

Longevity 311

Chapter 311: Picking Divine Skills, Shameless Duobao

Within the secluded courtyard of the Jin Mansion, in the tranquil chamber belonging solely to Fairy Yunrong.

Tao Qian sat cross-legged on a meditation cushion, and gazing upon the slightly heavy yet incredibly exquisite and lively female cultivator, Kitten, in his arms, he couldn't help but fall into self-doubt.

The pursuit of pleasure was the same!

Him, Tao Qian, mentioning it seemed quite awkward and very much libertine behavior.

Yet when Yunrong spoke, it sounded so natural, neither obscene nor frivolous.

Moreover, napping in someone's arms would seem crude and disrespectful when done by others, quite sleazy indeed.

But when Yunrong did it, it seemed just like an elegant affair.

Tao Qian was only stunned for a breath's time, having felt a certain temptation, he directly gave up resisting and resignedly thought, "A Transcend Mortality Realm Kitten is nothing even my Master wouldn't raise, I didn't expect I would be the one to have it first."

As the thought settled, his hands involuntarily landed on the body of Daoist Yunrong in his embrace.

He only heard a soft moan, as Yunrong, whose true form had been grasped by Tao Qian, let out a comfortable noise and then burrowed even deeper into his arms.

"Infinite Venerable, I still have fates to overcome, I must not indulge, I must not indulge."

After advising himself, Tao Qian couldn't resist but stroke her a few more times.

Only then, with difficulty, did he withdraw his hand, not attempting to meditate and cultivate.

Instead, he formed a Secret Demon magic hand seal, using his Divine Soul to call out to the Red Lady Demon hidden within Lady Mei's body, who was also in the Demon City.

Tao Qian had no contact with that Tribulation Leader, delaying his entry into the tribulation.

However, to prevent any unforeseen changes, he still sent a Demon to hide within her, to stay constantly aware of her situation.

At the same time, he could probe into some truths within the Ninth Prince's Mansion.

Not long after he called out, he soon heard the fierce yet adorable response from the Red Lady Demon at a distance:

"This woman is fine; she is just being held under house arrest."

"She spends her days crying, non-stop, cries when she sees a moth burn itself in the candle flame, and cries when she hears someone else suffers outside... But she cries so well, I cannot eat her brain and heart, but feasting on immortal dew is not bad either; if only she didn't fall asleep from crying too much, the Red Lady would definitely make her cry all the time."

"Don't know what treasure her body is, but her tears are so delicious."

"Master, if you allow me to take a bite out of her, I'd reduce one Demon Pill for you."

Upon hearing this, an image of the Red Lady opening her mouth with fangs glistening immediately popped into Tao Qian's mind.

Don't be fooled by this little devil's presentable appearance, cute and seemingly clumsy.

She was indeed an Outer Realm Demon, and in the Ten Thousand Demon List, she ranked even higher than the likes of the Star Zha Demon and the Substitute Demon.

If she took a bite, Lady Mei wouldn't have a life left.

"No!"

Almost immediately, Tao Qian refused.

"This woman is the body of the Jiangzhu Immortal Grass; her tears are equivalent to the Jiangzhu Immortal Honey."

"Being able to eat it constantly is already immensely lucky, and you still think about biting her?"

"Keep babbling, and I'll subtract both your Demon Pills."

"Take good care of her, and inform me immediately if anything changes."

Having said that, Tao Qian was too lazy to haggle with the little demon and cut off contact by dispersing the Demon Seal.

Who would expect that as soon as he woke up, he immediately found his other hand, which was meant to be empty, had involuntarily touched Fairy Yunrong's body once more.

After instinctively stroking a few times again, Tao Qian had to forcefully pull away.

Turning his head to look at the other corners of the quiet room, Shan Jiu was also asleep, steadily releasing a greenish radiance, while Little Age and Lian Jing'er were each diligently cultivating. With cultivation techniques to practice, these two talented and exceptional alien beings saw their powers advancing by leaps and bounds.

In contrast, him, the Great Master Tao, was getting involved in various side activities.

"Tao Qian, oh Tao Qian, you must not indulge, you must not indulge."

"Now that I have a place to stay, I should indeed start practicing a thing or two."

"Speaking of which, although I am an inheritor of the Spirit Treasure and have received the Ancestor Master's teachings, and the Great Lifebook Scripture is stored in my mind, strictly speaking, I haven't yet cultivated any of the Spirit Treasure Great Divine Powers."

"My strongest method against enemies is currently the Buddha Bird Relics, yet that belongs to the Buddhist Sect."

"The swordsmanship used to bully the Cavernous Mystery Demon not long ago is good, but that's from the Demon Path."

"Tsk tsk, it's also thanks to my short time in cultivation; if it were slightly longer, the Spirit Treasure Ancestor might come looking for trouble."

As these thoughts tumbled forth, Tao Qian naturally began considering first cultivating a Spirit Treasure Divine Power.

Thus, he immediately closed his eyes to focus, his Primordial Spirit leaping into the vast Sea of Consciousness, starting to pick a suitable Divine Power Skill from among the numerous chapters of the Great Book to practice.

And about practicing the Basic Method to increase mana and immortal energy?

In this area, Tao Qian was rather special.

He had to use the Third Method to break through the Taishang Treasure No-leak Body and advance into Transcend Mortality before it makes sense to begin cultivation.

Then he would officially step into a Transcendent state, barely deserving to be called an Immortal.

After that, perhaps his cultivation or retreat might take months, years, or even more than a dozen years, perhaps even longer.

Before that time, he only needed to worry about the many calamities and troubles; the tempering of mana and immortal energy within his body would be taken care of by the Taishang Treasure No-leak Body.

Meanwhile, Senior Brothers like Xuu Xun and Lu Xi, who had pathways defined through the Ancestor Master's teachings, might step into Cavernous Mystery upon exiting a single retreat.

Tao Qian originally thought that it would be very straightforward to find a powerful Divine Power from the Great Book and cultivate it.

It should have been quite simple.

Yet quickly, he realized it wasn't that easy.

"This Great Book really is too vast, and there are too many chapters; I've already learned small skills such as the Sweet Rain Skill and the Clear Wind Skill ahead of time."

"Skills like the Spirit Treasure Enchantment Secret Technique and the like, I can also learn without much effort whenever I wish, without any delay."

"But regarding grand Divine Powers such as the Inversion of Heaven and Earth Great Five Elements Hand Seal, with my meager cultivation and limited time, how can I possibly learn them?"

It wasn't long before Tao Qian fell into a state of distress.

He had only flipped through a small portion of the Great Book and was already dazzled by the vast choices.

Although he discovered many enticing Divine Power Skills, most of them were beyond his ability to practice.

"It's not a matter of cost, but those Divine Skills all have their own high cultivation standards, such as requiring the Transcend Mortality Realm, or even the Cavernous Mystery Realm."

Tao Qian was indeed eager for his abnormal soul to grant him an exemption.

Unfortunately, the answer was cruel—no exemption was possible.

Take the Inversion of Heaven and Earth Great Five Elements Hand Seal, for example. Once mastered, it's ridiculously overpowered.

With a single palm strike, the world turns upside down, and everything in that area comes under your control—truly an immortal means.

But Tao Qian could not master it. Not only did mastering this technique require preparing many treasures, but there were also numerous conditions. Most important was the very first standard: one needed to be at Perfect Transcend Mortality or higher.

Seeing these few characters and hearing the answer "no exemption possible" in his mind, Tao Qian could only watch the Divine Skills he coveted drift away.

As for another skill that Tao Qian coveted even more and was desperately excited about, the Universe in the Sleeve, the answer was even crueler.

"Can't master it unless you're at the Ultimate Happiness Realm?"

"Hmm? But didn't Senior Brother Xuu release the Universe in the Sleeve once on Eight Immortals Island? Could it be that there is a pocket-sized version that circumvents the restriction?"

"That's useless to me. I'm not a disciple of Aunt Ma Yi, so it's not my turn."

"Using a Divine Skill to collect the entire population of the Imperial City into your robes... With such might, such swagger, it seems I won't be able to do this for the next few years."

"But it doesn't matter. I can pretend with the Holy Embryo Bag. Though it's not as good as Aunt Ma Yi's, it might even be stronger than Senior Brother Xuu's Universe in the Sleeve."

Thinking of his Master, Tao Qian's mind went to the Holy Embryo Bag.

Suddenly recalling something, his expression changed subtly, and he quickly summoned Yuan Gong out of the bag.

Before this old-timer of the Secret Demon Sect got angry, Tao Qian pointed to Yunrong in his arms and preemptively changed the subject, transmitting his voice to say:

"Yuan Gong, do you know of any formidable figures in the lineage of Jade Ring Mountain?"

"According to Sister Kitten here, there's even some granny above her, including me in her calculations."

"Although Master is a bit stubborn, his love and care for his disciples are undeniably genuine. He should stir up my destiny as soon as I enter the world, and I shouldn't be calculated against."

"With your powerful cultivation and vast knowledge, even my Master respects you highly. Surely you know the secrets behind this."

Tao Qian shamelessly flattered Yuan Gong, dragging Duobao into it to butter up the latter.

Initially disinterested in Tao Qian, Yuan Gong did indeed feel more pleasantly upon hearing this. The suffocation of being forcefully stuffed into the Holy Embryo Bag dissipated somewhat.

However, when he replied, his tone was still huffy, and his words were rather impolite.

With just a few sentences, he hit Tao Qian's sore spot.

"You are just as cunning and sinister as Duobao. Can't you figure it out?"

"You are being played; it must be your cheap Master who sold you out."

"Everyone in the Cultivation World knows that the future Sect Master of the Spirit Treasure Sect must be Daoist Duobao."

"The Spirit Treasure Sect is indeed powerful, but even the mightiest Sect needs allies. Maybe Duobao saw your outstanding aura and profound blessing and decided to use you as a Beauty Trap."

"I do indeed know about the lineage of Jade Ring Mountain. There's indeed a formidable character hiding there, but I'm not going to tell you who."

"Otherwise, if she finds out, it would ruin my plans."

Hearing this, Tao Qian fell into silence.

He had suspected the first two sentences himself.

As a disciple of Duobao, if he could be calculated by someone else, it certainly involved Duobao as well.

However, as for the reasons, Tao Qian didn't think it was anything like a Beauty Trap. Lacking information, he couldn't figure it out.

"Well, so be it, even if it really were a Beauty Trap, it doesn't matter."

"When my Cultivation Realm improves, these confusions will naturally unravel."

Speaking these words, Tao Qian was immediately ridiculed by Yuan Gong.

"Heh, don't pretend to be magnanimous in front of me, you slippery youngster. I don't trust either of you Master and Disciple."

"I can tell something's amiss with you. Knowing your nature, you must be secretly holding a grudge against Duobao, planning to repay him in the future, right?"

Tao Qian quickly shook his head, denying it:

"Yuan Gong, you jest! I, Tao Qian, always honor my Master and value the Dao; I'm not that type of person."

"By the way, Yuan Gong, you were once an old rival of my Master, so you should have some understanding of the many Divine Power Skills of our Spirit Treasure Sect. I recently received the Ancestor Master's Teachings, but my cultivation is too weak. I don't know which Divine Power Skill would be most suitable to cultivate?"

"As a True Disciple of the Spirit Treasure Sect, I cannot be without the Spirit Treasure Divine Power. I beg for your guidance, Yuan Gong."

"Heh, of course I know. I'm not only familiar with the many techniques of your Spirit Treasure Sect, but I also know those of the Taishang Dao."

"But that's your Master's job, what does it have to do with me?"

Clearly, Yuan Gong, the old-timer of the Secret Demon Sect, still held a grudge.

Unfortunately for him, now he was but a tiger that had fallen flat, left only as a wisp of Divine Soul residing within a statue, let alone that he was also burdened with a certain responsibility.

Yuan Gong thought Tao Qian was unaware, yet from the moment this "Yuan Gong Statue" fell into Tao Qian's hands, he had no secrets to hide.

Rejected by the old-timer, Tao Qian didn't panic, simply calmly saying:

"I suddenly feel that learning the Secret Demon Sacrifice Body Sword is quite exhausting and comes with too many costs. Just that Demon Suppressing Sword Intent was extreme enough, making me lose face in public."

"If I were to learn Slaying Strange and Destroying Buddha in the future, wouldn't that be even worse?"

"I already possess the Great Book, so maybe I should slowly learn the Spirit Treasure Divine Power first, then come to you for the Sacrifice Sword Skill."

These light words indeed angered Yuan Gong.

He even turned into smoke, drifting out, his ancient-looking face angry, his red eyebrows like a pair of sky-piercing blades ready to sweep through.

"Sly kid, you're threatening me, I, Yuan Gong..."

Before he could finish, Yuan Gong seemed to remember something and suddenly stopped, looking annoyed.

He pointed at Tao Qian and said indignantly:

"Damn it, I've fallen for Duobao's plot again."

"You, merely at the Foundation Establishment Realm, have just inherited the Ancestor's Teachings and entered the world, with no senior at your side except for this old ghost of mine."

"And the responsibility of teaching you, a True Disciple of the Spirit Treasure Sect, falls on me, an old demon of the Secret Demon Sect?"

"Duobao, how can you be so shameless?"

Obviously, the last remark was Yuan Gong shouting across the void at Duobao Daoist.

Chapter 312: Silent Divine Thunder, Jin Family Salon

Actually, at this juncture, both Tao Qian and Yuan Gong doubted that Duobao Daoist would secretly use the Returning Immortal Mirror to watch them embarrass themselves.

Unfortunately, they had no evidence.

After yelling out, they still had to face reality.

