

## Longevity 361

Chapter 361: Kongchan Arhat, the Grudge of Blocking the Path

Tao Qian listened attentively to the story of love and conflict between his Master and the Supreme Elder of the Taishang Dao Sect.

Unexpectedly, Yuan Gong suddenly started making a fuss.

Instinctively wanting to stop him, Tao Qian quickly harbored a hint of suspicion.

"When I left the sect, Master specifically instructed me to come to Demon City, mentioning great benefits and opportunities."

"Now it seems, he really calculated everything accurately. The so-called great benefits, could it be the treasure born from the Fragment of the Ancestor God, the 'Mountain and River Map'?"

"If I could get my hands on this item, it would indeed be a great opportunity."

"But to obtain it, I would have to confront the Ninth Prince, Zhu Qi, and thereafter face Master's mortal enemy, the one called 'Taishang Primordial Demon Manifestation Saint True Monarch,' the Old Demon."

"An existence of that level could crush me with a single finger."

"Could it be, has Master really been protecting me from the sidelines?"

While contemplating, Tao Qian started looking around with Yuan Gong, as if trying to trick Master Duobao into appearing.

Unfortunately, despite the noise made by the old and the young, they couldn't even summon the sight of Master Duobao's stout legs.

Their naive demeanor, however, was fully observed by Yunrong.

This Kitten shook her head, leapt out of the warm embrace of Tao Qian, lay down on a meditation cushion in the quiet room, and quietly enjoyed the scene.

Unable to trick Master Duobao into showing up, Yuan Gong was quite puzzled.

As a Sword Cultivator, although he is a senior with high cultivation and terrifying power, unfortunately, he lacks the talent for scheming.

"This doesn't make sense; such life and death matters are not a joke."

"Although Master Duobao is formidable, at such close range, if Lingwa discovers you, this sly boy, he couldn't rescue you in time."

"Don't even think of relying on me, Old Ape; I have been dead for so many years, the grass on my grave is probably a thousand feet tall, even this projection of my Divine Soul can barely withstand a single curse killing thought from Lingwa."

Muttering this, the smoke-formed face of Yuan Gong suddenly changed dramatically.

With furrowed brows, he turned his head to stare at Tao Qian and then began to grumble calculatingly about his own survival without any hesitation.

"This is bad, really bad. If Lingwa, this shameless Old Demon, discovers us, it's one thing for you, kid, to suffer, but it would also implicate me."

"I knew dealing with that Master Duobao would mean not losing at best, definitely no profit to be had."

"This old bastard wouldn't be thinking about forcing me to use the Secret Demon Sect's 'coffin money' to clean up your mess, would he?"

"Forget it, he's dreaming, that black-hearted old irredeemable..."

Yuan Gong, seemingly remembering something, then proceeded to curse profusely.

This old demon head of the Secret Demon Sect from years ago insulted Master Duobao with an array of unique swear words.

Caught in the middle, Tao Qian felt it wasn't his place to forcibly stop the old man.

Evidently, Yuan Gong, convinced he had guessed Master Duobao's intentions, was thoroughly furious, continuing his tirade and spilling more of Master Duobao's dark past.

Initially, Tao Qian wanted to stop him, but later, like Yunrong, he found himself engrossed in listening.

The tales were unbelievable, but Tao Qian somehow felt his Master could really have done such things.

Using the Returning Immortal Mirror to peep on the Female Bodhisattvas of Guanyin Temple, only to be caught and having several of them block his retreat at Penglai Sea.

Initially triumphant when entering Ultimate Happiness, flaunting the Heavenly Punishment Sword to challenge the Taishang Daoist Sect Master, only to be sent flying tens of thousands of miles with a mere flick of a horsetail whisk.

During a Daoist and Buddhist debate, after losing a verbal exchange to a high monk from the Great Freedom Temple, he forcefully challenged the monk to a duel, not in killing but in saving people, and lost again, losing face twice before ultimately having his sister, Fairy Yunhua, use a Big Array to salvage some dignity.

Once during a battle in the Outer Realm, Master Duobao almost got swept away by an Evil God called Calamity Star; the female fairy from Jade Ring Mountain kindly lent him the Haotian Divine Mirror to escape the predicament, and upon returning, he shamelessly declared in front of her, "This treasure is destined for me," infuriating the female fairy by calling his effrontery shameless.

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Tao Qian heard many more secrets and confirmed some of his own suspicions.

For instance, the Secret Demon Sect had not entirely collapsed. Besides dispersing their Great Lifebook Scripture among the Demon Thoughts of the Outer Realm Heaven Demons, they had also left a considerable and sturdy 'coffin money,' at least capable of handling that Taishang Primordial Demon Manifestation Saint True Monarch.

Another was that bringing Yuan Gong along was actually part of a transactional deal.

"Judging from the Record triggered when touching the [Yuan Gong Statue] inside the Mountain Gate, the purpose of this projection of Yuan Gong's Divine Soul was not only to find a suitable successor for the Secret Demon Sacrifice Body Sword Technique."

"The bigger, more important part was to cultivate a suitable Secret Demon Child for the Secret Demon Sect."

"!! It seems I have already been shortlisted."

"Who knows, one day, I might really have to go undercover to the Secret Demon Sect."

"Heavenly Venerate above, if that day comes and you are displeased, go find my Master; it's all his scheming."

While Tao Qian mentally shifted the blame, Yuan Gong continued to dig up more of Master Duobao's dark history.

Just as he broached another topic, Tao Qian suddenly sharpened his spirit, catching every detail keenly.

"Many years ago, an ancient battlefield relic was opened," Tao Qian recounted, "the treasure light burst straight into the Outer Realm Abyss. To vie for the treasures, Daoist, Buddhist, demons, devils, and even those major clan factions all came in droves."

"Duobao had calculated in advance that many treasures within the relic were destined to belong to the Taishang Demon Sect."

"That cunning old man even collaborated with several bald monks from the Demon Buddha Temple set numerous life-path traps, repeatedly duping the cultivators of the Taishang Demon Sect, causing them to lose several divine treasures, which he then divided up with those bald monks from the Demon Buddha Temple. Collaborating with the Demon Sect, he often boasted shamelessly of being a true Daoist practitioner."

"At that time, who came on behalf of the Taishang Demon Sect was none other than Lingwa, this unlucky fellow, who originally possessed an exotic treasure known as the 'Thirty-Three Heavens Great Freedom Demon Relics,' destined for him as the Primordial Demon Saint True Monarch, which could have helped him ascend to the Daoist Transformation Realm, and manifest the Six Desires Heavenly Demon Dao Body."

"Regrettably, he was duped by Duobao and Kongchan from the Demon Buddha Temple. The Heavenly Demon Relics were split in two, one piece falling into the hands of that shameless bald Kongchan, who refined it into an Arhat clone... Clearly, it was Duobao's conspiracy, but actually, Lingwa hated Kongchan even more, as this obstruction was an enmity that could not coexist under the same sky..."

Yuan Gong paused at this point, seemingly coming to a realization.

He abruptly halted recounting Duobao's dark history and lowered his head, locking eyes with Tao Qian.

Clearly, both of them had the same guess.

However, at this moment, when Tao Qian suddenly saw a sliver of opportunity, his face showed joy.

On the other hand, after guessing some of the reasons, Yuan Gong's expression was one of frustration.

After a pause, Tao Qian spoke, half to salvage Yuan Gong's dignity and half to seek advice:

"Knowing the grudge between the Demon Buddha Temple's Arhat Kongchan and the Primordial Demon Saint True Monarch, I also have plans, just diverting the trouble eastward will do."

"But it seems there isn't a convincing reason to lure that Arhat out?"

"Moreover, this place is far away from the Demon Buddha Temple's mountain gate, how should I connect with that Arhat Kongchan?"

Tao Qian spoke of his desire to cooperate with the demon cultivators, yet his expression did not show anything amiss.

If it were someone from the Shenxiao Sect or Taishang Dao, they could never say such things.

Fortunately, Yuan Gong was used to it and knew that his disciple was giving him a way out.

He was peers with Duobao True Master, Kongchan Arhat, and Primordial Demon True Monarch, and while the latter three were still at large, he was left with only a projection of his divine soul.

It could be said to be pitiable; he had just come to a realization, even his act of revealing the other party's dark history was calculated by Duobao as a "hint" for Tao Qian.

Realizing these, it was no wonder he looked frustrated.

Fortunately, he had survived these years by relying only on a statue for life prolongment, Yuan Gong had long lost the stale air of pedantry.

Changing his mind, he immediately answered Tao Qian:

"Lingwa arranged for his disciple to refine the Ancestor God Forbidden Fragment, apparently planning to take another path, breaking the Daoist Transformation Tribulation to refine that Six Desires Heavenly Demon Body."

"It's essential to know that Demon City isn't named so for nothing."

"In this place, countless demons are hidden, and it has connections with the Outer Realm's Thirty-Three Heavenly Demon Realm. If his disciple successfully refines that laborious Mountain and River Map, using the Ancestor God's immense power with the entire Demon City territory's Ten Thousand Demons as nourishment, he must ascend to Daoist Transformation."

"Whether it's Duobao or Kongchan, both know Lingwa's small-mindedness. When the time comes, the first to bear the brunt will be Kongchan. Both possessing a piece of Heavenly Demon Relics, they are already mortal enemies, and whoever ascends first, the other must perish."

"You only need to inform this Demon Buddha Arhat, even if it's thousands of mountains and rivers away, he must hurry over to obstruct Lingwa's ascension again."

"As for how to communicate?"

"That's the easiest part. Kongchan is the Arhat with the most mixed refining methods in the Demon Buddha Temple. Besides his own Demon Buddha Scriptures, he's also learned a few divine skills from the Guanyin Temple's Bodhisattvas; even flaunted his Thousand-Handed Guanyin Dharma Form before us back in the day, which was truly nauseating."

"I'm certain he's also learned our Secret Demon Sect's Summoning Demon and Refining Demon Techniques, he surely hasn't summoned the Joyful Demons to his bed chamber infrequently."

"In this case, just summon a 'Buddha Fragrance Demon' from the Outer Realm, refine it using your Control Demon Technique, and let it go to deliver the message."

"Buddha Fragrance Demons can enter from the Outer Realm, move unhindered between Guanyin Temple, Demon Buddha Temple territories, and can even directly locate cultivators who have refined and used the Summoning Demon Technique."

"The real thought is instantaneous, tens of thousands of miles are but a trifle, even the Great Freedom Heart Light Escape Technique can't compare to going through the Outer Realm path."

After Yuan Gong finished speaking, Tao Qian's eyes lit up.

He had heard of the Buddha Fragrance Demon before.

But who knew it also had such uses?

Indeed, in terms of utilizing demons, the Secret Demon Sect claimed to be second, yet no one dared to claim first.

Heartened, Tao Qian was about to start summoning demons when,

suddenly, the quiet room's doors burst open, and a Cloud Token Letter from the National Salvation Congress shot in.

Tao Qian caught and opened it, and immediately, good news jumped out:

"Yin Qiye has sworn a demon oath, to give Rashamon Girl and All Heavens Secret Demon Scripture Formless Chapter to him, he agrees to betray the Ninth Prince."

"Good!"

With dual happiness approaching, Tao Qian could not suppress the smile on his face.

Without any intention to delay, he put away the Cloud Token, thanked Yuan Gong, and concentrated to meditate.

This time it took a bit longer, as aside from retrieving a scroll of the "Formless Chapter," he also had to catch a "Buddha Fragrance Demon."

