

Longevity 691

Chapter 691 Aunt Immortal's Trace, Duobao Teases_2

"If these beings who have attained the Dao and become 'Divine Spirits' were to re-enter the world, I fear it would not be months before a great Immortal-Demon War would erupt, the earth would crumble, the sun and moon would lose their light, and we would return to a time of darkness and ignorance."

"At that time, the situation of the Human Clan would not be any better than it is now."

After Zhao Gongda had spoken, Li Ren immediately fell silent.

He wanted to argue but could not utter a single word.

It was then that Tao Qian added, dampening spirits further,

"Daoist Transformations and Tribulation Immortals exist mostly in the Outer Realm Abyss, not returning so easily."

"As for the Ten Thousand Immortals of the Penglai Sea?"

"The majority of all living beings in their cultivation seek only their own liberation, and the Spirit Treasure Sect is no exception."

"All of us here are exceptions, even if I were to stand forth and declare an alliance with Yuann Daoist to seize the world, we might secure some covert support from the Spirit Treasure Sect, but full participation in the war is absolutely impossible."

"In this respect, the Primordial Sect comes off a bit cheaper, as they seem to want to use the fortune of saving the world to re-establish an Immortal Sect... but they are currently busy with movements in the south and cannot spare attention for the Northern Land."

"Li Daoist, your method is not really that extraordinary."

"The Immortal Dynasty and other methods, I've considered them all."

"Even methods that have never existed in this world, I have thought of a few."

"Alas, there is no hope in sight for the time being."

"However, I, Tao Qian, have never felt that this is a matter that can be resolved in a short time; the future is long, and I am prepared and willing to seek..."

At this point, Tao Qian had a premonition.

This time, it was a fleeting premonition of crisis.

Strangely enough, it made him think of Uncle Qin Jiao.

"It's different for me, I don't cultivate using the Human Dao Destiny, I don't manipulate destiny, so there is no chance of it backfiring on me."

"The Alchemists have been uprooted by me, as long as I persist a bit longer and remove this malignant tumor, even if I still cannot find a proper system of salvation and governance, I can at least give the people at the bottom of the world a chance to breathe."

"It won't take too long, I am just a step away from the Ultimate Happiness Realm, and in a short time, I will be able to return to the Penglai Sea to contemplate and prepare for the Daoist Transformation Tribulation."

Tao Qian consoled himself, feeling a sense of urgency.

No longer engaging in futile discussions with Li Ren, who tried to match him with Yuann Mingzhen, Tao Qian suddenly asked, recalling something,

"You said that Yuann Mingzhen Daoist has the support of my Aunt Yunhua behind her?"

"Is this true? What proof do you have? Have you met my aunt, or is it something Yuann Daoist said herself?"

Previously, when he heard this, Tao Qian was skeptical, even considering that Yuann Mingzhen might be a split persona of Senior Sister Lingji.

But having now met this "Li Ren," he sensed something was amiss.

Though a passionate and straightforward person, Li Ren seemed not very bright.

And here, there was another issue that could not be avoided.

That was Xie Lingzhu, who accompanied Yuann Mingzhen; although she was the older sister of Xie Lingji, she greatly disliked Aunt Yunhua.

If the two were to meet, Xie Lingzhu would not hesitate to act, regardless of seniority.

Sure enough, upon asking, he received the expected response.

Li Ren scratched his shiny head with his tentacle and replied,

"That is not the case."

"However, Yuann Mingzhen Daoist has said that she possesses a set of extremely powerful flags, acquired recently from the foremost female fairy of the Spirit Treasure Sect, Yunhua Immortal."

"Just by deploying them, a [Mixed Element Nine Real Creation Immortal Array] can be formed in an instant, that even powerful beings from the Ultimate Happiness Realm could suffer heavy injuries within, or even perish with one misstep."

"To give away such an Immortal Array so readily to her, doesn't it clearly show an attitude of support?"

After these words were spoken, even Zheng Yin, Zhao Gongda and others could see.

Li Ren, though passionate, was indeed unreliable.

That conclusion!

It wasn't a grave mistake, but it couldn't quite be considered correct either.

Upon hearing this, Tao Qian thought to himself,

"The Secret Technique of Creation was indeed meant for Aunt Yunhua, and since Yuann Mingzhen had acquired it recently, this does indeed prove that she has met my aunt."

"However, given my aunt's temperament, if she had truly confirmed that Yuann Mingzhen was a split soul of my senior sister, she wouldn't have kept it hidden at all. She absolutely adored my senior sister. If anyone dared to provoke my senior sister, she would set up that terrifying array even our master fears, and she wouldn't hesitate to call her friends, rallying the other aunts."

"I wouldn't be able to call upon the help of Ten Thousand Immortals with my own reputation, but with my aunt, the scene would have been quite different."

"By then, not to mention those three bald thieves from the Demon Buddha Temple, but anyone within Qiantang Province who wished to trouble my senior sister's split soul, without exception, would not even leave one bird alive; they would all perish without a trace."

"The absence of such a display adequately proves that Yuann Mingzhen is not a split soul of my senior sister, or at least most likely not."

"However, there must be some connection; otherwise, merely on account of Xie Lingzhu, my aunt wouldn't have offered that set of flags."

With these thoughts, Tao Qian suddenly felt enlightened.

At the same time, he found himself somewhat speechless about Li Ren, and straightforwardly declared,

"Let's not speak of the arranged marriage again, I already have a daoist couple."

"However, if Yuann Mingzhen Daoist wishes to join us, that's possible. From this book 'Governance Scripture,' we can tell that Yuann Daoist possesses extraordinary wisdom, compassion for the common people, and the aspiration to save the world."

"If it's convenient, why not invite her to meet us."

"Good!"

"You know, Tao Qian, you and a few others think I'm wild in my dreams, haphazardly arranging pairings."

"No matter, as soon as you and Yuann Mingzhen Daoist meet each other, you will hit it off at once, and upon a second meeting, fall head over heels - a match made in heaven... But it's inconvenient right now; Master Shenxiu and Zen Master Da Yu from the Great Freedom Temple are both fiercely vying for her attention, speaking of righteousness, yet they're also trying to coax her into handing over the fortune of her Dharma lineage and the Spring and Autumn Chariot."

"But tonight, there will be a Dharma assembly at the Demon Buddha Temple. As a condition for their protection, Zen Master Da Yu wants Xie Lingzhu Daoist to participate in the first debate."

"The Zen Master said: the Beautiful Corpse from the Demon Buddha Temple practices multiple techniques and is well-versed in both Orthodox and Heterodox Buddhist scriptures. If it's just debating

scripture, even Master Shenxiu would most likely not be an opponent. However, Xie Lingzhu is different. She and the Beautiful Corpse have both practiced at the Guanyin Temple, and even have a not-so-superficial acquaintance."

"The Zen Master taught Xie Lingzhu a secret technique that she can employ during the scripture debate to make the Beautiful Corpse admit defeat voluntarily."

"While they're debating, Tao Qian, you need only cast some Sublime Dharma to remove yourself from the situation, and I can arrange a meeting with Yuann Mingzhen for you."

"Believe me, Tao Qian, Yuann Daoist must be your..."

"Dang dang dang!"

Li Ren was getting excited in his talk when suddenly the sound of bells came from the surface of the water.

At the same time, divine phenomena of Buddha started appearing throughout the entire province, with heavenly flowers falling and Earth Bursting Golden Lotuses emerging everywhere.

The ears were filled with the immensely pleasant chanting of Buddhist hymns and the whole city was engulfed in Golden Light and fragrant mist.

"The Dharma assembly is about to start, let's leave it at that for now. Everyone, act according to the situation."

"Send us back."

Having said this, Tao Qian finished, and Zheng Yin immediately took action.

Amid the flashing radiance, this odd meeting in the Buddha's Golden Soup came to a premature end.

When Tao Qian opened his eyes again, he found himself back within the quiet room of the Zen monastery.

In his eyes, the first thing to be reflected was the beautiful face of Yunrong.

Although he hadn't agreed to anything, even to a single word of assent, Tao Qian inexplicably felt strange because of all the nonsense Li Ren had spouted.

Thinking of this, Tao Qian immediately took out his Golden Radiance Token.

Although he had already guessed the majority of it, whether Aunt Yunhua was indeed in Qiantang Province and whether Yuann Mingzhen was actually a split soul of Senior Sister Lingji still needed verification.

No sooner had he wondered than the Golden Radiance Token started trembling, and the teasing voice of his nominal master came through,

"Hahaha... My dear disciple, have you been smitten by spring, so concerned about finding your Senior Sister Lingji? Or are you still pondering over what your Aunt Yunhua mentioned, about setting you two up once you find Xie Lingji?"

"Eh, if I remember correctly, don't you already have a wife?"

"I must tell you, that girl Yunrong is an excellent one; don't you let her down."

"If you mess things up, don't even say you are a disciple of Duobao. Her master, Grandma Taizhen, is very fierce. I cannot defeat her, so to avoid getting involved, I will have to expel you from the sect if it comes to that."

Chapter 692 - The Devil Concubine's Origins, Scheming Master and Disciple

Within the city of Qiantang, the sound of Buddhist chanting and immortal music resonated incessantly.

In a quiet room of a certain Zen monastery, Master Tao Da accidentally let his own master jest with him for a while.

He was certain that Duobao Daoist knew Yunrong was by his side and said those words on purpose.

Tao Qian even suspected:

"Before, Master Yuan said I was taken out by my cheap master to use the 'Beauty Trap.' Now, it seems that it might not be untrue."

"Did he already receive some benefits from Grandma Taizhen beforehand, softening because of favors received, hmph, it must be the case."

"Shameless Daoist, only receiving without giving, even using his own disciple to exchange for treasures."

While his thoughts raced, he looked up, and sure enough, he locked gazes with Yunrong, whose alluring eyes seemed to be both smiling and not at the same time.