For example, Yuan Gong still had to deal with Tao Qian eagerly looking at him, the Great Book complex, and the Divine Powers indeed numerous. Yet, the spell mnemonics in the Great Book couldn't just be quickly scanned by Tao Qian using his Divine Thought; they had to be selected slowly, one by one.

If he had plenty of time, this wouldn't be a problem, days, months, or even years would suffice.

But Tao Qian was facing imminent disaster trouble, with something bound to happen within nine days; slow selection just wouldn't work.

Fortunately, Yuan Gong was by his side.

This senior elder finally reacted, his striking red eyebrows drooping as he muttered,

"Indeed, Duobao is still Duobao. I wondered why he was so generous to lend his newly accepted good disciple to me."

"It seems he was thinking of borrowing chickens to lay eggs, with your dark heart, you must have calculated more than just me."

"Who knows which Other unlucky guy has to teach his disciple for him?"

Yuan Gong muttered to himself, completely ignoring that Tao Qian was right in front of him, listening naively.

Hearing the last sentence, Tao Qian really wanted to respond to Yuan Gong with, "No senior, currently it's only you."

Afraid of getting hit, Tao Qian swallowed his words.

After Yuan Gong finished venting with his muttering, Tao Qian finally got the guidance he wished for.

After all, having taught Tao Qian the Immortal Slaying Sword Intent previously and having interacted with him over many days, Yuan Gong had some understanding of Tao Qian's details.

Thinking only for a moment, he then spoke:

"Kid, you already have Buddha Bird Relics and the Secret Demon Body, two powerful offensive means, enough to handle most disasters and tribulations."

"Plus, the Nine Toad Bead that both defends and attacks, and the Holy Embryo Bag that traps and confines people... Not to mention cultivators of the same rank, even those in the Transcend Mortality Realm, and even the Cavernous Mystery Realm cultivators, are usually not your opponents."

"You truly are a monster. Even for major powers like the Taishang Dao, Great Freedom Temple, Evil Sect, and the Si Family, finding a Foundation Establishment Realm cultivator who can rival you is difficult."

"Those of your generation are really out of luck."

Yuan Gong praised and boosted him like this, but Tao Qian maintained an innocent smile the entire time, not showing a trace of complacency.

Seeing this, Yuan Gong nodded slightly, then continued:

"Now, you only lack some common offensive techniques, which are very easy to solve."

"In your Spirit Treasure Great Volume, there should be two Thunder Skills suitable for you to learn. One is the 'Innate Taiyi Divine Thunder,' a powerful law whose activation sends down thousands of feet of golden thunder fire, especially effective against Evil Cultivators. This technique is easy to learn but hard to master for most Spirit Treasure Cultivators, but with your rare talent like the Innate Dao Seed, you should learn it easily."

"The second is the 'Silent Divine Thunder.' Not only is its power comparable to Taiyi Divine Thunder, but it's also extremely subtle; it activates without a trace or sound, only revealing a sky full of thunder light when it explodes completely. This method is too malicious and thus costly to learn, demanding high requirements for the cultivator's talent, aptitude, and even temperament. However, it shouldn't be difficult for you."

"You can choose between these two Thunder Skills."

"After mastering them, you can refine another technique called the 'Innate One Qi Great Seizing Hand.' Since you have the Innate Dao Seed, this technique should pose no difficulty for you."

"Besides these, you can also refine the 'Spirit Treasure Golden Light Body Protection Divine Spell,' an unmatched defensive technique that can ensure your dharma body remains intact."

"Ah, I, Yuan Gong, a decent old demon from the Secret Demon Sect, am now teaching a Spirit Treasure True Inheritor how to become stronger. What a sin, what a sin."

"By the way, your Secret Demon Transformation Technique and Summoning Demon Technique are both well refined. Don't slack off in the future, continue refining deeper."

"If you have leisure time, use the Summoning Demon Technique to call from the Outer Realm the Soul-destroying Demon, Inversion Demon, Formless Demon, Substitute Demon... Force these four demons to merge, and you can gain the 'Secret Demon Formless Inversion Secret Method.' Once you learn this technique, you can use it to reverse the Qi mechanism and disrupt your own Heavenly Fate needs."

"Of course, if anyone dares to calculate against you, it would be your shameless master, so even if you learn it, it won't be very useful."

"The Spirit Treasure Sky Displaying Skill really is the best in the Cultivation World for predicting, Fate, and Heavenly Mechanism matters. Otherwise, how do you think Duobao got his infamous reputation?"

After saying all this, Yuan Gong no longer paid attention to Tao Qian, his Divine Soul projection instantly returning to the statue.

Tao Qian, meanwhile, had no time to console this senior elder, and likely no need.

With Yuan Gong's sharpness, it was only a matter of accepting the reality that he had been calculated by Duobao and he would soon be lively and bouncing again.

A few breaths later, Tao Qian had digested what Yuan Gong had said and also began reviewing the Great Volume in his mind, one article after another.

After a while, following an impulsive premonition, he quickly made his choice.

"For the next period, I'll refine the 'Silent Divine Thunder.' This technique is malicious and highly suitable for combat, completing my routine offensive means. If I had known this technique before, I might not have needed to use the Demon Suppressing Sword Intent. Just using the defensive Nine Toad Bead and releasing this Divine Thunder could have tortured that Demon City Giant Merchant, Swallowing Gold Rat Demon Liu Hongsheng, to desire life and death."

"After that, I'll go to the Outer Realm and retrieve the Formless Inversion Secret Method, covering my identity first when going out, ensuring my safety."

"After that, I'll refine the Golden Light Body Protection Divine Spell and the Innate One Qi Great Seizing Hand."

Having made up his mind, Tao Qian did not avoid the Fairy Yunrong still lying in his arms.

Taking out the Holy Embryo Bag, he immediately began preparing to refine the technique.

Whether it was the Innate Taiyi Divine Thunder or the Silent Divine Thunder, as long as it involved Thunder Skills, most required essential spiritual materials like Thunder Pearls and Thunder Crystals.

And the greater the lack of talent, the greater the need for these materials.

Such items were naturally not rare in the Spirit Treasure Sect.

When Tao Qian left the sect, he also packed many.

His own Ascending Immortal Island, with the Flame and Ice Pot two Immortal Mountains, could produce various kinds of spiritual material treasures of water, fire, yin, and yang.

While Yunhua Immortal Mountain and the Spiritual Resonance Cave could collect thunder essence.

From this, one could see the gap between Great Sect disciples and Loose Cultivators. The treasure materials that Tao Qian could take out at will were things that those wilderness Loose Cultivators had to fight to the death to seize.

"Let's start!"

Tao Qian sighed before he decided to concentrate and meditate on his Divine Skills.

Before that, he didn't forget to extend his hands and fiercely pinch Yunrong again.

Then, throughout the night, the private room of Yunrong kept echoing with the sounds of subtle thunder.

Intermittently, sharp screams from the startled Kitten demon could be heard.

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When the daylight broke the next day, there was a strange scene in the private room of Fairy Yunrong.

The Kitten Demon, who had constantly clung to Tao Qian, had at some point moved away from him. It hid under its own soft quilt on the bed, only revealing a pair of extremely lively and beautiful emerald devil eyes, looking at Tao Qian from afar.

Apart from fear, there was also intense surprise in its eyes.

Across from her, Tao Qian was sitting on his cushion, his hair in disarray, and his face marked with light scratches, excitedly observing the Immortal Pill in his palm that was swirling with thunderous light.

Within the pill contained countless thunderbolts, with lightning snakes tumbling around, yet it made not even the slightest sound.

"You... you have refined it already?"

"I heard from my grandma that Silent Divine Thunder is one of the most sly and harmful Thunder Skills of the Spirit Treasure Sect."

"Just a lightning or two is fine, but if you refine it deeply, once activated it could unleash thousands of Silent Divine Thunders, devastating whether in a group attack or a solo fight."

"However, as vicious as this Thunder Skill is, the price to pay is also extremely high; are you alright?"

Perhaps due to the overwhelming events of the previous night, even though she spoke words of concern, Yunrong did not want to come out of the quilt.

Despite being in the Transcend Mortality Realm, she still behaved according to her true nature as a Kitten when revealing herself.

Kittens are afraid of thunder.

This was also the reason for Tao Qian's tousled hair and scratches on his face.

"Sister Yunrong need not worry; this technique matches my talent very well, and there is hardly any price to pay."

"I rushed the refining last night and scared Sister, my bad, my bad."

While speaking, Tao Qian, with a thought, stored the Thunder Pearl away.

He then stood up and instinctively walked towards the bed.

He indeed wasn't lying; if it were any other disciple of the Spirit Treasure refining the "Silent Divine Thunder," the cost would indeed be steep.

But for Tao Qian to refine, it was much better.

His abnormal Soul exempted him from everything else, leaving only a trivial minor price: during thunderstorm days, the likelihood of getting struck by lightning would be slightly higher than other beings.

Indeed, after refining, the chance of Tao Qian being hit by lightning increased slightly.

But they were just normal thunders, which are deadly for the Mortal Human Race.

However, even if Tao Qian stood there, letting the wild thunderbolts bombard him, they could do nothing to harm him.

Thus, he had perfected an excellent Slaughter Divine Power, only taking just over half the night.

While he still needed more time to master it fully, his speed of acquiring it was likely far superior to other cultivators.

It's no wonder Yuan Gong said it couldn't hinder him.

With newly acquired Divine Power, Tao Qian was indeed in high spirits, perhaps also addicted to petting the cat.

After walking over, he scooped Yunrong—a bit stunned—from her quilt, intending to place her back into his embrace.

Interestingly, it was just at this moment.

From outside this secluded courtyard, suddenly came the excited voice of Jin Xiuju.

"Sister Yunrong, Sister Yunrong, are you awake?"

"Just now, someone from Prince Zhao's Mansion came by, saying today Sister An Ya wants to use our Jin Mansion living room to hold a banquet... oh no, rather, an event called a salon."

"In short, Sister An Ya will invite many enjoyable and interesting people over here; we'll all chat together and feast."

"Come along with Senior Jin Lin; it's going to be fun."

"Oh yes, my father also arrived; he has prepared many gifts and wants to invite Senior Jin Lin to become our Guest Elder."

Upon hearing Jin Xiuju's voice,

Yunrong, who had shown her true nature all night, subconsciously transformed back into her Human Clan appearance.

Completely forgetting that she was still being held by Tao Qian, the shameless Daoist addicted to petting beasts.

She also forgot about her past interaction mode with Jin Xiuju, which was as casual as sisters in the Mortal World, without any reservations.

She hadn't set any Forbidden Techniques in her quiet room, allowing Jin Xiuju to come and go freely.

Thus, the next moment, with a "creak," the door swung open.

Jin Xiuju, all dolled up, with her wide eyes full of disbelief, stared at the two almost hugging each other.

First, she was surprised and then her cheeks turned pink with shyness, her hands up to shield her eyes, yet immediately creating a big gap to keep staring intensely at the two.

"You... you two practiced Dual Cultivation?"

"How did this happen? Sister Yunrong, you are a cat, and Senior Jin Lin is a dragon; it's miraculous."

In this moment, the pampered and beautiful daughter of a wealthy merchant, filled with a desire to know.

Chapter 313: Rashamon Princess, Angry Hero

Tao Qian and Yunrong, in the end, were unable to satisfy the young girl's thirst for knowledge.

The two disregarded Jin Xiuju, who had been spouting aggressive words the whole time, and stepped out of the courtyard to meet Jin Tianyang, who had arrived with many spiritual material treasures.

Tao Qian, who had come with a purpose, readily accepted the latter's invitation.

Within a few words, they had agreed on the matter of becoming a Guest Elder.

Afterward, Jin Xiuju pulled the two of them toward the bustling living room of Jin Mansion.

The "Sister An Ya" whom Jin Xiuju mentioned was actually the Princess of Rashamon Country, married to the Ninth Prince who came with a warship, and also known as Princess Zhao of the Longevity Heavenly Dynasty.

It was unclear what suddenly inspired this Princess Zhao to invite many people to Jin Mansion for a salon.

As the trio left, Jin Tianyang's side, featuring a goat-bearded old butler, asked puzzled,

"Master, the tribute contract we signed with this devil seems rather lenient."

"According to the contract, this Master Jin Lin hardly needs to do anything, even if our Jin Family faces trouble, he can choose not to lift a finger."

Jin Tianyang smiled slightly upon hearing this and responded directly,

"You get what you pay for, not just in the mortal world but in the Cultivation World as well."

"Since we haven't paid a huge price, we naturally can't expect significant help. This dragon demon comes from the overseas Immortal Island, rich in natural resources and spiritual materials. Although I have collected many spiritual material treasures with money, it's hard to impress a devil cultivator of his kind."

"However, there is no need to worry; there's plenty of time to come. As long as he is willing to stay, there will be many opportunities."

"I've heard he got into some trouble with his cultivation and needs various female devils... That's very good. Send out orders to add 'female devil' to the list of things to collect. It doesn't matter if their cultivation is low or if they haven't transformed; be it cat demon, dog demon, chicken demon, fox demon, or flower demon, as long as they are charming and attractive, we will eventually find one that pleases this dragon demon."

"Yes, Master."

...

Tao Qian, who was being pulled by Jin Xiuju toward the Jin Mansion Living Room, naturally was unaware that the wealthy merchant behind him had started searching worldwide for female fairies after discovering his "hobbies."

Jin Tianyang, lacking significant talent in cultivation, was, however, skilled at pleasing important figures; even the Ninth Prince found his service satisfactory.

It seemed that Tao Qian, this mere dragon demon newly exposed to the world, would also pose no problem.

Before long, as the trio neared the living room, they had not yet fully entered when they overheard intense debates coming through the window.

Voices rose and fell in succession, and the content was all related to cultivation.

Moreover, the subjects they debated were immensely challenging, so much so that Tao Qian also found himself utterly unable to offer an opinion.