Chapter 362: Decrees Capturing the Heart, Lady Mei in Danger

In the quiet room of Zhang Mansion, Tao Qian held Yunrong, a man and a cat, as they stared into the eyes of an ancient and bizarre Outer Realm Heavenly Demon.

Even Yunrong was full of curiosity, her eyes revealing an expression similar to saying "seeing is believing."

The air was swirling with incense, with trails of sandalwood drifting about, originating from an old monk.

This monk, holding an iron bowl in one hand and a tin staff in the other, had kind eyes and benevolent brows, with two long white eyebrows hanging down to his shoulders. Such a figure was not uncommon in temples, with hundreds, if not thousands, resembling him.

However, above the monk's forehead appeared something that resembled a burning "incense," with red light flashing from the accumulated black ash.

The tranquil aroma of sandalwood filled the quiet room.

Human-shaped Buddha Incense?

Tao Qian and Yunrong looked on curiously as the old monk, with a worried expression, bowed and chanted a Buddhist phrase, seeking mercy.

"Amitabha!"

"One's greed can bring endless harm; the Buddha truly does not deceive."

"This poor monk has consumed the Master's Demon Pill and fallen into the Master's trap. I am willing to serve the Master without much resentment."

"But, the Master is merely at the Foundation Establishment Realm. Why send me to convey a message to a Demon Buddha Arhat in the Ultimate Happiness Realm? The Kongchan Arhat is not someone to mess with. If I go, I fear I might not be able to return. Could the Master spare this poor monk's life?"

This constantly burning bald-headed old monk was naturally the Buddha Incense Demon that Tao Qian had captured.

This demon was indeed rare. Previously, when Tao Qian summoned demons using the "Ten Thousand Demon List," he could easily call forth Outer Realm Demons without much effort.

However, summoning this old monk had taken a long time.

And only under Yuan Gong's guidance was he subdued.

If demons could not control their greed, even with the good fortune of a "Corpse Demonic Sky Demon Elixir," it would be extremely difficult to succeed.

The Buddha Incense Demon originated from all Buddhist practitioners in this world.

Monks and nuns adored this demon the most; having this old monk by their side, constantly smelling the Buddha Incense, enabled them to practice any form of Buddhist Law, from the orthodox Great Freedom Temple to the questionable Demon Buddha Temple, doubling their efforts.

However, the fragrance emitted by this demon was poisonous.

Over time, it became impossible to break free, and instead, it turned to embrace him at his disposal.

Most Buddhist practitioners who could own a "Buddha Incense Demon" would neither suck nor refine it, indeed reluctant to send it to its death.

Unfortunately, Tao Qian was not a true Buddhist practitioner.

Upon hearing this, he immediately smiled and said:

"Go ahead, Daoist, and I assure you, as long as you convey the message, not only will that Kongchan Arhat not trouble you, he might even offer you great benefits, and it's not impossible for him to rid you of the Corpse Poison."

"However, thinking over, this matter is indeed dangerous; well, let me give you your reward first."

"Just so you know, among all the demons I have summoned, none but you, Daoist, has managed to receive benefits in advance from me."

After these words, Tao Qian suddenly waved his sleeve.

Three unadulterated Heavenly Demon Pills emerged and fell directly into the incense cloud drifting from the top of the Buddha Incense Demon.

With everything said, obviously, the Buddha Incense Demon knew it couldn't refuse.

He swallowed the Demon Pills wrapped in the fragrant air and then, with a worried expression and hands clasped, said: "Master is generous; I will go."

Afterward, the old monk transformed into a wisp of fragrance and swiftly entered the Void, disappearing from sight.

As the Buddha Incense Demon left, Tao Qian did not rest.

He had already arranged with the "National Salvation Congress," and once the hour came, someone would come to take away both the "All Heavens Secret Demon Scripture Formless Chapter" and the trained Rashamon Girl.

This Cultivation Technique! Tao Qian had brought back the Buddha Incense Demon from the Outer Realm incidentally.

With guidance from an old demon of the Secret Demon Sect, Tao Qian was spared the woes of drawing lots.

Refining the demon once yielded results.

However, one step was still lacking; as part of the agreement, Rashamon Girl An Ya needed to be handed over to Yin Qiye.

Yet, this girl was also a risk.

She had a significant influence on Yin Qiye, and no one knew if she would abide by the agreement once freed.

Neither Tao Qian nor the National Salvation Congress were naive.

To prevent any surprises, employing extraordinary measures was indeed necessary.

Just then, Tao Qian took Rashamon Girl out from the Holy Embryo Bag again.

While she was dazed and weak, Tao Qian fetched the Demon Gourd, gave it a shake, and out tumbled a "Decree Demon" that looked very much like a young commanding general.

Before the little devil could stand firm, Tao Qian's voice came through:

"Alter this girl's will to favor the general populace of the Longevity Heavenly Dynasty, subtly influencing Yin Qiye."

"Be subtle, not too obvious."

"Yes, Master."

Excited with the order, the Decree Demon fully embraced his role, seeing himself as a loyal commander under the Master's command.

Previously, a good opportunity had been snatched by a Body Demon, and just now, he had seen the Buddha Incense Demon receiving a tasty reward. The demons in the Demon Gourd were quite resentful, and finally, it was his turn.

Instantly, the Decree Demon transformed into a streak of Demon Light and rapidly entered inside Rashamon Girl's Divine Soul.

Soon, he returned like a triumphant general, vigorous and spirited, announcing:

"Master, it is done."

"Effortlessly, this Minority Clan girl indeed harbored sinister intentions, planning to elope with Yin Qiye and take his Heavenly Demon Army away from the Longevity Heavenly Dynasty to her own clan's nation, helping her clear many obstacles, including her father, to ascend as the queen. She had grand ambitions."

"Now, I've changed all that, yes, just like how that human girl named Shi Ying Qiong was changed."

As the Decree Demon spoke, he looked at Tao Qian with eyes full of expectation.

Chapter 363: Decrees Capturing the Heart, Lady Mei in Danger\_2

"Clearly, this little devil was seeking credit."

Tao Qian was also looking at the newly transformed Rashamon Girl and indeed noticed some subtle changes in her.

They were slight, and quite elusive.

The most obvious sign was the previously charming Princess An Ya, whose brows now bore a hint of murderous and heroic spirit.

Seeing Tao Qian looking at her, the Rashamon Girl even held her fists in a salute and then said very cheerfully and directly,

"Daoist, are you worried I might affect the Great Plan?"

"There is no need for that, An Ya and Qi Ye are truly in love, they would never harm each other."

"I have long disliked that demon Zhu Qi, a pervert indeed, and I can't wait for his schemes to fail and for him to perish."

"According to the common saying in Longevity Heavenly Dynasty, this is what we call sharing a common hatred."

"Good!"

As soon as An Ya finished speaking, a familiar cheer erupted.

Then in the quiet room, a glow flashed, and a treasure emerged from the ground, shaped like an ordinary fishing boat.

Two figures emerged from within the shuttle.

Leading the way was Shi Yingqiong, followed by Yang Li, who was clearly the controller of the treasure.

Seeing Tao Qian unconsciously look at the shuttle-shaped treasure, Yang Li openly said,

"This item is called the 'Kasyapa Golden Light Shuttle.' It was a Protective Dharma Treasure given to me by my master when I left the temple. It can ignore many Forbidden Techniques. Even in the base of the Heavenly Demon Army, as long as I bear no malice, I can come and go freely."

"However, when coming here, it was discovered by the Daoist Soldiers under your command. After obtaining their agreement, we were allowed to enter."

"Daoist indeed deserves the reputation of being able to kill power figures from Evil Sects like Lian Yulou. Just one Mechanical Alien Species under your command also holds extraordinary treasures."

Upon their first meeting, Yang Li seemed like a shy young man.

But once he became a bit familiar with Tao Qian, it became clear that he was also a chatterbox.

And indeed, he was quite sincere.

He clearly placed a lot of trust in Tao Qian, revealing all his details upon their first meeting.

The Mechanical Daoist Soldier he mentioned was undoubtedly referring to "Lian Jing'er," who had indeed sent a message to Tao Qian just moments before.

Regarding the extraordinary treasure mentioned by Yang Li, it was likely the Creation Treasure Wheel hanging behind Lian Jing'er's head, but that object was clearly not something Tao Qian could have forged. It was painstakingly crafted by a group of aunt-mentors in the Penglai Sea who doted on Lian Jing'er, using various metal essences.

As soon as Shi Yingqiong appeared, she glared intensely at the Rashamon Girl, having previously had a quite unfavorable impression of her.

However, after just a brief conversation, she began to view her differently.

Moreover, she inexplicably felt that this girl could also be recruited into the National Salvation Congress.

Tao Qian, standing to the side, clearly saw and noted Shi Yingqiong's thoughts.

His lips twitched slightly, and in front of everyone, he reached out and stuffed a Demon Pill into the mouth of the waiting Decree Demon, then drew it back into the Demon Gourd.

Then, he thoughtfully produced another item.

It was an object resembling a human skin mask, which he handed over to the two.

"Within this item is the 'Formless Chapter' of the 'All Heavens Secret Demon Scripture.'"

"Send it along with the Rashamon Girl to Yin Qiye. Let him cultivate it for two days, but do not switch immediately."

"Switch from Taishang Demon Son to Secret Demon Child during the crucial moment when Zhu Qi is refining the Mountain and River Map. Doing so will avoid the attack from Zhu Qi's Master, the Primordial Demon Manifestation Saint True Monarch."

Upon hearing this, Yang Li took the Formless Chapter while Shi Yingqiong led the Rashamon Girl.

"Daoist, rest assured, we will not betray your trust."

Having said that, both of them bowed solemnly to Tao Qian and then reunited with the Kasyapa Golden Light Shuttle.

The light flickered and the Golden Light Shuttle, clearly a treasure of the Buddhist Sect, disappeared without a trace.

Tao Qian, watching, couldn't help but think,

"In this era of great contention, all forces in the Cultivation World are placing their bets."

"But unexpectedly, the usually tightly-knit Buddhist Sect has also chosen to split up their stakes."

"The Great Freedom Temple evidently backed the Emperor."

"And this Reclining Buddha Temple sent Yang Li as their pawn into the National Salvation Congress."

"However, it now seems the National Salvation Congress is the territory of the Primordial Sect, a Daoist Hidden Sect that crumbled in the Ancient Era but found a prime opportunity here."

"At least for now, the National Salvation Congress is a good organization."

While reflecting on this, Tao Qian suddenly recalled Yang Li's previous praise of Lian Jing'er.

Instantly moved, he conceived a new plan.

He transmitted his voice directly and called Lian Jing'er, Little Age, and Shan Jiu.

These three young ones, who could have enjoyed their blessings at the Spirit Treasure Mountain Gate, had only been idling around following Tao Qian into worldly trials without engaging in any serious matters.

Now, an opportunity had arrived.

Tao Qian, struck by a sudden whimsical idea, assigned each of the three little ones a task that seemed exceedingly fitting.

Lian Jing'er, highly skilled in hiding, surveillance, and analysis without any aura or murderous intent, was nearly undetectable by the cultivators of the Ultimate Happiness Realm, so Tao Qian tasked him with monitoring the entire movement of Demon City, to relay any unusual activities to Tao Qian.

Little Age was sent by Tao Qian with a few demons as escorts to the outskirts of Demon City to watch over the movements of the Fungus Demon Army under Fourth Prince Zhu Xuan.

In a sense, this was right up their alley.

