all costs and even erase the signed seal."

"The only issue is how to force a Heavenly Demon or Fierce Ghost to sign the contract?"

With this thought, Tao Qian reached out and grabbed the bronze tripod.

However, he didn't open the lid but scanned through each tiny hollow hole with his Divine Thought, probing the seemingly endless, incessantly screeching, invisible to the naked eye, a kind of red worm that exists between reality and illusion.

They were entirely blood-red, their surfaces smooth, numbering in the hundreds with hook-claw-like limbs, no eyes or nose, only possessing a sucker-like mouth, their form constantly shifting between solid and ethereal, emitting a horrifying screech that could shatter souls.

"This worm is known as the 'Corpse Evil Worm,' coming from the extremely mysterious and terrifying Hidden Sect 'Evil Sect,' and if I remember correctly, it was scavenged after slaying an unknown Evil Cultivator."

"This worm has only one function: parasitic control."

"Whether Human Clan, Devils, or Outer Realm Demons, intangible Alien Species, or ghostly Elves, this worm can parasitize them all, and once parasitized, even if one were to cut down their own corpse and grind their bones to dust, these worms cannot be removed, allowing the person who implanted them to manipulate at will."