Just as he was about to refute, he suddenly saw Yunrong blink her eyes.

The next moment, the image of "Senior Sister Lingji" appeared in the demon pupils of Yunrong—and from Tao Qian's perspective.

To the point where, for an instant, whatever Tao Qian was thinking, Yunrong also seemed to have a faint sense of it.

Initially, Yunrong had some teasing intentions, but she had no heart to blame, merely wanting to see the awkward state of her Daoist couple.

Her true form was that of an Alien Species, the Kitten.

Although she had transformed, her thoughts and desires were still utterly different from those of the Human Clan.

After seeing the heart-breaking grace of Xie Lingji and hearing what Tao Qian felt in his heart, Yunrong's eyes widened, and she continued the phrase Tao Qian had said in admiration:

"Good brother, you are right. This sister's grace is truly inconceivable. Yunrong has never seen such a person. If she could cultivate with her in search of Longevity, it would be such gratifying matter."

"Lucky for me, I met younger brother first. If I had met this sister first, Yunrong would also wish to cultivate Ultimate Happiness with her and have some Kitten offspring."

"Her aura and essence seem to gather all the spiritual beauty of heaven and earth, not at all inferior to your Spirit Treasure Sublime Body, brother."

"I really want to revert to my true form and snuggle in her arms..."

Seeing this scene, Tao Qian knew that Yunrong, through the spiritual connection they shared, had cast a secret technique, allowing her to meet Xie Lingji unilaterally in space with his perspective.

Seeing her infatuated demeanor, Tao Qian suddenly couldn't bear to blink and erase the image.

Tao Qian was speechless, yet he understood quite well.

When he first saw Senior Sister Lingji, the woman in the flowing green robe with her hair bound by a wooden hairpin, a natural spirit of the world, she indeed made Tao Qian marvel at the wonder of creation, and he had a similar infatuation.

Contrary to him, Master Tao Da only admired the demeanor and bearing of Senior Sister Lingji without any disrespectful intentions.

And now, Yunrong thought of having Kitten offspring with her?

Tao Qian felt something was amiss; it made sense with me, but how with Senior Sister Lingji?

Just as he was puzzled, from the other end of the Golden Radiance Token, the voice of Duobao Daoist, which was also quite speechless, came through:

"Hmph, consider yourself lucky, kid, to pass this test."

"However, you can't get your hopes up for now. That girl named 'Yuan Mingzhen' is not an avatar of Xie Lingji. Did you not think, if she were, why would she only give a set of Array Flags?"

"Junior Sister Yunhua cherished Xie Lingji all her life. If someone wanted to kill her, by now Qiantang Province City would probably have been flattened by the 'Spirit Treasure Nine Realms Immortal Extinguishing God Array.' Shipi, Kongchan, and Lian Sha might have some skills, but once Yunhua sets up the Array, all three old thieving monks would have to transform into Buddhas, with none escaping."

"However, that girl Yuan Mingzhen does have some relation to Xie Lingji. I just made a Prediction, and it seems that the Xie Family used a few strands of Xie Lingji's leftover hair, along with the Outer Realm pregnancy secret method, and the Conception Guanyin Skill from Guanyin Temple, to forcibly raise a child."

"Although they didn't obtain Xie Lingji's Innate Taoist Body, they accidentally acquired the Heavenly Phoenix Destiny, which also somehow benefited the Xie Family."

As Duobao spoke up to this point, Tao Qian's face showed disbelief.

The hair of Xie Lingji, the Outer Realm pregnancy method, and the Conception Guanyin Skill melded together... was the widely-known Devil Concubine Yuan Mingzhen.

"Can this actually work? Isn't this the cultivation version of cloning?"

"On my Ascending Immortal Island, getting a few strands of Senior Sister Lingji's hair would be an easy feat..."

Duobao had no idea that his disciple was starting to get carried away with wild thoughts, as he continued to reveal the truth.

"Speaking of which, the Xie Family really is a family of madcaps. Although they have some heritage and barely qualify as a millennium cultivation family or powerful clan, they truly can't rank in the forefront and certainly can't be compared to the likes of the old monster families of the Xiu Family, the Si Family, or the Zhang Family. Perhaps because of this, the Xie Family is overly ambitious, always daydreaming of expanding their influence."

"Back then, your Aunt Yunhua insisted on taking Xie Lingji away by force because she saw that such a good girl would have a miserable end staying with the Xie Family, so she snatched her. The Xie Family has quite a few strong people, so to ensure success, Yunhua had to engage in battle personally and also secretly arranged several of the second generation Masters to hold off the old ancestors of the Xie Family."

"The Xie Family, knowing that the great era of contention was coming, preemptively raised Yuan Mingzhen."

"Unfortunately, they couldn't withstand the maneuvers of those old beasts—Alchemists. Having hardly managed to seize the Imperial City in alliance with Guanyin Temple, they lost it again not long after."

"What is contemptible is that, since Yuan Mingzhen lost her value and became a target of the world, the madcaps of the Xie Family simply abandoned the girl, withdrawing their entire family back to their ancestral home in their territory."

"Only Xie Lingzhu, the young lady, showed some loyalty and continued to stay by Yuan Mingzhen's side. Perhaps Aunt Yunhua gave the life-saving Array Flags because of this consideration, and afterwards she went to the Outer Realm. There seems to be some sensing between her and her disciple, perhaps making some discovery."

As the talk came to an end, Tao Qian suddenly understood the whole story.

His guess was not wrong; there was indeed some connection between Yuan Mingzhen and Senior Sister Lingji, but they were not the same person.

Duobao spoke and then suddenly added,

"Now that you plan to eradicate the cancer for the mortals of Qiantang and the Tiannan Two Provinces, forging a path of survival for them, it's about time you made your move."

"Whether it's those three old thief monks or the three beasts of the Gao family, they're all subtly urging me to assist them. This one guise of mine can now only be used separately—if seen by both parties at the same time, it will certainly give the game away."

As these two sentences were heard,

outside Tao Qian's Zen monastery, suddenly came the voices of the brother and sister from the Zhen family, announcing that the Dharma assembly was about to begin and inviting the two of them to attend.

Yunrong went to respond, while Tao Qian immediately transmitted a message to the Golden Radiance Token:

"For now, there is no need to trouble Master with matters concerning the Demon Buddha Temple."

"However, tonight, I ask that Master make another trip to the Steamed Buddha City, to inform them that those three old monks plan to use the Gao family and all the warlords and strong people within the province city as treasures to refine the Great Compassionate and Merciful Transcendent Bodhisattva."

"Any ordinary cultivator who learns of this conspiracy will surely spread the word widely."

"But I reckon the Gao family will not. Rather, they are likely to seek out the old monster Gao Huan for divine skills and treasures to counter the plot, taking advantage of the situation to annex the entire Qiantang Province in one fell swoop, along with the Demon Buddha Treasures and Devil Concubine Yuan Mingzhen. Lacking territory and population resources, they can't resist such temptation."

"As for me, after tonight, I too will seek out those three old thieves, inform them of the Gao family's vulnerabilities, and guide at least two of the Three Arhats to lead the Demon Buddha army to Tiannan Province the day after tomorrow, to uproot the Gao family's foundation, thereby dealing a heavy blow to Gao Huan... A small move triggering a chain reaction, with the loss of Tiannan Province, Gao Huan will inevitably suffer a backlash of fortune, and the other few old monsters who are alchemists are already starving. Seeing Gao Huan vulnerable, none will be able to resist pouncing."

"And the fate of being divided and devoured that befell the Zhu Dynasty Taizong will also fall upon Gao Huan."

"And the Gao family's dying counterattack will also be tough for those three old thieves to bear, especially considering that they believe the Buddha treasures, the Great Transcendence Bodhisattva, which they count on for their big use, have been secretly tampered with by me. Not only will it be of no use to them, but it may instead come to my aid."

"As long as I can prompt both sides to exhaust and kill each other, even if our identities as master and disciple are exposed afterward, it will not matter, as we can just flee."

"However, there is a chance that something unexpected may occur, such as if there are other old monsters from the Ultimate Happiness Realm hidden in the Demon Buddha Temple or the Great Freedom Temple, who might jump out at a critical moment, and I too may be in trouble."

Having finished speaking, Tao Qian felt the Golden Radiance Token vibrate slightly, conveying Duobao's laughter.

Within that laughter was full of admiration.

"Hahaha... what a venomous scheme."

"Without expending a single soldier or warrior, there's a possibility of defeating two major forces. If handled well, even the old monster Gao Huan might be taken down too."

"Good! Worthy of being my Duobao Disciple, worthy of me risking the deterioration of one of my false identities to help you. Indeed, you are teachable."

"As for your concerns, rest easy."

"The Demon Buddha Temple doesn't have much spare capacity left, those Buddhas are completely detached from worldly affairs, a bunch of Arhats are either stirring up trouble in other provinces or are tied up by Daoists from the Guanyin Temple. As for the Great Freedom Temple and Vajra Temple, there is even less to worry about; their ambitions are not small either. At most, what might appear in Qiantang Province could be Long Meng Arhat, the ugly monk's master, and the old rabbit, Auspicious."

"Since you have a wager with Shenxiu, these two will recognize you."

"If they don't, as your master, I will personally go to the Free Temple to make them recognize you."

"All right, I am off to play with those three animals. Go enjoy the spectacle and have your secret meeting with Yuan Mingzhen."

"Although this girl is not your Senior Sister Lingji, she has a few similar charms, and coupled with her Heavenly Phoenix Destiny, she's also one of the most stunning women in the world."

"I know you have a kind heart and wouldn't stand by and watch her die."

"There's just one more thing."

"After all is done here, you should return to the Penglai Sea."