If the Fungus Demon Army were not actually a trained force by the Heterodox Sect known as the Fungus Sect and just natural fungus demons, Tao Qian would have even considered letting Little Age slowly consume them.

And Shan Jiu?

This fellow was the least of Tao Qian's worries, requiring no complicated arrangements.

Tao Qian instructed him to pose as an Alien Species drawn to the "Treasure Convention," pairing this with the intelligence he acquired from defeating the leader of the Changchun Society, easily enabling Shan Jiu to blend into the lower ranks of this loosely organized society.

Given Shan Jiu's luck, Tao Qian had no doubt he would reap some rewards.

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After making these arrangements, another day had passed.

Night fell again, and Tao Qian had no time to rest any further.

Suddenly, something unexpected emerged.

This time, it came from a pawn he had almost forgotten.

Originally, when Tao Qian set foot in Demon City, at a dance hall in Sleepless City, he encountered two Tribulation Leaders, one being Lady Mei and the other Zhang Baisui.

He delayed entering into tribulation, and neither contacted immediately.

However, he secretly deployed a "Red Lady Demon," parasitized inside Lady Mei.

Over the days, amidst many changes of fate and even a life-and-death tribulation, Tao Qian had almost forgotten about it.

But at that moment, the voice of Red Lady Demon, still fierce and filled with anxiety, came into his mind:

"Master, Master, come save me quickly."

"That disgusting Taishang Demon Son, just now suddenly said he gathered the last spiritual material needed, 'Demon Soul Swallowing Corpse Essence', and decided to refine the Six Desires Demon Pill ahead of schedule."

"Lady Mei, this silly and pitiful woman, cried every day previously, now hearing the death sentence, knowing she's about to be thrown into the pill furnace to be thoroughly burned, she suddenly stopped crying."

"Master, if you do not come to save us, Red Lady may have to return to the Outer Realm prematurely. The pill furnace of Taishang Demon Sect is horrifying; once I enter, I'll be refined into mere dregs too."

Chapter 364: Saint Heir Turns Out to be 25 Coins, Tao Qian Enhances the Desire Demon Elixir

The Red Lady Demon transmitted her message anxiously and in a flurry, a major disaster had occurred.

Tao Qian had placed his pieces in the dark, and according to his revealed Record, the Ninth Prince, Zhu Qi, had planned to refine Lady Mei in ten days.

But who would have thought?

The ten-day period was unexpectedly brought forward, and the change was clearly due to the last ingredient "Demon Soul Swallowing Corpse Essence".

This spirit monster, Tao Qian also knew.

It was even recorded in the Spirit Treasure Great Volume,

"It is rumored that there exist seventy-two types of spirit monsters between heaven and earth. These creatures are unrestrained by heaven, unmanaged by earth, not controlled by the five sacred mountains, not confined by the seas and mountains; they are prone to killing and chaos, promiscuous, and feed on flesh and blood... This Demon Soul Swallowing Corpse Essence is the first kind."

"They are said to look like twenty-eight-year-old women, with rosy faces and vermilion lips, green brows, and red cheeks, bodies like creamy balm, dressed in emerald blue, adorned with splendid crowns, making those who see them think they are Heavenly Girls descending from heaven. Who would expect them to be spirit monsters that specifically disrupt one's cultivation?"

"This creature is elusive and extremely rare, no wonder even with Zhu Qi's resources, he set a ten-day period. Has his good fortune turned, catching it ahead of time?"

In a flash of thought, Tao Qian's eyebrows furrowed tightly.

While comforting the Red Lady, his mind raced with thoughts.

"If Lady Mei is the Tribulation Leader, it means she plays a significant role in whether I can survive the tribulation."

"Even if she's not, as a benevolent woman, now that I know of her, I must think of some way to rescue her."

"I had no chance when I first arrived, only just succeeded in flipping 'Yin Qiye', and managed to devise some means to rescue people."

"But now with this sudden turn of events, Lady Mei is about to be thrown into the pill furnace to be refined, how can I rescue her?"

"Although Ninth Prince Zhu Qi is twisted and disgusting, his strength is undeniably formidable, being a Taishang Demon Son, his mansion is certainly no different from a real Demon Cave."

"With my current abilities, can I quietly infiltrate Prince Zhao Mansion and take her away?"

As the last question arose, Tao Qian immediately gave himself an answer.

No!

Even if he held himself in high esteem, and had achievements like defeating Lian Yulou, he could not simply barge into Prince Zhao Mansion to save someone.

Not to mention, if Zhu Qi's master, who might also be his own father, was present.

If that "Taishang Primordial Demon Manifestation Saint True Monarch" were in Prince Zhao Mansion, Tao Qian's infiltration would be akin to seeking death.

Even creatures like Substitute Demon and Invisibility Demon, with their peculiar abilities, would appear like child's play before a high-level cultivator of the Ultimate Happiness Realm, who could see through them in the blink of an eye.

Even without that True Monarch present, Zhu Qi still had a host of Demon Cultivators from the Taishang Demon Sect under his command.

The Alchemist Saint Child Huang Chong, the Squad Leader of Cao Gang who had cultivated the Blood River Scripture, and so on.

Saying the guards were formidable and Demons roamed everywhere was no exaggeration.

"Perhaps I should seek advice from Yuan Gong..."

Left with no choice, Tao Qian thought of his accompanying elder and was about to ask for guidance through transmission.

Suddenly, the Red Lady's urgent voice rang in Tao Qian's mind again.

This time, her tone held more confusion.

"Master, master, something strange has happened again."

"There seems to be a traitor among the Taishang Demon Son's subordinates, secretly adding ingredients to the alchemy materials."

"The immortal dew that silly woman just drank, ugh, it's all worms, save me, master, that silly woman has drank a belly full of worms."

"Hmm?"

A new turn of events, Tao Qian's eyebrows also raised.

He immediately had the Red Lady Demon send the scene directly to him, which, though such action consumed a great deal of Demon Thought, Tao Qian could not but promise some more Demon Pills in return.

Then, in the next moment, Tao Qian saw a series of very peculiar scenes:

The entirety of the grand Prince Zhao Mansion flashed by, bright and lit up, ancient pill furnaces floated midair, each one containing different spiritual materials.

In one of them, Lady Mei, who seemed as frail as Xishi, or a Heavenly Girl descending to earth, was sitting calmly.

Unperturbed, filled with indifference towards death.

The light and shadow flashed, entering her body swiftly.

"Hiss!"

Given Tao Qian's current Divine Power Cultivation, there were very few scenes that could surprise him.

But his eyes were opened again.

Lady Mei was originally a dead woman, who by chance merged with a "Jiangzhu Immortal Grass" and was reborn as an Alien Species.

Her inner world was vaguely showing the image of the Immortal Herb.

But at this moment, the Immortal Herb was covered by countless tiny insects.

Those worms were long and roundish, flesh-red in color, with bifurcated tails, their front ends splitting into nine petals like "blooming flowers", exposing the densely packed sharp teeth within, and a constant dripping of disgusting saliva.

Although these worms seemed to be in a state of half-sleeping and half-awake.

Clinging to Lady Mei's internal organs and intestines, some even flowed with the blood into her skull, flat-out clinging to the surface of her brain.

Her whole body was infested with insects!

The usually mighty and domineering Red Lady Demon now stood alone on Lady Mei's heart, looking frustrated as her temporary residence turned into a horrific nest of insects.

Tao Qian, with his expansive knowledge, looked on for a long while but couldn't recognize the creatures at all.

He thus settled on projecting it in the quiet room.

All the while, planning to call upon Yuan Gong for his opinion.

Unexpectedly, a sharp cry suddenly came from within Tao Qian's embrace. Yunrong lifted her head to look, and rare fear appeared in her green, bewitching pupils.

Without waiting for Tao Qian to inquire, Yunrong's voice came through:

"This insect is called the 'Huangquan Mite', a kind of extreme Yin poison, and a Gu Worm that can only be cultivated artificially."

"To cultivate this Gu, one must first nurture a land of extreme Yin, irrigating it day and night with precious Yin Source Qi. Thereafter, 'plant people' whose Life Charts are special and whose bodies are extremely Yin, forcibly burying them in the soil and allowing them to endure the torment of Source Qi, suffering painfully until death."

"Such being the case, once nine hundred ninety-nine people are planted, then go on to draw in some water from Huangquan to irrigate, followed by sealing it off."

"After nine years, upon reopening, all those extreme Yin human trees will have had their flesh dissolved, their skins shed, and their bones will have transformed into something like black jade."

"Crush the bones, and from within the marrow, you'll find the worm."

"Huangquan Mite, a Gu worm between tangible and intangible with a single use: controlling others."

"As long as one's body is entered by this Gu, even a high-level cultivator, I'm afraid, will have to obey another's command."

"At least cultivators of the Cavernous Mystery Realm cannot avoid this fate. It's unknown for those in the Ultimate Happiness Realm."

"This Gu comes from the Heterodox Great Book 'Gu God Scripture,' a powerful and terrifying Lifebound Scripture. Alas, the Gu God Scripture has long been lost."

Yunrong had just finished speaking,

When a red mist wafted around and Yuan Gong appeared.

It was rare for his face to show such solemnity as he pointed at the Huangquan Mite and said:

"In ancient times, there was a capable cultivator who practiced this scripture, self-titled 'Mad Plague God Gao Tianma.' He made an enemy of the Buddhist Sect over an incident, and after plotting for hundreds of years and refining thousands of Gu worms, he managed to devour the Buddhist Great Sect 'Dragon Sparrow Temple' from top to bottom in a single night."

"This act enraged the Buddhist Sect, provoking both the Great Reincarnation Temple and Vajra Temple to act. In the end, Senior Gao was caught by the Glazed Vajra Arhat of the Vajra Temple and was brutally hammered into dust."

"Even so, that Glazed Arhat, who could have achieved an even higher realm, had his Vajra Body ruined by a final Gu God's flesh-eating blow from Gao Tianma and soon reincarnated to cultivate anew."

"And that volume of the 'Gu God Scripture' likely fell into the hands of the Imperial Family at that time."

After Yuan Gong finished his last sentence, Tao Qian's face immediately displayed shock, and a guess formed in his mind.

"It's been countless years since ancient times, and the Imperial Family has changed through numerous generations. The Imperial Family that had the 'Gu God Scripture' back then probably has no connection to today's dynasty."

"Even if Prince Zhu Qi really had it, he wouldn't be crazy enough to use the Gu on himself, right?"

"Moreover, there is still one person in Prince Zhao Mansion today with an exceedingly close connection to the Imperial Family."

"Huang Chong!"

"This Saint Heir comes from the Alchemist Organization."

"This organization takes it upon itself to uphold the name of the Longevity Heavenly Dynasty, and within it, there's a bunch of old monsters and many lost Great Lifebook Scriptures which they seem to have collected."

"For instance, while in Southern Yue, that pretty boy Qin Wuxiang brought out the 'Emperor's Shocking Book' for Ji Xianxian to practice, which is also a lost Great Book."

"So is Huang Chong, who openly chose Zhu Qi as the Saint Heir he intends to support, actually a double-dealer in secret?"

"Planning to use this 'Huangquan Gu' to control Zhu Qi?"

As these thoughts surged forth, without concrete evidence, Tao Qian inexplicably felt he had guessed correctly.

Goodness! Not a single one of them is sincere, all secretly playing dirty tricks.

Tao Qian silently lamented, and at the same time, he did not forget to ask Yuan Gong if there was a way to rescue Lady Mei from Prince Zhao Mansion.