A group of apparently young men and women were arguing over which path in the Cultivation World — Daoist, Buddhist, Demon, Devil, heterodox, noble families, etc. — held the most promise, was closest to the Great Dao, or could truly achieve eternal longevity and invincibility.

Initially, each spoke well of their own views, but soon it escalated to mutual attacks.

Yet, although all these young people showed signs of cultivation, most were superficial, merely at the Energy Introduction and Refining Realms.

Their means of attack were also primarily by citing examples.

It just so happened that Tao Qian and his companions reached the window, and their glimpse perfectly captured most of the scene inside the living room.

At that moment, a young man dressed in a Daoist robe, disheveled and acting as an ancient free-spirited poet, took the lead and said,

"Everybody knows that our Daoist sect has Twelve Major Daoist Sects, with numerous Divine Power Skills, and most do not require severe penalties. But the Buddhist methods are different—it often makes people castrate themselves and clean their bodies, avoid meat and fish, not be angry, and not harm living beings... I had a cousin troubled by a devil monk's gift when he was young, who cut off his 'descendants' root' and shaved off his entire head of annoyance hair that very night, claiming he wanted the emptiness of the Four Greats to become a Buddha and an ancestor."

"Brother Xu, you should be careful not to fall for the tricks of those Buddhist bald donkeys and end up utterly empty too."

"Your family's electric car company still needs you as the heir."

The one being targeted, a young man who looked frail but dignified, also the son of a wealthy businessman, was dressed in a normal long gown and robe, sitting next to a kindly-faced, emaciated old monk.

The young man, less tempered than the old monk, became somewhat angry upon hearing the slander and couldn't help but respond,

"Brother Song, you needn't worry about me. The method I practice is not that of devil monks and Demon Buddhists, but the Supreme Dharma of Qingjing Temple. It doesn't require me to castrate myself or shave off a whole head of annoyance hair."

"Rather, it's you, Brother Song, who should be cautious. I heard you're practicing the Magic Skills of Lingxu Sect. Although this sect claims to belong to Daoism, as far as I know, most Daoist cultivators don't recognize it, only saying that it belongs to heresy and heterodoxy."

"Brother Song, you also know heresy and heterodoxy is mixed with good and evil, mostly involving methods of walking off the beaten track, like consuming hair and drinking blood. Be careful not to get scammed."

This Xu-named youth revealed the other's secrets with a single statement. The young man next to him, however, was an unrestrained middle-aged man holding a large fan.

Hearing this, he was not annoyed but laughed carelessly several times.

Unexpectedly, someone else got angry; it was a woman dressed in bright red, fiery and vigorous. Beside her sat an imposing middle-aged beautiful woman with a red plum embroidered on her brow, whose expression was sharp. The red-clothed woman suddenly slammed the table and retorted to the Xu-named youth,

"Xu Damo, make it clear, what is wrong with heterodoxy?"

"My Xuan Miao Temple is a major sect of the Heterodox, a great heterodox sect. We usually slay Demons and devils, and protect the local people. How could we possibly walk the crooked path or consume hair and drink blood?"

Caught off guard by this woman, the Xu-named rich merchant's son, also a disciple of Qingjing Temple, immediately turned red-faced and quite embarrassed.

Just then, the old monk by his side did not move an inch, apparently not planning to help him out of this predicament.

As the argument was about to escalate, the host of this salon, a Rashamon girl sitting in the principal seat, filled with exotic charm and breathtaking beauty, suddenly intervened.

It was strange, as she was a woman from an exotic realm, yet she spoke the official language of Longevity Heavenly Dynasty and Demon City fluently, indistinguishable from the locals.

This captivating Rashamon girl, who could turn the heads of all living beings, flashed a brilliant smile and interjected,

"Please, stop arguing. I have some understanding of the many factions and paths in the Longevity Heavenly Dynasty's cultivation world."

"Be it Daoist, Buddhist, Demon, or Devil, heresy and heterodoxy, or the major families like the Zhang Family, the Xiu Family, and the Si Family, each possesses supreme methods to achieve longevity."

"As the common saying goes in your Tian Chao, 'The Great Dao is simple, leading to the same destination by different paths.'"

"Speaking of which, An Ya admires you people of Longevity Heavenly Dynasty. I've heard that now the Twelve Major Daoist Sects, Buddhist temples, and Major Demon Sects—all major forces of the cultivation world—are integrating with the mortal world, and billions of people might have the chance to come into contact with and cultivate the Longevity Techniques."

"Unlike in our Rashamon Country, where transcendent Magic Skills are controlled by those damned magicians."

"But now An Ya is married here too, so am I not also a person of your Longevity Heavenly Dynasty? I wonder if I can learn these Longevity Techniques?"

This speech had an excellent effect.

The bickering ceased indeed, and now in the living room of Jin Mansion sat many people, their backgrounds exceedingly complex.

Tao Qian quickly glanced around and, aside from a large group of young men and women from Demon City with diverse backgrounds, also saw idle imperial family members, celebrities from the city, and famous actors. However, these once-prominent figures were now getting little attention here.

The ones truly in the spotlight were a group of cultivators, Daoist, Buddhist, devil, demon, heretics, and noble families alike.

Listening to the Rashamon girl's words, they all sneered secretly inside.

Most thought: Barbarians, fit only to be slaves, yet dare to dream of learning our Longevity Techniques?

Although that was their thought, no one spoke up.

Everyone knew!

This breathtakingly beautiful Rashamon Princess called "An Ya" had another identity—she was the wife of the Ninth Prince, who had been made Prince Zhao, the real ruler of Demon City.

Contempt in the heart was one thing, but offending someone with words was another.

Of course, there were still some courageous ones who spoke up.

In the room were several young people with complex auras, not descendants of affluent families. They were there because of their substantial reputations.

Now with frequent protests and similar events happening within Demon City, these few were the leaders.

Originally, they were ordinary students, who would have taken the imperial examination and served as officials in the Longevity Heavenly Dynasty.

Unfortunately, they were shocked by a monumental change that had not occurred in a millennium, and they were furious about the sudden and severe suffering endured by tens of billions of the Longevity Heavenly Dynasty's common people.

Each had a heart to save the world, but none had yet joined the rebel forces; they were still exploring their own principles and methods.

Some followed the path of cultivation, others replicated techniques from the Western Barbarians.

The leader among them, a young man dressed in a simple light-colored robe, seemed very plain.

He appeared to be around twenty, with clear eyes and well-defined features, possessing a handsome appearance. If it had been before the great upheaval, entering the palace examination, he might have been appointed the top scholar by a beauty-loving Emperor.

However, at this moment, this young man heard the feathery words of the Rashamon Princess and Prince Zhao's wife, and immediate anger flashed in his eyes.

Without regard for the vast difference in their statuses, he suddenly stood up and burst out angrily,

"Envious? Princess, are you envious of these young masters? What about the tens of billions of ordinary people in the Longevity Heavenly Dynasty is there for you to envy?"

"We dealt with corrupt officials' exploitation earlier, and now we face countless demons and ghosts... Longevity Techniques? Ha! If these techniques were truly useful, why would the situation in the sixty-seven provinces of our dynasty be so rotten?"

"How could rebel armies like the Taiping Army, Devil God Army, and White Lotus Sect sweep through the provinces causing devastation and suffering?"

"How could absurd warlords like Zhang Jiudeng, Yang Yu, Dong Xiu, and Xu Wan seize control of entire provinces, enslaving civilians, and acting tyrannically?"

"And you, Rashamon Princess, the wife of Prince Zhao, if you truly consider yourself married into this country, you should advise your husband, the esteemed Ninth Prince, when you return not to create further slaughter. He should properly play his role as Prince Zhao and leave the affairs of Demon City to those who are serious about their duties."

"Do you want to learn Secret Techniques?"

"Who in Demon City doesn't know that the Ninth Prince has deep connections with the Taishang Demon Sect? Why don't you directly learn the Demon Sect's Secret Techniques from him?"

"Or is it that you, the Rashamon Princess brought in by a battleship, can no longer meet that temperamental, cruel, and tyrannical Prince Zhao?"

"Hiss..."

When the young man had finished his bold speech, the living room of Jin Mansion fell utterly silent.

Everyone was stunned, including Tao Qian and two others standing outside the window.

People often talk about courting death, but even courting death shouldn't be like this.

Chapter 314: The Three Immortals of Ultimate Happiness in Great Wilderness Mountain, Princess Zhao Seeks the Secret Technique of the Marital Bed

Outside the Jin Mansion living room, Tao Qian could see and hear everything crystal clear. He originally thought that as soon as the young man uttered those offensive words, conflict would immediately arise—and perhaps even a cultivator's battle.

With his keen perceptions, he could tell that the brave young man with his passionate speech had a strong presence, and was indeed a cultivator at the Foundation Establishment Realm.

To the side of Princess Zhao, there were two people sitting on her left and right.

One had deep-set eyes and a hawk-like nose, exuding an aura of sheer nefariousness—a strange monk in black obviously from Rashamon Country.

The other was an ordinary-looking middle-aged cultivator dressed in a black robe, sporting a beard, and always carrying a fake smile on his face.

Besides these two, who were clearly at the Perfect Transcend Mortality Realm, the Rashamon Girl had many guards seated in the side hall.

Should trouble really start, a mere "Foundation Establishment Cultivator" would truly be insignificant.

Yet strangely, the Rashamon Girl did not get angry, nor did the clearly Taishang Demon Sect's middle-aged cultivator immediately act.

Instead, he suddenly lost his smile, his expression turned stern, and killing intent emanated from him as he angrily said,

"Yu Yanshi, you have always been forming factions and scheming privately, creating this so-called 'National Salvation Congress' with these people here, inciting citizens and scholars to protest and demonstrate within Demon City. Considering your status as a master, His Highness has tolerated your reckless talks."

"But do not overstep your bounds, criticizing the Princess and slandering His Highness... Ha, if you do not give an explanation today, despite being punished by His Highness, I will have to teach you a lesson myself."

"At most when your master comes knocking, I'll simply owe him my life."

As his words fell, an intense surge of Demonic Qi suddenly erupted from the Demon Cultivator's body.

In an instant, the entire Jin Mansion living room seemed to be pulled into a bizarre Exotic Realm. Countless strange and terrifying demons surged forward, as if they would devour the young man called "Yu Yanshi" in the next moment.

Seeing this, everyone showed a look of shock.

However, most of these people did not aid the Demon Cultivator, nor were they opting for prudence. Instead, they hesitated whether to speak up on behalf of Yu Yanshi and plead for him.

Outside the living room window, noticing the confusion in Tao Qian's eyes, Sister Yunrong suddenly explained through transmitted sound,

"This young man has great renown in Demon City and has an extraordinary background."

"His disregard for caution is actually reliant upon his master's prestige—the 'Weng Zhong Immortal Ruan Xizhai'."

"Nine hundred miles outside of Demon City, at the Three Immortals Ridge of Great Wilderness Mountain, lies a renowned Daoist Field, home to three Ultimate Happiness Realm cultivators."

"They are the Weng Zhong Immortal, the Copper Tripod Immortal, and the Tianjiang Immortal. All three claim themselves as Loose Cultivators, practicing together and staying out of worldly affairs."

"However, in recent years, the Weng Zhong Immortal has whimsically come into the world and taken a disciple named Yu Yanshi."

"The young man has exceptional talent, quickly building his Dao Foundation, but for some reason, he vowed to 'save the nation before becoming an Immortal,' not otherwise."

"Recently, whether it be the Ninth Prince or some of the warlords and tycoons he has attacked, all have harbored killing intent towards him, only restrained by the existence of the 'Three Immortals of the Great Wilderness,' daring not to truly strike him down."

Hearing this communicated message, Tao Qian couldn't help but raise his eyebrows.

Who could have expected this?

A passionate, princess-scolding young man with such a significant background?

"The Three Immortals of Great Wilderness, all in Ultimate Happiness Realm?"

"With those Daoist Transformation Realm powerhouses not engaging in worldly matters, these three would naturally be considered top combat forces. To think that even my nominal master is nothing more than Ultimate Happiness himself."

"With such a strong foundation and support, no wonder the young man is so impudent."

"Speaking of which, I also have some powerful legs to cling to—my nominal master and Aunt Yunhua are thick and strong ones."

"If it weren't for the fact that the former has too many and too terrifying enemies, I, Master Tao, would also be strutting around arrogantly, alas."

Tao Qian's thoughts wandered off, complaining about Duobao Daoist, completely forgetting his own pile of grievances.

Knowing Yu Yanshi's background, Tao Qian thought he would continue to stand his ground against the Demon Sect Cultivator.

But in the next moment, a surprising scene unfolded:

The previously furious Yu Yanshi suddenly composed himself, revealing a radiant smile.

Then, with a highly respectful demeanor, he clasped his hands and said,

"This senior must not be angry. I was indeed rash earlier. On the way here, passing by a slum, I witnessed the suffering of the world and couldn't restrain my anger, thereby offending the Princess."

"Having heard that today, His Highness has generously opened the granaries to provide relief to the disaster victims, I, too, have some savings. How about I also donate them, joining His Highness' philanthropic efforts as compensation?"

These words, though somewhat sarcastic to the Demon Cultivator's ears, indeed seemed to make amends on the surface, giving him a way to step down. The Demon Cultivator took the hint and calmed his Divine Skills.

Even though he was of the Taishang Demon Sect and served the Ninth Prince,

The "Yu Yanshi" behind him was backed by no less than three Ultimate Happiness Realm cultivators.

Even if Yu Yanshi refused to submit, he, in fact, dared not strike to kill. At most, he might make a feint or two, making a big scene.

"Fortunately, this young man has some sense of propriety,"

The Demon Cultivator thought this to himself.

