

Longevity 111

Chapter 111 Tao Qian wants to employ a comprehensive strategy and succeeds in refining the Corpse Demonic Sky Demon Elixir_2

"Just using this worm comes with an extremely horrifying price,"

"The user must first nourish the Corpse Evil Worm with their own Divine Soul, enduring agony beyond common torture. Afterwards, when planting this worm into another Life, it must be willingly consumed; if detected and met with rejection, the Evil Worm will instantly perish... If successfully implanted, though it's possible to manipulate the Insect Puppet, both parties will have their Divine Souls interlinked, sharing life and death."

"I can waive all the costs, the only problem is how to make these Demon Lords willingly swallow down the worm."

Tao Qian sat cross-legged in the quiet room, staring at two things in front of him.

In his mind, inspiration flickered intermittently.

Although by now, he actually had some confidence.

For example, he could use intimidation to make a Substitute Demon, Star Zha Demon, sign the Demon Contract, with a likely chance of success.

But Tao Qian always felt there was a better way, tantalizingly out of reach.

"Willingly... intimidation and enticement... control and manipulation..."

"Boom!"

In an instant, that inspiration completely exploded.

Tao Qian, acting on a thought, actually commanded the Puppet Body within the Iron Buddha Temple to return to the quiet room.

Then, he directly opened the Exotic Fire Elixir Scroll obtained from the Wild Leek Demon "Shan Jiu," flipping to the last page, searching for the Elixir recipe called "Heavenly Demon Blood Transformation Pill."

Upon closer inspection, indeed within those few lines, he found the information that made Tao Qian reveal a look of joy.

"Heavenly Demon Blood Transformation Pill: Use an Outer Realm Demon as the main ingredient, refine it with Outer Heaven Flame Essence into a Blood Elixir, enhancing Divine Soul energy and blood. It contains Elixir poison, harmful to Human Cultivators, but for Outer Realm Demons, this poison is a substantial tonic; even high-level Heavenly Demons, upon scening the poison's aroma, will flock to it like ducks to water."

"I've got it!"

A very complete plan suddenly came to Tao Qian's mind.

Without any hesitation, he immediately began to cultivate according to the "Exotic Fire Elixir Scroll."

The scroll was seriously damaged, but luckily the fundamental Magic Skill remained, and the Cultivation process was extremely simple.

"If this works, it will be a great strategy to command and use the Demon Lords."

"If not, I can resort to plan B; there's always a guarantee."

With a thought, Tao Qian entered meditation once more.

Still on the Spirit Platform, the Innate Dao Seed had just leapt into Tao Qian's Primordial Spirit, and a massive gate opened of its own accord in front of him. The terrifying suction force that surged from within wrapped around Tao Qian's Divine Soul and dragged him into the gate.

Boom!

Upon entering the gate, which was an unknown place in the Outer Realm, Tao Qian's Primordial Spirit had no time to observe the surroundings, as his field of vision was entirely overwhelmed by an endless, terrifying Flame capable of searing and destroying the entire world.

Tao Qian was utterly convinced that if these Flames truly were to incinerate his Divine Soul, even if his Cultivation Realm skyrocketed to Cavernous Mystery, Ultimate Happiness, or even Daoist Transformation, it would be utterly meaningless.

Other than death, there would be no other outcome.

Until the next moment, he violently shivered.

Once again, an unimaginable power surged from within his Divine Soul, completely enveloping his Primordial Spirit and merging him into the world of Flames.

He was not dead nor harmed, but to Tao Qian's disappointment, he did not see the so-called "Outer Heaven Flame Essence."

Just as he was wondering if he had not been recognized and was not compatible with this Cultivation Technique, and that he might have to use his backup plan,

suddenly, the Flames in front of Tao Qian rapidly converged.

In a daze, Tao Qian saw it.

He saw a sun that filled the entire world, formless, constantly twisting, surrounded by countless tiny spheres of light.

The original dark Outer Realm was now illuminated by this red light as if it were daytime.

Tao Qian felt as if he had reached outside the Nine Heavens, coming face to face with the legendary "Sun Star."

Before Tao Qian could do anything, he saw those clearly lively tiny spheres of light surge towards him like a tidal wave, an ocean.

In an instant, they enveloped Tao Qian within.

Yet he did not feel any harm, only heard all kinds of chirping and chattering.

These sounds were filled with curiosity, friendliness, and an inexplicable fondness.

It was this outcome that left Tao Qian's Primordial Spirit overjoyed, unable to resist touching those light spheres and then he exclaimed aloud,

"This skill is fated to be mine!"

"I'm only regretful that I've practiced it too late."

"But it's not too late, not too late at all, just right."

...

Some tens of breaths later, it was still that Spirit Platform Secret Acupoint.

Tao Qian's Primordial Spirit, holding the Dao Seed, left it exposed without any reservation, allowing the fragrance of the Dao Seed to permeate the Outer Realm.

Seemingly unaware, inside his seemingly crystal-clear spirit platform, dozens of Outer Realm Heaven Demons had already hidden themselves.

Although half were lowly inferior demons, there were plenty of demon leaders ready to stealthily make their move to snatch the savory body of this Human Clan Cultivator and that even more desirable Innate Dao Seed.

Unfortunately, it was at this very moment.

Tao Qian's Primordial Spirit, which had been meditating, suddenly opened his eyes.

The instant he closed the Secret Acupoint with a thought, he also revealed a smile to the group of demons in front of him, "Gentlemen, you've traveled far and wide, I should have given you some time to use your tricks, but I'm pressed for time and must send you on your way immediately."

Before the sound of his words had faded, a Nine True Spirit Sound was expertly cast.

After freezing those dozens of demon leaders, Tao Qian did not use the Secret Demon Refining God Seal to pound them into sugar pills, nor did he force them to merge to extract their Cultivation Techniques.

Instead, he unexpectedly whistled, and in the next moment, the dozens of Outer Realm Heaven Demons that were forced to reveal themselves and were frozen stiff were scared witless.

They watched with their own eyes as this Human Clan Cultivator, supposed to be merely at the Qi Refining Realm, within his empty spirit platform, suddenly has flames rise eerily from all directions. Startlingly, these were numerous tiny, life-like, red-light fire globes comprising the formation, which faced the various tricks of the Human Clan Cultivator without any concern, scaring leaders of demons so much that their demon thoughts burst and they momentarily broke free from the Spirit Sound's bind.

Unfortunately, the area had already been filled with Exotic Fire.

Aside from wailing, the demon leaders could do nothing else.

A few moments later, within the quiet room, Tao Qian opened his eyes.

Before him hovered a pill about the size of an infant's fist, black and red interlaced, with the suffering faces of dozens of demon leaders emerging on its surface, incessantly exuding Demonic Qi and even demon thoughts – a bizarre Elixir.

"The Heavenly Demon Blood Transformation Pill is complete."

Tao Qian looked at the Elixir before him, smelling the aroma it emitted, and forcefully resisted the urge to consume it.

Suddenly, he reached out, but instead grabbed a Bronze Tripod filled with "Corpse Evil Worms" on the side.

The tripod already had Forbidden Techniques in place, ensuring there would be no danger.

With a flicker of Divine Thought, Tao Qian seized a Corpse Evil Worm, and with a familiar shudder, he completed the feeding and averted the associated cost.

He then carefully brought the Corpse Evil Worm close to the Heavenly Demon Blood Transformation Pill.

After that, he began to wait.

The Evil Worm could sense Tao Qian's Divine Soul intent; it swam around the Elixir, drawing nearer and nearer.

One breath!

Two breaths!

Three breaths!

On the fourth breath, the Evil Worm suddenly exploded and reassembled, its body twisting. In the flash between Reality and Illusion, it successfully burrowed into the Heavenly Demon Blood Transformation Pill.

With the occurrence of this scene, an irrepressible look of joy spread across Tao Qian's face.

This time, it was truly complete.

Chapter 112 Laughable Demon Loses His Wife and Troops without Forethought

In his quiet room, Tao Qian was quite satisfied as he gazed at the Heavenly Demon Blood Transformation Pill before him, a fatal temptation to both Cultivators of the Human Clan and Outer Realm Demons alike.

Refined from the essences of dozens of demons with the help of Exotic Fire, its quality was anything but mediocre, not to mention the special ingredient Tao Qian had just added.

"As stated in the 'Exotic Fire Elixir Scroll', even high-level demons would find it hard to resist the alluring fragrance of the poison released from the pill's inner core."

"One just needs to give them a reasonable excuse to swallow it, and they would happily and eagerly ingest the pill."

"In doing so, the taboo of the 'Corpse Evil Worm' within wouldn't be triggered, allowing the worm to take effect."

"Hmm?"

"This effect, why does it feel somewhat familiar?"

Inexplicably, memories of a certain vicious pill from a wuxia novel he read in his past life crossed Tao Qian's mind.

After some thought, Tao Qian shook his head and said, "Still, it's not the same. I am a bona fide Spirit Treasure Cultivator, I come from the Righteous path, creating this pill is just out of necessity, and besides, the ones I seek to deceive are demons."

Reaffirming himself with a murmur, Tao Qian then turned his gaze to Little Age and Lian Jing'er inside the quiet room, somewhat worried if he might be leading these two youngsters astray.

However, the two little ones were picking and choosing their spoils in the corner, oblivious to their surroundings.

Having followed Lin Xiaohua previously, their safety was guaranteed, yet Xiao Hua Daoist, honest and sincere as he was, knew nothing of "live off the land."

Unfortunately, before Little Age and Lian Jing'er found suitable Basic Methods, they needed to consume large amounts to grow, having followed Xiao Hua Daoist on a routine of starving for three days and gorging nine meals.

Since following Tao Qian, the little ones have been so happy that they've forgotten their homeland of Shu.

Having experienced excitement, their little mouths had hardly rested.

Lian Jing'er's Prediction hour was rapidly shrinking.

As for Little Age, he was fast developing some unbelievable Divine Skills.

Tao Qian watched and couldn't help but sigh, then a thought took hold, spurring his movements.

Once again, he concentrated and meditated, settling himself atop the Secret Acupoint Platform.

Tao Qian's Primordial Spirit lifted his hands, forming a strange and twisted Demon Seal.

He began to utter obscure noises that seemed impossible for a human to produce, eerily disturbing, stirring the Divine Soul, inducing uncontrollable compulsion.

After several breaths, Tao Qian suddenly cried out in a low voice,

"All Heavens Secret Demon, come forth!"

In the blink of an eye, a storm seemed to rage within Tao Qian's pure spirit platform.

Then, a dark vortex abruptly appeared with a wisp of murky dark Qi that, despite Tao Qian's sense of its extreme reluctance to come, couldn't resist the pulling force and had to leap out of the vortex, shakily revealing its true form.

It was a long-snake-like demon, topped with a human head, its facial features never settling, a billion expressions shifting.

Its Demon Body was wrapped around an obscure Ancient Mirror; almost instantly, the mirror reflected Tao Qian's Primordial Spirit.

Tao Qian was momentarily dazed, feeling as if he was being pulled into the mirror while the Demon that clung to it sneered coldly at him, ready to rush into his body and take over.

See All Living Beings as seeing oneself?

And then perform a Body Seizing?

This Demon was truly brazen, going for the kill upon first meeting... Tao Qian had this thought when he suddenly shivered with familiarity, knowing the Demon's backlash had once again been waived by him.

"Boom!"

Inside the spirit platform, Tao Qian saw something explode – it was the Ancient Mirror and the Demon.

Even though they quickly self-restored and aimed to flee,

Regrettably, Tao Qian still held the Summoning Demon Seal, and amidst the struggle, despite the Substitute Demon's screams and howls, it could not break free for the time being.

Not to mention, Tao Qian had closed the Secret Acupoint Spirit Platform in advance.

Catching turtles in a jar, nothing more than this.

"You Demon, coming all the way here and nearly capturing my Primordial Spirit to take over my body,"

"Do you think you can just leave without discussing compensation with me, your victim? Or perhaps we can talk about a deal?"

"Take a look at this!"

As he spoke, Tao Qian guided the Substitute Demon to look in front of him.

Somehow, an alien item also leaped into the Secret Acupoint.

It was the Netherworld Demon Contract, from which surged a strong Demonic Qi that almost immediately captured the Substitute Demon's attention.

The Demon's initial shock eased as the head wrapped around the Ancient Mirror began to laugh maniacally.

In the laughter, defiance and wild arrogance poured out.

"Ha ha ha... I get it, you Human Clan Cultivator have learned the Summoning Demon Technique of the Secret Demon Sect, but you lack the Demon Control Refining Technique, so you want to deal with me, offer me some benefits in exchange for serving you?"