"Given that the Human Dao Destiny on you grows more formidable by the day, and your cultivation becomes stronger day after day, and with the Spirit Treasure Sublime Body, it's becoming increasingly difficult for me to predict your fate. If this continues, I'm afraid I won't be able to protect you."

"You might as well step into the Ultimate Happiness Realm before coming out to save the world and undergo cultivation tribulations. Your chances will be greater then."

"In any case, return home soon."

After a rather verbose explanation, the Golden Radiance Token went silent, clearly indicating that Duobao had donned the guise of 'Qingjing Zen Master' again to toy with those three Ultimate Happiness beasts of the Gao family.

Tao Qian tucked away the Golden Radiance Token and was about to leave to meet with the Zhen siblings and head to the grand feast of the Dharma assembly.

In his arms, the sculpture of Master Yuan vibrated once or twice as a few murmurs from Master Yuan transmitted through:

"You and your master are the same when it comes to tricking people, both equally shameless."

"If it were just you, perhaps it wouldn't work out, considering that Shipi Kongchan is no easy target, but with Duobao helping you, there'll likely be few doubts left."

"Also, his words about increasingly not being able to protect you are probably no lies, you should take it to heart."

"However, there's no need to flee back to the Penglai Sea necessarily."

"When it comes to the art of escaping and hiding, my Secret Demon Sect is unmatched."

"After all this, I will take you to a good place, not only safe, but I guarantee you will be so content that you won't think of returning—caught up in its delights."

Master Yuan also had his piece of advice, full of concern throughout.

Only the last few sentences sounded quite strange.

Chapter 693: the Customs of Rustics, Tao Qian Sends Greetings

Qiantang Province City had always been a luxurious territory, and even in the dead of night, one could see streets lit up with colorful lanterns for miles.

Tonight, the city was bustling to its utmost.

In addition to the million citizens, there were also guests from all corners, and a careful count might gather all representatives of the seventy-two provinces.

These various provincials—warlords, cultivators, demon cultivators, alien spirits, wealthy elite—had come for "Devil Concubine Yuan Mingzhen." As the current overlord of Qiantang, the Demon Buddha Temple did not drive away or exterminate these wicked visitors but instead facilitated them, declaring non-involvement in their disputes.

They even held a reception with various kinds of hospitality, which was greatly appreciated; not to mention that they had even persuaded the Devil Concubine to perform a dance.

All these good deeds, though making some people vigilant.

But most warlords and demon cultivators thought well of the monks of the Demon Buddha Temple, certainly better than those arrogant, high-and-mighty bald heads from the Great Freedom Temple.

As Tao Qian and his wife followed the Zhen siblings toward the increasingly imposing Little Leiyin Temple on Golden Light Mountain, all they heard along the way were compliments and flattery toward the demon monks from various demon and monster species.

The sights along the way, occupied by various demon cultivators and alien spirits from the seventy-two provinces, were each extraordinary.

Palaces and treasure halls, golden tiles and glazed glass.

Floating Buddha towers, merits in green bricks.

If there were any cultivators familiar with the Great Freedom Temple's arrangement present, they surely would have had words to say.

Take Master Yuan, for instance, who disdainfully transmitted:

"Still, the Demon Buddha Temple shows no ambition; every plant, every palace on this mountain is clearly built to mimic the mountain gates of the Great Freedom Temple, Vajra Temple, Dharma Cakra Temple, etc., mixed together in an ugly mishmash."

"And then who knows from where they copied a sloppy Buddha's verse and declared it a holy site of Spiritual Mountain."

"At least Shipi had some sense of shame, adding a little character before Thunder Sound Temple."

Amidst Master Yuan's scoffing, Tao Qian and his wife, along with the Zhen siblings, approached the now imposing Little Leiyin Temple.

The main feast of the Buddha's Birth Ceremony was held here.

Clearly, no one here was an unknown.

Before even getting close, Tao Qian noticed at the fiercely glowing Buddha Flame in front of the hall, two cultivators of no small cultivation standing on either side, collecting invitation cards and gifts, loudly announcing the names of the visitors.

Some names were familiar, many were not.

To hear more, Tao Qian deliberately slowed his pace.

On each side stood a demon monk, sporadically shouting:

"Representing the Devil God Third Princess of Qilu Province, You Changqing presents: ten Red Demon Swords, ten jars of Devil God Sand, twenty-one volumes of 'Ancient Buddhist Scripture Fragments'... to celebrate the anniversary of our Demon Buddha Tathagata."

"Representing Northern Land's Eight Provinces' Great Governor Zhang Jinluan of Fengtian Province, General Gao Tianci presents: one hundred Alien Species Dragon Beasts, one hundred Demon Blood Swords, one hundred Ancient Tomb Human Pearls, thirty-six volumes of 'Overseas Buddhist Scripture Fragments'... to celebrate the anniversary of our Demon Buddha Tathagata."

"Representing his brother, Great Governor Yelü Lushan of Desert North Province, Yelü Baoshan presents: ten Mirage Flood Dragons, one hundred Xuan Yin Nether Spring Pearls, one volume of 'Xuan Yin Soul Capturing Book' from Ancient Demon Scripture... to celebrate the anniversary of our Demon Buddha Tathagata."

"Worry-free Immortal Shi Zhongsheng, representing the provincial governor Si Xixin of three provinces, presents: one hundred Buddha Heart Demon Spiders, one hundred Demon Slaying Blades, one volume of 'Heavenly Dragon Zen Scripture' from Ancient Buddhist Scripture... to celebrate the anniversary of our Demon Buddha Tathagata."

"Representing his royal father, Prime Minister Li Siming of Fengcang Province, Li Zhixian presents..."

...

Tao Qian walked slowly, listening for a while and counting from Qilu Province onward, to Fengtian, Desert North, Demon City, Fengcang, Wu Jun, Dingzhou, East E, Yongzhou, Hanxi, Tiandu, Sanjin, Heavenly Fire, Ancient Yu, etc., totaling thirty-two provinces had people attending, and all were reputable figures even within their own provinces.

It could be said that at this moment, many demon cultivators in this hall were heavyweight figures in Northern Land.

Aside from warlords and demon cultivators, there were also quite a few practitioners from amongst the borderline of good and evil, heterodoxy, or well-known unique personalities worldwide.

Three among them were particularly conspicuous.

One was a Buddhist Practitioner called "Elder Du Shou" with a mysterious background. Although he practiced Buddhist Law, no one knew from which major temple he originated. With his long lifespan, he had entered court during the founding of the Zhu Dynasty, eventually reaching the position of Prime Minister before mysteriously disappearing. Upon reappearing, he had achieved Cavernous Mystery Cultivation.

The announcement said he came from Imperial City, evidently having avoided some past calamity by some method and now seemed to seek refuge with Demon Buddha Temple?

Another was a female cultivator called "Lady You Rui," renowned for practicing the Ancient Secret Technique "Harnessing Yang Scripture." She had refined a "Heavenly Desire Body" and controlled desire with desire, reputed that no man under the heavens could resist her charm, even a Daoist from the Pure Yang Sect would obediently soften in her presence.

Falling at her pomegranate skirt, begging to be her guest behind the curtains.

The third was called "Poison Ginseng Hermit," a Left-Hand Path Practitioner, and an Alien Species. His outer appearance resembled a middle-aged scholar, but his beard, skin, and even his eyes were dark purple, exuding a hair-raising aura. Within ten steps of him, not a soul dared come close, not even the demon monks.

The reason was simple; his true form was a thousand-year-old poisonous ginseng that had unexpectedly gained spiritual intelligence and cultivated after receiving a scroll of "Wood Origin Immortal Scripture," achieving not only Cavernous Mystery Realm but also possessing unimaginably powerful toxins, along with significant supernatural power, making him a match for ordinary Cavernous Mystery Cultivators.

Even those who cultivated beyond him hesitated to kill him lightly, fearing rumors that he had developed a Divine Skill called "Wood Origin Soul Slaughter Spell." Should he die, his formidable toxin would instantly condense into a Poison Pill, targeting the soul of his killer, recklessly attacking—any mishap could even damage those of Ultimate Happiness Cultivation.

Tao Qian paid this individual extra attention, mostly because the long-unplayed Little Age and Shan Jiu, feeling somewhat stifled, sensed his aura and continuously transmitted through the People Species Bag to Tao Qian:

"Big brother, big brother, I smell something delicious, can I eat that person?"

"Wow, that's the scent of Poisonous Ginseng. Is there actually a Poisonous Ginseng here? Quick, Daoist friend, big brother, seize the opportunity to capture this fellow and hand it over to me. There are great benefits."

"What benefits?"

Tao Qian subconsciously asked Shan Jiu through telepathy.

This Wild Leek immediately excitedly replied:

"In our Wild Man Mountain, there is an 'Elder Purple' who is very fierce. His original form is a Poisonous Ginseng, and his roots almost fill an entire Poison Peak. Anyone who goes up there will be poisoned to death. Only I can somewhat exempt from it but still suffer greatly. Although the Poison Old Man is

annoying, his cave mansion contains a pile of treasures and delicious foods. He constantly laments how lonely and isolated he is."

"Big brother, if I bring him a creature of his own kind, wouldn't I be able to trade for anything I want?"

"I see that you, big brother, like using that big toad as a tricky assault. It's fine at night, but not so convenient during the day. Wouldn't it be better to exchange for a few thousand poison fog beads from Elder Purple? Just a slight crush, and within a hundred miles, it would be poison fog, blinding anyone who opens their eyes because opening their eyes would poison them blind, giving you a perfect opportunity to use your toad to strike people. But you'd have to act swiftly; if you're too late, they might already be poisoned to death..."

At first, this did not seem like much, but by the end, Tao Qian was speechless.

Even though he had become accustomed to the Wild Man Mountain features occasionally narrated by Shan Jiu, hearing it again still made him think:

Wild Man Mountain is truly full of wonders!

Naturally, that includes Shan Jiu.