Yet, he was completely unaware that many of the clever ones in the room considered him foolish.

For instance, Tao Qian, who had been observing from the sidelines.

"This Yu Yanshi's contrasting attitudes, judging by his poise and manners, is clearly not one of those arrogant and reckless second-generation immortals."

"That challenging question of his might have been critical in the end."

"Perhaps he wanted to gauge the current state of the Ninth Prince?"

"If even the Rashamon Girl, a princess in her own right, cannot see her husband, it either means the Ninth Prince is in a severely bad state, or he is concocting some plot, right?"

"Everyone knows the former is unlikely. Although Princess Taiping is skillful, her mere 'Taiyin Xuan Nu Locking Dragon Needle' wouldn't be likely to inflict a fatal blow on someone who has inherited the true teachings of the Taishang Demon Sect and holds the identity of the Ninth Prince."

"So, Yu Yanshi and the others must be suspecting that the Ninth Prince is plotting. But what means will they use to uncover the truth?"

"The leader of the Changchun Society, He Sen, even with his status, only knows that the Ninth Prince is refining a treasure in hopes of completely controlling Demon City, but the actual details of the treasure—its origin, specific power—remain unknown."

"With such powerful support, Yu Yanshi should have made preparations early on, right?"

Not just Tao Qian was pondering these things.

The eyes of many Daoist and Buddhist Practitioners in the room shone with insight.

It was at this moment that a crisp voice suddenly resonated beside Tao Qian.

"Good!"

"Brother Yan Shi is really kind and generous, and Xiuzhu cannot fall behind. I also have ten thousand yuan in savings, which I will also donate to the disaster victims."

Indeed, the speaker was Jin Xiuju.

As soon as she spoke, she naturally exposed the presence of Tao Qian and Yunrong as well.

The three of them naturally stepped into the hall, and immediately there came successive echoes of agreement from others.

Since the Jin Family's daughter had made a donation, how could the children of all the big officials, rich merchants, and celebrities in the room not want to make their voices heard?

One by one, they also spoke up. If you donate ten thousand yuan, I'll donate twenty thousand.

In the end, even Princess Zhao, the Rashamon Girl, joined in and donated a whole fifty thousand yuan.

Before long, the people within this salon actually pooled together a million yuan in silver banknotes.

Yu Yanshi, who had been beaming with a smile, now had the corners of his mouth almost stretching to his ears, looking every bit like a cunning fox that had stolen a chicken.

He stood up and bowed repeatedly, saying,

"Good! Truly good. With the generosity of everyone here, we can benefit all seven or eight slums on the outskirts of Demon City."

"This trip was so worth it. I, Yu Yanshi, thank Princess Zhao and everyone in advance, and also thank Sister Xiuzhu."

Obviously, Jin Xiuju, the daughter of the Jin Family, greatly admired people like Yu Yanshi.

Receiving his thanks, she immediately beamed with happiness.

Then, remembering something, she quickly tugged at Tao Qian and Yunrong to the center of the room, very proudly saying to everyone,

"Sister Yunrong, everybody has met her already, this is our newly recruited tribute, Senior Jin Lin."

"Senior Jin Lin is a True Dragon from the Overseas Immortal Island, the kind that can call forth wind and rain, extremely powerful."

Compared to many of the young people in the room, Jin Xiuju was obviously very well-protected by Jin Tianyang.

Innocent and wilful in her manner.

Of course, you could also say she was inexperienced in the ways of the world.

After all, anyone with even a slight understanding of the Cultivation World wouldn't reveal the origins of their Guest Elder's footing as soon as they arrived.

The crowd knew this as well, and seeing that Tao Qian himself didn't mind, no one said anything.

The two words 'True Dragon' naturally had a significant deterrent effect.

Standing there in the living room, the salon's guests all simultaneously cast their gazes over.

Tao Qian also looked back with a smile, having only caught a glimpse from the window earlier and not the full view.

Now was a good chance to see within Demon City who among the mundane forces were there, and also to see how deeply intertwined they were with the Daoist and Buddhist, demon and devil, and various heterodox sects.

He was deeply into his role, and with the help of the Secret Demon Transformation Technique, he was completely flawless.

"No mistake, authentic Dragon Clan aura, should already be at the Perfect Transcend Mortality Realm, and vaguely one can see the semblance of wind, rain, thunder, and lightning. This demon should be of the Bo Dragon lineage."

"The combat strength is extraordinary; the Jin Family really hit the jackpot, consecutively obtaining two Great Demons of no ordinary origin."

While the representatives of the many local forces in Demon City were muttering to themselves in the salon,

Tao Qian had also clearly seen them and learned their basic information through Jin Xiuju's introductions.

Just a salon event, and moreover, one organized by Princess Zhao, a foreign Rashamon Girl, could not possibly have invited every major power in Demon City.

Apart from those who were there to make up the numbers, such as actors and scholars and assorted imperial relatives, the remainder was a bunch of young offsprings from Demon City's families, either officials or magnates.

Most of them were already Cultivators, accompanied by powerful fellow practitioners, evidently already connected with the Cultivation Sects.

Or to put it another way,

It was the Cultivation World that was encroaching into the mundane world.

These families, being able to receive the Longevity Technique, were unable to refuse, willingly becoming promoters or representatives of the mundane world.

However, only a few people really caught Tao Qian's attention.

First was the Xu Family, which owned electric and water companies, whose Young Master, Xu Damo, had received dharma from the Buddhist Temple Qingjing Temple, accompanied by an elderly monk called "Master Yuan Jue," in the Transcend Mortality Realm.

Second was the Song Family, which owned a large number of shops, two department stores, and even cinemas, whose Young Master, Song Dashi, had received teachings from the major Daoist sect Lingxu Sect, and his companion, the Mad Daoist known as "Cao Xianzhi," was also in the Transcend Mortality Realm.

Third was the fiery red-clothed young girl Luo Jingjing, from the Luo Family that opened many banks, who had been taught by the heterodox major sect Xuan Miao Temple, accompanied by a middle-aged beautiful woman named "Lady Hong Mei," also in the Transcend Mortality Realm.

Fourth was a youth named Zhuge Qingkong, who always seemed quiet and had been born unable to walk. The Zhuge Family was an officials' lineage, deeply connected with officials big and small within Demon City, and although he was physically challenged, he had received teachings from one of the Twelve Major Daoist Sects, the Nanhua Sect, but the Nanhua Sect did not send anyone to protect him.

...

"It seems that on the surface, most of the forces from the Cultivation World have only sent Cultivators in the Transcend Mortality Realm."

"Of course, Cavernous Mystery Realm Cultivators are considered senior experts, powerful cultivators; how could they be easily dispatched."

Just as Tao Qian had this thought,

Suddenly, Princess Zhao, the Rashamon Girl, who had thus far been playing the "Tool Man," allowing the Ninth Prince's men to perform, spoke up.

And with her first sentence, she uttered words so audacious that they made everyone's faces freeze.

Most crucially, this alluring and seductive Minority Princess directed her words straight at him, Master Tao.

She looked at Tao Qian earnestly, her eyes filled with hopeful light, and asked,

"Master Jin Lin, are you a dragon? A true dragon?"

"That's great. Back in Rashamon Country, I had heard about the Dragon Clan of your Longevity Heavenly Dynasty. They can have children with all things in heaven and earth."

"This means that your Dragon Clan must be very knowledgeable about this aspect. I wonder if you have any secret treasure that can be shared with me so my husband and I can also use it?"

As these few sentences reached the ears of the crowd, including the Demon Cultivator sent by the Ninth Prince,

Every one of them was as if struck by lightning, stunned on the spot.

And Master Tao himself was made exceedingly uncomfortable by the Rashamon Girl's direct gaze.

Chapter 315: No Way to Save the Nation, Calamity Arrives Suddenly

Jin Mansion Living Room, Tao Qian was gazing at a woman who was filled with charms from exotic realms and could be described as irresistibly enchanting.

This woman called "Princess An Ya," the concubine of the Ninth Prince, spoke with utmost directness, not bothering to disguise anything.

Even Tao Qian could not fathom this woman's temperament at that moment.

Was she truly bewildered?

Or was it feigned?

After she spoke those words, though others were also surprised, their reactions were not too great; at most, they muttered something to themselves like "Indeed a barbarian princess, ignorant of proper manners."

However, several cultivators who had access to deeper secrets of the Cultivation World instantly understood what the Rashamon Girl sought.

The Ninth Prince having been rendered unable to continue his lineage by Princess Taiping, naturally, could not engage in humanly relations anymore.

He might not tell the Rashamon Girl the truth, perhaps making excuses like feeling tired, being busy with official duties recently, or complications in his cultivation.

The Rashamon Girl, unaware of the truth, naturally sought secret techniques and magical treasures, which was to be expected.

In this way, her approach was somewhat tactful.

As Tao Qian's thoughts whirled in his mind, he quickly grasped what the Rashamon Girl truly desired.

But understanding was one thing; the awkwardness remained unavoidable.

"Indeed I am aware of quite a few secret techniques concerning the intimacies of the bedchamber, such as the 'Pure Yang Thought Control and Soul Destruction Technique' or the 'Little Desire Heaven Joyful Zen Embodiment Secret Method.'"

"The former bolsters virility incredibly, while the latter is the ultimate secret technique of the Great Da Zhao Temple from the Buddhist Sects, which can certainly bypass the 'Taiyin Xuan Nu Locking Dragon Needle.'"

"Yet even so, I cannot teach them. Although it's unlikely that the bald monks of Great Freedom Temple might discover me through this clue, the risk is still not worth taking."

"Besides, I am currently posing as a True Dragon. The Dragon Clan indeed does not shy from cold, and all creatures can bear offspring with them, but this relies on talents that are variable in size and shape, impressive in strength, and exceptional in nature, not on any secret technique."

"I will not teach, I will not teach!"

Tao Qian complained inwardly while maintaining a very polite smile on his face.

He then directly shook his head and declined:

"Princess, you flatter me too much, to be honest, our Dragon Clan, although proficient in the Yin Yang Dao, has no secret techniques."

"We can propagate our lineage with all creatures and birds purely through our innate talents."

As Tao Qian spoke, all the men in the room felt like they had been shown up.

If it had only been that, it might have been okay.

But right after Tao Qian finished speaking, standing beside him was a female cultivator, whose beauty and complexion were in no way inferior to the charming Fairy Yunrong, the concubine of Prince Zhao.

This stunning female cultivator appeared to corroborate Tao Qian's statement, nodding her head seriously and in agreement.

Immediately, the men felt insulted once again.

The Rashamon Girl was also deeply disappointed, continuously sighing.

Jin Xiuju, Yunrong, and a very graceful lady, rumored to be the foremost actor of Demon City, stepped forward to comfort the young concubine who now had to live like a widow.

Without a host, the atmosphere in the salon did not turn to ice but remained lively.

As it goes, with idle minds, although the young people in the midst didn't have much cultivation, they loved to argue intensely.

Fortunately, they all knew that magical duels were prone to accidents; otherwise, they might have started brawling while talking.

Tao Qian wasn't interested in these; after sitting down, he immediately turned his attention to a small group called "National Salvation Congress."

Initially, they seemed united behind Yu Yan Shi, presenting a united front.

But after managing to gather a million silver banknotes within a few words, several ambitious young men fell into debate.

It was just that Yu Yanshi had used some techniques to keep their tones isolated within that little circle, making them inaudible to others.

Curiosity grew in Tao Qian, and with a thought, he covertly performed a Summoning Demon Technique.

Yuan Gong was right; Tao Qian had refined this secret technique to perfection.

Some demons required him to store them in the Demon Gourd beforehand to be conveniently accessible.

But some special ones did not need this, such as the Eye Demon or the Ear Demon.

What Tao Qian summoned now was an "Ear Demon."

What other cultivators could not see happened—the ordinary ears of Tao Qian suddenly flashed with brilliance, and more ears overlapped, making it seem as if Tao Qian suddenly had four, six, eight ears...

Quickly, as he slightly turned his body, the debate from the members of the National Salvation Congress clearly entered Tao Qian's ears.

The tone and wording were unexpectedly intense.

A young man in a long robe, wearing spectacles and with a middle-parted hairstyle, directly fired at Yu Yan Shi, his spittle flying:

"Yu Yan Shi, don't bring up the disaster victims, disaster relief is important, but we must never collaborate with Zhu Qii, have you forgotten our goal?"

"We aim to save tens of billions of our country's people—our first task is to overthrow this decayed and malodorous court."

"Fortunately, Zhu Yong, that inept ruler, died suddenly, and the Imperial ideology was hit hard again. As long as we persevere, success is inevitable."

"This world belongs to the tens of billions of ordinary people, not to the Zhu Family."

"When I was running the 'Awakening World Newspaper,' I gathered information on uprisings and rebellions in various provinces. Besides the Taiping Army and Devil God Army, there are also numerous passionate heroes and righteous men, dedicated to the people. They disregarded their own safety, followed one after another, even if it meant sacrificing their lives to awaken all people. Over these years,

our compatriots' worship and reverence for the so-called Emperor and Imperial Family have dwindled significantly."

"Now that Zhu Yong is dead, and a bunch of princes and the old Emperor are squabbling over that damn throne, their brains might as well be battered out, completely unable to focus on the changes in the people's mindset—this is our best opportunity."

"Yu Yanshi, if you're unwilling to listen to this, then I, Li Wenyan, will just leave the National Salvation Congress," he said. "I refuse to believe that in such changing times, the so-called Emperors and Princes can continue to oppress the common people and prosper from it."

The members of the National Salvation Congress had clearly heard such statements before, hence they showed no surprise.

However, Tao Qian raised his eyebrows upon hearing this.