"Is this, by chance, the Netherworld Demon Contract?"

"What, do you think I must sign this contract with you, becoming your servant?"

Listening to the mad laughter of the Substitute Demon before him, Tao Qian was not annoyed but also let out a laugh.

Then, lifting one hand, he formed the Secret Demon Refining God Seal and inquired in a calm tone, "Knowing the Secret Demon Sect, you must be aware of the power of this Dharma Seal; if you refuse to sign, what if I hit you with the Refining God Seal?"

The wild laughter ceased abruptly.

The head on the murky Ancient Mirror solidified into a stiff, shocked Demon face.

Clearly, it had not expected this Human Clan Cultivator not only to have learned the Summoning Demon Technique but also the Secret Demon Refining God Skill, and to have somehow acquired the Netherworld Demon Contract, ready to coerce it into signing.

Chapter 113 The Foolish Demon Doesn't Consider, Losing His Wife and Soldiers Too_2

The Substitute Demon, being a rare and cunning demon, had a mindset in no way inferior to that of the Human Clan, perhaps even more devious.

At this moment, although it appeared unharmed on the surface, a surge of Demon Thought welled up from deep within:

"This Human Cultivator is utterly shameless. Since he possesses such methods, he shouldn't have forced a demon like me into signing a contract. He should have sought the Dao Heart Demon or the Savior Demon, demons that could aid in cultivation. To inexplicably choose me for this contract means he must be facing a life-and-death crisis and wishes to use my Divine Skills to cheat death and escape trouble."

"If I refuse to sign, this fellow will surely become annoyed and use the Refining God Seal Hammer on me, which will be torturous."

"Hmph, I'll sign. This fellow only knows the extraordinary effects of a Demon Contract but is unaware that we Outer Realm Heaven Demons also have ways to deal with it. Once I create the illusion of a successful pact with Void Demon Thought, I'll deceive this chap into opening his Secret Acupoint, seize the opportunity to escape, and reckon this Qi Refining Realm Human Cultivator youngster won't be able to catch me."

The Substitute Demon secretly calculated its plan, preparing to feign agreement with Tao Qian.

Just at that moment, it suddenly smelled a fragrance it simply couldn't resist.

The next moment, another object leaped out from the Secret Acupoint Platform.

At the sight of the object, its expression first shifted to one of extreme terror and then quickly to extreme greed, finally freezing there.

"Heavenly Demon Blood Transformation Pill!"

Before Tao Qian could speak, the Substitute Demon cried out in alarm.

Then at once, Tao Qian also revealed a smile, pointed to the just leaped into the Secret Acupoint, a Demonic Qi filled and exceedingly alluring Elixir, and said:

"Since you recognize this pill, then I won't have to waste my breath."

"This pill is also part of the transaction. If you're willing to sign the Demon Contract and help me escape danger after an hour, I'll give you this pill."

"What say you?"

"Good!"

With hardly any hesitation, and even skipping the bargaining process, the Substitute Demon excitedly agreed to Tao Qian's terms.

Encased with the gray Ancient Mirror, it was ready to fly over to sign the contract while also preparing to take that "Heavenly Demon Blood Transformation Pill."

But just as it was about to act, Tao Qian once again restrained it in place.

Seeing the change, the Substitute Demon immediately panicked, thinking the Human Cultivator had changed his mind. It was considering whether to ask for better terms or to swear an oath when:

Tao Qian then asked, "Don't rush, don't rush. To see if the deal can go through, we must first test if you, the demon, truly have the capability. I know you're adept at body substitution, but I don't know if your skill can deceive the little demons of the Demon Buddha Temple and their Sandalwood Divine Dazzling Skill?"

The Substitute Demon, panicking over Tao Qian's potential change of heart, upon hearing this, couldn't help but let out a scoff and said:

"You Human Cultivator have summoned the right demon. If you had called on other demons, even those higher than me, like the Five Directions Demon or the Jiu Pan Demon, they truly wouldn't have any means against that Māra's Sandalwood Divine Dazzling Skill."

"But I am different. I am one of Māra's people, inherently skilled in chaotic substitution, conveniently capable of deceiving that Sandalwood Fragrance Cloud's search and dazzle."

"Very well, then this transaction is agreed upon."

"Agreed, agreed, agreed!"

The dialogue between the human and the demon concluded.

Both chuckled silently in their hearts; then the Substitute Demon swiftly approached.

It rapidly imprinted its demon thought onto the Netherworld Demon Contract, and in an instant, a surge of blood light emerged, and a sign of the Demon Contract appeared on both Tao Qian's and the Substitute Demon's foreheads. There seemed to be a connection between the two, and Tao Qian even felt he could perceive many of the Substitute Demon's thoughts.

Did this scene signify the Demon Contract was successful?

It appeared to be so, yet the information that emerged in Tao Qian's mind suggested otherwise.

However, Tao Qian merely smiled and did not expose the deceit.

He let the Substitute Demon take that "Heavenly Demon Blood Transformation Pill" and swallow it eagerly into its stomach, unable to wait.

Demons are inherently fickle and extremely cunning.

If Tao Qian had initially offered the Blood Transformation Elixir, despite the Elixir's alluring toxicity, there was no guarantee the demon wouldn't have hesitated.

But Tao Qian first drew the demon's attention with the Demon Contract, then timely threw out the Demon Pill as bait, deliberately interrupting the process once or twice... In such a manner, even the most cunning demon lowered its guard, succumbed to the temptation of the Elixir's toxicity, and swallowed it directly.

As soon as the Heavenly Demon Blood Transformation Pill entered the mouth of the Substitute Demon, Tao Qian happened to open the Secret Acupoint.

The Demon immediately changed its expression. While its smoke-like demon body began to flee, it pointed at the Demon Contract in front of Tao Qian, where the false Demon Thought was disappearing, and burst into crazed laughter,

"Naïve Human Clan Cultivator, you actually thought that through threats and bribes, you could make me obediently comply and be driven by you."

"This time, you've lost both your wife and your soldiers, gifting me a Heavenly Demon Blood Transformation Pill for nothing."

"Ha ha ha..."

The Substitute Demon intended to end its mad laughter with a successful escape, having obtained the Demon Pill and achieving its mocking purpose, which seemed perfect.

But embarrassingly, as soon as it finished laughing, it discovered it had lost control of its demon body.

Even though the Secret Acupoint was wide open and it only needed to leap to leave,

no matter how much it stirred the Demon Thought, the demon body remained fixed in place, immovable.

What was worse, at this moment, it could distinctly feel

an alien presence deep within its Demon Soul that it could not expel, and to its shock, both the Demon Thought and demon body had been seized by this alien presence.

At this instant, even the foolish knew it had been duped.

Indeed, it hastily raised its head, only to see the nearby Human Clan Cultivator revealing a darkly amused smile, eyeing it with great interest.

"What have you done? What did you add to the Heavenly Demon Blood Transformation Pill?"

The Substitute Demon roared angrily, with its demon body disintegrating and reforming.

Misty Ancient Mirror surfaces flickered with various faces, as the Demon Thought nearly began a minor tempest on the spot.

But no matter how it tried, not even a glimpse of the "Corpse Evil Worm" could be caught, let alone expelled.

The number of Demon Sects could not compare to the Major Sects of Daoist and Buddhist,

but each one was more bizarre than the next. It was true for the Secret Demon Sect and Demon Buddha Temple, and even more so for the Evil Sect known as "Hidden Sect", which was exceedingly peculiar.

Without knowledge of the Magic Skills, it was utterly impossible to unravel the Evil Sect's Exotic Skill.

Seeing all its methods fail, the Substitute Demon finally began to plead:

"I am willing to sign that Demon Contract, swear by my Demon Soul, and will never betray you."

"Let me sign it, please, I am willing to sign."

"Even without signing, I recognize you as my master and am willing to offer you my 'Lifebound Demon Soul', wholeheartedly serving you from now on, only begging you to remove that thing."

"Master, please spare me. With an alien presence parasitizing my Demon Soul, I've lost the ability to grow; how then can I relieve you from worries and resolve difficulties for you in the future?"

"Master, when you face trouble from those of the Demon Buddha Temple, I am willing to find a 'Buddha Fragrance Demon' to assist you. Such a Demon is most adept at dealing with Buddha, and you just need to transfer the alien presence from my Demon Soul into its Demon Soul—then all dangers would be resolved."

"Master, my great master..."

The Demon kept changing its tone, ultimately placing itself in the position of Tao Qian's servant.

Unfortunately, Tao Qian did not believe it.

Upon hearing this, he willed it to silence and then cheerfully said:

"I've also heard of the Buddha Fragrance Demon, but with my current cultivation, I cannot summon it. However, it matters not, for now that I have you, the Substitute Demon, my chance at freedom has greatly increased."

"We still have some time left. After I refine a few more Heavenly Demon Blood Transformation Pills, with the method I used just now, I will subdue a few more Substitute Demons, or perhaps an Empty Demon, along with one or two Star Zha Demons."

"That should suffice."

"Your demon body is quite an eyesore, enter here to await further instructions."

As soon as the words were spoken, Tao Qian took out a Blood Gourd specially used for containing demons and placed the Substitute Demon inside.

Afterward, he once again took a seat at the Secret Acupoint Platform, cradling the Dao Seed, letting the Exotic Fragrance permeate into the interconnected Outer Realm territory, and cast out the second line, simply waiting for the fish to bite.

Chapter 114 Evil People hidden in Chenghuang Mountain, Māra's Sandalwood intimidates the Divine Soul.

Another line-by-line dialogue unfolded at the Secret Acupoint Platform. There, Tao Qian, embracing the Dao Seed, conversed with a Demon whose form was rather unique.

Before him, as usual, floated two alien objects.

To the left was the Netherworld Demon Contract, and to the right, the Heavenly Demon Blood Pill.

However, this Demon appeared much more endearing than the others.

It had the likeness of a human child, dressed in bright green garb, with the lower half of its body shrouded in mist. Its childlike face was eternally twisted in anger, the crimson in its pupils especially unnerving, warning others not to get too close.

At this moment, the child's eyes were fixed on the "Heavenly Demon Blood Transformation Pill" in front of Tao Qian. Drool dripped tick by tick from the corner of its mouth, turning into mist as it fell.

Hearing Tao Qian's question, the child patted its chest and bragged,

"You, a Human Cultivator, have called upon the right demon this time."

"Don't worry about Māra, or Buddhist Law, or Arrays; none of those have any effect on me."

"Once you sign this Demon Contract with me, all it takes is a flash of my Evasion Light, and the stars in the sky will move with me. Thousands of miles away is but a breath's distance, and even the much-vaunted 'Great Freedom Heart Light Escape Technique' of those bald heads from the Buddhist Sect can't compare to my Star Zha Demon Escape."

"So stop dilly-dallying, Human Cultivator. Bring me that Demon Contract and Demon Pill. Once I've signed and ingested it, I'll ensure you're safe from any disasters."

"Very well!"

The dialogue had just ended when the Demon Contract and Demon Pill successively floated towards the little Star Zha Demon.

But what surprised Tao Qian this time was that this little devil was exceptionally earnest.

It actually branded the Netherworld Demon Contract with its own demonic thoughts and then joyously swallowed the high-quality Heavenly Demon Blood Transformation Pill.

This scene made Tao Qian, holding the Demon Contract, feel a bit embarrassed.

Starting with the first Substitute Demon, followed by a second one, an Empty Demon, and an Illusion Demon, each and every one had been exceptionally cunning. Without fail, they all tampered with the contract signing—either creating an illusion or using fake demonic thoughts.

This little "Star Zha Demon" was the first Outer Realm Heaven Demon to sign the contract honestly.

Unfortunately for it, Tao Qian had no intention of fulfilling the contract and binding his Divine Soul and life to a Demon.

Instantly, he thought to erase his own brand with the soul and tucked away the Demon Contract.

The next moment, as he raised his head, he met the burning crimson gaze of the Demon Child.

Clearly, the Star Zha Demon had detected the "Corpse Evil Worm" in the Heavenly Demon Blood Transformation Pill.

By swallowing the Elixir, it had grown somewhat, but as a result, it had completely lost its freedom.

Enraged, the little demon's green clothing began to flutter without a breeze, a multitude of starry fragments burst forth along with the demonic qi. Had it not been for Tao Qian's restraint, it likely would have used the Star Zha Demon Escape to directly crush this deceptive and shameless Human Clan Cultivator.