Seeing that the Poisonous Ginseng had entered the Treasure Hall, knowing that it wasn't a good time to act, Tao Qian reassured the two half-grown children in his bag, who were almost crying from craving.

Then, he stepped forward, offering the long-difficult-to-find treasures related to Buddha from his bag.

The Manager Monk who received his gifts paused, then with a very surprised look at the undefiled, pure Buddha's son, chuckled and then chanted:

"Representing his master, Qingjing Zen Master, the Wu Gou Buddha Son gives a Joyful Buddha statue, a scroll of 'Little Desire Heaven Joyful Zen Incarnation Secret Method,' and an Ancient Demon Soul Capture Stick... to celebrate the birthday of the Demon Buddha Tathagata."

It was almost immediate.

When the demon monk finished chanting, everyone in the hall turned their eyes toward Tao Qian.

Each face bore an expression of astonishment, as if they had mistaken the person.

It wasn't so strange that they felt this way, given the stark contrast.

The treasures and the names of those Buddhist Divine Powers could be guessed by even the slowest of minds as to what they entailed.

Had the donor been a licentious demon monk or a sleazy evil cultivator, presenting such items as gifts would have been perfectly normal.

But it was the "Wu Gou Buddha Son" instead, whose appearance was clean and undefiled. Though he had a Daoist couple as anyone else, no one would associate him with such filthy things.

Yet here he was, offering them up as gifts.

If it weren't for those warlords and strong people in the hall who had either heard of or personally experienced the power of the Wu Gou Buddha Son, there would likely have been open mocking at this point.

Even though everyone was restraining themselves, those peculiar gazes and stirring whispers rose from all corners.

"Wow, what a greeting gift! You can tell they're all valuable treasures."

"Indeed, looks can be deceiving; the Wu Gou Buddha Son, such a person, actually has such treasures."

"Eh, it might not necessarily be what the Buddha Son had in mind; perhaps it was prepared in advance by his master, Qingjing Zen Master?"

"Look, the Beautiful Corpse and Lady You Rui are both eyeing that handsome monk. Is there still justice in this world?"

"You also acknowledge that he's handsome; why even ask?"

...

Suddenly the center of attention and hearing these whispers,

Although he had been prepared when giving out the gifts, Tao Qian still regretted it somewhat.

Especially now, as Yuan Gong's mocking laughter echoed in his mind:

"Hahaha... See that? This is the price you pay for taking Duobao as your master."

"The Duobao Lineage is famously known for hoarding; thus, you barely managed to bring out these useless items you have and botched your attempt."

"Don't worry, you wouldn't have these issues if you followed me; at most, you'd like to chop people, which is a good thing too."

Tao Qian didn't give Yuan Gong's sarcastic comments any attention as he withstood those gazes.

He bowed to the three Demon Buddha Arhats seated at the head and then calmly said:

"These items were prepared by my master and are of little use to me as a poor monk, but are quite fitting for friends at the Demon Buddha Temple; hence, I brought them here."

With a poker face, he passed the buck, then scanning the room with that fierce reputation that came from recently severely beating Gao Tianci and Yelü Baoshan, he silenced the murmuring crowd.

He then disregarded everyone else and took his seat with his wife.

Chapter 694 - Sisters United, Demon Buddha Projection

Qiantang Province City, Little Leiyin Temple.

Surrounded by myriad statues of Vajras, Arhats, Bodhisattvas, and Buddhas, a grand banquet was in full swing.

The gathering at the banquet included distinguished Cultivators, Demons and Monsters, and warlords from over thirty provinces of the Northern Land. Given its high caliber, this assembly was renown throughout the world. After all, aside from those in power, it could truly be said that strong people were as common as clouds.

Particularly, the three Arhats of the Ultimate Happiness Realm, seated at the head of the gathering beneath the hundred-yard Buddha statue, each displayed a different Dharma Image, all appearing as if they were True Buddha Arhats from the Western Heavenly Bliss Land, inspiring a sense of reverence in anyone who cast eyes upon them.

Just beneath them was Cheng Arhat, the "King" of Qiantang Province in name, presiding over this Earthly Buddha Country.

He was originally just a warlord who had seized the opportunity to ascend swiftly to heaven. According to the memories of Zhen Buchi's Heart Soul, the Demon Buddha Temple had recognized him and intended to support him as a true Arhat.

Earlier, outside the city, his shameful history had been exposed by Great Abyss Zen Master, revealing him to be a hypocritical villain who had betrayed his master and origin.

However, this corpulent monk felt no shame in it; instead, he took pride.

Now lying within the Dragon Chariot, his body exuded a golden, sticky, and stenchy oil that slowly oozed out and dripped down the chariot, attracting dozens of red-haired rats from who knows where to steal bites below.

After consuming the human oil from his body, the Rat Demon radiated a glow. Its bones and skin crackled in noise, and it metamorphosed into a dangerously charming and beautiful Desire Heavenly Girl. Climbing onto the Dragon Chariot, she stuck out her tiny tongue and frantically licked more of the golden oil... This scene, though seemingly revolting, somehow felt as if imbued with some Buddhist truth, truly Abnormality.

At this moment, the hall was filled with countless such Mutations.

But that was normal, given many guests belonged to neutral camps or were part of heresy and heterodoxy.

Even more, however, were evil cultivators of sorts.

Fortunately, Tao Qian and Yunrong, known for their 'Ten Lifetimes of Resentful Couples' persona, required no others to join their intimate gatherings—nothing could be more reasonable.

You wouldn't believe it, but Lian Sha Arhat's most pampered disciple, the Beautiful Corpse, along with "Lady You Rui," the number one beauty of the Northern Land, tried to approach them but were brutally rejected, losing face.

The rest, sensing the power of this Buddhist couple, thought to fawn upon them, but witnessing this scene, they extinguished such thoughts.

They figured it would be more convenient to seek an audience at another time, or simply wait until South Sea Qingjing Zen Master established his teachings.

With everyone considering not to disturb them, Tao Qian took the opportunity to divert some of his Spirit and began to listen to the conversations intermingling with reckless festivities that leaked information in the hall.

"I possess immense Human Dao Destiny and have stumbled upon some secret techniques, allowing me to glimpse the major events of the seventy-two provinces without leaving my home."

"But that's just a rough outline; details and hidden secrets are hard to discern."

"Almost half of the Demons and warlords in the hall are destined to become dry bones in tombs, material for Refining Treasures. But after all, their statuses are no ordinary; they're just what I need to supplement my shortcomings. The only question is how to get them to talk more... Fortunately, I need not put in extra effort."

As Tao Qian chuckled to himself, his gaze swept over the Buddha candles in the hall as tall as a person and as thick as barrels, burning and exuding Exotic Fragrances.

A Record suddenly burst forth in his mind:

[Record Type: Buddha Fat Soul-Entering Incense Candle.]

[Record Type: Alien.]

[Record: This unique item comes from the Demon Buddha Temple. Within the temple, there are Arhats Bodhisattva Buddhas whose Dharma Bodies Mutated and secrete Buddha Fat daily. Heavenly Girls scrape it off and refine it into various treasures. Soul-Entering Incense Candle is one among them that causes one to divulge one's secrets involuntarily and leaves no trace afterward. Depending on their ranks, the effect varies in strength.]

[Note one: The candles in Little Leiyin Temple are of the weakest rank, merely guiding people to converse about secrets and gossip but unable to extract significant secrets.]

[Note two: Among the guests, like Gao Tianci, Yelü Baoshan, You Changqing, Zhu Xun, Shi Zhongsheng, Li Zhixian... a cohort of major warlords and representatives have all prepared high-grade candles in their rooms, wishing to stealthily steal the hidden secrets and Cultivation Techniques within the guests' spirits.]

[Note three: Your room has been prepared the same way. The Three Arhats are all curious as to what kind of techniques Qingjing Zen Master has Cultivated to be so powerful.]

...

Reading these Records flowing past, Tao Qian was speechless.

He knew there was no such thing as a free banquet, and the Demon Buddha Temple was a well-known Demon Sect - it wasn't exactly opening a Kaisan Hall. How could such hospitable treatment not have a hidden agenda?

In the meantime, before using these Demons to refine treasures, doing something else was only natural.

But could they really be this shameless?

Treating your guests like this with one visit?

While Tao Qian inwardly criticized, he also telepathically shared his findings with Yuan Gong.

In the next moment, Yuan Gong's voice, full of disdain and satire, came through telepathy:

"Youngster, your sharp Dharma Eyes have uncovered a big secret of the Demon Buddha Temple just by taking your seat."

"That is how the Demon Buddha Temple grew to power. We have always called those thieves 'Stealing Technique Temple.'"

"In fact, the 'Soul-Entering Incense Candle' is merely one of their least noticeable schemes. There are many more shameless tactics. Thousands of years ago, when the Great Freedom Temple and Dharma Cakra Temple held the highest respect, the Demon Buddha was weak. But then those vile monks used some secret technique to cultivate a massive number of Buddha Infants with Wisdom Heart Clarity and natural Buddha bodies."

"These Buddha Infants, under their secret arrangements, were taken in by various temples as True Inheritors and were taught all the secret techniques."

"Centuries later, the Buddha nature exploded within these accomplished True Inheritors, causing them to betray their temples en masse and join the Demon Buddha."

"After this event, although the Demon Buddha Temple had alienated almost all the Buddhist Temples, their power surged overnight, and no one could do anything about it."

Chapter 695:

A new secret reached his ears, and Tao Qian could not help but blink.

How ruthless!

A spy plan to steal magic skills!

And it had been successful.

Just as Tao Qian secretly considered the Demon Buddha Temple quite shameless and cunning, Yuan Gong suddenly changed his tone and said,

"In fact, it's not a big deal. Stealing magic skills in the Cultivation World is as common as eating and drinking. The bald monks of the Demon Buddha Temple just do it most extremely and cunningly."