Then he received a cold sneer in response, Yuan Gong pointed at himself and said irritably,

"Although Lingwa, that old thing, is far from Duobao's match and certainly cannot beat me from back in the day,"

"he is, after all, an elder of the Taishang Demon Sect. His killing prowess and divine powers are far beyond what an ordinary cultivator in the Ultimate Happiness Realm can compare with."

"I just took a look, and that old thing has already returned to Demon City. Right now, he's in that damned Prince Zhao Mansion."

"At this time, unless you can bring Duobao or Kongchan, that old bald donkey, whoever goes will not escape a fate of death and Dao annihilation."

"If your cultivation were in the Cavernous Mystery Realm, you could summon a few high-level demons to orchestrate something. You couldn't fight, but sneaking someone out should be no problem."

"Just a mere Foundation Establishment Realm, better rest easy, restrain your killing and malicious intent, lest he detects it... Besides, that girl is now filled with Huangquan mites. Even if you save her, so what? Could you still want that body? The Gu worms detailed in the Gu God Scripture are more difficult to resolve one by one than the last. Weren't the bald donkeys from the Dragon Sparrow Temple stronger than you, lad? Yet, didn't they still get wiped out?"

Yuan Gong's last sentence, cruel yet realistic, delivered the coup de grâce to Tao Qian.

From the description of the two, it was not difficult to know that the Huangquan mite is an extremely venomous Gu worm; once infected, it is very difficult to cure.

Despite this, Tao Qian still hadn't given up hope.

Silently sitting cross-legged in contemplation, after a moment, as if thinking of something, he suddenly asked, "These Huangquan Gu, do they only contaminate the flesh and have no harm to the true soul?"

Yuan Gong heard this and nodded,

"Although the Huangquan Gu can enter the intangible, it was initially created to control others' bodies. It indeed can't reach the soul. If that child named Huang Chong has really cultivated the 'Gu God Scripture', he must have Gu worms that can control the true soul. But as the Ninth Prince is Lingwa's disciple, attempting on his soul is nearly impossible. Any movement would likely startle the snake instead of catching it."

"Using the Huangquan Gu, however, is extremely appropriate."

"Even if the Ninth Prince has taken the [Six Desires Demon Pill] spiked with something extra, he would not dare to activate the Huangquan Gu unless he finds the opportunity."

"He only has one chance. If Lingwa notices, even if he momentarily can't eliminate the Gu, suppressing it wouldn't be difficult for him."

Hearing all this, and not knowing what inspiration it sparked, Tao Qian seemed to have an idea as a rare smile appeared on his face.

In the presence of Yunrong and Yuan Gong, he began to take out family affairs like the bronze tripod that had held the Corpse Evil Worm, Exotic Fire Elixir Scroll, and so on.

At the same time, he muttered to himself:

"Alchemizing definitely requires additional ingredients."

"Since Huang Chong, a subordinate of the Ninth Prince, can add something, I suppose I can also add some things into it, just have the demons help deliver from afar."

"It won't just be delivering demon pills. Apart from the flesh, there's still a lot that can be transported by Heavenly Demons."

"Lady Mei's body is beyond saving, but as long as her true spirit is rescued during the Elixir Fire's burning, and then brought to me, it should be undetectable by gods or ghosts."

"If she's compatible with the Jiangzhu Immortal Grass, she must also be a naturally born cultivation seed."

"If I rescue her soul, send it to the Spirit Treasure Sect, I can always find a suitable master for her, this could also be considered a turn of fate... Enter tribulation by inviting tribulation, was it meant to be here?"

"Wonderful, truly wonderful. I shall do exactly that."

Excited by his thoughts, Tao Qian was completely unaware that his actions appeared to others like a little devil secretly scheming against others.

Fortunately, in the quiet room, the two present, Yunrong as the Kitten Demon who did not mind her destined person being a Demon.

While Yuan Gong, watching Tao Qian's actions, was filled with a sense of gratification, inwardly he exclaimed:

"A natural Secret Demon Child, damn that Duobao."

Chapter 365: Red Lady Coaxes Lady Mei, Lustful Desires Entrusted to Huangquan

Tao Qian had devised another path to control demons with the "Corpse Demonic Sky Demon Elixir," which was actually the Corpse Evil Worm, combined with the Heavenly Demon Blood Transformation Pill, and added to it his abnormal soul exempt from the sacrifice required for refinement, using the Outer Heaven Flame Essence.

The true source of its efficacy was the Corpse Evil Worm.

It all began when Tao Qian killed an evil cultivator and seized a bronze tripod from within.

Extremely useful, yet as Tao Qian had been dealing with Outer Realm Demons for so long, his stock had gradually been exhausted.

He had been worrying about what to do in the future.

Although it wasn't difficult to learn the legitimate Secret Demon Sect's control demon techniques with Yuan Gong present,

The condition was to switch allegiance to the Secret Demon Sect.

How could that be acceptable?

Tao, the Great Master, was the legitimate inheritor of the Spiritual Treasures, and he had already clung to one of the thickest thighs in the cultivation world, why would he go for a broken one? He wasn't foolish.

Fortuitously, as Tao Qian was dozing off, Lian Yulou, the true inheritor of the Evil Sect, presented him with a pillow.

His "Desire Sin Nine Tribulation Body" was essentially composed of endless Desire Sin Worms,

And each one was of a very high rank.

Compared to the Corpse Evil Worm that Tao Qian obtained in Southern Yue, these were truly high-end goods.

Especially since Tao Qian had touched upon this early and verified.

"The Desire Sin Worm, likewise, possesses the 'control parasite' effect, and the effect is even more exquisite than that of the Corpse Evil Worm."

"The biggest initial problem was how to get Zhu Qi, the Taishang Demon Son, to willingly consume these Desire Sin Worms, considering he is not an Outer Realm Heaven Demon and would not be tempted by the 'Heavenly Demon Blood Transformation Pill.'"

"And once the Desire Sin Worm is detected, its effectiveness immediately disappears."

"Fortunately, that Saint Child Huang Chong took care of this trouble for me, since he dared to use Lady Mei's body to administer the potion, he was obviously confident that the Ninth Prince would not notice."

"I didn't need to do much, just follow Huang Chong's lead and add my part."

"Indeed, the most venomous and dangerous are the stabs from those close to us."

As Tao Qian finished his sigh, he began alchemy.

He first went to the Outer Realm to catch Heavenly Demons for materials. To accelerate the process, Tao Qian specially took out the Demon Gourd again.

He let Star Zha Demons, Substitute Demons, and Decree Demons, these little devils, assist him in catching Heavenly Demons.

Being proficient in the Summoning Demon techniques, and with a bunch of demon traitors to help, it did not take much time for Tao Qian to capture a large number of low-level and insignificant Outer Realm Heaven Demons.

Then, by summoning the Outer Heaven Flame Essence to burn at high speed, he refined an unprecedentedly huge Heavenly Demon Blood Transformation Pill.

"Hiss!"

"Sasha Sasha!"

"Chilulu!"

In the quiet room, all were the sounds of the little devils swallowing saliva.

Each one craned their necks, gazing with desire at the pill, the size of an adult's fist, that floated in the air.

The poison within the pill was deadly to Human Clan Cultivators.

But for Heavenly Demons, it was a great tonic.

Delicious!

At this moment, all the little devils emitted such demon thoughts.

If they weren't restrained by their master Tao Qian, they probably would have pounced already.

However, the sounds of saliva did not last long.

Because Tao Qian began to add things to the demon pill.

Desire Sin Worms!

Brilliantly red, even more advanced and revolting than the Corpse Evil Worms, the new version of the evil worm, after being refined by Tao Qian, was stuffed handful after handful into the demon pill.

From salivating to heart and gall shattering, it was just a moment.

The reason these little devils were completely obedient to Tao Qian was precisely because of the doctored demon pills.

Now, they were witnessing the process of "demon pill" manufacturing for the first time.

The feeling was eerie and terrifying.

Especially when Tao Qian finished refining that heavy, fist-sized demon pill, satisfied holding it in one hand, and turned to stare at the group of little devils, their demon bodies trembled, a very bad premonition arose, and several clever ones had already started running towards the Demon Gourd.

Right at that moment, Tao Qian spoke, "I'm afraid the little ones will have to work hard to deliver this demon pill to the Red Lady; rest assured, I have specially refined it to be this large, and the pill wall is quite thick. As long as you are careful not to actually swallow it, the worms inside cannot harm you."

As soon as these words dropped, a group of demons had already dived back into the Demon Gourd, including a few coquettishly behaving Joyful Demons, almost wishing they could grow a pair of long legs.

However, there was one slowpoke.

Originally, the most sincere Star Zha Demon, due to being too close to the demon pill and trying to sneak a few licks, consequently suffered.

Despite being the fastest, it could not get away and was caught by the other hand of Tao Qian.

"I knew there would be loyal demons willing to work for the master."

"Come here, you earn a good one first."

As he spoke, an unadulterated good demon pill was stuffed into Star Zha Demon's mouth.

The little devil swallowed it without having time to think and only reacted afterward.

Unfortunately, it was too late.

In the Demon Gourd, the group of demons had already reached a consensus: the master's favors never came without a price.

The little Star Zha Demon looked at the Demon Pill in front of her, which was nearly as large as her own head, and then at her master's expectant and irresistible eyes. With a sorrowful and bitter expression, she ultimately opened her mouth to its limits and forcibly enveloped the Demon Pill inside.

A flash of Star Light, and the little devil had already departed through the Outer Realm route to seek out the Red Lady Demon.

Within the Mortal World, the Star Zha Demon's Escape Skill was incredibly fast, and in the Outer Realm, she was even faster.

Not long after, the little devil completed the handover with the Red Lady Demon.

Tao Qian's earlier speculations were not mistaken. The lights inside Prince Zhao Mansion were bright; demonic miasma pierced the sky, and a massive array had been set up. Numerous Pill Furnaces hung in the sky, each containing precious and rare spiritual materials — some inanimate, and plenty of living creatures.

Like Lady Mei, there were quite a few of these special fresh humans.

The Six Desires Demon Pill!

From the "Six Desires Heavenly Demon Scripture" within the Great Book of the Demon Path's Elixir section, once this elixir was completed, it could easily break the Taiyin Xuan Nu Locking Dragon Needle that had afflicted the Ninth Prince, Zhu Qi. Moreover, it could send Zhu Qi, who was at the Transcend Mortality Realm, directly up to the Cavernous Mystery Realm level.

The most shocking part was the negligible cost.

Precisely because they needed to refine this Demon Pill, Zhu Qi's Master, who was known as the "Taishang Primordial Demon Manifestation Saint True Monarch" and an Elder of the Taishang Demon Sect, had rushed back to personally oversee the Prince Zhao Mansion.

"The commotion from refining the elixir will certainly lead many cultivators to mistakenly believe that it is caused by the treasures yet to be refined owned by the Ninth Prince, and many demon cultivators not afraid of death will come to seize them."

"What a pity. They will be sending themselves to their deaths if they encounter Senior Lingwa."

"However, because of this, the defenses of Prince Zhao Mansion are likely all directed outward, and even the majority of that Supreme Manifestation Saint True Monarch's attention would be concentrated outside, thus neglecting what's right under his nose."

"Even Zhu Qi himself would never have guessed that his most trusted Alchemist Heir, Huang Chong, is actually a double-agent."

"There's a saying that the darkest place is under the candlestick, and this couldn't be truer."

"He chose the Pill Furnace where Lady Mei resides. To facilitate feeding her a belly full of 'Huangquan poison,' he's employed some clever Blinding Techniques to block probing. There's a silver lining; it's actually doing me a favor."