Just as Tao Qian was about to carefully explain to the Star Zha Demon, at that very moment,

The entire Chenghuang Market suddenly trembled.

Immediately, layers of Chaos Light visible to the naked eye swept through the market, sparking many angry and astonished cries.

However, the enraged cultivators soon saw that the defensive formation equipped with prohibitions, set up by Joyful Pavilion within the market, also activated.

A voice filled with tenderness and allure resonated throughout every corner of the market, carried by the alien artifacts scattered all around.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I am Hua Niang, the humble manager of Chenghuang Market."

"The two arrays that just enveloped this area were for preventing disasters that might disrupt our market; not informing everyone in advance left us no choice, please accept our apology."

"The cultivator responsible for the Fragrant Meat Collection massacre, I have only just learned of your arrival in Chenghuang Market."

"Alas, running a business of welcoming guests, I should not expel any visitors."

"But there are rules from above, so please try to understand and bear with Hua Niang, and leave this place for now. Once you resolve the matter of the warrant, I assure you: inside the market you will remain unharmed. But once you step out of the market, the world is vast; you are free to go wherever you please."

Anyone who heard this voice would subconsciously feel sympathy,

Yearning to embrace this woman called "Hua Niang" and comfort her tenderly.

Yet her words also stirred up a huge commotion in the market.

The cultivator who committed the Fragrant Meat Collection massacre!

This keyword instantly sent shock and alarm through countless cultivators.

Discussions solidified into waves of chatter, reverberating throughout the market.

"Fragrant Meat Collection? Ugh, it's that terrible evil person. Dear ancestors above, I've been to Fragrant Meat Collection, and the sight was more frightening than the Infinite Purgatory itself, layer upon layer of demon flesh chopped into fine mince, mixed with blood and spread over miles of market, truly more demonic than Evil Demons themselves."

"Shh, didn't you hear? That killer is in the market right now."

"Run for it, I don't want to end up chopped up like that. I may be Mutated into a demon, but there's still hope for me; I shouldn't die here."

"Shut up, this is Chenghuang Market we're talking about, it's not comparable to Fragrant Meat Collection at all. Even if that evil person is cruel and brutal, they couldn't possibly commit a massacre here."

"Who can be certain of that, though? The owner of Fragrant Meat Collection, Zhu Wuxin, had Iron Buddha Temple as a backer, yet he still got slaughtered to the last."

"Hey, what do you think, is this Daoist a member of the Righteous or an Evil Demon?"

"That's a mystery, isn't it? They say Righteous, yet that person wields the sword techniques of the Secret Demon Sect and can perform the Secret Demon Transformation Technique, such eerie Great Divine Powers. But if you say Evil Demon, they never kill humans, only striking against Demon Cultivators. It's like they're a righteous swordsman who despises evil."

"Hush, enjoy the show, that guy's finished. I heard Iron Buddha Mountain has sent a Great Demon to capture him."

...

Within the quiet room, Tao Qian turned off the Forbidden Technique, allowing the multitude of voices from the outside to pour in.

Hearing these discussions and the fear of many Evil Cultivators and Demons towards him actually made Tao Qian want to laugh.

He had been cultivating and walking the path of Dao for some time, always keeping a low profile.

Yet, he unexpectedly made such a name for himself unintentionally after actively facing the first of the Three Calamities Heart Inquiry.

Knowing that Hua Niang wasn't the real deal, Tao Qian naturally disregarded the so-called advice.

Having put away the Star Zha Demon, Tao Qian also took Little Age, Lian Jing'er, and placed them into a Magic Artifact capable of holding living people. Then, still using the grisly "Evil Ghost Body," he left the quiet room and naturally blended into the chaotic crowd within the market.

They had not been separated for very long, merely a few breaths.

The flower maiden, who felt she had done enough superficial work, did not speak again. Instead, the chaotic brilliance that had previously enveloped the market suddenly became even more dazzling.

Then, with a thunderous boom, an enormous figure shot over from the distance.

Carrying a monstrous demonic aura, it descended upon the sky above Chenghuang Mountain, overlooking the demons and humans within the market.

This demon was filthy all over, with a wide nose and large eyes, a mouth full of tusks, and wrapped in a gigantic swaddle.

Upon its arrival, it emitted an extremely harsh sound that was a mix of wild laughter and wailing.

In that instant, all eyes within the vast Chenghuang Market gathered on it, and even the blind and deaf could immediately discern that this was an extremely fearsome demon, at least of the Transcend Mortality Realm.

In fact, among the group of demon cultivators and evil cultivators, there were many who recognized its origins.

Giant troll baby demon!

Now in Southern Yue, it had made a considerable name for itself – a great demon of the Transcend Mortality Realm.

Serving under the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva, it considered itself one of the Bodhisattva's demon children.

"Wow... hahaha!"

"I've said before, Flower Maiden, there's no need for small talk. Just let me happily capture that guy and bring him back. Maybe we'll even have enough time left for us to enjoy a good moment of warmth," it said mockingly, directly flirting with many of the dream Daoist partners of the demon cultivators in the market.

Its tone clearly showed it did not regard the cultivator who had caused the Fragrant Meat Collection tragedy as being worth its attention.

Indeed, that was the case. In various predictive divine arts, Tao Qian always showed the same result: A Qi Refining Realm human cultivator.

Despite showing many special abilities over the past two days, and gaining a formidable reputation among the demon and evil cultivators in Southern Yue with his ever-increasing strength in battle, none of this changed the fact that he was just a Qi Refining Realm cultivator.

Whereas this giant troll baby demon was a bona fide Transcend Mortality Realm demon, and it was cultivating the fundamental methods of an infant demon. Despite being toyed with by Master Xiao without the slightest resistance, it was absolutely domineering and unreasonable when facing other cultivators.

At this moment, the giant troll baby demon sat directly on the forbidden big array, its swollen fatty hands patting the chaotic brilliance below it.

It then fished something out of its filthy embrace with one hand, while looking at the market with a disdainful gaze, mocking, "That little brat who practiced the Secret Demon Sect's methods, it's a huge fortune and opportunity for you that I personally came to capture you."

"When I catch you, don't resist. Although the Bodhisattva wants you alive, trying to convert you into a demon, my hand is always heavy. If you resist even a little, I'll kill you. But you can try to run. This Five Elements reversal array isn't that extraordinary. You learned the Secret Demon Body Sword and the Secret Demon Transformation Technique, maybe you've also learned the Secret Demon Escape Technique too. It should be easy for you to escape," it continued.

"If you run, I'll chase. Hehe, fun."

"If you do not run and try to play hide and seek with me among these waste and trash, that's fine too. Just don't blame me for cheating."

"Where did I put that great treasure the Bodhisattva gave me... oh, found it."

The infant demon, which had inadvertently stabbed everyone in the market with a knife, suddenly had a brilliant childlike smile on that extremely ugly face.

While a true child's smile would be endearing, its smile only made every demon and evil cultivator in the market feel an urge to vomit.

However, in an instant, everyone's gaze was attracted to the object in the infant demon's hand.

It was a small, exquisitely beautiful, and extraordinarily ornate incense burner, emitting an extremely intense and unusual aura.

The infant demon held up the incense burner, grinning and laughing loudly without lifting a finger, boasted to everyone in the market,

"This is a fine treasure bestowed upon me by the Bodhisattva, called the Māra Sandalwood Charming God Incense Burner. It has been used to light incense for the Bodhisattva for many years; it's really fun, magical, and dangerous."

"That little brat, don't get caught too quickly, that would be really boring."

"Huh"

The infant demon was showing off its unruly nature, making a scene all on its own.

As soon as it finished speaking, it swiftly removed the lid of the incense burner, and then blew a breath inside.

The next moment, a shocking scene unfolded that stunned the entire market:

"Boom!"

Suddenly, without any warning, a thick cloud of exotic fragrance billowed from within the burner, and then ten thousand feet of Buddha Light illuminated the sky, with the sound of Buddhist chants echoing on their own.

A perfectly ordinary Chenghuang Mountain was directly transformed into a Buddhist temple with flourishing incense at its gates.

And all of this was caused by just that small incense burner.

In Chenghuang market, many cultivators and demons of not insignificant cultivation realms were hidden, even more than one at the Transcend Mortality Realm.

But at this moment, listening to that Buddha chant imbued with extraordinary divine power and facing the sandalwood fragrance cloud that covered the sky like mist and smoke, everyone lost their capacity to resist.

Their divine souls were directly immobilized.

All eyes watched as the fragrance cloud swirled in, each strand seemingly alive or under the control of a willful guidance, directly wrapping around a figure in the crowd.

That figure turned out to be a ghastly evil ghost with a little ghost perched on each of its shoulders.

As the fragrant smoke twined around it, the evil ghost immediately manifested its true form—an ordinary Human Clan cultivator dressed as a corpse chasing Daoist, with two little zombies in tow, being dragged straight toward the incense burner by the smoky cloud.

Upon seeing this, including the infant demon,

Disappointment showed on the faces of who knows how many individuals. All the fuss about how strong and notorious they were before, and now they couldn't even resist a bit?

Above the sky, the giant troll baby demon's lament was heard:

"Is this it?"

"Although the Bodhisattva's magical treasure is very powerful, you little demon brat have received part of the Secret Demon Sect's lineage. Are you that incapable and worthless?"

"Disappointing, really such a disappointment to me."

Chapter 115 Substitute Demon Deceives Sandalwood, Sharp-tongued Spirit Sound Provokes Infant Devil

Chenghuang Mountain, Da Fang City, witnessed an extremely dull capturing act by thousands of Evil Cultivators.

Now, everyone knew that the item called "Māra Sandalwood Charming God Incense Burner" was a fine magical treasure, at least of the True Device level.

With just one exhalation, it could create a sky full of Sandalwood Fragrance Clouds.

It could capture Divine Souls and seize Life.

The Fierce Sword Cultivator, who had once committed the atrocity at the Fragrant Meat Collection and slaughtered a vast number of demons, couldn't even resist.

He was like a clay figure, wrapped and bound by the misty clouds, dragged into the incense burner.

Then, the infant demon sighed, tucked the exquisite incense burner into its bosom, and collected a set of Inverted Five Elements Formation Flags.

With hands clasped behind his back, he left the Chenghuang Market in a lonely and unbeatable manner, leisurely heading towards the Iron Buddha Temple.

It was as if it could imagine, behind it, numerous Evil Cultivators, with a face of "admiration," watching its departing figure.

Humans have vanity!

This demon, mutated and fallen from the Human Clan, along with the side effects of the infant demon's Basic Method, had even more vanity.

As soon as the giant troll baby demon left, there was a sudden commotion, and the market, from its dead silence, returned to normal, then became even more bustling as everyone began discussing the giant troll baby demon and the miraculous treasure from Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva.

Before that, the "Fierce Sword Cultivator," previously notorious, had his reputation plummet.

Boasting to be fierce and brutal, a Qi Refinement Realm was capable of slaughtering the Meat Collection Market, even slaying the pig demon from the Foundation Establishment Realm and rumoring to have tasted its heart for its saltiness.

Well!

The appearance of this giant troll baby demon, without any scene of battle, was captured as soon as the magical treasure was invoked.

It truly was disappointing, and hence discussions about it were mostly derogatory.

In such an atmosphere, nobody noticed that, in a certain tavern, a shabby old Daoist suddenly entered, flanked by a finely crafted young Daoist boy on each side.

Listening to the discussions of the Evil Cultivators inside the tavern, he also requested a quiet room for a brief cultivation.

As soon as he entered the quiet room, the old Daoist's figure swayed, revealing Tao Qian's true form.

He sat down cross-legged and immediately started to meditate, refining elixirs and demons, while muttering, "The Substitute Demon won't deceive for long, that ugly baby might realize halfway; it's better to control a few more demons quickly to cope with the frenzied search after this Transcend Mortality Demon loses face."

"Thinking carefully, there isn't much time left until I'm completely immune from the Prediction Skill."

"Let that ugly baby be rampant for a moment longer; once I have no concerns, hum."

With those words, Tao Qian repeated the process.

Indeed, not much time passed.

About thirty minutes later, still in Chenghuang Market, a much larger disturbance occurred without warning.

Boom!

Numerous Array Flags of the Five Elements fell from the sky, instantly covering Chenghuang Mountain again, the surging force of the Inverted Five Elements directly making any Escape Skill difficult to deploy, even the techniques of flying and leaping were greatly restricted.

If any cultivators or demon cultivators wanted to leave, they could only rely on the sheer power of their bodies.

Before the confused demon cultivators could speak, the giant troll baby demon had returned, like a falling meteor, smashing towards them.