The memories of his past life and those of the Hero he originally was suddenly made it hard for Tao Qian to distinguish between them.

He suddenly felt an impulse to sit beside those few people and join in their discussion.

Nevertheless, he suppressed that urge and just continued to listen sideways.

Despite being angrily criticized by his companion, Yu Yanshi didn't get annoyed. Instead, he responded calmly with a serious expression:

"If I remember correctly, Brother Wen Yan, you joined the Heavenly Talisman Sect, not the Shenxiao Sect that practices the impetuous Thunder Skill."

"Brother Zhichang, who's earnestly working in the south, indeed comes from the Shenxiao Sect, but even he doesn't have a temper as explosive as yours."

"When did I, Yu Yanshi, ever say I wanted to collaborate with Zhu Qi? I'm merely using the convenience of his Prince Zhao Mansion to look after the hundreds of thousands of disaster victims around Demon City. Do you object to this as well? You have a moral obsession that needs to change, even if it's for the sake of the disaster victims."

"And what you've mentioned, yes, that's one of the goals of our National Salvation Congress."

"But it's only one of them. If there hadn't been that earth-shattering disaster, that Ancestor God Forbidden Technique, and if the Longevity Barrier hadn't broken, this certainly would be our highest goal."

"Now that you've joined the Heavenly Talisman Sect and are aware of the vastness of the Cultivation World, having seen the Demons entering the Human World, you should realize how complex and rotten the situation is in those 67 provinces, and what kind of dilemma the billions of common people face. Is it solely an issue of imperial power?"

After Yu Yanshi finished speaking, Tao Qian had just heard a familiar name and didn't have time to think further.

He then heard another person from the National Salvation Congress continue the conversation.

Unexpectedly, it was a woman.

At first glance, she seemed delicate and pretty, yet her sharp, slanted eyebrows soon revealed a bravery unmatched, showing that she was as competent as any man.

Her voice was steady, not hasty, but strangely persuasive.

"Brother Wen Yan, don't be in such a hurry. Brother Yu is making sense."

"If there were no Cultivators, no Immortals, no Demons in this world, then our only adversary would be the corrupt imperial power."

"Unfortunately, the Cultivation World is right before us. Let's not talk about us, even Jin Mansion has recruited a Kitten Demon and a Bo Dragon as a Tribute. Jin Tianyang is just a mere wealthy merchant, nothing more than a lapdog of the Ninth Prince."

"If we think about saving the nation and the world, there's too much to consider. After overthrowing the Longevity Heavenly Dynasty, what kind of new nation can we provide for the billions of people? A new Emperor? A new system? Or shall we just copy the governmental structure of the Western Countries?"

"We have too many adversaries—Twelve Major Daoist Sects, Buddhist Temples, several Great Demon Sects, Devil Clans, Alien Species, immeasurable major families like the Zhang Family, the Xiu Family, the Si Family, plus countless heresy and heterodoxy..."

"The real world is extremely cruel, with various great powers combined into one. If we don't have the power to resist, even if we overthrow the Longevity Heavenly Dynasty and establish a new dynasty tomorrow, we'll still fail."

"Any of these forces could send a mere Tribulation Immortal to destroy our lifetime of efforts."

Upon hearing this, Li Wenyan, like the others, fell silent.

After a while, he spoke grudgingly:

"It's the same old story; each of us is aware of this."

"Heh, a power to contend with Cultivators and Tribulation Immortals? The only option is to join them, and become Tribulation Immortals ourselves?"

"If we truly became Immortals, who then would retain any humanity? Who would even glance at the tens of billions of ants struggling in this human purgatory?"

"At most, we'd just sigh at how time changes and all living beings suffer."

"Don't think too much or too far ahead. If we can overthrow this oppressing dynasty that torments all people, exterminate that bunch of misbehaving nobles, and those ridiculous warlords, I, Li Wenyan, am prepared to sacrifice myself."

At the moment he uttered these last words, this man, despite only being in the Qi Refinement Realm, erupted with a force that even made Tao Qian take notice.

It was then that Yu Yanshi also seemed to be moved by his speech.

Suddenly, with a laugh, he patted Li Wenyan on the shoulder and then said mysteriously:

"Don't be discouraged. Who said that to contend with them, we have to join them?"

"The so-called person who tied the bell must untie it. Remember, before the Ancestor God Forbidden Technique shattered, our only adversary was indeed the corrupt dynasty."

"If that's the case, why don't we reconstruct that Forbidden Law Barrier again..."

As Yu Yanshi was speaking, he suddenly changed his expression, as if sensing something, and abruptly stopped talking while twisting his head to look toward the center of the living room.

Before him, Tao Qian had already sensed something earlier.

Without any warning, the Cultivation Tribulation Technique inside him automatically activated.

"Trouble is coming!"

Following this sensation, Tao Qian's gaze sharply locked onto Rashamon Girl, Princess Zhao.

Then, he shifted his attention to a seemingly charming and fragile actress.

Initially, Tao Qian's senses confirmed she was a mere mortal.

But now, he felt an intense sense of danger from her.

The source was not his own perception, but the warning released by the "Innate Spiritual Sensing" that Senior Sister Lingji had gifted him.

"People of the Xie Family?"

"Or from the Evil Sect?"

Instantly, Tao Qian's eyebrows knitted tightly, and his mind churned.

Chapter 316: True Inheritor of the Evil Sect, Male Concubine Yulou

It was not just Tao Qian and Yu Yanshi who sensed something amiss; all the Transcend Mortality Cultivators present were not blind or deaf to the bizarre atmosphere.

At that moment, everyone turned their gaze towards the delicate woman beside Princess Zhao.

Until then, everyone had thought she was merely an ordinary woman.

Although the popularity of this woman had recently made her the number one actress in Demon City, famously known as "Little Juxian."

When she performed, many wealthy merchants and celebrities from Demon City would go crazy for her, throwing gold and silver as if it meant nothing, some even going as far as abandoning their families for her.

In other places, she was undoubtedly a distinguished guest.

But in this salon, filled with great figures of cultivators, she was supposed to be just an accompanying guest.

Indeed, that was the case, until an unusual surge of energy erupted, and nobody had noticed her presence.

But now, a sudden sigh from her made the entire lounge, no, the entire Jin Mansion feel as if it had plummeted into an Exotic Realm.

A sinister darkness surged from all directions, soon enveloping everything, while a blinding white glow showered down from above, and vibrant red mandrake flowers abruptly bloomed everywhere within sight.

When that voice, neither male nor female, sounding both tearful and plaintive, rang out, everyone, including Tao Qian, was controlled.

This place seemed to have become a meticulously set, magnificent stage.

All lights were shining on that woman, who somehow had changed into extremely vibrant theatrical robes, her face already made up intricately, surrounded by a whirlwind of petals, her presence emitting an eerie vibe, toxic-like, eroding the spirit and soul of everyone present.

Everyone lost control over their own bodies and souls, forced to watch her.

It was then that the crowd saw clearly this woman... no, this man's true form.

Though he was heavily made up, donned in purely feminine attire,

his stature and face clearly belonged to a very tall, even burly man.

Despite this man moving with ultimate seduction,

even men could not help but swallow and stir with desire.

And there, hovering in front of him, was an object.

It was a palm-sized puppet, intricately eerie, carved out of soft white jade, indistinguishable in feel from human flesh, its elaborate and luxurious clothing shockingly made of countless tiny, blood-red insects that shrieked and gnawed, attempting to reach another world through the threads hanging from the void.

As the threads tugged, the insects incessantly fell off, futilely repeating the cycle.

A treasure!

Even though it was just a puppet, any cultivator who saw it even once could tell.

This object was undoubtedly a treasure of terrifying power.

Indeed, the very moment this puppet appeared, including all the Transcend Mortality Cultivators, everyone lost their ability to resist.

Simultaneously, strands of thread fell from the void, merging with the bodies of everyone present,

With each pull, each person hung in the air like a puppet.

Including Tao Qian!

Including several from the National Salvation Congress!

Including all the Transcend Mortality Cultivators!

Including the entire Jin Mansion!

This eerie spectacle unfolded too quickly, too abruptly.

Although Tao Qian, due to his Spiritual Resonance Sensing, had preemptively known half a breath earlier that this woman called "Little Juxian" was actually from the Evil Sect,

Driven by concern, he did not seize the opportunity to act and missed the moment.

Now, he too was hung up.

At this moment, all he could do was let this woman, or rather, this man, mournfully utter:

"Love causes karma, all living beings suffer."

"Today, I bestow this object upon you all to render a beautiful dream, to dissolve karma and alleviate suffering."

As he articulated each word, many instantly closed their eyes, blissfully falling asleep.

But those with higher cultivation resisted more fiercely.

The Transcend Mortality Realm cultivators, still conscious, struggled, causing some threads to snap.

But soon, more evil threads would wrap around.

Simultaneously, information burst forth in Tao Qian's mind:

[Record Name: Evil Silk Demon Puppet]

[Record Type: Alien]

[Record: This treasure, an object from the Evil Sect, originates from the Demon Path's Great Book "Evil Scripture," under the chapter of Evil Objects. Its refining process is extremely special. The refiner must first erase all their Divine Power Skills, enter the mortal world in a mortal body, collect intangible evil worms from emotional beings, twist them into threads, suffering through the agony of worms gnawing at their heart each time a thread is created. At the right moment, they also have to cut a lump of flesh from their heart, carve it into the puppet's shape, and integrate the evil threads, only then the treasure can be formed.]

[Note 1: The power of this treasure depends on the user's cultivation level, cultivators of the same realm without capable treasures cannot resist it.]

[Note 2: This individual is Lian Yulou, a True Inheritor of the Evil Sect in the Perfect Transcend Mortality Realm.]

[Note 3: This treasure invades the spirit and soul... it grants immunity after 20 breaths!]

As the last note emerged, Tao Qian's expression suddenly froze.

20 breaths?

If this true inheritor of the Evil Sect had any intention of killing, 20 breaths would be more than enough to obliterate Tao Qian several times over.

After seeing the Record, Tao Qian was quite clear.

Even if he had taken the initiative a moment ago, it would have done nothing to prevent the current predicament.

Due to the items on Tao Qian's body—the Buddha Bird Relics, the Nine Toad Bead, and the Holy Embryo Bag—none could restrain the evil sect's treasure.

Unless Tao Qian could kill Lian Yulou instantly, the outcome here remained unchanged.

Yet, even so, deep regret and reflection surged up in Tao Qian's heart.

"Recently, I have been too fortunate. Divine Power Skills refined at my whim, and I've gained quite a few treasures."

"Even a Cavernous Mystery Realm Great Demon like Liu Hongsheng has been at my mercy, ultimately breeding complacency."

"Facing a tough nut now, the true legacy of the Evil Sect. Was he really just hiding his identity in Demon City as an actor, merely to refine this 'Evil Silk Demon Puppet'?"

"He's making his move here now, and for what?"

Many cultivators shared Tao Qian's confusion, until the next moment.

An unexpected answer suddenly emerged.

"What a stunning beauty that turns the world upside down, it's just a pity she married the wrong person."

"But that's fine too. From now on, just follow me. It's better than staying with that mediocre prince."

As this androgynous voice spoke, everyone saw Princess Zhao inching closer and closer to falling into their grasp.

Did he intend to abduct the princess directly, from his words?

At once, the Rashamon Demon Monk and the black-robed Demon Cultivator were both plunged into shock and anger.

They were guards. If they allowed the princess to be kidnapped, how could they save their own lives?

It was at this moment that the black-robed Demon Cultivator suddenly stared intensely at Lian Yulou's face, then as if recalling something, let out a loud cry.

"You're not Little Juxian, you're Lian Yulou, the favored male concubine of Xiao Chenzhou, the Prince of West Capital from the Taiping Army."

"Has Xiao Chenzhou gone mad? Does he really think the Taishang Demon Sect is unmanned? First he sends his daughter to assassinate His Highness, and now he sends you, this androgynous devil, to kidnap the princess."

"Devil, if you dare touch a hair on the princess, the Ninth Prince together with my Taishang Demon Sect will annihilate your Xiao Mansion, annihilate your Western Capital Army."

The black-robed Demon Cultivator furiously spat out these words, and then suddenly, as if only just realizing, stared at the eerie puppet.

A person could still open their eyes, especially someone right in front of the Demon Cultivator.

At that moment, he witnessed firsthand how a person's expression could be twisted to such an extent.

This black-robed Demon Cultivator seemed to have encountered the most inconceivable thing in the world.

Only to hear him tremblingly, almost frantically saying:

"Did you just say 'where there's love, there's calamity'?"

"Are you a person from the Evil Sect? Could this be the 'Evil Silk Demon Puppet'?"

"Lian Yulou, Xiao Chenzhou's male concubine... are you truly one of the True Disciples of the Evil Sect?"

There were still many cultivators at the scene, all still sober.

Suddenly hearing this Demon Cultivator utter these words, they all revealed incredulous expressions.

Anyone could hear the panic in the voice of this cultivator from the Taishang Demon Sect.

The one who understood him best was Tao Qian.

"The Returning Immortal Mirror once mentioned that the Taishang Demon Sect had two major thorns, one the Evil Sect, the other the Demon Buddha Temple."

"Although they are fellow travelers on the Demon Path, both repeatedly bully those who claim to be the orthodox Taishang Demon Sect."

"Ninth Prince Zhu Qi is clearly a key disciple nurtured by the Taishang Demon Sect, even being groomed toward becoming the Young Sect Leader."

"Recently, this disciple was castrated by Xiao Chenzhou's daughter using the Dragon-locking Needle."

"Now, they've sent a male concubine over to kidnap the princess, and this male concubine is from the Evil Sect."

"If the Ninth Prince were here and knew of this, he might have just burst in anguish."

"It's truly bullying too much!"