"Speaking of which, if my Secret Demon Sect fancies another sect's exquisite magic skills, we too would think of ways to steal them. If we can use them, we use them; if not, we modify them a bit and use them to trap others."

"The 'Secret Demon Buddha Corpse Transformation Technique,' which you previously found very useful, came about in this manner."

"As for your Spirit Treasure Sect, it has several divine powers that are famous in the Cultivation World. Not just us, everyone wants to steal them, but so far no one has succeeded. Take Duobao, for instance—his famous 'Divination Technique' and 'Ten Thousand Treasures Secret.' Several of my junior brothers and sisters tried every trick in the book but couldn't steal even a single phrase."

"Even Old Lady Jiang, she only managed to trick Duobao into teaching her one prediction technique through provocation, but it still wasn't enough."

"Also, don't assume that cultivators of the Righteous path are much better. Your Spirit Treasure Sect once had a second-generation master who coveted the secret technique from Da Zhao Temple. He pretended to convert and eagerly went to their temple's secret realm to ask for the technique. While he managed to cultivate it successfully, he lost his life in the process."

"The Spirit Treasure Sect lost a second-generation master, and Da Zhao Temple gained a Bodhisattva, a huge loss in trade, huh, huh."

...

Originally, Tao Qian intended to eavesdrop on the many secrets of the demon military warlords in the hall but was interrupted by Yuan Gong and turned to listen to the secrets of spies and skill theft among the major Daoist and Buddhist sects.

This took a bit of time, but fortunately, he quickly reacted.

Leaning in to listen again, it was just as the effects of the drug took hold.

At that moment, the warlords, each one revealing their madness, began to spout all kinds of things.

After selecting for a while, these gossips entered his ears:

"You Changqing, this man, is ranked among the top five talents of his generation in the Pure Yang Sect. Not only is he extraordinarily adept in Daoist skills, but he is also born handsome and dashing, quite remarkable. Although he originated from one of the Twelve Major Daoist Sects, he ironically joined the ranks under the Devil God Third Princess, who is Hong Fu, willingly serving under her because of his deep love for Hong Fu... It is now rumored that Hong Fu will unite in marriage with Si Xixin, causing You Changqing's devoted love to be wrongly placed, truly pitiful."

"After the Yang Sui Uprising, the Seventy-two provinces crumbled, countless warlords and strong people rose, among them Si Xixin, though a weaker newcomer. However, this person is determined and skilled in tactics, quickly rallying support from many Great Sects, including his own Si Family... And whether in conquest or governance, he is incredibly adept, conquering several provinces including Demon City, and is now rapidly expanding."

"Seeing the rise of Zhang Mazi, Si Xixin, and Red Buddha Girl, the three major warlords growing stronger with potential to unify, other major warlords in the Northern Land such as Yelü Baoshan, Song Tiecheng, Wu Shaozu, Guo Zhanlong, Li Siming, and several others intend to unite and form a provisional court to battle the three major warlords and compete for supremacy over the Central Plains."

"Zhang Mazi, the strongest warlord of the Northern Land, recently proposed to marry Hu Yudie, the daughter of the Sect Master of Star Leader Sect, and also sought to marry her younger sister, Hu Caide. He was chased for eight hundred miles by her wielding the 'Seven Stars God Slaying Saber'. Eventually,

Hu Caide had no choice but to appear and claim she had long harbored feelings for her brother-in-law, begging her sister to forgive them... Eventually, somehow Zhang Mazi managed to marry both sisters, but at a steep price, all three of his legs were broken, forcing him to lie in bed for a month before he could recover."

"As for the remnants of the Zhu Dynasty, the Heavenly Eunuch Zhu Xun, to fully inherit the Zhu family's legal system and legacy, sought the secret technique of continuation in private, hoping to successfully marry and unite with the Devil Concubine Yuan Mingzhen to produce sons."

"In the Southern provinces, several are interconnecting with an apparent intention to promote the inheritor of the Primordial Sect, the chairman of the National Salvation Congress Yan Shi, as the Great Governor of the Southern provinces..."

"Over the last few years, whenever armies from exotic realms have invaded, none have escaped severe damage. Having learned of the capabilities of the Longevity Heavenly Dynasty, they began to mix in and steal techniques and treasures... The marriage of Rashamon Princess An Ya to the Ninth Prince of the Zhu family is one such case. Although there were twists and turns, the princess managed to bring back some of the Demon Dao Skill to Rashamon Country. Many locals began Cultivation, but as soon as they made progress, they revolted, claiming to be demon slaves of the Taishang Heavenly Demon Sect, nearly overthrowing the entire Rashamon Country."

"The Ting Di Sect, Divine Ear Sect, Ten Thousand Miles Sect, and six other sects focused on the paths of knowledge and secrecy, recently united and notified the seventy-two provinces, claiming they would share secrets and jointly publish a catalog called [Longevity Heavenly Pride Map]. The list will name all talents in the Longevity Heavenly Dynasty, regardless of whether they are from the Human Clan, irrespective of their magic veins, anyone meeting the criteria will be listed and known throughout the world."

"This is a complex and magnanimous task, and as of now, the person with the highest acclaim as the top candidate is Tao Qian from Spirit Treasure Daoist—a Tao Master whose current whereabouts are unknown."

"The Nine Sects jointly appraise: If Tao Master can escape from numerous enemies and one day reach Ultimate Happiness, enter Daoist Transformation, and perhaps even reach the stage of Tribulation Immortal... He should be considered the top talent of the time."

...

Inside the Little Leiyin Temple, the scene was extremely lively and also highly abnormal.

The warlords, the strong people, for some reason, did not hold their tongues.

Although no major secrets were leaked, many minor secrets filled the air, and the monks from the Demon Buddha Temple secretly arranging recording duties almost couldn't keep up.

A few, like Tao Qian,

exempted and also seeing through, kept silent in agreement,

listening along, the information was vast.

However, the atmosphere did not last too long as it was almost time.

The Shipi Arhat, although deep in slumber at the head, suddenly awoke and cried out:

"the hour is upon us!"

"Welcome, my Demon Buddha Tathagata!"

As his words fell, the entire province sprang into operation.

Bells and drums chimed in unison, and the Buddha's name resounded throughout.

A million faithful, demon monks, Jialan Gatis, Buddha beasts and slaves, Buddha's sons, and King Arhats all stood solemnly or formally seated in salutation.

As for Tao Qian and the gathering of warlords, they stood ceremoniously and listened as the city praised aloud concurrently: "Prostrate and convert to the great enlightened and supreme benevolent viewers of all suffering beings... Whoever converts to the great enlightened shall not fall into depravity."

After numerous praises, a thick Buddha Incense visible to the naked eye wafted throughout the city.

A million faithful had their heads ignited; spirit, soul, and essence blood began to burn.

This scene almost made Tao Qian lose his composure.

At that moment, Yuan Gong suddenly transmitted a reminder:

"Boy, do not be angry. These few bald monks are conducting this 'Buddha Birth Technique' to affirm the religious orthodoxy and link it to the fortunes of tens of millions in this place. Hence, they will not forcefully extract but will give some benefits to the people of this city."

"A million Human Incenses can summon a projection of Demon Buddha, but after enjoying these offerings, he must provide additional benefits."

"If not provided, once fortune is invoked, a million people will awaken instantly, all harboring the thought 'Without benefits, why would we worship you?' These bald monks will then be in massive trouble. Just endure a bit more and see."

Even without Yuan Gong's words, Tao Qian could have endured.

Yet, hearing them brought a slight comfort.

And Yuan Gong's words were promptly verified.

As the Buddha Incense thickened suddenly, the skies burst into Buddha Light, instantly turning the entire province,

no, seemingly the whole world, into gold.

Flowers rained from heaven, Earth Bursting Golden Lotus appeared, and the merits' water sprinkled on the human realm, with countless images of Vajra, Arhats, Bodhisattvas, and Buddhas revealed.

It was as if the Western Pure Land had descended.

Within the Buddha Light, a supremely majestic, inapproachable, unimaginable, indescribable form of a Buddha appeared.

In an instant, a million people knelt down, tears streaming, incessantly chanting the "Demon Buddha Conversion Heart Sutra."

Tao Qian stood in the hall, head bowed like the others, yet a quiet urge to peek at the incredible projection of the Demon Buddha stirred within him.

But before he could contemplate further, the miraculous, sacred projection of the Demon Buddha appeared to say something to all the faithful and then slowly faded.

The strands of "Human Incense" that had risen ascended back into the bodies of the faithful.

Each individual seemed as though they had consumed a Ten Complete Great Replenishing Elixir, their complexions glowing and their wisdom heightened.

"Our Buddha is merciful!"

"Our Buddha is gracious!"

"Our Buddha is supreme!"

...

Amidst the murmurs of the city's people, the ceremonial proceedings of the Buddha Birth Technique came to an end.

In Tao Qian's mind, Yuan Gong's commentary came again:

"Ha ha ha...just a moment?"

"I thought Kongchan, Shipi, and Lian Sha, these three old thieving baldies, would be more generous since they occupy a prosperous province; how could they be so stingy."

"It appears they are also vying for power and profit within their temple, these three bald monks lacked the means to grab more resources, truly embarrassing."

Chapter 696: Sleazy Arhat, Sister-obsessed Ling Zhu

After listening to Yuan Gong's ridicule of the Three Arhats from the Demon Buddha Temple, Tao Qian remembered several other matters and replied,

"It's not necessarily that they are stingy, or that they failed to seize the provisions. These three old bald thieves have taken over Qiantang with great ambition. Not only do they want to cultivate the eighteen Great Compassionate and Merciful Transcendent Bodhisattvas, but they also seek to help Cheng Arhat step into Ultimate Happiness. If they managed to give the town's people a moment of relief, they likely did their best."