While still in the air, its anger, air of killing, and the solidified killing intent surged ahead.

It opened its tusk-filled mouth, roaring:

"Despicable and shameless little demon, come out!"

"How dare you ... how dare you deceive me."

"I will kill you, I must tear you to pieces, and scatter your ashes to the wind."

"Ah!"

Accompanying these roars, everyone saw the infant demon, in its chubby hands, was clutching an Outer Realm Demon resembling a snake, encircled by a gray ancient mirror.

The infant demon, now truly like a frenzied baby, forcefully rubbed the demon against the surface layer of the Chaos Light, incredibly agitated, jumping around, the terrifying demonic Qi sweeping like a tide over Chenghuang Market again and again.

The once scenic Chenghuang Mountain was soon ruined, riddled with holes and wounds everywhere.

Yet, even so, Joyful Pavilion did not intervene to stop the furious infant demon.

Now, everyone knew, this Transcend Mortality Demon had been tricked by the cunning sword cultivator.

The Bodhisattva's gifted incense burner had captured not the body of the sword cultivator, but a "Substitute Demon."

It was indeed fortunate for this infant demon, which had previously assumed a lonely and unbeatable air.

Now that the truth was revealed, everyone felt face pain for it.

Face, heavily lost.

The market's demon cultivators, suddenly aware of the truth, were now all trying their best to avoid making eye contact with the giant troll baby demon.

Anyone with sense knew that a very vain but face-lost Transcend Mortality Demon, venting its anger, didn't need a reason.

You might just be an innocent bystander, but because you glanced at it at this moment, you gave it an excuse to hammer you to death.

If you tried to argue, "I wasn't laughing at you," your soul could be erased by it.

In such an atmosphere, the giant troll baby demon could also feel it.

Venting for a full fifteen minutes, the infant demon finally calmed down and crushed the barely alive Substitute Demon in its hand.

Immediately thereafter, it stood again on the sky above Chenghuang Mountain, its venomous and cruel eyes glaring at the many cultivators and demons in the market. The first words it spat out almost caused an uproar throughout the market.

"I really want to ask the Bodhisattva for that 'Hundred Demon Embryo Blood Refining Array' to refine you all."

"Sadly, the Bodhisattva probably won't agree."

Had it not been for the latter half of the statement, what the infant demon would have seen was likely a scene of thousands of demon cultivators scattering in escape.

However, anyone could tell that the first sentence was its true desire, only that the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva would likely not allow this lawless infant demon to wreak havoc.

After a sigh, the infant demon, seemingly piqued, took out the incense burner again and flipped open the lid, blowing a breath over it.

"Boom!"

Once again, ten thousand feet of Buddha Light, Zen chants, and the sky-engulfing, smoke-like Sandalwood Fragrance Cloud enveloped the area.

This wisp of smoke directly entwined around a figure in the market, this time an impoverished old Daoist with two children beside him, who offered no resistance. They only feigned a struggle in the smoky bindings to find a slightly more comfortable position.

Before they were dragged into the incense burner, the infant demon grabbed them with its swollen, giant hand.

Accompanied by a "bang," Demonic Fog surged, revealing another Substitute Demon.

This time, the thousands of cultivators and demons in the market also fell into silence, everyone involuntarily worried for the infant demon.

"That fierce Human Cultivator is only in the Qi Refining Realm, but he cultivates the top-notch Secret Demon Transformation Technique which even the Daoist and Buddhist Sects would need to prepare for to detect. A mere giant troll infant demon really can't cope."

"To finally have the Sandalwood Incense Burner—a Bodhisattva's Treasure—to help, who would have thought that the cultivator could summon such rare demons as Substitute Demons."

"What can be done about this?"

After placing themselves in the infant demon's perspective, many felt worried for it, but the infant demon felt that everyone in the market was mocking it.

Of course, it was right to think so, as at that moment both the demons and the Evil Cultivators were inwardly mocking the infant demon wildly.

Had it cultivated the Daoist Mind Reading Technique or the Buddhist Telepathy, it would have heard the overwhelming laughter.

"Bang!"

Within a thud, the freshly emerged Substitute Demon was crushed.

The giant troll infant demon, gnashing its tusks as if about to explode from rage, also scratched at its filthy body and furiously said, "Little demon, let's keep going, I want to see how many more Substitute Demons you can summon."

Before the words even finished, another breath was blown out.

The skies of Chenghuang Mountain were once again swept by the Sandalwood Fragrance Cloud, the Bodhisattva's Treasure did not fail in capturing its target, only pity...

"Bang, again!"

"Bang!"

"Bang!"

In the following time, the cultivators in Chenghuang Market felt they were opening their eyes to new sights, witnessing rare Substitute Demons continuously emerging, unaware that four had already died.

Even so, that terrifyingly fierce Human Clan Sword Cultivator never revealed his true face.

At this moment, no one dared to belittle that person anymore.

Whether in the Qi Refinement Realm or Foundation Establishment Realm, all demons and cultivators on Chenghuang Mountain deeply respected that Human Clan Sword Cultivator who had cleared the Fragrant Meat Collection.

Because, in the past thirty minutes echoing above the sky, aside from the giant troll infant demon's impotent rage and howling,

More so, it was the mysterious and ferocious Human Clan Sword Cultivator, through the "Substitute Demon's" mouth, who continuously spat out taunts.

"Is this all you've got? Didn't you claim to be strong enough to kill me? How are you, a Transcend Mortality Demon, so lacking in Divine Power that you can't even see my true face, let alone kill me?"

"You call yourself giant troll infant demon, I suppose you cultivate the Infant Sect Method, but I wonder how you cultivate; everyone from the Infant Sect is exceptionally handsome and harmonious with nature. How did you manage to cultivate such an ugly appearance; have you ever looked in a mirror?"

"Speaking of your ugly face, I've heard a rumor that you claim to be a child under the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva. But what I heard was that you were rejected by that Bodhisattva. What did she say? Oh right, 'You are ugly but fancy yourself beautiful.' The Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva really is beautifully cruel, openly showing no consideration for your ugly face."

"Ah, I remember, when Infant Sect Master Xiao campaigned against Iron Buddha Mountain, you were guarding the formations, yet Master Xiao toyed with you effortlessly; nearly costing you your life with just a mere rattle."

"Seeing this, ugly infant, you really can't do anything right. If I were you, I'd settle my own accounts sooner rather than constantly losing face."

"With such incompetence, you finally had an easy job of capturing a Qi Refinement Realm Human Cultivator, yet I see you can't even complete this minor task. I wonder, after going back, whether the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva might slap you to death in anger."

...

As these venomous words continuously echoed around Chenghuang Mountain,

Many demon cultivators in the market hung their heads even lower, roaring internally for no more words to be said.

Everyone had already become too frightened to even glance at the giant troll infant demon.

It seemed there wasn't just a Transcend Mortality Demon there,

But rather, a colossal volcano completely erupting, scattering molten flames across the land.

Giant troll infant demon!

It was now on the verge of falling into a state of madness.

Some cultivators, highly sensitive to the scents of "Mutation" and "Corruption," began to show signs of drastic change in their expressions.

Chapter 116 Do Not Assume This Child Lacks Divine Skills, The Infant Demon Decapitated Flees Ten Thousand Miles

Why do demons and abnormalities never cease in this world?

One reason is the Human Clan itself.

All cultivators, whether Daoist, Buddhist, or belonging to heresy and heterodoxy, no matter which path they follow, are in fact backup armies for demons and monsters.

Once their cultivation goes astray, they immediately become Evil Cultivators.

If they continue to mutate and fall, they will directly transform into irrational, crazed monsters, utterly beyond salvation.

Just like when Tao Qian first entered the Dao at Seeking Immortal Pier, and saw Hong Heihu before that slaughter. Although he had deviated in practicing the "Blood River Scripture" making him an Evil Cultivator, it wasn't until he was backstabbed by his own son that he mutated into a mindless Blood Beast brute.

Now, the Transcend Mortality Realm Demon, raging furiously and threatening Chenghuang Mountain, was facing the same situation.

The words that Tao Qian uttered through the mouth of the Substitute Demon, combined with the Nine True Spirit Sound, a Divine Skill immensely harmful to the Divine Soul, turned every word into a blade, jabbing at the giant troll baby demon's already weak Divine Soul.

Gradually, it began to falter.

The Demonic Qi emanating from its body became increasingly wild and frenzied.

In the market, many cultivators and Alien Species sensed that something was amiss.

Among them, several impetuous ones, unwilling to wait any longer, quickly looked up at the infant demon's condition, then began shouting loudly before starting to flee using their physical bodies.

"Quick, this place is doomed, leave fast."

"The infant demon is going mad, run!"

"It's over, this infant demon is about to fall, a Transcend Mortality Realm Mutated Demon will affect us."

"It's too late, we'll all die."

Despite many cultivators, demons, and Alien Species being quick-witted, sensing that something was wrong with the giant troll baby demon and immediately fleeing, it was still too late.

"Boom!"

With a loud bang, something massive hit the ground.

In an instant, half of Chenghuang Mountain was crushed by this giant creature, and the remaining area was shrouded in its shadow.

This giant creature was the infant demon.

Everyone, including Tao Qian hidden in the shadows, saw clearly at that moment.

The originally slightly larger-than-an-adult human giant troll baby demon's body was visibly swelling at a rapid rate, with enormous amounts of swollen, filthy flesh emerging from nowhere, continually spilling out.

At the same time, giant tumors grew on its body's surface, and with "thump, thump, thump" sounds, the tumors burst, sending swollen arms stretching out from its back and sides.

A mix of crimson blood Qi and black rancid Qi swirled together, forming a massive cloud that completely enveloped the giant infant.

It was mutating, it was falling.

It was swaddled in what was clearly a Magical Treasure, which still managed to wrap around it despite its growth to mountainous proportions.

From within the flamboyant swaddling clothes, the infant demon cried and howled.

"Wah! Ah ah ah... kill kill kill!"

"Eat eat eat!"

"Thump thump thump!"

It started pounding on the Array, beating Chenghuang Mountain, rolling around on the mountain, and occasionally grabbing people, buildings, or anything nearby, stuffing them directly into its tusk-filled gaping mouth to chew voraciously.

If it were a normal infant, it wouldn't have been a big deal.

But the current giant troll baby demon, with a body size befitting its name, the entirety of Chenghuang Mountain couldn't withstand its rampage; in the blink of an eye, at least dozens of patrons had suffered.

Perversely, the mutated infant demon was extremely picky—biting something once and then not eating it again, thus halves of patron corpses were scattered everywhere.

As this scene unfolded, the Joyful Pavilion finally could not sit still.

It directly released the Forbidden Array, allowing all the demons, Evil Cultivators, and Alien Species within the market a chance to escape.

At the same time, dozens of figures rapidly flew out from inside the Joyful Treasure Pavilion, simultaneously using various types of Magical Treasures like bells, drums, gongs, zithers, etc., to disperse the Spirit Sound released by Tao Qian, and also lit a large amount of Calming God Incense, trying to help the giant troll baby demon calm down.

In that instant, the sky was swirling with smoke and divine music filled the air.

These measures indeed had an effect.

The giant and blood-red eyes of the infant demon, due to its mutation and fall, gradually regained some clarity.

Realizing its predicament, the eyes of the infant demon immediately showed panic and fear.

Although it was a complete Evil Cultivator, indulgent and lawless, it did not intend to mutate into a selfless, purely crazed creature.

As such "life forms" always met with no good end.

In the world of the Righteous, they would be executed, skinned, and dissected, taking useful parts for refining treasures and arts.

And for the Evil Cultivators who were also demons, their fate was even more tragic; not only were they executed, but they were roasted and eaten, with useful parts taken away for refining and treasure-making. It could be said that not a single bit was wasted.

At this thought, the infant demon also immediately took action.

The filthy giant hands no longer pounded the workshop, but struggled against their demonic nature, recklessly piercing through their own bodies. They forcibly extracted various worms, tumors, blood sausages, and other "Mutated Demons" and "strange lesions," and then thump, thump, thump, they tossed them out, wantonly contaminating the surrounding area.

This action had some effect, but it still was not enough.

So, the infant demon controlled a filthy hand to reach into the swaddling clothes and began frantically searching. Soon, it actually pulled out a blood-red sword box that looked exactly like a coffin.

The infant demon used its mind to cast a spell, lifting the heavy "coffin lid" of the box.

The next moment, a terrifying sword intent that even Tao Qian in the dark preparing something was alarmed by, surged into the sky, and then one saw one huge blood-red sword after another flying out of the coffin, piercing into the giant troll baby demon's body amid the "hiss hiss hiss" sound.