Such thoughts stirred in Tao Qian's heart.

Meanwhile, like everyone else, he was shocked that a True Disciple of the Evil Sect would actually become someone's male concubine.

Although the Prince of West Capital from the Taiping Army indeed had a vast influence, and might even have a chance to fight for dominion over the Central Plains.

But for a True Disciple of the Evil Sect, such matters were beneath concern.

Could it really be true love?

As everyone pondered this, the Rashamon Demon Monk and the black-robed Demon Cultivator started fighting desperately.

If they allowed the princess to be kidnapped by a True Disciple of the Evil Sect and Xiao Chenzhou's male concubine, there would be no doubts about their fate—it would be worse than death.

With a "boom," the two likely released some secret technique involving burning Essence Blood or life, freeing themselves from all the Evil Silk.

"Devil, stop!"

"Devil, die!"

Their shouts were loud, and each unleashed powerful Divine Skills and Magical Treasures.

But in the next moment, only to see Lian Yulou let out a coquettish laugh, fine dense Evil Silk suddenly falling from the sky, hanging both men up again.

Even more terrifying was the demon puppet, which also emitted a laugh just like Lian Yulou's.

In an instant, it moved in front of the Rashamon Demon Monk, and as the latter watched in utter terror, the puppet's actor's clothes slowly stripped away, revealing a body like human flesh turning abruptly into a meat worm, completely disregarding the monk's clothes and protective aura, burrowing into his heart.

Horrendous screams of extreme terror echoed through the Jin Mansion.

But soon, the screaming stopped, because the stripped clothes directly disintegrated into millions of red worms, starting from the scalp, taking merely a breath to completely devour the monk, who was equivalent to a Transcend Mortality Cultivator.

Not a speck of flesh or a piece of bone wasted.

It was fortunate that the mortals and those with lesser cultivation present had already fallen into illusions early on.

Otherwise, this scene alone could have driven many insane.

Chapter 317: Daoist, Your Destined Tribulation Has Come

Within the Jin Mansion, the weak were hung by Evil Silk and sank into a deep slumber, while the group of cultivators that were slightly stronger and still maintained their consciousness were compelled to witness the might of Lian Yulou, one of the Evil Sect's current generation of True Disciples.

Transcend Mortality killing Transcend Mortality!

There should have been an exciting fight, but just after a brief encounter, two Transcend Mortality cultivators were captured; the devil monks from Rashamon Country couldn't even resist before being devoured.

That process was even easier than killing a chicken.

And the previous cries of "Devil, meet your death!" seemed to have tickled the funny bone of the Evil Sect's True Disciple Lian Yulou.

He revealed a flirtatiously feeble demeanor, covering his mouth as he chuckled incessantly, shaking the entire exotic realm of the stage with his laughter.

"Taishang Demon Sect... hahaha, such grandeur."

"When I first paid homage to my master, he said that we, practitioners of the Evil Sect, fear neither heaven nor earth. After entering the world for training, we should do two things."

"One is to follow our heart's desire, to stray from the orthodox path, to do whatever we want."

"The other is to bully the people of the Taishang Demon Sect, to kill if we want to kill, to toy with them if we wish."

As these words resonated, everyone fell silent but also found them reasonable.

Because of Lian Yulou's attire and his status as the male concubine of the Prince of the Taiping Army, everyone underestimated him.

Now, witnessing him kill Transcend Mortality cultivators as though slaughtering chickens, a realization dawned on them all.

Evil Sect's True Inheritors!

The power of these four words within the Cultivation World is beyond imagination.

If it were the Demon Buddha Temple, Secret Demon Sect, Spirit Treasure Sect, or any other Great Sect's True Disciple who ran off to be a prince's male concubine, it would definitely shock the entire Cultivation World as groundbreaking news.

But if it were the Evil Sect, although everyone would still be amazed, they wouldn't think the world had gone mad.

One common knowledge in the Cultivation World: anything the people of the Evil Sect do is logical.

Just as Lian Yulou was about to take action against the Demon Cultivator from the Taishang Demon Sect, suddenly, those Transcend Mortality cultivators from major sects also managed to free themselves from some constraints at this moment.

Though they couldn't immediately fight back, they were able to speak.

The emaciated old monk from Qingjing Temple, with the Buddhist name "Yuan Jue," sighed as he looked at Lian Yulou and said,

"Earlier, it was my lack of perception; I failed to realize that Daoist was from the Evil Sect, and even a True Disciple at that."

"In that case, all of us combined indeed would not be a match for Daoist."

"However, Daoist kidnapping the Princess here, although we are innocent, how could we possibly wash our hands of this matter?"

"I wonder if Daoist would be willing to find a way to stop this?"

As soon as the old monk finished speaking, the effeminate, delicate-looking Lian Yulou suddenly grinned.

"What if I don't want to stop?"

"Then there's no other way. My talent is dull, and my divine skills are weak, I'm afraid I won't be able to cultivate any significant attainment in this life."

"Since today presents an opportunity, I'd rather go to the Western Heaven prematurely by your merciless hand."

Right after Master Yuan Jue finished his words, the Mad Daoist of Lingxu Sect Cao Xianzhi, as well as Lady Hong Mei of Xuan Miao Temple, also followed suit and said,

"I've long heard that among the Demon Paths' Major Sects, the methods of the Evil Sect are the most bizarre and terrifying. Today gives me the chance, so I, Cao Xianzhi, brazenly seek a lesson or two from Daoist."

"Daoist even produced such a rare treasure as the Evil Silk Demon Puppet. Lady Hong Mei is fortunate to see it and cannot miss the opportunity."

The words from these three Transcend Mortality Cultivators seemed to pique Lian Yulou's interest.

He did not kidnap Princess Zhao right away but instead smiled charmingly again and said,

"You three are worried that after I kidnap the Princess, the Ninth Prince will trouble you all, right?"

"After all, no one knows how frantically frightening a prince who has completely lost face and wields vast power can become, so you all plan to fight desperately with me?"

"Even if you can't stop me, you can prevent the Ninth Prince from redirecting his anger to your backing Sect."

"If that's the case, why shouldn't I grant your wish?"

After saying these few words, those cultivators who were still conscious immediately noticed the Evil Silk on the bodies of the three Transcend Mortality Cultivators beginning to snap off one by one.

Clearly, it was the doing of Lian Yulou.

Was he intending to face all three of them alone?

Even at this moment, Lian Yulou looked towards Tao Qian and Yunrong, who were also maintaining their consciousness.

Tao Qian, who was about to do something and even began to look forward to being treated the same and freed from the Evil Silk,

If he truly gained his freedom, Tao Qian would immediately strike with all his might.

That "Demon Cleansing Sword Intent" he had been cultivating for a long time; although it wasn't as powerful as when Yuan Gong possessed him to release the Demon Suppressing Sword Intent, it was enough to inflict minor injuries on this True Disciple of the Evil Sect. Then, whether he used the Nine Toad Bead to strike or captured him with the Holy Embryo Bag, he would catch an opportunity to prevent the other from using the Evil Silk Demon Puppet.

Master Tao had suffered a lot of grievances and had been captured before, but being hung up like this and unable to resist was a first.

If his opponent were a mighty cultivator he couldn't defeat, he would have taken note of it in his little book.

But now, Tao Qian felt there was an opportunity for immediate revenge.

The plan for counterattack was all set, but alas, the other party wasn't cooperating.

In the next instant, Lian Yulou, the True Disciple of the Evil Sect, shook his head towards Tao Qian Yunrong, looking rather regretful as he said,

"There's not enough time. Add in one Kitten and a Bo Dragon, and there's indeed a chance of a capsize even in the drain."

Hearing this, Tao Qian's mouth twitched involuntarily.

However, he didn't say anything. If it were another time, Tao Qian would have mocked Lian Yulou.

At the moment, Tao Qian watched the countdown in his mind as it reached "eight, seven, six..." without any panic, just waiting quietly.

"It's okay not to let go. Later, when I unexpectedly unleash the Demon Cleansing Sword, the effect might be even better."

Just as Tao Qian harbored this thought, suddenly, another turn of events occurred.

It was still Lian Yulou who, right before he lamented engaging in a fair fight with the three Transcend Mortality cultivators, suddenly snapped his fingers again.

Accompanied by a chorus of operatic singing, more radiance fell down, and within this Exotic Realm, it seemed as though an additional dim Taiyang appeared, directly casting light on dozens of figures wrapped in yellow glow, who appeared to be soldiers and also cultivators.

Chapter 318: Daoist, Your Calamity Has Arrived_2

They each looked like fierce gods and demons, dressed in yellow robes, covered in bloodstains, wielding blades and spears, and chanting slogans that Tao Qian was extremely familiar with, slashing through.

"Ancestor God shattered, Longevity powerless... the commoners like grass, officials like blood cattle... where Taiping reaches, brightness shines."

"Taiping Army!"

Just as this thought arose in everyone's minds, a coquettish transmission pierced into their brains.

"You wouldn't think I, Lian Yulou, came to capture this Rashamon Girl on a whim. Jin Mansion has been dragged into the miasma of worldly Evil Light, enough to hide us for an hour. When I made my move, these obedient children also slaughtered all the Demon Cultivators guarding the Rashamon Girl in the dark."

"I know that many among you, although bound by Evil Silk, still have strength to spare. To prevent you from meddling while I and three fellow Daoists exchange pointers, I'll have to inconvenience you as well."

"These obedient children will come to kill you. Resist if you can, and if you cannot... go die."

As the last three words fell, everyone still conscious stared wide-eyed.

Fear and anger surfaced simultaneously.

Regrettably, no one had time to say anything.

Even before they could fully process this transmission, Lian Yulou had already clashed with the San Tuifan.

Amid the raging collision of Evil Light, Buddha Light, and Daoist Skills, dozens of ruthless Taiping soldiers immediately took action.

Although Master Yuan Jue, Cao Xianzhi, and Lady Hong Mei intended to first eliminate those dozens of Taiping Cultivators, they themselves were in peril.

Upon contact with Lian Yulou, that bizarre and violent oppressive force descended upon them.

Instantly, they understood: fighting with a true inheritor of the Evil Sect could lead to death and Daoist eradication in an instant.

Thus, at that moment, a massacre erupted.

Starting from the outer area of Jin Mansion's living room, dozens of brutal yellow-robed soldiers started their slaughter, sneering as they did so.

One after another, they carried out their killings. Those who were deep in sleep fared better, as they died without much pain.

However, many young nobles, second-generation celebrities, and their guarding Cultivators, because of the treasures they carried and their inherent cultivation,

could barely resist the invasion of Evil Silk onto their Divine Souls. Although also captured and deprived of their freedom, they did not fall into a dreamscape.

Yet at this point, everyone suddenly wished they were still in their dreams.

At least, in death there would be no fear.

In the process of this brutal slaughter, indeed, many burst out in resistance.

Some detonated their Magical Treasures to sever the Evil Silk, others unleashed skills like "Heavenly Demon Disintegration" or "Primordial Spirit Splitting" to grasp a chance of survival.

Regrettably, it seemed that Lian Yulou had overestimated everyone.

Their resistance spurred only minor ripples, slowing the pace of the slaughter, yet none succeeded.

And these actions also served as a reminder to those brutal soldiers. When they advanced towards the core area, aiming their blades and spears toward the necks of Jin Xiuju and members of the National Salvation Congress,

The leading man, dressed in yellow robes and a golden crown, whose cultivation of some Evil Technique had turned his eyes a ghastly green, suddenly bridged the distance, locking directly onto Tao Qian and Yunrong.

Like a night owl hunting prey, his murderous intent surged, instantly turning into a foul-smelling yellow light streaking towards them.

"I have killed many people, slaughtered Demons, yet never have I killed any from the Dragon Clan."

"Today, I shall fulfill this wish."

His actions and voice had not yet stirred Tao Qian's rage, but they had already thoroughly provoked Yunrong by his side.

This Kitten Demon, who had descended from Jade Ring Mountain, was not interested in the Evil Sect or the Taiping Army, but only started struggling to resist and save someone when she saw those brutal soldiers advancing to kill Jin Xiuju.

But now, someone was trying to kill her "destiny."

A sharply terrifying cat scream erupted, and a violently crimson Demonic Qi, yet oddly resembling Immortal Qi, surged out furiously.

In an instant, the Evil Silk binding them snapped, and it was unclear what Magic Skill Yunrong had used. As soon as she gained her freedom, she revealed a somewhat twisted massive figure, an extraordinary aura ready to erupt and slaughter all the dozens of brutal soldiers in the area.

But right at this moment, Tao Qian's pale hand suddenly fell on Yunrong's head, soothing her down.

Tao Qian's voice, though calm, could not entirely mask the intense killing intent that followed closely:

"Let me handle this!"

"Roar!"

As soon as these words were spoken, the entire Jin Mansion was filled with the sound of a Dragon Roar.

Soon after, Wind, Rain, Thunder, and Lightning arrived, the terrifying celestial phenomena immediately disturbed the pervasive evil atmosphere of the place.

Amidst the swirling rainbow lights, a massive beast that resembled both a dragon and a horse, with golden eyes and canine teeth, and a black tail on a white body, leaped out.

It was unclear whether it was the Sword Qi or the claws, but one could only see the rainbow lights speeding by, instantly shredding dozens of brutal soldiers into a mush of blood and flesh.

Yet, that was not all. The body of the Bo Dragon that Tao Qian had transformed into using the Secret Demon Transformation Technique, though not a real Bo Dragon, possessed the semblance and a third of the power of one.

He had just broken free and killed the Taiping soldiers.

Immediately, he turned into a rainbow of colors and charged into the battlefield with four combatants.

Three Transcend Mortality cultivators were already in grave danger, and without even having time to thank Tao Qian, they were flung away by his tail.