"That makes sense. There are numerous small groups within the Demon Buddha Temple. The main schemer here should be Kongchan, and the strong enforcers are probably Shipi and Lian Sha. The mastermind behind them is the Nirvana Demon Buddha. Although this old bald person cannot appear in the world, he is troublesome to deal with, so be careful. If it really comes down to it, we'll just flee to avoid disaster..."

Just as Yuan Gong was prattling his warnings.

Suddenly, outside the provincial city, a bell sound came rushing.

Just about to re-enter the banquet, everyone simultaneously turned their heads toward that direction.

They saw beyond the tranquil river outside the city, atop a mountain that was stunning in its spiritual beauty, a thousand-year-old temple where the Buddha bell echoed.

The soul-soothing sound of the bell seemed to stretch boundlessly, carrying with it a miraculous Source Power that calmed the previously jubilant citizens, all of whom turned to look in that direction.

At that very moment, a bright moon rose, illuminating the earth.

It seemed like the Taiyin Star from the Outer Realm had suddenly entered this world.

Above Han Mountain, there was a trapping array; however, illuminated by this moon, the dark energy dispersed, and a majestic and dominant Qingluan Phoenix shadow surged toward the sky.

The scene was indeed picturesque.

It moved the mortals and alarmed the cultivators.

Yet, just at that time, someone wanted to spoil the scene.

"How bold, you wretched maid, thinking of escaping?"

Cheng Arhat suddenly bellowed angrily.

Those present also realized that the Heavenly Phoenix shadow was none other than Devil Concubine Yuan Mingzhen, who had drawn the attention of countless warlords and strong people across the world.

And that moon, was it possibly the Great Abyss Zen Master, aiding Yuan Mingzhen to break free from the array, possibly allowing this Devil Concubine to escape?

Just as this thought emerged in everyone's minds, at that moment,

the Qingluan Phoenix shadow burst into a radiant light and, ultimately, transformed into a Divine Treasure that made many strong people in the Little Leiyin Temple go crazy.

It was, astonishingly, a War Chariot.

Crafted from bronze, the design was simple.

With nine dragons leading the front and nine phoenixes singing together in the back.

Additionally, there was a golden flag, engraved with various Secret Divine Chapters.

"The Spring and Autumn Chariot!"

It was still Cheng Arhat, the greasy and corpulent monk, his eyes now emitting a greedy glow.

Most people in the temple looked the same.

At this time, within the seventy-two provinces, almost no one could resist the temptation of the Ancestor God Treasure.

Not to mention, atop that precious chariot stood a woman driving men mad.

Her beauty surpassed all in the world, dressed in an Empress gown, a teardrop mole under her eye, which appeared quite enchanting... Mixing it all together, many in the hall, especially the men, were breathing heavily, their desire to possess that woman wildly erupted, utterly uncontrollable.

Even Tao Qian, who had been surreptitiously watching the Beautiful Corpse and Lady You Rui, had their attention directed at that woman.

The Beautiful Corpse spoke directly, licking her lips, "What a great beauty, what a Devil Empress. I won't contend with you gentlemen, but tonight, I intend to share her bed."

Lady You Rui, not someone who longed for both men and women, simply exclaimed, "How can this sister be so good-looking? Rich yet not too heavy, enticing yet not lewd, as if she embodies all the spiritual aura of the world. It's just a shame she's not a man; otherwise, I'd try my utmost to also make her succumb beneath my skirts."

It can be said, at that instant, all eyes were drawn to Yuan Mingzhen.

Immediately following her appearance, and all heading toward the Little Leiyin Temple, as the crowd that included Master Shenxiu of Free Temple, Great Abyss Zen Master, over a hundred Vajra Monks, Xie Lingzhu, cultivators from the Guanyin Temple, and many others, were all ignored.

Yet it also made sense, seeing as even Tao Qian and Yunrong were looking at Yuan Mingzhen.

Tao Qian had observed her from afar before, and now, he was officially meeting her.

Yunrong suddenly transmitted her thoughts, casting remarks that made Tao Qian raise an eyebrow.

"I used the Taizhen Secret Technique to peek at her. This woman's background is indeed mysterious. How did the Xie Family manage to extract a trace of almost imperceptible Spiritual Resonance, place it into the belly of a Taiyin Heavenly Phoenix from the Outer Realm, and then using the Conception Secret Technique from the Guanyin Temple, they were able to conceive her? She's both human and phoenix. If the timing is right, it would only be natural for her to become an Empress."

"Dear husband, your sister here is increasingly looking forward to meeting Senior Sister Lingji in the future."

"This woman has only received a bit of Lingji's spiritual aura, and she's this good-looking. Wouldn't Senior Sister Lingji's true form be the World's Most Beautiful Woman? Yunrong is so looking forward to it."

...

Although there was no jealousy or such messy drama, this turn of events still left Tao Qian unsure how to react.

In his heart, he couldn't help but feel slightly melancholic, thinking, "It's natural for a beauty to adore another beauty, just hope that I won't end up having my wife stolen by Senior Sister Lingji or something even more melodramatic..."

As Tao Qian entertained thoughts from his past life, ideas like Yuri that this realm's people couldn't understand at all,

the group from Free Temple, in a blink, stepped into the provincial city and descended upon the Little Leiyin Temple.

"Namo Amitabha!"

"Lord Cheng, three Daoists, we have come as promised."

The speaker, naturally, was the Great Abyss Zen Master.

This ascetic-like Zen Master was indeed as exceptional as Yuan Gong had mentioned.

Originally, the focus was on Devil Concubine Yuan Mingzhen!

Yet, now that he stepped forward, everyone instinctively looked toward him.

Chapter 697: Sleazy Arhat, Sister-obsessed Ling Zhu_2

Despite not revealing a trace of his Cultivation Qi Mechanism, as long as he stood there, he seemed like a bright, flawless moon, resembling a spirit mirror, attracting everyone to reflect and gaze upon him.

Whether they were righteous or evil, Buddha or Demon.

The more one observed the Great Abyss Zen Master, the impurities and flaws upon their spirit would gradually diminish.

Although the effect was slow and it provided no direct aid to one's mana in cultivation, this indiscriminate gift to all was still incredible.

What Tao Qian had not anticipated was that Yuan Gong, who had previously praised the Great Abyss Zen Master once, spoke again:

"Good monk, this scope is remarkable, and quite generous."

"He follows the Path of Salvation, has not cultivated any Buddhist Divine Skills, and doesn't even possess a single volume of the Great Lifebook Scripture, akin to abandoning the path of cultivation, unable to advance step by step to the realm of Arhat Bodhisattva Buddha."

"Unless something unexpected happens, this monk will likely pass away within a hundred years—this is an unavoidable price unless he achieves the Buddha Status in this lifetime directly."

"Young man, the forces of Great Freedom Temple and Vajra Temple will not allow you to borrow and utilize them easily, but this monk can."

"You can be honest and open with him, your paths are actually quite similar, you just need to meet him, lift the protection of the Divine Light of the Haotian Divine Mirror, let him have a good look at you, and he will naturally choose to assist you."

While Yuan Gong was advising Tao Qian and undermining the Free Temple,

There had already been a round of verbal confrontation at the scene.

Originally, Cheng Arhat, along with several fierce warlords, thought that the Great Freedom Temple was planning to help the Devil Concubine Yuan Mingzhen escape Qiantang.

Otherwise, why would they have disrupted the array at Han Mountain Temple?

However, after the group entered the city, before the Great Abyss Zen Master could explain, Yuan Mingzhen spoke first:

"You scum, be assured, I, Yuan Mingzhen, whose words hold great weight, have promised to stay at Han Mountain Temple, and so I shall."

"This visit is merely to attend the ceremony."

"If the Three Arhats do not welcome my presence, I shall return to the temple."

As she spoke,

The Devil Concubine still stood aloft on the Spring and Autumn Chariot, looking down at everyone with extreme disdain and disgust.

Yes, almost everyone.

Even including Kongchan, Shipi, and Lian Sha, these three Arhats, all were despised.

No one would have thought that this now troubled phoenix would still carry such arrogance, truly audacious.

Indeed, there was an "exception"—Tao Qian and his wife received a subtle glance from Yuan Mingzhen.

Clearly, Yuan Mingzhen had lied.

She came under the guise of attending the ceremony, but her real purpose was to meet with Tao Qian.

Behind her imperial chariot, many followers were staunchly devoted, among whom stood a young monk general in a simple white robe, holding a crescent shovel, who was none other than Li Ren of the Han Mountain Army.

As the two sides covertly assessed each other, an odd scene unfolded in the arena:

Those warlords, who had been despised by the Devil Concubine, astonishingly did not get angry.

On the contrary, most displayed an awkward joy, as if being despised by Yuan Mingzhen was a satisfying and delightful matter, truly baffling.

The most shameless was undoubtedly Cheng Arhat, the unscrupulous fat monk, who laid back and, with a giggle, loudly replied:

"Miss Yuann, don't be annoyed, no need to return."

"This King merely spoke a bit too much, which should not be taken seriously, if Miss Yuann feels displeased, feel free to use your white jade-like phoenix feet to trample me thoroughly."

"Do not be polite, step on my face, the harder, the better, come on dear sister..."

As Cheng Arhat spoke, everyone looked at him with a gaze as if viewing excrement.

Could there indeed be such shameless people in the world?

Even those warlords who had thoughts of seizing the Devil Concubine now wished they could strike Cheng Arhat first.

But since this scoundrel was also powerful and a local authority, they had to abstain.

Tao Qian at this moment also felt the urge to take out the Toad God Tile and smash this fat monk's head.

Even Yuan Gong couldn't help but transmit a message:

"If I were not dead and happened to pass by here, I would definitely have to give him a sword blow."

"Truly disgusting, boy when you get the chance in a few days, do not spare him."

...