Chenghuang Mountain also suffered due to this infant demon, getting stabbed by those huge swords like a porcupine.

Within a hundred miles, every corner echoed with the agonizing howls of the infant demon.

Surprisingly, amidst the wails, the signs of its mutated and fallen body really began to diminish.

But just at this moment, a change occurred again.

Accompanied by a piercing whistle, within the entire Chenghuang Mountain, an endless stream of Xuan Yin Invisible Sword Qi suddenly burst forth, slashing like a torrential rain toward the infant demon impaled on the mountain by its own magical treasure.

Observers thought to themselves, "That Sword Cultivator is indeed ruthless, thinking of attacking a Transcend Mortality Demon with just a Qi Refining Realm cultivation? But this sword array is indeed as terrifying as the legends say. The infant demon has such a huge body; if it really gets hit, who knows how much lard could be sliced off?"

Seeing the terrifying power of the Xuan Yin Invisible Sword Array, the cultivators in the market all wanted to avoid it.

But unexpectedly, the infant demon, who had just regained its senses, suddenly burst into loud laughter and didn't avoid it at all. Its filthy giant hands suddenly pounded the void, and with a "crack" sound, the so-called sword array shattered like an illusion, and an illusion demon, its body full of eyes like smoke and fog, was forcibly pulled out by the infant demon.

"Ha ha ha, Illusion Demon? You little demon, you've finally run out of tricks,"

"Daring to provoke my Divine Soul and cause my fall, wait till I dig you out, I must chew you to pieces."

Amidst the roar, the infant demon called forth the Māra Sandalwood Charming God Incense Burner with one breath.

In an instant, Buddhist chants sounded, and sandalwood fragrance clouds wrapped around, quickly pulling a Human Clan Cultivator and two odd little Mountain Spirits from inside the shattered Chenghuang Mountain.

The cultivator was of average stature, plain-looking, but with a pair of eyes as sharp as a hawk, and his body overflowed with terrifying Sword Intent.

For some reason, upon seeing this cultivator, including the infant demon, everyone couldn't help but think, "Caught him, with such an appearance, he must be the real deal."

At this, the infant demon was most pleased.

Amidst the howling wind, it suddenly reached out a gigantic arm, half-way already grabbing the Sword Cultivator along with the two cute little Mountain Spirit, clutching them tightly before tossing them into its gaping maw, as if devouring three sugar beans, tusks clamping down and vigorously chewing.

But with one bite, there was only a "bang" sound, and amidst swirling Demon Fog, a Substitute Demon with an innocent face appeared, stuck in the teeth of the infant demon, looking tearlessly at its own messy Demon Body.

Before the infant demon could get angry again, true surprise happened.

A faint voice, with no warning, echoed through the broken and chaotic Chenghuang Market.

"The hour has come!"

"Originally, I planned to just leave, as my frail body really couldn't cope with a Transcend Mortality Demon capable of casting the Deceitful Infant Demon Escape Technique."

"But you, ugly baby, willingly laid yourself on the chopping block, bound yourself, and used this Magic Sword to thoroughly impale yourself. If I don't take the opportunity to gift you a sword, how can I do justice to all your hard work putting up with this?"

Before these words rose up in the air.

At the neck of the giant troll baby demon, suddenly a vague figure emerged from the "Void". In an instant of transformation from illusion to reality, a Hundred Refinement Sword Pill suddenly leapt out.

Driven by the "three hundred and sixty paths" of Spirit Treasure Immortal Spirit Qi inside Tao Qian, this sword pill abruptly extended a thick sword light that could be clearly seen even a hundred miles away. It seemed like it was going to split the entire earth in half, and in a thunderous noise, in the blink of an eye, it cleaved through the neck of the giant troll baby demon.

From afar, it was an extremely strange scene: a mountainous bloated infant demon, its body full of blood swords, lying atop Chenghuang Mountain, then a sword light pillar sweeping across its neck, accompanied by a torrent of fresh blood gushing, that extremely ugly head was directly chopped off.

Chenghuang Mountain Market, and all around, numerous cultivators and demons striving to escape.

At this moment, they were all stunned.

They watched as a Blood River gushed from the infant demon, wrapping and sweeping a gigantic ugly baby head downwards towards the base of Chenghuang Mountain.

In this terrifying scene, a laugh echoed.

"From the Fragrant Meat Collection to the end at the Joyful Pavilion."

"Slashing through the group of demons, beheading the infant demon."

"Exhilarating, truly too exhilarating, ha ha ha..."

Listening to this hearty laughter, people saw that vaguely outlined Sword Cultivator casually take out a gourd and shake out a Green-clothed Child-like Demon.

Although that Demon's face was full of reluctance, it still turned into twinkling starlight fragments wrapping around the body of that Human Clan Sword Cultivator.

Boom!

It was clearly daytime, but everyone knew this was no illusion.

The stars in the sky seemed to tremble slightly, visible brilliant starlight suddenly burst forth, streaking across the land, vanishing instantly towards an unknown place.

Chapter 117 In front of Meiling Mountain, Primordial Yang Sect, Evil Spirits proclaim long live.

Whoo-whoo-whoo! Accompanied by the whistle, a steam train scarred from numerous battles, known as the "Primordial Yang," spewed thick smoke into the sky while dragging along no less than thirty carriages and slowly came to a stop inside Yang County Station.

When the train pulled into the station, one could clearly see that, apart from a few spacious carriages at the front that carried nobles, the remaining twenty-some carriages were all packed full of people standing and sitting.

From their clothing, one could tell the diversity of the passengers on the train: old men in patched cotton garments with cloth stockings and shoes, small merchants in cotton robes, wealthy households in mink, male and female students in modern school uniforms, overseas students in suits, martial artists from worldly society... Most of them were ordinary folk in single layers of clothing.

As soon as the doors opened, everyone was eager to disembark, anxiously eyeing the wounded carriages. They then bowed and expressed their gratitude to the dozen or so cultivators flying through the sky, many of whom were moved to tears and began racing toward the safety of Yang County with their families in tow.

As the last carriage opened, those who disembarked were somewhat special passengers; each one emitted an unusual aura, indicating that they were all cultivators.

A middle-aged cultivator in a fiery red Daoist robe descended from the sky and said to these loose cultivators,

"Fellow cultivators, your assistance along the way is immensely appreciated. On behalf of the Primordial Yang Sect, I express our deep gratitude. The world is undergoing great changes, and if any of you wishes to join our Sect as a Guest Elder, you may follow me now to meet our Sect Master."

This middle-aged Taoist, with his Foundation Establishment Realm cultivation, surpassed all the loose cultivators present. At his call, the cultivators responded immediately.

"This aligns perfectly with my intentions. With the current chaotic situation, if the Primordial Yang Sect is willing to take me in, then shamelessly I accept."

"The magnanimity of the Primordial Yang Sect is commendable. They're even willing to pay a steep price to ransom the commoners from the demons that occupy Giant Deer City. Just for this reason alone, it's worth joining them. I only hope that senior will not look down on my weak cultivation at the Energy-Introducing Realm."

"Alas, the demons have flooded into Southern Yue from several surrounding provinces, with most of the territory having fallen. Fortunately, the provincial city remains intact, and places like Yang County, Thunder City, Fire God City, and Qingya City, which are protected by major sects, are not disturbed by demons. The Human Clan still has a chance to breathe."

"But there's more. There are hero cultivators like Gu Zhichang and Zheng Wufu leading rebel armies, who have at least reclaimed over a dozen cities and counties in the southeastern region. In addition, righteous Human Clan cultivators have stepped forward, like the mysterious sword cultivator who slaughtered the Fragrant Meat Collection and beheaded the giant troll baby demon at Iron Buddha Temple, giving the Human Clan great hope."

"I've heard of that sword cultivator as well. They say he's a fiend who has received some of the Secret Demon Sect's inheritance. However, his cultivation in the Qi Refining Realm alone can't do much. The giant troll baby demon whose head he severed didn't die; right after the sword cultivator left, the baby demon directly mutated into a ferocious infant demon and slaughtered all the remaining evil demon cultivators in Chenghuang Market."

"Good riddance. Nowadays, who doesn't know that Joyful Pavilion has sided with the Devil God Army? We righteous cultivators have long since stopped going to Joyful Pavilion."

"Disaster struck too suddenly. Now, with the news that the Ancestor God Forbidden Technique Longevity Barrier is ineffective spreading throughout the world, not only have all hidden demons appeared, but the number of humans mutated into demons and alien species is skyrocketing. It's rumored that the Sect Master of a small sect had a mishap in his cultivation, which directly caused the over a hundred disciples listening to his teachings to mutate and fall into demonhood overnight, slaughtering the town at the base of the mountain... Such dark and chaotic times have truly arrived."

"Thanks for the kindness, senior, but I plan to leave Southern Yue to seek refuge elsewhere. I heard conditions are much better in other provinces."

"You're not wrong. Who knows what the court and Ji Xianxian are doing? And where is the Demon Suppression Army of several hundred thousand troops? I heard that once they form their array, they can instantly kill those at the Cavernous Mystery Realm, and even seriously injure cultivators of the Ultimate Happiness Realm. Why have they not moved to quell this chaos?"

...

Among these voices, some accepted the Primordial Yang Sect's invitation, while many loose cultivators did not.

Included was a young cultivator who obviously practiced the Heterodox Magic of the "Heavenly Mechanism Puppets Scripture," carrying and leading several puppets of strange design. After refusing the invitation, he entered the town called Yang County, which was still under expansion, without uttering a word.

Needless to say, this mysterious puppet cultivator covered in a black robe was none other than Tao Qian's disguise.

One of the big-headed doll puppets latched onto his back was Little Age.

Following closely by his side, the bronze puppet as tall as a man was Lian Jing'er in disguise.

Tao Qian took such precautions, naturally due to how his formidable achievements over the past two days had affected others.

Especially since he had recently beheaded a giant troll infant demon with a single sword strike, despite merely being a Qi Refining Realm cultivator, his reputation within Southern Yue was truly not small.

After all, the number of demons and evil cultivators that had died by his hand was excessively high, and among them were many with realms higher than his.

Of course, the "giant troll infant demon" did not count.

After all, it was a Transcend Mortality Realm demon, and simply chopping off its head couldn't kill it.

After being decapitated, the infant demon indeed did not die, but it mutated into a truly demonic creature—extremely violent, brutal, and devoid of all sense of self.

A demon infant larger than mountains!

It was bad enough that the Joyful Pavilion's big investment, Chenghuang Market, was directly destroyed, but that day, the demons and evil cultivators there were devoured by the demon infant to the extent of fifty or sixty percent, resulting in heavy casualties.

It's said that those who went to see the aftermath found the land everywhere scattered with dismembered, haphazard corpses.

Fortunately, the demon infant couldn't wreak havoc for too long before it was quickly bound and captured by people sent by the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva and taken back to Iron Buddha Mountain.

This outcome was, in fact, precisely Tao Qian's intention.

He had known all along that his sword strike couldn't kill the infant demon but it could be the final straw to force it to mutate and fall.

That fate was much worse than just dying—a Transcend Mortality demon with no hopeful future in cultivation, possibly returning to Iron Buddha Temple to have its skin peeled and bones disassembled, its entire existence and life turned into resources to empower other demons.

"It's a pity that there wasn't enough time; I couldn't ensure I could extract the good stuff from that peculiar swaddle before the infant demon turned into a demon infant. The one thing I could take, the Māra Sandalwood Charming God Incense Burner, I dared not touch, wasting a great opportunity."

"However, the benefits I've acquired these past two days have been plenty enough; best not to be greedy."

As this thought occurred to him, Tao Qian couldn't help but recall the many gains he had made in the past two days:

A large variety of exotic treasures and cultivation resources from the Mustard Seed Talisman seed.

Experiences in combat and magical dueling that couldn't be acquired from books.

Advancing from the early stage to the middle stage of the Qi Refining Realm, acquiring new divine powers such as the "Sweet Rain Skill," "Auspicious Cloud Skill," and "Clear Wind Skill," among seven or eight others. The Spirit Treasure Immortal Spirit Qi within his body had increased from the initial ninety-nine streaks to one hundred and sixty-eight and later surged to as many as three hundred and sixty.

If one were to cultivate following the rules and regulations, acquiring these would surely take a significant amount of time.

But Tao Qian had managed to shorten it to within two days.

Of course, all of this was thanks to the Heart Inquiry Three Calamities.