As Tao Qian was contemplating this.

Inside the completely sealed Pill Furnace, Lady Mei was engaged in a staring contest with a fierce-looking, yet adorable little girl demon.

At the same time, the Red Lady Demon was strenuously holding onto an Elixir about the size of a fist in her arms.

The surface of the Elixir was speckled with something resembling saliva, but coming from a place far out of the ordinary. The viscous substance was emitted with star light, making it quite the beautiful sight.

Ordinary people would surely be terrified upon encountering the Red Lady Demon abruptly.

Lady Mei, however, was not. This is because both the human and demon had become quite familiar and could even be said to have developed a friendship.

Naturally tearful Lady Mei, kept from dying of grief while imprisoned, relied on the companionship of the Red Lady Demon.

Her repayment was her Jiangzhu Immortal Honey.

She originally thought that once she was burnt to death, the little demon would leave her body on its own to return to the Outer Realm.

Yet unexpectedly, a new Karmic connection had formed.

"You're saying that the Immortal Water I drank before was actually filled with insects and they've crawled all over me?"

"Then this Demon Pill also contains insects, which your master specifically sent for me to willingly consume, so that it can use my body to thwart that evildoer's conspiracy?"

"And, while my body is being refined, you will swallow my True Soul and spirit me away from this place, to seek refuge with your master?"

The frail Lady Mei, with an adorably daft expression, pointed at the Demon Pill in the arms of the Red Lady Demon and asked three consecutive questions.

This woman, although she had never practiced cultivation even once,

was, after all, the chosen host for the Jiangzhu Immortal Grass, tainted with a special aura, incomparable to ordinary women.

Now knowing the horrifying situation inside her body and facing death itself, her complexion remained unchanged, carrying an air of detachment from worldly concerns.

Before her, the Red Lady Demon, with a wide grin, nodded in affirmation.

In order to complete her task, to receive a generous reward, and also to preserve the life and Dao Path of the foolish woman before her, she decided to coax the woman by explaining:

"Yes, yes."

"Lady Mei, your body contains a Jiangzhu Immortal Grass, hence you've become that Taishang Demon Son's alchemical ingredient."

"Since that performance at the charity gala in Sleepless City, my master took a liking to you, but because that Taishang Demon Son holds massive influence, he couldn't intervene directly to save you. Therefore, he sent me to protect you until the end of the ten days."

"Just now, upon learning that the damned Taishang Demon Son intended to refine the elixir ahead of time, my master had to step in unexpectedly."

"This is also fortuitous; you've long grown tired of the effects that the Jiangzhu Immortal Grass brought you, haven't you? Constant tears, endless sorrow; you might be of gentle nature, but not to such an extent."

"When the time comes, I will assist your True Spirit to escape. Your body, contaminated by the insects, will just be perfect for trapping and killing that Taishang Demon Son. If that guy succeeds, at least several million of your Mortal Human Race will die, perhaps even ten million more—it's not impossible. He's a bigger scourge than we Outer Realm Demons."

"Right, my master has promised to protect you entirely and find you a renowned master, one who can cultivate and seek the Dao in a first-class Cave Heaven Blessed Land... and let me tell you secretly, my master, he's a genuine Godly Immortal, Lady Mei. You're quite lucky."

"Here, eat this."

As her words ended, the Red Lady Demon held up the Demon Pill, bringing it near Lady Mei's mouth.

The little demon's explanation didn't carry all that much persuasive power.

But that sentence about the destruction that would occur if Zhu Qicheng had his way managed to move Lady Mei without a moment's hesitation.

She reached out to take the Demon Pill, fully aware that it was filled with countless, disgusting insects. Still, she bravely opened her mouth wide and forcibly swallowed it.

The Demon Pill was swallowed!

Instantly, the Elixir Wall shattered.

A vast number of "Desire Sin Worms," invisible to the naked eye, surged forth, immediately beginning to parasitize the many Huangquan toxins.

Perhaps the Huangquan poisons were in a half-sleeping state.

Or maybe these "Desire Sin Worms," extracted from the flesh and blood of the Nine Tribulations Body in Lian Yulou, were too high in rank.

With no resistance, they easily completed the parasitism.

Who would have thought?

This poisoning and tampering could also be nested like a set of Russian dolls.

Chapter 366: Lady Mei Loses Herself in the Jade Ring, Zhu Qi Swallows the Elixir and Ascends to Cavernous Mystery

Tao Qian, though able to borrow the perspective of the Red Lady Demon, peeked at the shocking scene inside Prince Zhao Mansion.

But after all, it was in someone else's territory, where strong Demon Cultivators were everywhere, and there existed a figure like "Primordial Demon Manifestation Saint True Monarch" stationed there.

Tao Qian instructed the Red Lady, after she had fed Lady Mei the Demon Pill, to hide within her body, and once the Pill Furnace started to spew Elixir Fire, to refine the fusion of Lady Mei's body with the Jiangzhu Immortal Grass at that moment, and immediately consume Lady Mei's True Soul, then return to another place from the Outer Realm.

Apart from Tao Qian who poisoned the Elixir, indeed, unexpectedly many people were paying attention to the entire Prince Zhao Mansion tonight.

Belonging to the Taishang Demon Sect, the Ninth Prince's side, they had advance knowledge that the Demon Pill was being refined.

Hidden in the Demon City were all sorts like Dragon, Snake, Rat, Ant, under the spread of interested parties, they only thought that Zhu Qi, the "Wasted Prince," was refining a supreme treasure.

They all felt that his skills were poor, which led to such a long refining time.

It showed that in the Cultivation World, not only the Outer Realm Demons were controlled by greed, but many were blinded by greed without realizing it.

There were Human Clan, Demons, and Alien Species.

As if it had been agreed upon, the moment the Elixir Fire sputtered and Alchemy began, there were sudden attacks from all directions.

In the night sky above Prince Zhao Mansion in Demon City,

It seemed like fireworks appeared out of thin air, various streams of lights, and surging energies.

Among them, there was no lack of Cavernous Mystery Realm existence, who also risked using secretive methods to muddy the waters and break into the Prince Zhao Mansion.

Just like Corpse Demon Wan Nanchuan, whom Tao Qian had seen in General's City—this guy practiced the "Taiyin Three Corpses Scripture" very well, and managed to summon as many as a thousand flying corpses, covering the sky and rushing into Prince Zhao Mansion.

This scene was terrifying enough.

And there were more than one strong person like Wan Nanchuan.

All hid their true bodies elsewhere, only directing some treacherous Divine Powers toward Prince Zhao Mansion.

Cavernous Mystery Cultivators knew their strengths and weaknesses and were thus cautious.

Most in Demon City were wild creatures.

Bewitched by rumors like the "Mystic Yellow Tower" and "Heavenly Demon Pearl," they sneaked into Prince Zhao Mansion quietly—none expected that a whole bunch had the same plan.

One person sneaking in alone is considered secretive.

But when a large group of Devil Demons and Evil Cultivators all sneak in together, it turns from stealth to overt action.

Instead, all of them stopped hiding, and various indistinguishable sources of yelling echoed, as if creating an environment where a mob of demons attacked the mansion, muddying the waters.

"Zhu Qi, you brat, the treasures of the world belong to those with destiny. If you can't refine it well, clearly you're not the Bright Lord either, so hand over the treasures."

"You speak truly, beautifully done, Zhu Qi. As the Taishang Demon Son, you can't possibly refine such a Daoist treasure like the Mystic Yellow Tower. Let me do it."

"After so many days without success, Mr. Zhu, why continue hoarding the treasures? Just let them go."

"I heard Zhu Qi that your real father just died suddenly. As a prince, instead of rushing to the Imperial City to mourn and maybe stage some thrilling palace drama for us to watch, why still squat in Demon City? Aren't you afraid that once you enter the Imperial City, your own grandfather will skin you alive?"

"Don't talk nonsense, it's not his real father who died. The old man on the throne right now isn't his real grandfather either."

...

In a distant place at Zhang Mansion, Tao Qian, Yunrong, and Yuan Gong almost moved stools over to enjoy the lively scene outside Prince Zhao Mansion through the Mystic Light Mirror.

Human Clan Cultivators, Devil Demons, Ghosts, Alien Species... all sorts of Divine Powers were displayed.

Besides almost mindlessly revealing themselves, most still used treacherous Magic Skills.

For instance, this array of noisy voices, clear to anyone listening, but you'll never find out where the speaker is located.

After hearing a couple of sentences, Tao Qian couldn't help but laugh and said,

"A bunch of self-proclaimed smart folks, looks like they've been terribly fooled by the Changchun Society, White Lotus Sect, and Cao Gang, not knowing what they were thinking? Ancient Divine Treasures like the Thirty-Three Heavens Xuanhuang Pagoda, how could they possibly appear in the hands of the Ninth Prince Zhu Qi."

"They came here on a fool's errand, thinking probably that Zhu Qi's master wasn't in Demon City, but that old demon had already returned."

"These fools are in for a disaster."

These words were like a prophecy.

Just as an Evil Cultivator was exposing the Ninth Prince's flaws, a cold snort suddenly resounded through Prince Zhao Mansion.

It was almost like thunderous explosions that even shook the sky of Demon City.

Then a hint of Demon Light first appeared from 'Flashing,' then expanded, suddenly, billions of points of Demon Light burst forth.

All around Prince Zhao Mansion, no matter how well hidden,

that instant—everyone suffered their fate.

Anyone touched by Demon Light, their Divine Soul Body was immediately stuck and dragged towards the Big Array enveloping Prince Zhao Mansion.

Even Cavernous Mystery Cultivators like Corpse Demon Wan Nanchuan, dragged from the depths of the earth along with those thousand flying corpses, struggled and were pulled toward Prince Zhao Mansion.

Despite possessing numerous methods, once hit by countless Demon Lights, any finely tuned spells were completely shattered.

Seeing this scene, everyone was left wide-eyed and speechless, shocked beyond words.

Especially those captured Devil Demons and Evil Cultivators, only then did they realize the severe consequences, each starting to cry out in sorrow.

Unfortunately, the "Primordial Demon Manifestation Saint True Monarch" didn't even bother to speak a word to these ordinary folks. Even less of a response could be expected now.

In no time!

The Demon Light vanished, and peace was restored to Prince Zhao Mansion.

The struggle of those Cavernous Mystery Cultivators and demons also had its value.

That instant disturbance allowed Tao Qian a glimpse into the inner scene of Prince Zhao Mansion: Its heavenward realm seemed to have formed its own world, where clear and turbid merged, chaotic and blurry. Inside, countless Pill Furnaces were linked together in an enormous Array. A rough count showed at least hundreds—each a remarkable treasure, connected by Demon Flames. Moreover, hundreds to thousands dressed as "Elixir Children" Heavenly Demons shuttled back and forth, attending to the refining process.

Chapter 367: Lady Mei Loses Herself in the Jade Ring, Zhu Qi Swallows the Elixir and Ascends to Cavernous Mystery\_2

No matter if it was the mere eruption of billions of Demon Lights that instantly swept away numerous Demon Cultivators, among whom there were existences from the Cavernous Mystery Realm,

or this Alchemy Demon Array, both were profoundly shocking, necessitating one to marvel at the handiwork of the Taishang Demon Sect.