Shipi Arhat couldn't stand it anymore, inadvertently sliced off a piece of his own flesh, and threw it into Cheng Arhat's mouth.

Then he turned his head, facing both Great Abyss Zen Master and Master Shenxiu, and said,

"Enough talk. If we're to fight, let's fight."

"After you lose, leave quickly. A moment's delay and I will have you killed. Don't think I'm really afraid of that fool Long Meng or that old rabbit Auspicious. Together, they're hardly a match for me."

Whether Shipi's words were just bravado was unclear, but neither Great Abyss nor Shenxiu was inclined to argue.

Both nodded their heads amidst numerous warlords and strong people.

Following their prior agreement, the two major temples of the Buddhist Sect then commenced their first contest.

Debating Scripture!

One of the initially planned events was the demonstration of scripture by various eminent monks from the Demon Buddha Temple.

However, if things had gone as originally planned, few Demon Cultivators or individuals from heresy and heterodoxy would dare to attend.

After all, who doesn't know that within the Buddhist Sect, whether True Buddha or not, they are extremely skilled at converting people.

The "Sublime Dharma Powers" offered freely by the Buddhist Sect are enticing, but what's the cost?

Listening might be fine, but if you understand and learn immediately, it's tantamount to surrendering yourself.

Now that it had turned from a demonstration to a debate, everyone was satisfied.

Loving to watch the excitement and fights is a natural inclination of the Human Clan, even for Demon Cultivators.

Especially the next moment, when everyone saw who the debaters representing each side were.

Inside Little Leiyin Temple, excitement surged once again.

Restlessness broke out.

"It's starting, who do you think will win this first round? Demon Buddha Temple or Free Temple?"

"If you ask me, I naturally support Beautiful Corpse Daoist. She masters three arts and even perfected the rare Divine Skill 'Heavenly Demon Buddha Mother Dharma Form,' no doubt debating won't be an issue for her."

"What does having powerful Divine Skills have to do with debating prowess? When it comes to eloquence, who can compare to the bald monks from Free Temple?"

"That's true, the monks from Free Temple have unmatched debating skills, able to confuse and cripple one's thought."

"Eh? Look quickly, the one chosen from Free Temple isn't a monk, it's a female cultivator."

"There's something exciting to watch now, being a female cultivator and coming from behind the Devil Concubine, no need to guess, she must be the Female Bodhisattva from Guanyin Temple."

Amidst these discussions, the two debaters appeared.

From Demon Buddha Temple, naturally, was the beloved disciple of Lian Sha Arhat and a talent who cultivated Demon, Buddha, and Devil Three Skills, Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva.

On the Free Temple's side was also a woman who, when introducing herself, said she was a daughter of the millennium-old Xie Family, also a cultivator from Guanyin Temple, named Xie Lingzhu.

This woman was also exceptionally beautiful, slightly inferior to Yuan Mingzhen, but still one of the top beauties in the world.

Tao Qian, looking at Xie Lingzhu through the void, couldn't help thinking:

"Previously, I thought that Lingji's sister was assisting Devil Concubine Yuan Mingzhen because of the arrangements between the Xie Family and Guanyin Temple."

"It seems I was mistaken."

"She probably doesn't care about the wishes of Xie Family or Guanyin Temple at all. The real reason must be that she sees Yuan Mingzhen as a 'doppelganger' of her sister Lingji."

"I didn't expect that Xie Lingzhu is such a devoted sister."

"But it makes sense. If I had a sister like Lingji, I'd probably be overly protective too."

As Tao Qian muttered to himself, the scripture debate officially began.

Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva clearly didn't expect that she would be debating Xie Lingzhu.

The latter stepped forward slowly.

Her gaze, slightly dazed, fell on Beautiful Corpse, looking at her newly matured "Goddess Guanyin" visage, and a touch of reminiscence appeared on her pale, moon-like face.

But the first words she uttered were not the profound scriptures of the Buddhist Sect but a nostalgic greeting.

"Sister Yang, we haven't seen each other for a long time. How have you been?"

"You have reincarnated to cultivate once again, yet still don the guise of Guanyin, showing your lingering thoughts for our master and Guanyin Temple."

"If that's the case, why don't you come back? Master has been waiting for you."

"You were always the cleverest among us. Can't you see that although Lian Sha Arhat treats you like a daughter, he also uses you as a shield? Why do you deceive yourself?"

These words, once spoken, instantly stunned the entire audience.

What happened to the scripture debate? Why start with such a trump card?

Chapter 698 - Newly Compiled Buddhist Scripture, The Love Story of the Beautiful Corpse

Lian Sha Arhat regarded the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva as someone who would take on calamities, which was also considered a secret.

To everyone's surprise, Xie Lingzhu uncovered it straight away, and everyone was shocked, thinking that Lian Sha Arhat would fly into a rage, while the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva would cause a big ruckus.

But in the next moment, this odd master-disciple pair both burst out laughing.

It started with Lian Sha Arhat, who held the Blood Lotus and chanted a Buddha's name before candidly saying,

"The little girl pretends to be clever. When I first took Shan'er under my wing, I told her clearly: I once had a daughter who died tragically due to my Demon cultivation. That event gradually turned into my Heart Demon. Now I teach you all sorts of Magic Skills without reserve, treating you like an heir, as if you were my own flesh and blood. However, when disaster strikes, she might have to block it for me."

"Shan'er agreed verbally, and only then did I cast a spell to bring her back from the dead. Since then, Guanyin Temple lost a Female Bodhisattva, and Demon Buddha Temple gained a Beautiful Corpse."

Having said his piece, the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva, who resembled a young Guanyin, also spoke up.

"Xie Lingzhu, you are still so shameless and hypocritical. When I wanted to leave Guanyin Temple, I could've escaped smoothly if it wasn't for a bunch of shameless so-called sisters who disclosed my secret, bringing that old nun to my door."

"I paid the price of temporarily dying and turning into a corpse to leave the temple successfully. Telling me to go back? For what, to be stuffed into the Jade Purification Bottle by that old nun and refined into sweet rain relics?"

"You say I've misled myself? Although Master sees me as someone to block calamity, he also sees me as his true daughter, and if real disaster comes one day, he won't let anything happen to me."

"Isn't that so, Daddy?"

"Of course not, my dear daughter."

This final exchange was nothing short of paternal love and filial piety.

Yet for some reason, it made all the bystanders feel weird.

A nameless sense of distortion slowly took root.

Seeing that her "instigation" failed, Xie Lingzhu's expression remained unchanged, and she spoke again.

This time she recited Buddhist Scripture, and the Beautiful Corpse, looking both innocent and enchanting, boldly kept up.

The two of them, back and forth, actually began to engage in serious Debating Scripture.

However, it didn't last long before the scales of victory irresistibly tipped toward the Beautiful Corpse.

In terms of knowledge and understanding of Buddhist Scriptures and of spiritual wisdom,

Xie Lingzhu had not lied: the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva was almost completely overwhelming her.

In that voice, soft as silk, it was clear to anyone that Xie Lingzhu couldn't out-argue the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva.

Indeed, after just a few moments,

Xie Lingzhu's questioning of the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva's mixed cultivation methods and her destined failure to comprehend the Dao and achieve Mahayana... was silenced by the Bodhisattva's obscure Buddhist Scripture "Treatise on the Three Acts Introductory Discussion."

Just as everyone thought Xie Lingzhu was about to concede, the female cultivator suddenly smiled lightly and then with a decisive tone said,

"Sister Yang's wisdom remains as before, and your elder sister has learned a lesson."

"However, you're still studying too broadly, sister. That's why you cannot see the truth, and even less so your own initial and true heart. Now, your elder sister will prove it to you."

At the end of her speech,

Xie Lingzhu suddenly sat cross-legged in the Void and began to chant a Buddhist Scripture known as "All Living Beings Love and Desire Root Scripture."

While reciting, she did not employ any Divine Skills, and since the texts were mostly rhetorical questions, this naturally did not break any rules. The Three Arhats sensed something amiss but found no reason to intervene.

This hesitation spelled trouble.

At first, the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva heard a few sentences and showed a sneer, preparing to retort.

But Xie Lingzhu continued, unfazed.

The Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva patiently listened on, realized she needed to ponder, and continued listening. Gradually, a hint of perplexity appeared on her face, falling into contemplation.

Towards the end, a look of bewilderment emerged, and a strange, devilish energy began to seep out of her body, showing signs of Falling Demon?

In contrast, everyone else present, including Tao Qian, did not find the content of the Buddhist Scriptures unusual.

Until the next moment, when Tao Qian's mind was struck by Yuan Gong's voice and various Records.

First was Yuan Gong, who exclaimed in astonishment,

"It's that Great Foolish Monk's doing, playing quite a game, tailoring a Buddhist Scripture on the spot for that girl called Beautiful Corpse."

"If the girl cannot respond, she may be forced to change her path and become a true Guanyin Practitioner... whether it's fortune or misfortune, that's hard to say."

As Yuan Gong's voice faded, a burst of Record surged in the mind:

[Currently listening to "All Living Beings Love and Desire Root Scripture" ...]

[This Scripture was written on the spot by Great Abyss Zen Master, specifically targeting cultivators who possess an Innate Lustful Soul and are entangled by sinful emotions. Once heard, they are trapped within it, as if fallen into a fantasy of love and lust, revealing many secret desires and yearnings from within the Heart Soul, questioning the cultivator's true nature while also guiding them from evil to righteousness, freeing them from the entanglement of lustful souls and achieving deeper Buddhist principles...]

"Such a clever tactic!"

Upon discovering this secret, Tao Qian couldn't help but be startled.

The Great Abyss Zen Master, it seemed, possessed no Cultivation or Divine Skills.

Yet, with one move, he was about to forcibly change the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva's path?

It was known that Bai Qin could only attack while the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva was closed in meditation to refine the Buddha Bird Relics, using a [Bu Jue Guanyin Root Seal] to forcibly induce the Bodhisattva's sudden insight.