When Spirit Treasure Cultivators faced the Three Calamities, although there were life and death dangers, it also came with many opportunities, and the speed of cultivation was incomparable to ordinary times, thus confirming the saying that misfortune leans on fortune, and fortune on misfortune.

"Now, the first disaster is over."

"This means that as long as I can get to the Spirit Treasure Mountain Gate, I, Tao Qian, will surely be admitted."

At this thought, Tao Qian couldn't help but reveal a smile on his face.

He then looked ahead quite relaxedly.

To his surprise, whether it was someone like him, a Cultivator of strange appearance, or those terrified commoners from other counties, everyone was easily accepted.

The local county residents did not reject these outsiders, not even a look of surprise or wonder; instead, there were welcoming gazes aplenty.

On his journey here, right up to the border of Southern Yue, Tao Qian had seen many terrifying and absurd sights.

Demons eating humans or the Earth Devil Country and the like were already common occurrences.

This bustling and prosperous scene was the real rarity.

He had taken the Primordial Yang train, so he had already learned the details during the train ride and knew that such scenes would become increasingly common.

The Devil God Army might have made a mess of Southern Yue, but after all, it was one of the largest provinces in the southern region, with not a few cultivating forces, both big and small.

These sect forces had been waiting for the Tian Chao officials to act, but Ji Xianxian remained unmoved.

To protect their foundations, knowing also that the Ancestor God Forbidden Technique had lost its effect, these forces, big and small, had no reservations anymore and began to intervene in the worldly affairs.

Those cities and counties severely afflicted by demons had no choice but to seek protection from these cultivating sects at such life and death moments.

Yang County, a border county in Southern Yue, was also the bustling and large county that one must pass through to reach Meiling.

Primordial Yang Sect, a cultivating sect located here, although not among the Twelve Major Daoist Sects and nowhere near comparable to the Ten Thousand Infant Sect,

had several hundred Cultivators who practiced the legitimate Daoist skill from the Great Book "Primordial Yang True Fire Scripture." It was rumored that the founding Sect Master was a previous generation genius true practitioner from the Pure Yang Sect.

In recent days, the thirty thousand residents of Yang County, along with the county government, all agreed to hand over the control of Yang County to the Primordial Yang Sect.

It was because of this that the lively and bustling scene in front of him had unfolded.

However, Tao Qian's destination was not here, but rather outside of Yang County, a territory called Meiling Mountain that stretched magnificently and led straight through to two major provinces outside of Southern Yue Province.

That day, he had forced the little devil Star Zha to use Evasion Light, fleeing from Chenghuang Mountain with an extremely dashing posture.

But unfortunately, either that little devil had been bragging that its Escape Skill surpassed the "Great Freedom Heart Light Escape," or it was too weak to possess the ability to escape tens of thousands of miles in a thought, let alone to ignore the various demon arrays and forbidden techniques along the way.

Moreover, Tao Qian found out that it wasn't just demons who were creating obstacles; even the Southern Yue officials had set up formations in some critical areas to obstruct Escape Skills.

Tao Qian, merely a Qi Refining Realm cultivator, naturally had no capacity to create a big scene.

He had to obediently escape along the previously chosen route to this border area.

The only consoling part: after surviving the first calamity, Tao Qian could say he sailed with the wind, his cultivation increasing every moment, without encountering any danger.

"After leaving Yang County and following the ancient path up Meiling Mountain, I can directly enter Fumin Province, which I heard is also chaotic but in a better state than Southern Yue, where I should be able to pass through safely to reach the Penglai Sea."

"Those demons setting up demon arrays and forbidden techniques are somewhat understandable, but I don't know what Ji Xianxian is thinking, also restricting..."

While Tao Qian was contemplating, he took the two little ones and was about to cross the Main Street of Yang County to leave the city.

But at that moment, several voices that sounded very shrill to his ears reached him.

They came from five or six insignificant Cultivators setting up wooden shacks and selling spirit pills and talismans to the residents.

While selling the charms at low prices, they spouted propaganda:

"Fellow townspeople, don't worry about those demons."

"We have come from the provincial city to tell you some shocking good news."

"Our Governor of Southern Yue, Mr. Ji has received an imperial edict from the court, granting him full control over Southern Yue Province, and he will send troops to suppress the rebellion from today onwards."

"The eight hundred thousand Demon Suppression Army will soon sweep clean and eliminate all the filthy demons and ghosts."

"Before that, Mr. Ji has sent us to various places to sell these remarkably effective spirit pills and talismans at the lowest prices, ensuring that all residents are free from the contamination of demonic Qi."

"Mr. Ji is the great savior of our Southern Yue."

"Long live Mr. Ji! Long live Mr. Ji! Long live Mr. Ji!"

Chapter 118 The Daughter Palace's Legacy is Passed On, Life Extension during the Transit of the Longevity Star

Main Street of Yang County was bustling with a dense crowd of people.

Tao Qian, disguised as a Puppet Master, listened to the small group of low-level cultivators boasting for a moment but did nothing, his face expressionless as he passed by.

Where these cultivators hailed from, and why they boasted about Ji Xianxian—Tao Qian knew perfectly well. He understood that such spectacles must be prevalent throughout Southern Yue. Who could stop it? The trend was with him.

In a flash of thought, Tao Qian did not linger much in Yang County and quickly led two little ones out of the city.

After sensing that there were no array restrictions in the middle area, he directly used the "Small Innate Nascent Soul Escape Technique."

Within a few breaths, eager to step foot on the first mountain peak that one must cross over to enter Meiling through the ancient road, Tao Qian, carrying many puppets, appeared in a hidden mountain hollow as a faint scent of infancy wafted around him.

He looked around at his surroundings, discerned the direction, and headed straight for a small path on the left.

Soon, the view before Tao Qian cleared, and he saw a broad, winding mountain path—an ancient road—unfold before him.

This ancient road was mainly paved with blue bricks and stone slabs. Besides the mottled marks of erosion by time visible everywhere, many marks from burns and cuts could be seen in the details, indicating that this long mountain path had weathered much over time. It was fitting to call it an ancient road.

While passing through Yang County, Tao Qian had heard about the origin of this "Meiling Ancient Road." It was said that a high official of the Longevity Heavenly Dynasty had been decreed thousands of years ago to split the mountain to create this road. In the process, an evil event occurred, and it was only through the voluntary sacrifice of one of the official's concubines that the road was completed.

Such ancient matters could not be pursued further, and standing beside the road, Tao Qian looked into the far distance to see that starting from the first peak of Meiling, the ancient road stretched across several peaks. On the fourth peak, there was a massive ancient boundary stele as large as a ceremonial arch and a solemn gateway resembling a city gate.

There lay the transit point.

Officially, it was a checkpoint for mortals to cross, but to Tao Qian's eyes, it was far more.

A strong palpitation in his mind reminded Tao Qian that there was an immensely large hidden array formation at the border area of Southern Yue.

However, without touching an array point or array flag, Tao Qian could not determine what exactly the array was, or what its function was.

"I originally wanted to escape directly into Fumin, but it seems that's not possible now; I'll have to cross the border by the usual means," he muttered.

Then, Tao Qian's gaze fell onto the mountain path.

It was already nighttime; the cool moonlight illuminated the mountain, which should have been a time of quiet and peace.

But it was not so here.

Dressed as a black-robed Puppet Master, Tao Qian standing on the mountain path did not seem eerie or strange at all.

Although the area could not be described as swarmed with people, it was definitely bustling.

Aside from cultivators like Tao Qian emitting unusual auras, there were also many merchant caravans and travelers, as well as families fleeing with their belongings, and even traces of many ghosts and alien species. Most hid their presence, fearing that normal people seeing them might scream in terror; they simply blended in and moved forward with the crowds.

Perhaps due to the Primordial Yang Sect or some other reason, despite such activity on the mountain path, there were surprisingly no conflicts or fights.

"Possibly, because those who come here, be they cultivators or ghosts and alien species, share the same goal,"

"That is to flee Southern Yue; once they cross Meiling, they can directly enter the neighboring two provinces. Although the situations there aren't great, they definitely are better than the current state of Southern Yue."

With this thought, Tao Qian smoothly blended into the group.

Due to recent drastic changes, the common people of the Mortal World had shifted from their initial amazement and desire to fear and terror, and now to numbness.

They had also acquired a basic ability to discern among the many different types of cultivators and alien species.

Like Tao Qian, someone solitary and accompanied by mysterious puppets, was most likely from heresy and heterodoxy. Since he appeared on the Meiling Ancient Road, there's no need for excessive fear, but it was also advisable not to get too close.

If it had been a cultivator from the Righteous path, perhaps some bolder commoners would even approach to ask for some chances or benefits.

Such risk-takers were not many, but they were not few either.

Tao Qian was pleased with the tranquility, but as he walked, because of his obvious identity as a cultivator, he eventually gathered together with other cultivators.

Most were low-level cultivators.

A few were at the Energy-Introducing Realm.

For convenience, Tao Qian also disguised his cultivation at the Energy-Introducing Realm, maintaining a quiet demeanor as he mingled with the group of cultivators, listening to the knowledge and news they shared.

Although the three lessons from Lin Xiaohua had already filled many of his gaps.

But he wouldn't refuse a chance to gain knowledge for free, learn about the real-time situations across different areas, and see various unique cultivators.

For example, a group of cultivators who had just joined the group attracted the attention of many peers, Tao Qian, and quite a few common folk.

They received curious and admiring gazes in abundance.

The group consisted of six people, each a young woman of striking appearance and distinctive charm, wearing pearl hairpins and flower-patterned face powders, dressed in colorful, bodice-hugging skirts, adding quite a bit of color to this mountain path.

Being the center of attention did not embarrass these six ladies at all; each of them was composed and poised.

Although there was no physical contact, Tao Qian easily sensed that all six female cultivators were at the Energy-Introducing Realm. The leading one seemed slightly cold and was only a step away from reaching the Qi Refinement Realm.

However, what truly caught Tao Qian's attention were the shoes of these six ladies.

Colorful, exquisitely beautiful, and emitting a similar unusual aura.

Clearly, the ladies' shoes were all Exotic Treasures.

Many cultivators were also drawn to these six pairs of "exquisite embroidered shoes," but none were as discreet and polite as Tao Qian. They stared at the ladies' feet like yokels who had never seen the world.

In the crowd, a middle-aged cultivator with an honest face obviously couldn't stand those layabouts and took the opportunity to slap the back of his own disciple's head who was also sneaking peeks, then half scolded, half complimented the girls, saying,

"Look, keep looking and I'll gouge your eyeballs out."

"These female fairies must be from the Daughter Palace, originating from a remarkable background. Despite being a heterodox sect, each of the female fairies in the palace is kind-hearted and acts gently. The Daughter Palace Master is highly respected and her good reputation has spread throughout Fumin. It is said that even the Bodhisattvas of the Guanyin Temple often invite the Daughter Palace Master to discuss Taoism."

"You layabouts, if you look a few more times, beware of shortening your lifespan, hmph."

With these flattering words, the cultivator made the girls burst into joyful laughter.

The layabouts then turned their heads away, no longer daring to sneak peeks at the girls' embroidered shoes.

It wasn't fear of shortened lifespan that deterred them, but the worry of offending a powerful heterodox sect.

This so-called "Daughter Palace" sect wasn't particularly powerful, but since its master could visit the Guanyin Temple, it surely wasn't weak.

For these ordinary cultivators present, truly offending them would likely lead to no good.

At this moment, the crowd had reached the top of the mountain peak on a large stone square.

For some reason, the six female cultivators from the Daughter Palace simultaneously stopped, either because the middle-aged cultivator had flattered them or perhaps it wasn't such a big secret.

The leading cold female cultivator suddenly pointed at the stars above and then softly said,

"Since all of you are traveling with us and are all within the Meiling territory, there seems to be a connection."

"There is a sporadic blessing here that happens every few years, which even includes our Daughter Palace and nearby sects know of, as do some well-informed mortal families; so there's really no need to keep it a secret. If you are fortunate enough, perhaps some of you will also have a gain later."

After saying these two sentences,

Suddenly, many people who heard her stopped in their tracks.

A group of cultivators, including Tao Qian, and even some passing mortal civilians, all cast curious and expectant gazes.

The female cultivator didn't keep them in suspense and continued,

"The Meiling territory, every three years, occasionally has a 'Longevity Star' transit."

"The duration is very short, only about thirty minutes."

"During that time, the sky will drop an alien object called 'Longevity Star Peach,' which is delicious and can extend life when eaten."

"Hiss,"

Not surprisingly, upon hearing this, everyone immediately widened their eyes, their faces showing an uncontrollable expression of thrilled desire.