Except for Yuan Gong, who merely scoffed and explained to Tao Qian,

"That technique Lingwa just used is called the 'Five Directions Five Elements Heavenly Demon Binding Body Technique,' which is also a well-known Magic Skill of the Taishang Demon Sect, just as the 'Innate One Qi Great Seizing Hand' that you're cultivating is a famous technique of the Spirit Treasure Sect. However, their cultivation time is much longer, and once you reach the Ultimate Happiness Realm, your 'Innate One Qi Great Seizing Hand' will surely be more formidable."

"As for this Pill Array, it indeed is significant, known as the 'Taishang Nine Revolutions Heavenly Demon Refining Pill Array.' By using this array to refine pills, you can transfer various costs to these Elixir Children Heavenly Demons, but the master of the array must also bear some of the burden."

"Ah, previously when I heard those rumors, I found them absurd."

"Now it seems there is some truth to it. Lingwa, this fellow, is sinister and cruel, with a very narrow mind. Even being a Direct Disciple, he shouldn't be so generous."

"If it were his own son, that might make sense."

After Yuan Gong finished speaking, Tao Qian's knowledge had also expanded.

Meanwhile, from the perspective of the Red Lady Demon, inside the Pill Furnace, the Immortal Herbs body of Lady Mei was gradually melting under the Elixir Fire.

The demise of Lady Mei was imminent, and the Red Lady could not afford any delay, anxiously waiting.

The moment of death was instant, and the True Soul emerged.

If she could not save Lady Mei within that instant, it was all over.

It's worth noting that this Elixir Fire could refine even Outer Realm Demons.

The next moment, an unusual sound was heard.

"Pop!"

A frail, Xi Shi-like woman, surrounded by the Elixir Fire, transformed into an essence entirely condensed by Jiangzhu Immortal Liquid, and through the cracks of the furnace, it was about to converge towards the core of the Pill Array.

Before that, a Soul overflowing with Spirit Light leaked out.

Without waiting for her to merge with the essence, the Red Lady Demon, whose mouth was opened to the fullest, swallowed it in one gulp.

The sound of "swoosh" was heard as she swallowed the True Spirit, immediately transforming into a blazing crimson radiance attempting to flee. Although she was scorched a bit by the Elixir Fire in the process, she still crashed into the Void and vanished in an instant.

...

A few breaths later, inside the Quiet Room of Zhang Mansion,

the Void unpredictably split open, and the Red Lady Demon sprang out, rushing toward Tao Qian while screaming in terror, "Master, Master, save me, my butt is on fire!"

The three of them looked, and indeed, the tender buttocks of the little girl demon were ablaze with Demon Flames, crackling loudly.

Apparently, the Red Lady had eaten well recently, with plenty of fat.

Tao Qian sent a burst of Demon Cleansing Sword Qi over, extinguishing the Demon Flames.

At the same time, he spread open his palm, allowing the Red Lady Demon to lie in his hand, crying pathetically.

"Master, oh my great Master!"

"The Red Lady has really suffered this time, squandering two Demon Pills, and even this demon body can't be restored."

"Gulp...gulp...gulp."

Three consecutive Demon Pills were then stuffed into her mouth by Tao Qian.

Though she swallowed them whole without even tasting them, the actual benefits manifested immediately, and in the blink of an eye, her charred buttocks were healed.

Red Lady Demon feigned ignorance and continued to keep her mouth wide open, waiting for food.

Tao Qian, out of options, fed her another piece.

The little girl demon enjoyed the treat so much that her eyes nearly closed in glee, and her mouth opened a bit wider.

This time, however, Tao Qian did not indulge her. He pinched it with two fingers, tilted his head downward, and poured it into his other palm.

Knowing that the benefits had run out, the Red Lady Demon dared not resist and muttered about her stingy master, then retched "Ough."

As the drool stretched and poured forth like a downpour.

Wrapped within the vomit was none other than the True Spirit of Lady Mei.

Oddly enough, though she no longer had the "body of the Jiangzhu Immortal Grass", as soon as the True Spirit appeared, a light, refreshing fragrance filled the entire quiet room, lifting spirits.

Tao Qian took out a jade box, intricately carved with numerous pavilions, terraces, towers, and immortal landscapes. Inside it flowed a droplet of "Jade Marrow," which exerted a strong attraction on the freshly revealed True Spirit and Life Soul of Lady Mei.

But as she looked over, the first thing she saw was a young, handsome Daoist rising seriously to his feet, sincerely saying,

"I am Tao Qian, a disciple of the Spirit Treasure Sect. This little girl demon is under my command. I had known of your plight, Lady Mei, since the dance hall in Sleepless City and admired your compassionate actions."

"At that time, I too had no means to help you escape. Only just now did I find an opportunity to act, and I could only manage to extract your True Spirit and Life Soul. Unfortunately, your body of Jiangzhu Immortal Grass could not be saved."

"However, worry not, I can promptly send someone to escort you to the Spirit Treasure Sect Mountain Gate, Penglai Sea Fairyland, where I will find an immortal master for you, ensuring your Dao Path remains unobstructed. Please step inside this jade box first, Lady Mei. This droplet of Jade Marrow, gifted by the Gu Huo Mountain Goddess, can not only extend your life but also nurture your Life Soul..."

As Tao Qian spoke, suddenly Yunrong poked her head out from his arms, looking at Lady Mei, who despite being just a True Spirit, still carried an extraordinary demeanor.

Indeed, her eyebrows seemed to frown but did not, and her eyes appeared joyful yet not, possessing a peerless charm, reminiscent of a reborn sickly beauty.

Then, Yunrong uttered a remark that greatly surprised Tao Qian, "Grandmother has just transmitted a message saying that Lady Mei and she have a karmic teacher-student connection. If you do not intervene to take her away, it would repay the favor you owed for borrowing the Haotian Divine Light earlier."

After saying this, without waiting for Tao Qian's response, she leaped from his warm embrace, circled around Lady Mei,

and then affectionately nudged her, whispering in her ear:

"Our lineage at Jade Ring Mountain might not be as powerful as the Spirit Treasure Sect, but our mountain is filled with female cultivators. Without strife, it is harmonious and perfect. Moreover, many girls have been born from the transformation of Lingzhi immortal herbs; it's most suitable for you."

"I find you very approachable, and you must feel the same about me, right or am I wrong?"

Though Lady Mei was merely a True Spirit and Life Soul, she was still visibly tickled by Yunrong's touch, her small tongue causing a ticklish sensation.

Upon hearing this, Lady Mei indeed laughed, nodding unconsciously, "Yes, sister, you seem like a Kitten Demon, but for some reason, I find you extremely likable. If my body still existed, I would definitely embrace you."

Hearing her words, Tao Qian couldn't help but laugh.

Just perfect!

It appears everything is sorted out, and this matter has nothing to do with him now.

Without further delay, Tao Qian directly handed the jade box to Yunrong, letting her guide Lady Mei to settle inside, then said, "Since Lady Mei has this karmic connection, I shall not bother any further. The grandmother at Jade Ring Mountain and my Master are both peers and formidable beings. Lady Mei, having her as your master is indeed a great fortune."

As Tao Qian finished speaking, the Lady Mei in the jade box suddenly moved past him, looking toward a Mystic Light Mirror reflecting the scenery of Prince Zhao Mansion.

At that moment, the Forbidden Technique that constantly enveloped the mansion dispersed on its own.

A tremendously terrifying column of Demon Light shot into the sky.

Inside this column, shockingly, there was an Imperial Chariot with the Ninth Prince Zhu Qi, dressed in a black Dragon Robe.

Previously, his cultivation level was genuinely in the Transcend Mortality Realm, but now, he had momentarily broken through the Cavernous Mystery stage. Behind him now seemed to emerge another world, filled with boundless Heavenly Demons roaring and howling, an intimidating force far beyond what a normal Cavernous Mystery Cultivator could compare.

A tyrannical, sinister laugh followed, echoing throughout Demon City.

Chapter 368: The Mountains and Rivers Emit Treasure Light, Tao Qian Deceives the Arhat

"Reincarnation is indeed a technical art, that freak first obtained a prince's body, became ruler of Demon City, the Grand Admiral, then became the Taishang Demon Son, his father suspected to be the Taishang Primordial Demon Manifestation Saint True Monarch. Others to reach the Cavernous Mystery Realm don't know how much blood, sweat, and time they have to spend, the terrifying price, enduring hardships and dangers, but look at him, a single 'Six Desires Demon Pill' and it was done."

Perhaps because the Ninth Prince Zhu Qi was too arrogant, Tao Qian rarely made a sarcastic remark.

In the midst of complaining, there was something he didn't say.

"Although it was enhanced by me and that Saint Heir Huang Chong, the medicinal power was not reduced in the slightest, a genuine, cost-free Cavernous Mystery Realm."

Tao Qian had this thought, naturally sensing the large number of Desire Sin Worms he had refined.

Now, inside Zhu Qi's body.

To be more precise, the Desire Sin Worms had parasitized the Huangquan poison that Huang Chong had placed in Zhu Qi's body.

It could be said to be extremely concealed, even if the elder Lingwa discovered something unusual about her own son, the first to be caught would surely be that Huang Chong.

As for him, Master Tao?

Should there be any movement, he also had enough time to destroy the evidence.

These fleeting thoughts passed, Tao Qian turned back to face Lady Mei, inviting this remarkable woman with a heart of compassion into the Jade Marrow box.

Knowing she was still worried about the millions of disaster victims, Tao Qian thought for a moment and made a rare promise:

"Lady Mei rest assured, thanks to your body of Jiangzhu Immortal Grass, I have taken the initiative."

"I dare not say much about other things, but I will do my utmost to stop Zhu Qi from blood-sacrificing those millions of disaster victims."

Hearing Tao Qian say this, Lady Mei felt inexplicably relieved.

She didn't know why?

Although it was her first time seeing the young Daoist before her, upon making eye contact, she felt an endless trust.

The True Spirit Life Soul gracefully bowed and softly said, "Lady Mei believes in you."

As if he couldn't stand the intimate exchange between the man and woman before him, Yunrong suddenly became agitated, nudging Lady Mei with his head into the Jade Box to nourish her soul.

At the same time, he followed with his magnetic voice:

"Alright, alright, Lady Mei, swiftly enter the box, so I can send you to your grandmother's place."

"If you truly wish to enter the world and save it, you should go to Jade Ring Mountain, cultivate diligently, ask your grandmother a few more times, and have her teach you some powerful Divine Power Skills. Otherwise, with your frail body, not to mention fighting the likes of evil people such as the Taishang Demon Sons, you won't even be able to uproot a tree."

This persuasion indeed worked.

Lady Mei's True Spirit entered the Jade Box, her somewhat dim soul, nourished by the Gu Huo Mountain Goddess's Jade Marrow, immediately burst forth with dazzling and fragrant Spirit Light.

With this arranged, another change arose at Prince Zhao Mansion.

Previously, like demons sending themselves to their doom, many wagered their lives and fortunes only to be effortlessly wiped out by the Divine Skills of the Taishang Primordial Demon Manifestation Saint True Monarch.

Then there was the stir of little Zhu Qi's advancement to the Cavernous Mystery level.

This should have been enough to keep people of the Cultivation World respectfully at bay.

But immediately, a dazzling treasure light burst forth from inside Zhu Qi.

This light!

In an instant, it swept across Demon City, reaching even farther lands, covering at least dozens of cities and counties, mountains could not block it, nor could stars and moons conceal it.

Including Tao Qian, at least tens of millions of people were swept by this light.

The Mortal Human Race didn't feel much, not sensing anything significant.

But those in the Cultivation World, whether Cultivators, Demons, or Alien Strange Objects, all at this moment developed a strong desire for the "light source."

Along with this desire, they had a very strong intuition.