Looking like a mad tyrant, Tao Qian, enveloped in Wind, Rain, Thunder, and Lightning, struck with the fierce head of a Bo Dragon and unleashed a violent Dragon Roar at Lian Yulou, the True Inheritor of the Evil Sect.

But what entered Lian Yulou's ears was another sentence:

"Daoist, your calamity has arrived."

Originally planning to use the same trick with the Evil Silk Demon Puppet to hang the arrogant Bo Dragon before him,

Lian Yulou's heart burst with a warning signal upon hearing this sentence.

But before he could react, the blue and white rainbow light burst forth without warning.

The extremely tyrannical power of the thunder completely enveloped the area.

Even more astonishing was Tao Qian's next move. The Bo Dragon, completely unconcerned with the scorching thunder, opened its massive jaws and bit directly at Lian Yulou.

This turn of events greatly puzzled Lian Yulou, who was dealing with the thunder.

Because he knew that neither the Divine Skills of thunder released by a Bo Dragon nor the biting of this Bo Dragon should be able to harm him, a True Inheritor of the Evil Sect.

Not to mention being truly eaten, it wasn't even possible for him to suffer minor injuries.

These two types of attacks couldn't even break through his protective Evil Light.

But strangely, as the attacks of the Bo Dragon continued, the sense of crisis in his heart grew stronger.

Especially when the mouth of the Bo Dragon touched his indestructible body, a Magical Treasure he wore that could detect good and bad fortunes, directly shattered.

"How is this possible?"

"A mere Bo Dragon in the Transcend Mortality Realm, threatening my life?"

"Is there something strange about this dragon, or is there a strong person hidden at the side?"

Ideas exploded in Lian Yulou's mind.

Though puzzled, he still used his Divine Skills in that instant, teleporting away using the ubiquitous Evil Silk.

Barely avoiding the Nine Toad Bead that Tao Qian was about to expel, a massively forceful smash.

At the same time, he also avoided being wrapped up by the Holy Embryo Bag.

However, in that moment, his slightly disgusting body was touched by Tao Qian.

When the Record triggered on Lian Yulou and on those Taiping soldiers burst forth simultaneously.

What truth had he seen?

Immediately afterward, Tao Qian's large copper bell-like Bo Dragon eyes opened wide once again.

Chapter 319 Desire Sin Scripture, Heavenly Nourishment Entrusting an Orphan

Tao Qian suddenly revealed the form of the Bo Dragon body, and together with the Divine Skill "Silent Divine Thunder" he had refined last night, his might became even more terrifying than that of a True Bo Dragon.

Not only did he instantly kill that group of savage Taiping Soldiers, but he almost devoured Lian Yulou, the True Inheritor of the Evil Sect.

To outsiders, it seemed that way, but through the eyes of Lian Yulou, the situation was quite different.

"This Bo Dragon is possessed!"

Lian Yulou, with a face full of heavy makeup, frowned tightly; having narrowly escaped from the dragon's maw, he should have counterattacked.

But he hesitated for just a moment before making a different decision.

After giving Tao Qian a deep look, he swept his sleeve, and the Evil Silk dancing in the sky suddenly formed a net, wrapping up the Bo Dragon that Tao Qian had transformed into.

Everyone thus regained their freedom, but they didn't have time to do anything; they could only watch helplessly as Lian Yulou, the True Inheritor of the Evil Sect, deployed another peculiar magic skill.

The bright red costume shed, revealing a pale meat worm that grabbed the enticing Rashamon Girl, and in a flash, burrowed into the void and vanished from sight.

Such an escape technique!

It was unprecedented, and Tao Qian, who had just shattered the Evil Silk with his claws and Divine Thunder, couldn't help but be stunned.

Of course, what truly astonished him

was still the Records that were continuously bursting forth in his mind at this moment.

He had originally thought this to be a meticulously planned robbery and assassination directed at the Ninth Prince, who held a grudge against the Western Capital Army.

But the actual truth was something even Tao Qian could never have guessed.

The first complete Record to emerge was that of the several dozen savage soldiers.

[Name: Heavenly Demon Slave.]

[Record Type: Cultivator.]

[Record: The Taishang Demon Sect possesses a Secret Technique called "Soul Swapping Technique," which can exchange the bodies and souls between different people, perfectly inheriting everything from one another, including the Soul's aura and Divine Power Skills. These dozens of individuals are all Heavenly Demon Slaves under the Taishang Demon Sect, subjected to this technique to replace the bodies of several dozen genuine Taiping Soldiers.]

[Note 1: This technique is exceedingly perfect, capable of deceiving various Prediction and Calculus Methods, such that even with the bodies in hand, one cannot uncover the truth.]

[Note 2: Since the replacement bodies belong to Heavenly Demon Slaves, their master can readily think a thought to cause these dozens of individuals to die instantly, destroying their bodies and erasing all traces.]

...

As these Records and notes flowed past, Tao Qian, if he were not a fool, would immediately realize the implications.

This catastrophe was a conspiracy through and through.

"Taishang Demon Sect, Ninth Prince."

"These soldiers were actually dispatched by the Ninth Prince; he sent people to impersonate Taiping Army soldiers to abduct his own princess. What could he possibly be aiming for?"

"And how does Lian Yulou, the actor who is a male concubine of the Prince of West Capital from the Taiping Army, fit into this?"

No sooner had Tao Qian begun to wonder than the Records belonging to that True Inheritor from the Evil Sect surfaced in his mind.

Perhaps it was the influence of the tribulation energy or perhaps the state of Lian Yulou, the True Inheritor of the Evil Sect, was amiss.

In any case, Tao Qian was confronted by the most intricate and detailed Record information he had ever seen.

As he quickly skimmed through it, Tao Qian's eyes bulged out, clearly shocked by even more startling secret news he had discovered.

[Record Name: Lian Yulou.]

[Record Type: Cultivator.]

[Record: This individual is one of the current True Disciples of the great Demon Sect, the Evil Sect, from Huaiyang. Originally an actor, he caught the eye of a local Clan Leader on his first performance, and after days of pursuit, his affection was reciprocated. Imagining himself favored, he wished to be taken in as a consort and become part of the household; an idea that anyone would consider a fool's dream, yet surprisingly it was granted by the Clan Leader. With such a decision, the Clan Leader's authority was wholly lost, and Lian Yulou was hence despised by the Leader's Consort and other concubines, enduring daily beatings and bullying. The Clan Leader initially made every effort to care for him until one night, apparently too overwrought, he died in Lian Yulou's bed. Strangely enough, upon the Leader's death, Lian Yulou discovered that he, in a man's body, was pregnant.]

[Note One: With the Clan Leader's death, Lian Yulou instantly lost his protection. Coupled with the scandal of a man becoming pregnant, he was set to be secretly executed by the wealthy family the very next day. However, for reasons unknown, the executioner, after hearing Lian Yulou's pleas, had a change of heart and secretly took him in. After a ten-month pregnancy, he gave birth to a meaty blob. This flesh ball, upon seeing daylight, split open and from within, flew out a scroll titled 'Desire Sin Scripture,' which is in fact a volume of the 'Evil Scripture' from the Demon Sect, the chapter on desire.]

[Note Two: After a ten-month pregnancy, giving birth to the Desire Sin Scripture, assisted Lian Yulou to unravel a thread of prenatal mystery, vaguely realizing that in a past life he was an expert of the Evil Sect in the Demon Path. Now reincarnated, he must pass through nine Evil Tribulations to regain his Dao cultivation. He is currently undergoing the first tribulation.]

[Note Three: Having obtained the Heavenly Book and practiced the Evil Technique, Lian Yulou soon reverted to the demeanor of a Demon Path intermediary. That very night, he slaughtered the wealthy family and set out to seek his second tribulation... Soon Lian Yulou realized that with each tribulation he passed through, he had to ensure the death and destruction of the one who helped him through, in order to achieve perfection. Yet he himself was also caught in the tribulation, bewitched and confounded, unable to evade it.]

[Note Four: This constitutes a major technique of the Evil Sect, with the belief that 'all creatures harbor desire, and where there is affection, there is sin.' In the following ten years, Lian Yulou passed seven tribulations and was quickly brought back to the Sect by his former chief disciple, now an Evil Sect Elder, where he took his place as a True Inheritor. Afterward, he descended the mountain again to face the world and undergo the final tribulation. Upon completion of this last tribulation, Lian Yulou's

accumulated cultivation and mana from many lives fully returned. He then went into seclusion for a hundred years, which could lead him directly into Ultimate Happiness and allow him a glimpse into the mystery of the Daoist Transformation Realm; this is the true reason for his reincarnation and cultivation anew.]

[Note Five: Prince Xiao Chenzhou of the Taiping Army in West Capital is the person entangled with him in desire and is the focus of his Ninth Tribulation. After entering the world, Lian Yulou was quickly influenced by the secret techniques and became fully immersed in his role, developing a perverse love with Xiao Chenzhou, openly revealing his identity as a True Inheritor of the Evil Sect. He supported Xiao Chenzhou with all his might, until recently Lian Yulou realized that Xiao Chenzhou had betrayed him, repeatedly spending nights in other's quarters and growing increasingly cold toward him.]

[Note Six: Lian Yulou, turning love into hate, coincidentally had his background glimpsed by the Ninth Prince, Zhu Qi, and they hit it off instantly. Lian Yulou collaborated with Zhu Qi to act out a play, representing the Western Capital Army, publicly kidnapping Princess Zhao... Zhu Qi will use this as a pretext to persuade Rashamon Country to send troops in support, coupled with his own Demon Army and several other allies, to jointly annihilate the Western Capital Army....]

[Note Seven: ???]

[Note Eight: Marked by tribulation energy! Exemption possible!]

Within the nearly ruined Jin Mansion, the surviving cultivators saw that the Bo Dragon was still maintaining its original form, simply assuming it was still on high alert.

Little did they know that, at this moment, Tao Qian was experiencing a total overhaul of his three core beliefs, a shock to the very foundation of his understanding.

He had thought that with his many experiences in Southern Yue, combined with what he had seen and heard within the Mountain Gate, he would not be surprised by any odd occurrences once he entered the world.

That was until just now, when he caught a glimpse of the secrets buried in Lian Yulou.

"Don't exempt it!"

Almost subconsciously, Tao Qian seemed to realize something and suppressed the urge of his abnormal soul to purge the trace of evil aura from his body.

At the same time, his thoughts surged rapidly, clarifying the situation.

"That is to say, the bloodshed and robbery that just occurred were orchestrated by the Ninth Prince, Zhu Qi himself."

"The dozens of brutal soldiers were disguised as the Taiping Army using the secret techniques of the Demon Sect."

"Subsequently, it was Lian Yulou, who holds a weighty status, who acted and abducted the Rashamon Girl in public."

"Moreover, the crime was committed in the territory of the Jin family, who are staunchly loyal to the Ninth Prince. With many notable figures and cultivators as witnesses, the blame could not be more conclusively placed on Xiao Chenzhou—irrefutably fastened to him, with no possibility of removing it."

"Following this, the Ninth Prince will use this as a pretext to wipe out the Western Capital Army."

"However, the Record that follows is a question mark. Evidently, there is more secrecy hidden inside. Destroying Xiao Chenzhou is not the Ninth Prince's true aim?"

At that thought, Tao Qian inexplicably remembered the Records he had glimpsed from He Sen, the leader of the Changchun Society.

Undoubtedly!

Huang Chong, one of the saint heirs of the Alchemist Organization, must also be one of the Ninth Prince's allies.

Adding to that, the father of Zhang Baisui, the great warlord Zhang Jiudeng.

And there was the army of Rashamon Country!

And the most fundamental of all, the Taishang Demon Sect.

With all these powers combined, it was impossible that their purpose was merely for a Western Capital Army, or just Xiao Chenzhou.

As Tao Qian thought more and more that something was amiss and felt he was close to touching the root of a disaster conspiracy,

suddenly, numerous cries and howls erupted.

Among them, one was particularly loud.

Tao Qian opened his eyes and saw within the ruins of Jin Mansion, strewn with severed limbs and bloodied bodies,

Jin Tianyang, the Jin Family Patriarch, had miraculously survived.

But at this moment, he was in a terrible state, completely lacking the forbearing presence of a conniving hero from before. He stumbled along, staggering over the bodies of the Jin family in the ruins while wailing, appearing almost insane as he headed toward the parlor area.

When he realized that his only daughter, Jin Xiuju, was unharmed, his face abruptly relaxed.

The madness in his demeanor slightly eased.

However, under Tao Qian's observation, as Jin Tianyang let his guard down, the vital energy that had been gathered in his body dispersed in an instant.

His Dao Foundation was rushed and forcibly enhanced, inherently weak and vulnerable.

After Lian Yulou's intervention, those brutal soldiers deliberately inflicted severe injuries on Jin Tianyang but did not kill him, to make the act more credible.

Jin Tianyang should have collapsed and died on the spot upon seeing the ruin of his life's work.

It was only because he was concerned about the life and death of Jin Xiuju that he had stubbornly rushed over.

Upon seeing that his only daughter was safe, Jin Tianyang's spirit relaxed, and his Dao Foundation immediately crumbled; he had but a short hour to live.

At that moment, Jin Tianyang himself realized it as well.

Perhaps it was the terror of imminent death that made this cunning Jin Family Patriarch swiftly regain his wits. After rushing over, he first made sure Jin Xiuju was safe and then started frantically inquiring from the surviving cultivators in the parlor about everything that had happened.

Quickly, after listening to the whole process and upon hearing that the Ninth Prince's Princess had been abducted, the entire person was stunned.

Whatever he thought of, his eyes narrowed, flashing a frightening glimmer within.

He then suddenly turned his head, a trace of hope lingering in his eyes, and looked toward Tao Qian and Fairy Yunrong.