Whether mortal civilians or cultivators, their expressions were exactly the same at this moment.

Lifespan!

Faced with this word, even in the Cultivation World, few could remain calm or indifferent.

Seeing the crowd's excitement, the female cultivator hurriedly continued,

"Everyone, don't become too greedy; I haven't finished yet."

"As is known, there is always a price to pay for cultivation."

"The Longevity Star Peach sounds wonderful, but the cost is extremely severe and frightening; you all better hear it out first."

"If this item descends, one must catch it with bare hands; other objects, whether gold, stone, wood, jade, or other rare materials, are useless, touching them will cause immediate rot and disintegration. After catching it with a person's hand, one must swallow it immediately; if not eaten within ten breaths, the peach will disappear."

"You can't fight over this fruit. If you eat a peach that was taken by force, not only will it not increase your lifespan, but you will mutate, fall, and turn into a demon; even immortals cannot save you."

"Each peach can extend one's life by one year."

"Whether one can catch the peach when it descends is predestined; those without enough blessing, even if they wait a lifetime, will never obtain a peach. There was a wealthy mortal who learned of this

and moved his family to these mountains to wait, but every time the Longevity Star transited, it was never their turn; instead, hunters and travelers passing by often caught a peach in front of them."

"One day, seeing his own elderly servant catch a peach, he couldn't restrain himself and snatched it from him, only to mutate into a fierce beast instantly after swallowing it and devoured his whole family."

"Additionally, there is one iron rule: if a demon, Evil Cultivator, or magician catches a Longevity Star Peach, there are only two outcomes after swallowing it; one is reduced lifespan, the other is mutation and falling into demonhood; it's impossible to increase lifespan."

"These rules and costs are teachings from hundreds of years of blood and tears."

"Believe it or not, it's unrelated to us."

"The location where the peach descends is uncertain, and it could be anywhere within the Meiling territory. Everything depends on karma; everyone may do as they see fit."

With that, the female cultivator led her junior sisters aside to quietly wait.

Meanwhile, everyone else in the area had bright, eager eyes, and their breathing became much quicker.

If it wasn't for the concern about decorum, they would probably have started cheering already.

Tao Qian, among them, looked at the expressions of the people around him and couldn't help but silently think, "This female cultivator's words probably fell on deaf ears, as most people likely only remembered the phrase 'each peach extends life by one year.'"

At the same time, Tao Qian also marveled, "The Cultivation World truly contains all wonders; does such a supernatural spectacle as this heaven-sent Longevity Star Peach really exist?"

More curious thoughts then sprouted in his mind.

Tao Qian also wanted to see what the scene of a Longevity Star Transit looked like. What would that so-called Longevity Star Peach look like? What would its effects be? Was it truly as magical as described?

Chapter 119 Suddenly granted a lifespan of 108, the second disaster comes with the cries of infant spirits.

Longevity Star... Longevity Star Peach... The rules of this mountainous opportunity, as well as the cost and various details, were all made crystal clear by that female cultivator from the Daughter Palace.

Even the common folk who happened to hear the speech could easily comprehend the key points.

In short, whether one could obtain the exotic treasure "Longevity Star Peach" depended entirely on one's blessing; fighting for it was futile, and so was forcing it.

However, even though most people knew this, many had chosen to keep their distance, though not entirely, exhibiting a skeptical and precautionous demeanor.

They were clearly afraid that if a real treasure did appear, others might snatch it away.

They thought about moving farther away but felt it was better not to leave the vicinity of those female cultivators from the Daughter Palace.

This attitude was not only prevalent among the common folk but also among the cultivators.

Seeing this, Tao Qian did not show any sign of mockery; instead, he understood.

Extending one's life by a year was naturally tempting for ordinary civilians; how many would be willing to bankrupt themselves just to live a few more days, let alone a year?

Cultivators were equally obsessed with extending their lifespan, as the path of cultivation was long, and many indeed failed to advance their cultivation realm due to an insufficient lifespan. A year might not seem long, but perhaps it was the most critical year?

After Tao Qian entered the Qi Refining Realm and cultivated the Spirit Treasure Immortal Spirit Qi, his lifespan increased by eighty years.

Therefore, his lifespan was still considered sufficient.

Moreover, Tao Qian was well aware that cultivation bore its costs, and such heavenly gifts probably were not as simple as they seemed.

After a moment's thought, he also led Little Sui and Lian Jing'er to the side and silently awaited.

According to the female cultivator, the hour was drawing near.

Whether the "Longevity Star Transit" would occur this year would be revealed within thirty minutes.

That time passed in the blink of an eye.

Change? There was none at the moment.

But this opportunity, being related to lifespan, had given everyone exceptional patience, and even though the so-called Longevity Star had not yet appeared, no one stepped forward to express dissatisfaction.

It was at this moment that Tao Qian suddenly felt an extremely special and unprecedented throb in his mind.

It was very faint, as if separated by a vast distance, almost as if it were from another world.

However, through it, Tao Qian sensed an extremely terrifying aura.

Without any hesitation, Tao Qian looked up at the sky.

Unbeknownst to him, the stars and the cold moon had become dimmer, as if they were now needed to highlight another "star."

That star appeared suddenly in the sky, bright and dazzling.

Such a mysterious scenery would not be visible anywhere else.

Only from "Meiling" could one see that special star appear and grow increasingly large and bright. Five pure and dazzling types of light intertwined and twinkled on that star, casting a captivating aura across the entire territory of Meiling, making it impossible to look away.

Suddenly, a cultivator exclaimed with joy, "Longevity Star! There it is, the Longevity Star has arrived."

It seemed that it was this human's exclamation that caused the slowly moving star over Meiling, twinkling with five-colored light, to tremble slightly.

The whole of Meiling seemed to tremble along with it.

Soon, a vast number of spark-like starlight fell down.

Initially very tiny, as they neared the ground, these starlights eventually transformed into fist-sized, crystal-clear, juicy-as-jade peaches, seemingly carved from jade. As these peaches came closer, people could even see the enticing textures on their skins and the fine fuzz illuminated by the starlight.

It was real, yet incredible.

Within the territory of Meiling, countless Longevity Star Peaches scattered unknowingly.

However, the flying birds and beasts around showed no reaction to them as if they couldn't see them at all. The peaches that fell to the ground would roll for about fifteen minutes and then integrate into the soil and disappear unless caught by someone below.

Tao Qian was also stunned by the sight for a moment; he had seen powerful cultivators battle, encountered the bizarre being like the Heavenly Demon Buddha Mother, and witnessed arrays that could destroy mountains.

But such a "spectacle" was something he was seeing for the first time.

As two enticingly fresh fragrances emerged, Tao Qian couldn't help but reach out his hands.

For the falling peaches, two happened to fall towards him, requiring no extra effort as he simply needed to reach out his hands.

As two heavy sensations passed into his hands, Tao Qian now held a "Longevity Star Peach" in each.

Without any delay and with his senses triggered, information flooded his mind and was eventually arranged in a strange format.

"Record Name: Longevity Star Peach."

"Record Type: Exotic."

"Record: The Longevity Star, an outer realm god who has the habit of traveling through All Heavens at night and scattering seeds called 'Longevity Star Peach.' Consuming this peach can extend one's life in the human world by one year. However, once consumed, it also means being anchored by the 'Longevity Star.' Whenever the Longevity Star desires to descend to the world, it will choose a host from those of the Human Clan who have consumed this item. Due to his high status, the body born after his descent will inevitably mutate and fall."

"Remark One: Since Longevity Star prefers the orthodox Human Clan, thus demons, alien species, or those filled with evil thoughts at the time of consumption will be backlashed, mutate and fall, or even die on the spot."

"Remark Two: There is no limit to the number of times this item can be consumed, and its effects can be stacked. However, the more one consumes, the more favored by the Longevity Star he becomes, increasing the chances of being chosen as a host."

"Remark Three: This item originates from the Longevity Star himself. The peach core contains a trace of extraordinary origin. If one can ripen it using high-level Source Qi before it dissipates, one can obtain 'Longevity Star Peach Seed,' which can be planted and nurtured, but the result is unknown."

"Remark Four: Immunity from mutation, fall, and death!"

...

The third remark caused Tao Qian's eyes to light up slightly.

The mystery was unveiled, not exactly pleasant, but unexpectedly, not so dreadful either.

From the record, this entity called "Longevity Star" was not merely a star but a god from the outer realm?

He scattered the Longevity Star Peaches not out of idleness but because he favored the Human Clan, choosing them as hosts for his descent, using these peaches as a medium.

"Every three years, the number of Human Clan who manage to eat a Longevity Star Peach is probably not small. Although there is a sad possibility of being used as a host, from a probabilistic point of view, the human race is not losing."

Tao Qian quickly summed it up.

Then he actually clenched his hands forcefully, and with two "thump" sounds accompanied by splashing juice and pattering flesh, Tao Qian now had two black and glossy peach cores, seemingly carved from Black Jade, in his hands

Indeed, this was Tao Qian's plan.

Although his soul could be exempt from death or mutation costs, consuming the peach flesh clearly couldn't exempt him from the possibly being chosen as a host by the Longevity Star.

Extending life by a year was indeed a nice benefit, but it wasn't worth the risk for Tao Qian.

What if the Longevity Star really favored his body?

However, that third note piqued Tao Qian's interest; as soon as he took out the peach core, two strands of Spirit Treasure Immortal Spirit Qi surged forth within him.

Judging by their level, the upgraded version of Spirit Treasure Source Qi should be high level, right?

As the two strands of Immortal Spirit Qi touched the peach core, a sudden, strange transformation occurred.

The core, already resembling black jade, began to emit a lustrous jade light, the peculiar depressions and textures on it gradually magnifying, as though hiding another world within, irresistibly drawing one in. Soon after, Tao Qian even smelled a fragrance that seemingly should not exist in the human world.

"Did it work?"

Joy appeared in Tao Qian's eyes.

At this time, thirty minutes had already passed; the peach flesh on the ground had long since vanished.

Yet in Tao Qian's hands, two "Peach Seeds" emitting an intensely strong aura were clearly preserved.

"Back in the day, I realized the Three Calamities Heart Inquiry, where the secret within stated: 'With each calamity surpassed, one's fortune increases, without hindering cultivation, this is the Spirit Treasure Method.'"

"I initially had my doubts, but now it seems true, it's both a blessing and a curse for others."

"For me, though, it's a considerable opportunity not to be wasted."

Smiling to himself, Tao Qian suddenly took out the gourd specially used for storing demons.

After shaking it a few times, he directly shook out an Empty Demon.

Then Tao Qian pointed towards Meiling, where Longevity Star Peach fruits continuously fell.

Thirty minutes is far too short.

Using the Small Innate Nascent Soul Escape Technique, Tao Qian could indeed catch quite a few, but no matter how, his efficiency couldn't compare with that of an Empty Demon capable of Void Jumping.

Since he was going to delegate the task to someone else, Tao Qian wasn't stingy, and immediately promised, "If you help me catch more peaches this time, afterward I will give you a Heavenly Demon Blood Transformation Pill without any additives, how about that?"

Initially dissatisfied with Tao Qian, the demon's face showed unwillingness, but upon hearing this statement, it hurriedly nodded, "Master is really too polite, serving the Master is my honor."

While speaking, the Empty Demon voluntarily dissipated its body, wrapping towards Tao Qian.

The next moment, within the vast territory of Meiling, a figure appeared that concealed itself, invisible to others, and crazily performed Void Teleportations, flashing about.

This figure only caught "Longevity Star Peaches," yet didn't eat them.

Discarding the juice-dripping, fragrant, soft flesh, it took the peach cores, and immediately a stream of Spirit Treasure Immortal Spirit Qi was injected.

Thirty minutes!

Soon, it was all over.

At an unexpected moment, the five-colored radiance flickering, the Longevity Star that illumined Meiling high in the sky, disappeared.

Meiling returned to its original state.

This made many who had participated in this blessing feel as if it had all been a dream.

Only those commoners or cultivators who had eaten the peaches, satisfied at heart, knew it was not only no dream but also a great boon.

...

Inside a certain mountain in Meiling, Tao Qian, having just refined another ripe Peach Seed, couldn't completely hide the smile on his lips.

This joy, because he now knew that of the 360 strands of Spirit Treasure Immortal Spirit Qi in his body, a full half had already been used up.

This meant that Tao Qian now possessed exactly one hundred eighty "Longevity Star Peach Seeds."

Tao Qian was satisfied counting his gains, but his thoughts couldn't help but wander:

"That female cultivator from the Daughter Palace once said: 'Whether one can get a peach all depends on karma.'"