"Treasure, that's definitely a Supreme Treasure, possessing it means an immediate rise to heaven."

This intuition was illogical, but it triggered an explosion in Demon City and beyond, mobilizing countless Demon Cultivators.

Those previously widespread but seemingly ridiculous rumors suddenly found corroboration.

Although the light flashed away, Ninth Prince Zhu Qi also changed his expression drastically, concealed all his aura, and returned to the ground, Prince Zhao Mansion once again covered by the immense Great Prohibition.

But was it already too late to conceal anything?

Places like Medicine King Temple Market, Ten Thousand Demon Square were abuzz with debate, impossible to stop.

"My heavens, treasures, great treasures, that bastard Zhu Qi definitely has an Ancient Treasure."

"Overnight into Cavernous Mystery! It's the merit of that treasure, heaven really is blind, what happened to 'treasures belong to those with virtue'? How could someone like Zhu Qi get that treasure?"

"Didn't you see clearly? That treasure has not yet been refined by Zhu Qi, that was the proof just now."

"Unrefined or not, what does it matter? The Elder of Taishang Demon Sect has already returned to Demon City, with him stationed at Prince Zhao Mansion, who could snatch the treasure from Zhu Qi's hands?"

"Saw the tragic end of those who attacked the mansion tonight? Even Corpse Demon Wan Nanchuan, a Cavernous Mystery Cultivator, couldn't struggle at all in the hands of Primordial Demon Manifestation Saint True Monarch, let alone us with our low-level realms. In the eyes of such a powerful being, I'm afraid we're no different than ants."

"Shh, I've got secret news, at the Treasure Grand Assembly two nights from now, Ninth Prince Zhu Qi will be entangled with calamity, and the treasure inside him will fly away on its own. Whoever is fated will have it."

"I've heard too, in recent years under Zhu Qi's rule, Demon City is utterly miserable. Although there's some order, the situation is gradually deteriorating, demons running rampant, not to mention the surrounding disasters increasing to millions in number. Just yesterday that horrifying blood rain fell, a bad omen of celestial events... Human Dao disaster upon us, as the ruler Zhu Qi is indeed likely to be the first to suffer misfortune."

...

While Demon City was in an uproar, Tao Qian looked at a Record that suddenly burst forth in his mind.

Chapter 369: Mountains and Rivers Birth Treasure Light, Tao Qian Tricks the Arhat\_2

The flash of exposure passed over his body, automatically triggering a response.

[Record: Mountain and River Treasure Light, born from the Ancestor God Fragment into the treasure "Mountain and River Map," possesses infinite wonders...]

Clearly, because it was only a single treasure light,

Tao Qian failed to glimpse much useful information; however, it did verify the secrets leaked by Lian Yulou, which were indeed accurate.

Zhu Qi indeed possessed the Mountain and River Map.

"According to Lian Yulou and the conversation between Father and Son Zhang Baisui, once Zhu Qi successfully refines the Mountain and River Map, with a single thought, he could create an Absolute Spirit Forbidden Zone within the borders of Demon City, eradicating all existence within the Cultivation World, be they cultivators or demons. All would become mere fish on Zhu Qi's chopping board."

"However, his plan being prematurely seen by me, and should it be obstructed by me along with the National Salvation Congress, even if he could still kill many cultivators attending his precious gathering, he likely won't be able to refine the treasures, right?"

"Unless he has other methods."

"Even if he really does, Huang Chong would probably be the first to steal the fruits, and I could be the second, or even the last."

"If I could find an opportunity at the last moment to seize the Mountain and River Map and escape back to the Spirit Treasure Sect, wouldn't this disaster be considered as having been weathered by me?"

These thoughts churned in Tao Qian's mind.

It seemed feasible, the mantis stalks the cicada while unaware of the yellow sparrow behind.

Yet for some reason, Tao Qian still felt uneasy.

Just as he was about to continue ruminating deeply, Yuan Gong's expression suddenly changed, quickly retreating back into Tao Qian's embrace, while transmitting a message:

"Clever boy, you need to be careful now. The Buddha Fragrance Demon you dispatched has returned, and it carries a strand of Kongchan's Demon Thought."

"That bald old monk is always cautious. Receiving a message from the Buddha Fragrance Demon, he must predict first, and naturally, he would encounter Duobao, likely suffering a great loss, still not knowing who his opponent is, fearful of falling into a trap, hence he sent the Demon Thought to explore."

"Don't reveal yourself. If it was my disciple, it would be fair, but if he learns it is Duobao's disciple, the old bald demon will surely capture you to force Duobao to return his treasures."

"A master's debt repaid by the disciple is only proper."

After saying this, Yuan Gong became silent.

If not for the contact that still existed, Tao Qian himself wouldn't have known that there was still a statue in his embrace.

Yuan Gong's warning couldn't possibly be wrong.

The next moment, just like a "Human-shaped Buddha Incense," the demon indeed emerged from the void.

Holding an iron bowl and a tin staff, its cranium flashed with fire.

After standing firm, it bowed respectfully, smiling at Tao Qian:

"Buddha Incense has not failed master's trust; that message has been passed to Kongchan Arhat."

"The Arhat was indeed generous, rewarding Buddha Incense quite a bit, and my Dao Heng has also increased considerably..."

As the demon was speaking, it suddenly saw its own master looking at him with an abnormal expression.

After staring for a while, the master also bowed in salute, then suddenly blurted out a sentence that almost scared him out of his wits.

At the same time, it also caused the corner of Yuan Gong statue's mouth in Tao Qian's embrace to twitch, his inner projection almost bursting with laughter.

"The junior, Jin Lin, is a next-generation disciple of the Secret Demon Sect, and I have seen Kongchan Arhat."

"My master has often taught that when traveling abroad, if we encounter some of his old friends, we must serve them respectfully, for great benefits are sure to follow, and the old esteemed one is exactly whom my master often speaks of."

After Tao Qian finished talking, the Buddha Incense demon immediately opened its mouth wide, with incense ashes dancing above its head.

Then, the ashes, still sparkling with little sparks, suddenly converged, and a flash of Buddha Light manifesting, an old monk with a kind and peaceful face emerged.

This old monk, bare-chested and in a simple azure robe, head completely bald and covered with flesh knots, had an odd appearance with large eyes and a high nose, round shoulders, and moist skin.

In his hand, he held a Bodhi tree branch with seven forks, upon which a vivid jade cicada perched.

Upon his appearance, the quiet room immediately echoed with the sound of cicadas.

Anyone hearing this sound would see an increase in their Taoist power.

Of course, during this process, they would also manifest their Origin Qi.

"I was listening to the Kongchan Buddha's chant, which could increase my mana and mental cultivation state, but at the cost of being unable to conceal my own origin and foundation... already exempted!"

Seeing this line of Record flowing by, Tao Qian was taken aback.

At the same time, he reacted swiftly, deliberately releasing a strand of Secret Demon Sacrifice Body Sword Intent.

Then, he sighed inwardly:

"Indeed, those who are old but not dead are as thieves."

"Almost all the Old Demons and senior figures who have lived longer are like Old Silver Coins, except Yuan Gong, who is somewhat naive."

As he thought this, he saw before him an old monk, purely formed from a strand of Demon Thought.

With a benevolent smile, the old monk looked at Tao Qian as if he was a naive child, full of curiosity, and asked:

"Disciple of the Secret Demon Sect, you can even command the rare Buddha Fragrance Demon and have cultivated the Secret Demon Sacrifice Body Sword Intent... This really reminds this old monk of an old acquaintance."

"However, as far as this old monk knows, that acquaintance was defeated by a shameless person long ago and has already perished."

The first sentence was fine, but the keywords in the second sentence left Tao Qian speechless.

What to do now?

However, the die was cast, and he could not back out.

The Kongchan Arhat before him was merely a strand of Demon Thought; his true body was still nested in the Demon Buddha Temple.

But that was because this old creature was cautious by nature, afraid it was a trap and thus dared not come.

"If this old creature glimpsed my secrets, he would likely summon his true body to capture me, and then my master might have to bring out the Heavenly Punishment Sword to stop him... Such involvement would surely change this calamity."

"Fortunately, there is much information asymmetry between this old creature and me, plus the shelter of my master covering the Heavenly Mechanism, and with the True Monarch Lingwa attracting his attention with truly important matters, deceiving him once should not be difficult."

Tao Qian thought these things in his mind.

Yet, he did not delay his reply and directly said:

"The shameless person the senior speaks of, must be none other than the Duobao True Monarch of the Spirit Treasure Sect."

"My master also mentioned that the battle at that time was thrilling, but the methods of Duobao True Monarch were indeed somewhat disgraceful, relying on his supernatural power and the Ten Thousand Treasure Secret, he took quite a few treasures from our Secret Demon Sect, alas, if not for that, my master would have awarded me some protective treasures when I entered the world."

"This is truly hardship."

To match these words, Tao Qian made a bitter expression.

Without waiting for the Kongchan Arhat to speak, Tao Qian changed his expression, showing a heroic demeanor, and laughed:

"However, lacking treasures doesn't matter, as I have received the [Secret Demon Sacrifice Body Sword] personally from my master, a sword of 'Selflessness' that can cleanse demons, slay immortals, suppress demons, slaughter the abnormal, and slay gods."

"If I desire something, I do not need others to gift or reward me, I will take it with my sword."

During this speech, the Sword Intent surged around Tao Qian.

It was a genuine sword technique, personally imparted by the Old Cultivator 'Yuan Gong', who had once roamed the Cultivation World.

The Kongchan Arhat, with his deep blue Buddha eyes, could easily recognize this.

Surprise appeared on his face, "You are indeed a disciple of Yuan Gong, was there some hidden circumstance in that battle years ago..."

Tao Qian shook his head, his face full of unspoken secrets.

Then, shifting the topic, he pointed at the frightened Buddha Fragrance Demon and earnestly said to the Kongchan Arhat:

"Recently, I learned a secret and found that the current ruler of this place, the Ninth Prince Zhu Qi, possesses an exotic treasure [Mountain and River Map]."

"This treasure, formed from an Ancestor God Forbidden Technique Fragment, contains the mysteries of all things, holding it can refine a part of heaven and earth... I do not wish to deceive you, sir, my Secret Demon Sect longs to rise again and rebuild our mountain gate, and this treasure is indispensable."

"But later I learned that Zhu Qi is the Taishang Demon Son, and his master is none other than Taishang Demon Saint True Monarch Lingwa, I initially considered retreating, but later, under my master's guidance, knowing that Lingwa has some grievances with you, sir, allowing Zhu Qi to succeed would enable Lingwa to use his disciple as an opportunity to refine demons as provisions, and advance to the Daoist Transformation Realm."

"Then, sir, you might be in some danger, as both you and Lingwa share the same supreme treasure [Thirty-Three Heavens Great Freedom Demon Relics]."

"I detest those who beat around the bush, knowing this, I immediately sent this demon to convey the message."

"My only request, two days later, before Zhu Qi starts refining the treasure, is to first lure Lingwa away, making it convenient for me to act and seize the Mountain and River Map."

Chapter 370: Demon Buddha Magic, Bai Gu Pagoda; Behind the Saint Heir, There Existed a Master

"Who would have thought that in the quiet room of a seemingly insignificant prodigal son's residence, an Arhat from the Demon Buddha Temple of the Ultimate Happiness Realm would descend?"

The Kongchan Arhat held the Bodhi Branch, his gaze fixated on Tao Qian.

It was but a strand of Demon Thought that had materialized, yet it did not hinder his calculative judgement.