Completely disregarding the presence of other cultivators, as if a terrifying entity was chasing him, this Jin Tianyang actually dragged Jin Xiuju over to Tao Qian and Fairy Yunrong swiftly.

Without caring for their reaction, Jin Tianyang spoke urgently in secret transmission:

"Fairy Yunrong, Mr. Jin Lin."

"I know my Jin family owes no favors to you two; rather, that you two deigned to stay here is already a blessing for the Jin family."

"This calamity that my Jin family now faces brings us to the brink of annihilation."

"There are no intact eggs under an overturned nest. I, Jin Tianyang, have lived long enough without much regret, so if I die, I die. But Xiuzhu is still young; she cannot die."

"In shame, Jin Tianyang begs, willing to repay you with years of savings, to ask you two for a favor."

"Please take Xiuzhu to her betrothed, Zhang Baisui. If the Zhang Mansion is willing to take in Xiuzhu and fulfill the marriage agreement, you two benefactors are free to leave at any time."

"If Zhang Baisui breaks the engagement, I only ask that you two benefactors take Xiuzhu away from Demon City, choose a place of peace, and let Xiuzhu live out the rest of her life in anonymity."

After saying these words, Jin Tianyang collapsed to his knees with a thud.

His head striking the ground again and again, in his capacity as the family head, he offered a grand tribute to the two cultivators.

Chapter 320: The Ninth Prince of the Current Dynasty, Tao Qian Provokes Age 100

Jin Tianyang's sudden grand gesture, along with this act of entrusting his dependents,

left Yunrong and Jin Xiuju completely dumbfounded; they hastily intervened, particularly Jin Xiuju who was so agitated that she began to cry uncontrollably, overwhelmed and powerless.

Not so long ago, she had been the esteemed eldest daughter of the Jin Family in Demon City, a heiress mingling in the highest circles of society, where even Princess Zhao, the wife of the Ninth Prince who ruled Demon City, would use the Jin's salon to host her events.

Less than an hour had passed,

and everything had changed.

Her family was destroyed, her father, whom she viewed as omnipotent, had fallen to his current wretched state.

Tears streaked Jin Xiuju's face as she couldn't comprehend what had happened.

Tao Qian, however, understood Jin Tianyang's intention immediately upon seeing his initial reaction and his resolute decision to entrust his child's care.

Clearly, as a "loyal subordinate" to the Ninth Prince, Jin Tianyang had managed to deduce part of the truth.

At the very least, he guessed that the Ninth Prince had intentionally allowed this tragedy to happen, and that the Jin family mansion was deliberately chosen for this incident.

There were plenty of places where Princess Zhao could have been kidnapped publicly.

Choosing the Jin Mansion was merely to add an extra layer of credibility.

"Exhaustive schemes but no power, forced into a disaster where extinction is nearly a constant threat,"

Tao Qian expressed his lament just then.

Suddenly, from deep within Demon City, that most esteemed and heavily guarded place, significant upheavals began to emerge.

Complex auras converged, forming a tide racing towards the ruins of the Jin Mansion.

Among the cultivators present, including Jin Tianyang, enlightenment dawned instantly:

"The Ninth Prince is coming!"

The other cultivators, though not without panic, were somewhat relieved; those who had survived were all well-connected,

such as Qingjing Temple, Xuan Miao Temple, Nanhua Sect, not worried that the Ninth Prince would misdirect his fury towards them.

Even if he wanted to, he would have to hold back.

As for members of the National Salvation Congress, they had even less to worry about; with the Three Immortals of the Great Wilderness so close to Demon City, unless the Ninth Prince was out of his mind, he wouldn't risk offending three cultivators of the Ultimate Happiness Realm.

But Jin Tianyang, the true victim of fear, was struggling to stand, his body uncontrollably trembling.

Apart from fear, Tao Qian distinctly saw in his eyes an emergence of immense resentment.

He removed a jade ring from his thumb and immediately erased the mark on it.

Without reservation, his hand trembling, he handed it to Tao Qian.

Simultaneously, his voice, filled with desperate hope, reached them:

"Sirs, this contains all of the Jin family's savings, spiritual material treasures, cultivation manuals, mortal gold and silver, everything."

"I am aware this action entails risks for you both, and the Ninth Prince might vent his anger on you."

"But the likelihood is not high. I will stay here, along with the entire Jin Mansion, to compensate her life with the princess's, along with Xiuzhu's betrothed's influence being sufficient to withstand the Ninth Prince's wrath. I believe this transaction is worth it."

"If you are willing, please quickly take Xiuzhu and leave."

"Once the Ninth Prince's men arrive, it will be too late."

Jin Tianyang's state was truly pitiful.

His flesh was mangled, and after the collapse of his Dao Foundation, he had aged to look like a dry old man in his eighties or nineties, seemingly on the brink of death.

Now, his last effort was to seek a chance of survival for his daughter.

He could have deceived Tao Qian and Yunrong with promises of compensation, simply tricking them to take Jin Xiuju away.

Yet, he knew too well that at this critical moment, deceiving two well-connected Transcend Mortality Cultivators, even if Jin Xiuju survived, would plant seeds of disaster, which would not be worth it.

Faced with this plea,

Yunrong, who already had a fondness for Jin Xiuju, was inclined to agree.

However, now aware of the looming horrific disaster, she did not immediately consent.

Instead, she slightly turned her head to look at Tao Qian.

Just then, a brief yet comforting voice like music to Jin Tianyang's ears reached him.

"Alright!"

"I can't guarantee other matters, but sending her to the Zhang Family will be harmless."

With that, Tao Qian reached out and took the item.

Triggering the Record: A storage-type magical treasure called "Exorcism Jade Machine."

A quick glance inside confirmed indeed it was filled with many items, such as gold and silver of the mortal world, amounting to several small mountains.

For others, this ring was of enormous allure.

But for Tao Qian at this moment, it was useless.

Storing away the Jade Machine, Tao Qian ignored the looks from others around, thoughtfully calling Sui and Lian Jing'er, and Shan Jiu—the trio was safe and sound. Sui and Lian Jing'er had not only realized much of their potential for combat within the Mountain Gate but also had received much love from their aunts, possessing many fine things.

As for Shan Jiu?

Well, that Wild Leek Demon had free rein even within the terrifying belly of the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva.

Tao Qian even doubted if the Evil Silk of Lian Yulou could seize Shan Jiu.

With everyone assembled, Tao Qian and Yunrong took action together, forcefully dragging the sobbing Jin Xiuju away.

This young girl, though somewhat spoiled and naive, realized this departure meant death.

Watching his daughter being dragged away, Jin Tianyang, after an initial bout of crying, suddenly burst into laughter.

Almost at that moment, the skies over the Jin Mansion district changed again.

Despite the bright daylight, sunlight was suddenly obscured, and a surge of Demon Light and shadows flooded the skies, turning this ruined land into a realm akin to a Demon Realm on earth.

All cultivators knew that as bystanders and firsthand witnesses, they couldn't leave too early; otherwise, they were bound to face future troubles.

Thus, they could only watch as a terrifying army enveloped in Demon Light rapidly encircled the area. A sort of sky-covering array and barrier was swiftly established.

Then, in quick succession, a massive parade emerged directly from the Void. Naturally, the most eye-catching was the center, a grotesquely huge black Dragon Chariot.

Within the dimly lit Demon Realm, everyone looked up and saw on that Dragon Chariot a noticeably handsome, almost devilishly attractive, black-haired young man, dressed in attire resembling a Dragon Robe, overlooking all the cultivators and surviving gentry below.

Ninth Prince Zhu Qi!

The current Prince Zhao!

Those three elders of the Transcend Mortality Realm were suddenly startled by the terrifying aura exuding from that person.

During the deadly silence in the hall, a voice, hoarse and filled with despair, echoed:

"Your Highness!"

"It's Jin Tianyang's incompetence, allowing that damned Taiping Army rebel to kidnap the Princess."

"Jin Tianyang and all of us at Jin Mansion feel ashamed of failing the cultivation Your Highness bestowed on us, and now we can only apologize with death."

"I only ask that Your Highness also not spare that cause of all troubles, Xiao Chenzhou of the Taiping Army."

"All here are witnesses; they, like me, saw the soldiers of the Western Capital Army burst into Jin Mansion and murder, and the one who kidnapped the Princess was none other than Xiao Chenzhou's most beloved male concubine, Lian Yulou."

"The evidence is irrefutable, with no mistakes."

"Jin Tianyang deserves to die ten thousand times, and now, on behalf of the Jin Family, I will go first."

As these cries, sounding like blood weeping, rang out, everyone in the hall was stunned.

Finally, after shouting everything, the Jin Family Patriarch collapsed atop the ruins, silent, and everyone was left speechless by the scene they had just witnessed.

Unspoken, no one revealed that the two elders of Jin Family had escaped with Jin Xiuju.

Zhu Qi, atop the black Dragon Chariot, hadn't expected this turn of events and a rare look of regret flashed in his eyes, quickly concealed.

The next moment, all present heard a voice grinding through clenched teeth:

"Xiao Chenzhou! Western Capital Army!"

"Without killing you rats, I, Zhu Qi, refuse to rest."

...

Just as the upper echelons of Demon City and many cultivators witnessed the Ninth Prince Zhu Qi declaring his unyielding campaign against the Western Capital Army.

However, Zhang Mansion, located in a bustling area, was visited by unexpected guests.

It was about to become violent until Jin Xiuju appeared.

"Brother Zhang, my... my father is gone."

"Our Jin Family, too, is no more."

Evidently, Jin Tianyang had not lied; Jin Xiuju and Zhang Baisui were indeed betrothed.

The spoiled young lady, upon seeing the handsome young man in military attire coming out, immediately burst into tears and threw herself into his arms. Zhang Baisui, known as the heartbreaker of Demon City's young women and wives, convincingly showed a sympathetic sorrow and began comforting Jin Xiuju softly.

Tao Qian, seeing this scene, couldn't help but recall the encounter at "Sleepless City Dance Hall" previously.

At that time, the girl Zhang Baisui wanted to cherish was Jiangzhu Fairy.

Compared to then, his expressions were much more vivid.

"This Zhang Baisui dares to try to snatch Jiangzhu Fairy from Zhu Qi because of his father, the great warlord Zhang Jiudeng, backing him."

"But he doesn't know the details; he doesn't know how important Lady Mei is to Zhu Qi. Not just him trying to snatch her, even Zhang Jiudeng wouldn't be allowed to do so."

"Lady Mei is unattainable, but with his status, protecting a Jin Xiuju is not difficult at all, and Zhu Qi wouldn't care about an insignificant orphan girl. However, this could be an opportunity to make contact with the Tribulation Leader."

With his thoughts settled, Tao Qian suddenly spoke up.

He revealed everything that had happened in the Jin Mansion without reserve.

As expected, when he finished, both Zhang Baisui and his guards were visibly shocked.

Tao Qian knew that Ninth Prince Zhu Qi was brewing a plot, but the others were unaware.

They just thought Zhu Qi was brutally insane, not like normal people, basically a madman.

What if he irrationally attacked because Zhang Mansion sheltered Jin Xiuju? Who would risk it?

The group, obviously from a Daoist sect, sent by Zhang Jiudeng to protect Zhang Baisui and knowing his temperament, were about to advise caution.

But Tao Qian, regardless, continued:

"Mr. Zhang, since you are Xiuju's fiancé, surely you can ensure her safety."

"However, you must first give me and Yunrong a clear answer, whether you intend to honor the engagement and marry Xiuju?"

"If you are willing, Yunrong and I, as Daoists and Xiuju's elders, will no longer bother your Zhang Mansion and will leave."

"If you are unwilling, Yunrong and I will take Xiuju now, following Mr. Jin's last will, and find her a peaceful place to live out her life."

In just a few sentences, Zhang Baisui was provoked.

He hugged Jin Xiuju tight, instinctively about to agree.

The cultivators beside him swiftly intervened, one of them, a Transcend Mortality cultivator with a goat's beard, directly challenged Tao Qian:

"The Jin Family, being a great merchant in Demon City and later transforming into a cultivator family associated with the Ninth Prince, must have accumulated countless spiritual material treasures and Cultivation Manuals."

"If Jin Tianyang was placing his trust for the future, he surely would have handed over the Jin Family treasures as well."

"It seems likely those treasures are now in your possession; if our Young Master is to fulfill this marriage engagement, are you not also expected to provide these treasures as a dowry?"

This person thought Tao Qian, this Dragon Demon, would surely covet the treasures.

With such a provocative reason, they could perhaps pass off this hot potato.

But little did he expect, Tao Qian was waiting just for this moment.

With a sneer of contempt, he flicked out a beam of jade light, which landed in Jin Xiuju's hands.

As the light faded, what appeared was the Storage Treasure Bag called "Exorcism Jade Machine."

"All treasures and spiritual materials of the Jin Family are within this ring."

"If you find it insufficient, Yunrong and I, as Xiuju's elders, can add more treasures."

"I, known as Jin Lin, belong to the Dragon Species, having come from the Overseas Immortal Island. My only purpose in the mortal world was to seek opportunities for breakthroughs, and what I lack least are spiritual material treasures."

"Yunrong, my fellow Daoist, is a descendant of the Jade Ring Mountain lineage and similarly lacks neither materials nor treasures."

"Zhang Baisui, make your decision fast!"

"Looking so presentable, can't you even protect your innocent fiancée? Aren't you ashamed?"

As Tao Qian spoke these words, indeed, they enraged Zhang Baisui, causing his face to flush red.

He abruptly slammed the table, stood up swiftly, and yelled:

"Who says I can't protect Xiuju's life?"

"Let Zhu Qi come, to take Xiuju's life, he must step over my dead body first."