"My mind's record once stated: 'The more Longevity Star Peaches obtained, the more the Longevity Star likes that person, and the higher the likelihood of being chosen as a host.'"

"Although I used the Divine Skills of the Empty Demon, looking at this result, if my choice had been to eat the peaches, I really might have eaten one hundred eighty Longevity Star Peaches at once, instantly extending my life by one hundred eighty years."

"Such a huge benefit would probably mean that next time the Longevity Star descends, it wouldn't bother flipping His card, and would directly choose this body of mine."

"Fortunately, I, Tao Master, do not like eating peaches."

With this final thought, Tao Qian couldn't help but feel relieved.

Though he had taken a minor, negligible risk, the benefits obtained filled him with satisfaction.

Because every ripened Longevity Star Peach Seed bore the same record: "This is a Longevity Star Peach Seed, if cultivated properly, it may grow into an Immortal Plant Spirit Root."

It was precisely because of this statement that Tao Qian hastily acted and acquired these one hundred eighty Longevity Star Peach Seeds.

Tao Qian had a strange feeling that these peach seeds would be of great use to him.

He he chuckled softly and carefully put away all the peach seeds.

Then, satisfied, he proceeded to transcend territories.

From Southern Yue, to Fumin.

However, just at that moment, as Tao Qian stepped forward with his right foot.

An unforeseen drastic change suddenly occurred.

"Wow!"

A very crisp cry of an infant suddenly resonated throughout the entire Meiling territory.

At the sound of the cry, Tao Qian's Divine Soul trembled violently.

This familiar sensation made him freeze completely, thoughts bursting forth.

"Calamity strikes again!"

"My second calamity has arrived, just after gaining an opportunity?"

Chapter 120 Xuanpin Heavenly Gate Ten Absolute Array, Infant Mother Seeks Life into Qian's Embrace

"Although there's no pattern to the tribulations one faces when approaching the Spiritual Treasure, and the severity varies among cultivators, I just crossed the first tribulation, and now the second one is upon me. Could it be that I have too much karma entangled around me, and they know I'm about to leave Southern Yue, purposely coming to stop me?"

"Moreover, this sound of a baby crying, could it be...?"

As the thought crossed his mind, Tao Qian's figure had already appeared atop a towering Ancient Wood in an instant.

Intending to use his naked eye to locate the source of the crying, the crying sound abruptly echoed louder, only to come to a sudden halt.

Just as Tao Qian was puzzled by this, suddenly, within Meiling.

Forests, mountains, hidden valleys... and so on, the Void in each place split open, revealing translucent and jade-like cracks resembling umbilical cords, all appearing simultaneously in an instant.

At a rough count, there were tens of thousands of these "Jade-Colored Umbilical Cords."

And what was even more inconceivable was that these umbilical cords shimmered and revealed infant spirits entirely formed of light squeezing out from them.

"Wah!"

"Wah wah wah!"

The baby's cries truly resounded through every corner of Meiling.

Afterward, these tens of thousands of infant spirits turned into beams of jade light and shot towards the territories beyond Meiling.

This scene directly stunned the many cultivators and ordinary civilians on the mountain paths.

Was this Ten Thousand Infants breaking through?

The common folk within the Pass, upon witnessing this scene, were utterly amazed. At the same time, they took it to be a rare glimpse of Immortal Spells, exclaiming in shock and awe, thinking to themselves that cultivators are indeed transcendent beings.

Yet the cultivators within the Pass, especially those with a bit of knowledge, after their initial surprise, began to question.

Tao Qian could even hear the exclamations of the Loose Cultivators on the nearby mountain paths:

"Is this a move from the Ten Thousand Infant Sect? Why does it appear here, and why is there a need to break through?"

"To cast such Divine Power Skills, the person behind it must hold a high position within the Ten Thousand Infant Sect, maybe even an Elder?"

"Strange, strange, there must be some trickery at play here, we should quickly leave."

"Even a powerhouse from the Infant Sect needs to break through; that area must be unusual, let's not venture there for now."

"Let's just watch and see how it unfolds!"

The Loose Cultivators who had navigated the world year-round might not be impressive in terms of Cultivation Realm, but they lacked neither insight nor alertness.

At the sight of the Ten Thousand Infants turning into jade light aiming to break through Mei Pass, they all instantly realized that something unforeseen was happening that they weren't aware of.

Since it involved such a powerful being, for cultivators of their modest standing, it could likely spell disaster.

So they decided it was best to keep their distance.

And this premonition of the Loose Cultivators was quickly confirmed.

Just as the tens of thousands of infant spirits were attempting to break through the various regions of Meiling.

Suddenly, the massive, previously hidden Array that Tao Qian had sensed, erupted at that very moment.

Boom!

A visible spectral light swept across the entirety of Meiling in a flash.

After that, this incredibly vast area was divided by differing forces into ten block regions.

The tens of thousands of infant spirits were split into ten groups, each trapped within their own block.

Subsequently, all the cultivators within Meiling once again saw the appearance of seven or eight figures emitting intensely powerful auras, revealing themselves above the ancient Boundary Stele and the walls of Mei Pass.

The one leading was an old cultivator who radiated an Immortal demeanor, with white hair and beard.

Clothed in a Star Blue Daoist Robe, he rose into the Sky, surrounded by a dozen Sword Elixirs circling him, their fierce Sword Intent piercing the heavens.

Under the support of the night wind and the moonlight, it's unknown how many civilians developed feelings of reverence and worship.

If there were Immortals, this would probably be the very image of their elegance.

The next moment, this Old Immortal addressed the multitude of infant spirits:

"Mr. Xiao Daoist, all your varied Divine Powers have been thoroughly divulged by your peers, and your whereabouts haven't eluded the Prediction Skills of the Saint Heir, which is why we were dispatched to wait for you specifically here."

"The Saint Heir has asked us to persuade you. With the current situation being settled, and the Elders of the Infant Sect having made their decision, what's the use of just you opposing? Why not give up resistance and follow us back to the provincial capital, the Third Prince may be a little unruly, but he genuinely wants to acknowledge you as his godmother..."

"In your dreams!"

The Old Immortal hadn't finished speaking when he was met with the collective rejection of the tens of thousands of infant spirits.

And he seemed to have anticipated this response, merely adding calmly:

"Mr. Xiao Daoist, you have been escaping within Southern Yue for several days, your methods all expended, and now only this 'Ten Thousand Infant Mother's Umbilical' remains - how could it possibly help you break through this challenge."

"Presumably, you can see that this is the Xuanpin Heavenly Gate Ten Extremes Array. If you were in perfect condition, indeed, there might be a chance to break through, but now you are gravely injured, your realm has fallen. Not to mention breaking through the Ten Extremes Array, it's difficult even to survive; there's no chance for you to summon help."

"After all, you are a senior. We are kindly advising you to return, don't let our good intentions be in vain."

"Pah!"

The response of the tens of thousands of infant spirits was to simultaneously spit.

And then, immediately, all the infant spirits transformed into light and, heedlessly, charged again towards Mei Pass.

That group of cultivators who seemed like Immortals scoffed in unison and withdrew behind the Boundary Stele.

"Activate the Array!"

"Ten Extremes Infant Slaughter!"

"Boom"

As if by the principle of saying and following, the moment the old cultivator's voice faded.

The ten separated areas were suddenly struck by ten unimaginable disasters without any warning.

At this very moment, no matter where you were within Meiling's territory, you could see more than three kinds of horrific calamities.

And Tao Qian, a cultivator with such sharp sight, directly glimpsed which "ten absolutes" exactly were the ten.

The Meiling region was undoubtedly being ravaged by intense fire, frigid ice, golden light, blood transformation, soul downfall, poisonous water, Red Sand, wind erosion, demon engulf, and ghosts devouring... a full ten kinds of disasters.

Fortunately for the commoners and the many cultivators, these disasters had not yet affected them.

All were targeted solely at the tens of thousands of infant spirits.

And because of this, during the onslaught of the Big Array, the wails of tens of thousands of infant spirits nearly made everyone's heart ache with compassion.

Watching those exquisitely sculpted, adorable infant spirits being burned by intense fire, frozen by ice, slaughtered by golden light, dissolved into blood, struck with soul downfall, buried by Red Sand, devoured by Yin demons, gnawed by hundreds of ghosts – their crying sounds of "wah wah wah" constantly echoed throughout Meiling.

Cruel and terrifying.

These sights made the civilians, who had once revered the Old Immortal, shift their gaze bit by bit rapidly into disgust.

And at the same time, somewhere in Meiling.

Tao Qian was in a state of shock, by now he could not fail to recognize.

Behind these tens of thousands of infant spirits, was Master Xiao.

From the brief exchange between the two, Tao Qian could also directly guess the dire straits Master Xiao found herself in after their separation.

"Master Xiao had turned back to the sect to report, only to alarm the so-called Saint Heir, who used some means to sway the Elders of the Infant Sect to stand on Ji Xianxian's side, then turned around to start hunting Master Xiao."

"Although Master Xiao's Cultivation Realm and Divine Power were strong, after struggling for a time, she ultimately found herself at the end of her rope, severely injured, and decided to make a desperate attempt to break through Meiling and seek help somewhere else."

"But this plan was also predicted by the Saint Heir, who had prepared people well in advance and set up the Xuanpin Heavenly Gate Ten Absolute Array, ready to spring the trap."

"And indeed, they had caught Master Xiao."

With thoughts Flashing, Tao Qian furrowed his brows deeply, watching one infant spirit after another die tragically.

Shakes continued within his Divine Soul as if to remind him.

The second disaster was very likely meant for Master Xiao.

Tao Qian strove to remain calm, letting the throbbing in his brow go wild, thoughts churning in his mind:

"Those seven or eight cultivators, judging from the intensity of their pulses and strange auras, appear to have three in the Transcend Mortality Realm, and the rest are all in the Foundation Establishment Realm."

"And this powerful Ten Extremes Array that even Master Xiao herself could not withstand, how am I supposed to rescue her?"

"The first disaster tested my nature, but this second disaster, what is it trying to examine?"

Just as Tao Qian racked his brains, suddenly, right in front of him.

A faint ghostly light appeared and the Void cracked open revealing a fissure, from which a body that even Tao Qian did not dare to recognize tumbled out.

It was a female cultivator, with a face like a fairy from the heavens, her eyes brimming with endless tenderness, wearing the familiar golden embroidery cloud shoulder jade, revealing her enticing fair shoulders and collarbone, with a beautiful halo circling behind her head... if not Master Xiao, then who?

Tao Qian dared not recognize her because Master Xiao at this time.

Not only was her energy weaker than his, but her physical body had also shrunken a lot, no longer like a mother but rather like a young girl who had just blossomed into womanhood, yet her once broad and soft bosom remained unchanged; such a youthful faced yet large bosomed Master Xiao, no wonder Tao Qian dared not recognize.

She was conscious when she tumbled through the fissure.

Seeing Tao Qian's unfamiliar Puppet Master attire, she was first startled, but she quickly seemed to sense something, widening her eyes in alarm, she exclaimed, "It's you!"

Although she was surprised to see this strange junior whom she had dealt with before in front of herself.

But she also knew time was of essence, without the time for anything else, she quickly said:

"I sought a lifeline with my infant mother's spiritual sense, not expecting to bump into you here, but I should not have brought trouble upon you."

"Just trouble you to find a secluded and secretive place to let me down."

"After that, you should immediately flee far away, it's best to blend in with those passing through the trials, just pretend you never saw me."

"These catastrophes here are too vile, don't overestimate yourself and get involved."

"Remember, remember!"

Having finished speaking, she seemed to have used up all the remaining strength in her body.

So, just as she fell through the fissure, her eyes rolled back and she very straightforwardly fainted in front of Tao Qian.

One must know this place was the tip of an Ancient Wood, situated at a great height.

If Master Xiao were to just fall to the ground like this, given her current state, she might actually drop dead.

Left with no choice, Tao Qian quickly reached out to catch Master Xiao.

Looking up at the "infant spirits" still being slaughtered, he realised that these must have been a distraction deliberately released by Master Xiao.

And again looking from afar at the meiling Boundary Stele, those Transcend Mortality Cultivators who were manipulating the array.

Recalling Master Xiao's instructions before she fell unconscious, he muttered:

"This second disaster, seems more fatal than the first."

As Tao Qian sighed with these thoughts, he had made up his mind.

Holding Master Xiao, he immediately acted upon his thoughts and with a leap from the Empty Demon, both of them immediately started to escape into the deeper parts of the wild and forested wilderness below.