'This child sent a Demon to deliver a message, and I secretly predicted his background, only to encounter backlash,' he thought.

'I used to wonder when such a talent emerged in the Cultivation World.'

'Now looking at this child, his time spent in cultivation is indeed short, yet he has mastered the Secret Demon magic remarkably well—his Secret Demon Sacrifice Body Sword Technique carries the unmistakable mark of the Old Ape, without a doubt.'

'Could it be that the old fellow really wasn't killed by Duobao back then but secretly escaped instead?'

'Or could it be that Duobao, that sneaky fellow, has some other calculations and conspiracies?'

'Well, on the day the Secret Demon Sect collapsed, we predicted that these old Demons would surely make a comeback, and the numerous signs over these centuries have also validated this destiny.'

Thinking of this, a sudden realization dawned on the Kongchan Arhat, as if he had caught a glimpse of the truth through the dissipating mist before him.

He looked again at Tao Qian, whose face bore an expression of sincerity, and sneered to himself,

'Heh, little demon of the Secret Demon Sect.'

'All this about considering my well-being, afraid that I would be harmed by that old Lingwa—is clearly because your Secret Demon Sect has set its sights on the "Mountain and River Map" that can aid in the reconstruction of the Mountain Gate. You want to trick me into being your unpaid enforcer.'

'Since Yuan Gong, that old thing, hasn't died, it's likely that Su Old Demon, Old Lady Jiang, and the Evil Demon Daoist also saved their skins, especially Jiang Luan, that wily old lady, the most skilled in prediction and calculation. She's only slightly less adept than Duobao, and Lian Huasheng, the baldy from the Dharma Cakra Temple. The backlash I suffered before must have been her doing.'

'It's just as well. Collaborating with the Secret Demon Sect, after all, is better than fighting alone against Lingwa and his treasured disciple.'

'I was too greedy back then, lured by Duobao into trying to snatch the Heavenly Demon Relics, which entwined my Daoist Transformation Tribulation with Lingwa's. If he doesn't die, then it's my demise.'

'As long as I can hinder his attainment of the Dao, and have this group of old Demons from the Secret Demon Sect owe me a favor, my chances of winning in the future will be much higher.'

After calculation, the Kongchan Arhat had a plan.

His face once again showed a kind smile, and he even praised Tao Qian,

'You, the Secret Demon Child, do have a bit of the young Yuan Gong's presence.'

'You want me to make a move to help you seize the treasure? That's easy. On account of my relationship with your master, I can assist once.'

'But afterward, you must repay me.'

'Of late, I'm refining a Magical Treasure called the "Demon Buddha's Magic White Bone Glaze Tower". I've gathered all the other spiritual materials; I just lack some bones from Cultivators and Demon Alien Species. No need for many, just over nine hundred will do.'

'When the time comes, you needn't lift a finger; I'll personally capture all the Cultivators and Demons making a fuss within the bounds of the Demon City. You just bear the karmic consequences... with the Mountain and River Map in your possession, you should easily be able to assimilate it.'

'How about this deal?'

It's hard to imagine a monk, who looks as kind and benevolent as the Buddha himself, casually discussing trading in lives and bodies with Tao Qian.

In actuality, for the Mortal Human Race, this Kongchan Arhat's terrifying Divine Power could very well be deemed akin to that of the Buddha.

What a pity!

This Arhat did not come from reputable Buddhist temples like the Great Freedom Temple or the Great Reincarnation Temple.

He is from the Demon Buddha Temple.

Despite bearing the words "Buddhist Temple," the Demon Buddha Temple is a much older Great Sect, with more of a Demon Sect's style even than the Secret Demon Sect or the Taishang Demon Sect.

Tao Qian, having heard the transaction proposed by Kongchan, showed no surprise on his face.

The character of the Demon Buddha Temple, he had already experienced through the ordeal with the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva when he was in Southern Yue.

Iron Buddha Mountain, Fragrant Meat Collection... they were still fresh in his memory.

Although Tao Qian was tricking Kongchan Arhat, he still had to be tactful and not rashly agree.

If the other party were just an ordinary Cultivator, it might be fine, but facing an Arhat of the Demon Buddha Temple from the Ultimate Happiness Realm, if he made a promise and failed to keep it, the consequences could be grave.

Besides, Tao Qian was not truly a Demon.

What a crappy deal this was!

With a few thoughts flashing through his mind, Tao Qian directly shook his head at Kongchan and said,

'Senior, do not overthink. This time it is not my Secret Demon Sect asking you to assist in seizing the treasure. It is merely a coincidence that we know of some karma related to you here, and we couldn't bear to see you harmed by that Taishang Primordial Demon Manifestation Saint True Monarch's schemes.'

'It's an alliance of cooperation between us, with no transaction involved.'

'If the senior is unwilling, it doesn't matter. I will simply invite another senior. With her level of cultivation and skill, even Lingwa Master would have to give way.'

These words were pretty blunt.

It had been a long time since anyone had dared to speak to Kongchan Arhat in such a manner.

However, after hearing them, he was not angered.

Firstly, the young man in front of him was a disciple of Yuan Gong, a little demon practicing the Secret Demon Body Sword Technique—so it wasn't hard to guess what his temperament would be like.

Secondly, after hearing the words, Kongchan seemed to realize something.

His gaze shifted, falling on Tao Qian's arms.

There, Yunrong was poking out her adorable little Kitten Demon head, with quite a distinctive "spiritual and devilish aura" emanating from her.

Immediately, Kongchan's eyebrows raised, surprised,

'The lineage of Jade Ring Mountain?'

'Kid, don't boast. You think you can actually invite that female fairy?'

'Even if your master Yuan Gong himself were to go, it's not certain he could invite her to make a move.'"

Kongchan Arhat's words took Tao Qian by surprise.

He had feigned the need to request the help of Yunrong's grandmother, the leader of the Jade Ring Mountain lineage, as a deception against Kongchan.

Yet he had not expected the grandmother's status to be so high.

Seeing Kongchan's surprised and shocked expression, Tao Qian could fully imagine that the grandmother Yunrong spoke of likely surpassed Kongchan Arhat in strength.

This suggested she was stronger than Lingwa and, most likely, stronger than Yuan Gong too.

"It seems that among these old monsters, there is a clear hierarchy of strength."

"Kongchan, Lingwa, and Yuan Gong should be in the same tier, with Yuan Gong likely being slightly stronger."

"And Yunrong's grandmother, as well as my foster master, ought to be in another tier—but who is stronger among them?"

While these thoughts flashed through Tao Qian's mind, Yunrong suddenly spoke up, rounding out his lie.

"The venerable senior of the Demon Buddha Temple, it would be difficult to summon grandmother to help in a fight."

"However, if I were to personally request her, perhaps she could send a Dharma Body with the Haotian treasure mirror to assist a little. That shouldn't be too hard."

"On Jade Ring Mountain, I am grandmother's favorite."

Yunrong spoke the last sentence with pride and arrogance, her head held high in a charmingly adorable manner.

Kongchan, wise as he could be, instantly sensed that Yunrong's words were genuine and straightforward.

"Has the contemporary Secret Demon Child managed to establish a connection with the Jade Ring Mountain lineage?"

"That female fairy has always looked down on those from the Demon Path, so how could she allow her treasured Kitten Demon to become a Daoist couple with a bearer of the Secret Demon True Inheritance?"

"Could there also be some scheme behind this?"

"If that's truly the case, it spells trouble. This time we cannot afford any complications; we must prevent that old thing Lingwa from achieving his Dao."

Tao Qian was also quite adept at reading people. Noticing Kongchan's expressions, he struck while the iron was hot, offering a step down for the Arhat who was already tempted but still eying some benefits, Tao Qian added,

"This affair is an internal matter for our Demon Path, really not something to trouble grandmother with."

"My master and the others are tied up at the moment and due to the entanglement of karma, it seems it must still fall on the Arhat."

"How about this: My Secret Demon Sect only desires that one Mountain and River Map. Any other cultivation secret manuals or treasures, as well as provisions, will all be yours. What do you say?"

"It seems, Arhat, you are unaware that the current Ninth Prince, Zhu Qi, is actually Lingwa's bloodline. For his only son's Dao Path, he not only staked all his possessions in the Prince Zhao Mansion, he also obtained many exotic treasures from within the Taishang Demon Sect... all together, this might actually be worth more than the Mountain and River Map."

These words, accompanied by the sharing of some secret gossip about a sworn enemy, did indeed sway Kongchan Arhat.

He formed a Buddha Seal and silently made some predictions.

Afterward, he revealed a smile reminiscent of Buddha and nodded, "Alright, let's do as you say."

These two!

One seemed to be the Secret Demon Child and the other, a Luohan from the Demon Buddha Temple.

In just a few words, they had agreed on a scheme to thwart the Taishang Demon Saint True Monarch and his son and student's great plan.

After coming to an agreement, Kongchan Arhat had initially intended to say something more, such as extracting plans on the reconstruction of the Secret Demon Sect mountain gate from the newly emerged Secret Demon Child, especially since he was just an avatar of Demon Thought and didn't have to worry about the old demons like Yuan Gong plotting against him.

However, just then, the voice of the master of Zhang Mansion, that prodigal son, warlord second generation Zhang Baisui, echoed from outside the quiet room.

This pretty-boy cad pulled Jin Xiuju along, showing a face full of sincerity befitting an invitation to an expert, and gave a bow, saying,

"Senior Jin Lin, senior Yunrong."

"My father just sent word, dispatching nearly half of his subordinates from the Nine Lamps Mansion to Demon City for business, ostensibly under my command."

"These individuals are all capable people highly valued by my father, with even cultivators from the Cavernous Mystery Realm among them."

"When we were in Xiajing, they disrespected me for my youth."

"Now, being strangers in a foreign land, I'm afraid they won't heed my orders and simply seek to use my residence for shelter and my reputation to carry out their own agendas."

"Would the two seniors be willing to help me save face and prevent these Side Door characters from looking down on me?"

As these words reached the quiet room, Tao Qian was unmoved.

Kongchan Arhat, however, made a few quick calculations in front of Tao Qian.

It seemed he had predicted something and immediately his face broke into a mysterious smile, nodding, "In a world of great strife, it's logical for the Secret Demon Sect friend to arrange such. This child's father is truly a heroic figure—seemingly foolish and unorthodox, yet with a cunning and calculating heart. He preemptively occupied Ancient Qin Province, the land for fostering dragons. Although he may not secure the throne in the future, his chances are far better compared to Prince Lingwa Daoist who used the bodies of the harem concubines to have his son. However, in my predictions, that Zhang Jiudeng is utterly greedy, having formed connections with Alchemists early on. The old friends of the Secret Demon Sect must be careful of his deception."

"It should not be too difficult. Even if Mr. Yuan Daoist and Jiang Daoist are still wounded, dealing with a mundane warlord should be quite easy."

"Two days later, we put our plan into action—I shall take my leave."

With those last words, Kongchan Arhat's body disintegrated once more, returning to ash.

As he left, he completely missed the profound shock that surged through Tao Qian's heart upon hearing his words.

The unease Tao Qian had felt before, along with a question that had remained unanswered, suddenly found their answer in his own mind.

As for someone like Qin Wuxiang, a Alchemist Saint Child entering the world is meant to select a Bright Lord to ascend to the Dragon Court.

Huang Chong!

This Saint Child must also be aiming for that.

But he surreptitiously administered Huangquan poison to the Ninth Prince, Zhu Qi, indicating that Huang Chong's intended was not Zhu Qi.

So, who could it be?