This Zen Master needed no covert assault, simply writing a new Buddhist Scripture to accomplish such an inconceivable deed.

As Tao Qian contemplated, moments later, the scene corroborating Yuan Gong's voice transmission and the Records appeared.

Cries of agitation could be heard simultaneously from Little Leiyin Temple and the entire Qiantang Province City.

The source was the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva.

As she listened, she suddenly lost composure, a look of utmost agony on her face, collapsing in midair.

Buddha Light burst forth from within her, wave after wave, erupting out.

Chapter 699 - Newly Compiled Buddhist Scripture, The Love Story of the Beautiful Corpse_2

Each Buddha Light began to reflect the past life of the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva, depicting the myriad sinful emotions she experienced from childhood to adulthood.

Almost no other scenes were included; it was all entangling love and desire.

Naturally, these were sights unfit for innocent children to see.

Yet, at this moment, they were witnessed by everyone.

Shocking!

Explosive!

Who could have guessed?

A well-conducted scriptural debate had turned into the public revelation of the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva's romance—a true inheritor of the Demon Buddha Temple, daughter of Lian Sha Arhat, and a cultivator of three methods.

Although everyone knew they should not watch, who could resist?

Even Tao Da, the Great Master, watched with relish.

Amidst the restlessness, it seemed one could hear everyone's thoughts:

"Such... such a remarkable... romantic history."

"Entangled with love and sinful emotions from a young age, no wonder she is called Beautiful Corpse; truly, she discriminates against neither meat nor vegetarian, man nor woman."

"Indeed, each story is worthy of songs and tears. In the Mortal World, it could surely make one weep countless times."

"Pitiful! Such sorrow, to think the Beautiful Corpse Daoist's past is so miserable. Having gone through so much, she never found true love and yet is more tragic than the Ten Lifetimes of Resentful Couples beside her."

"To say she never found true love, yet each episode was true love, only for her to miss or destroy it in the end."

"Hmm? Does she seem to want to change something?"

...

Amidst the surprised murmurs, the crowd indeed saw a change.

The "Heart Soul" of the Beautiful Corpse had fallen into an illusion, reliving her past over and over again, as if she were going through reincarnation.

With each iteration, she was able to change the beginning and the process.

But no matter how she changed it, the ending remained the same.

Gradually, she seemed to gain sudden insight, began to actively distance herself from the entanglement of love, no longer clinging. Signs of transformation appeared in the "Innate Lustful Qi" within her soul, and her love-warped Heart Soul gradually returned to its rightful path...

Witnessing these scenes, many Demon Cultivators in the crowd could not help but shout, "Is the Beautiful Corpse about to achieve sudden insight? Is she returning to the Guanyin Method?"

Before these shouts, a group of demon monks, Elders, and even Cheng Arhat and Shipi Kongchan, looked towards Lian Sha Arhat.

Their eyes clearly conveyed a message: this is your disciple, your daughter, swiftly make a move to take her back.

Especially Cheng Arhat, who spoke bluntly, "Lian Sha brother, it doesn't matter if you lose the first round, but don't let down your niece, the Beautiful Corpse."

Upon hearing this, Lian Sha Arhat should have intervened.

Yet, strangely enough, he did not.

On the contrary, a conflicted expression appeared on Lian Sha Arhat's face.

"Ha ha ha...such a karmic bond!"

"It's truly amusing. Lian Sha, this ruthless old thief, also shows such an attitude. He genuinely regards that girl as his daughter. At this moment, he must be thinking: if he could convert that girl from demon to Buddha, the horrific cost brought by her cultivation of three methods could naturally dissipate."

"In doing so, not only would the girl effortlessly master the Peacock Buddha Mother Dharma Image you spoke of before, but she could also set foot in the Ultimate Happiness Realm, returning directly to Guanyin Temple to become a True Bodhisattva. It is equivalent to all her karmic debts being erased, and her Dao path made smooth."

"This is both disaster and opportunity; it all depends on how you see it."

Yuan Gong could see these things, and so could Shipi Kongchan naturally.

The previously unruly and self-mutilating Shipi Arhat, suddenly looked through the air at the Great Abyss Zen Master, sneering:

"Monk, you have no shame."

"It was supposed to be a scripture debate. How dare you write your own Buddhist Scripture to plot against my niece?"

"However, your scripture is indeed well-written. Though not supernatural power, it surpasses it."

"I've taken note. When the time comes, I'll take it back to my temple for some revisions—it'll be another great Demon Scripture."

Before his words faded away, Shipi made his move.

Just as Xie Lingzhu chanted "Cut off love and eliminate desire," the old monk reached out his hand, and immediately, a sweep of black Demon Buddha brilliance passed across the sky.

As if time was rewinding, all the changes of the Beautiful Corpse were thrust back instantly.

The chanting dissipated, and the Beautiful Corpse was pulled out of the love illusion, and directly thrown back beside Lian Sha Arhat.

"We concede the first round," said Shipi Arhat.

All the warlords and strong people felt the show was sadly unfinished.

They didn't know if it was because they felt let down by the conceding scene or because they regretted missing the chance to continue watching the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva's past love history, with those incredibly explosive scenes of lustful desire.

Da Yu, the Zen Master and author of the "All Living Beings Love and Desire Root Scripture," had easily won the first round, yet his face was full of regret.

He chanted a Buddha's name and, addressing the Three Arhats, especially Lian Sha, said,

"What a pity, what a pity, I still couldn't convert Friend Yang back to the Righteous Way, Da Yu has failed the trust placed in him by his Master."

"This scripture may be a bit crude, but it was written from the heart after Da Yu traveled through many provinces, observing the myriad love and lustful entanglements of the human world."

"It's a great honor for me to have my work collected by your temple."

"Noticing that Daoist Lian Sha is also trapped by emotion, if you have some free time, you could recite this scripture to help your disciples eliminate their sinful debts, and amongst it, the thirteen-character mantra of liberation, which might help you relieve the guilt in your heart...."

These words sounded very rambling, and seemed somewhat hypocritical and arrogant.

The implication was: "Take this Buddhist scripture of mine; rest assured you won't be able to transform or copy it. Lian Sha, you better read it well; who knows, there might be great benefits."

This was what all the warlords and strong people were thinking.

Nevertheless, they all acknowledged the impressive abilities of Zen Master Da Yu—he certainly had the capital for his arrogance.

"Good Zen Master, truly a remarkable monk of this era."

"With a casually written Buddhist scripture, he almost managed to convert the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva back, no, had Arhat Shipi not interfered, the Innate Lustful Soul and the sinful debts of love and desire within the Beautiful Corpse would have been transformed."

"However, something's not right; if he's really that powerful, why didn't he just write another scripture and convert all the demon monks in the provincial city once and for all."

...

"Though he nearly succeeded, this Zen Master truly counts as an incredibly remarkable monk."

"The Buddhist scripture was written specifically for the Beautiful Corpse, for cultivators like her, possessed by lustful souls and entwined by love and desire, utterly irresistible."

"If he had more time, could he produce an even more powerful Buddhist scripture?"

"Hmm, it's unlikely, but not impossible."

Tao Qian mused to himself, contemplating.

Lian Sha Arhat, who had barely avoided losing his "daughter" again, finally snapped out of his dilemma.

He looked at Zen Master Da Yu with a complex gaze and then scoffed,

"Zen Master, instead of worrying about my disciple and me, you'd better think about the second and third matches."

"That small monk named 'Shenxiu,' although somewhat skilled, how could he possibly overcome my immaculate disciple? He has already been defeated once before; in my opinion, he might as well concede early to save some effort."

"As for saving the world, heh, if this Qiantang Province, which has been in our grasp for so long, could really be saved by a monk without any supernatural powers... then we will admit our bet and retreat to our temple, no longer contesting Qiantang with you."

Hearing the second sentence made Tao Qian feel somewhat embarrassed.

For the first time, his enemy was boasting on his behalf.

However, he truly wasn't sure he could defeat Master Shenxiu.

If he could act without inhibitions, going all out, then the odds of winning were quite high.

But relying solely on the People Species Bag and the Buddha Bird Relics, his chances were somewhat diminished.

"Unless, right from the start, I use the People Species Bag to sneak attack Shenxiu, capturing him inside would naturally bring victory."

"Or maybe, quietly arrange a deal with Shenxiu, cooperate for a staged match?"

Tao Qian muttered to himself, then heard the third sentence.

Immediately, including himself, everyone fell into surprise.

Previously outside the provincial city, the details hadn't been completely clear; now, upon hearing this, everyone understood that the so-called "saving the world" contest was actually this serious.

"To save the world means to save people, or to use one's Source Power and Buddhist Law to influence mortals."

"And not just one person, not ten thousand, not a million, but ten million."

"On the third day, Cheng Arhat and Zen Master Da Yu would compete to see who could save more people."

"The stage isn't just this provincial city; it's the entire Qiantang Province."

"Will Buddha or Demon be decided by these two?"

At the moment of enlightenment, Tao Qian also instantly guessed Cheng Arhat's method of saving the world.

That fat corpse planned to borrow Kongchan's formidable Buddha Treasure, the Demon Buddha's Magic White Bone Glaze Tower, to sit in meditation, emulating Buddha himself, stepping into the Ultimate Happiness Realm through the method of saving all beings.

The more demons he converted, the stronger his cultivation would become.

Not only aiming for a meteoric rise but also intending to use "Zen Master Da Yu" as a stepping stone to achieve fame in one decisive battle.

Chapter 700 - The Devil Concubine's Tactics, Tao Qian Borrows a Treasure

"This is so unfair."

"The Demon Buddha Temple defeated Han Mountain Temple and took Qiantang, occupying this land for half a year. They've already infiltrated nearly every inch of the province with their demonic nature. In every market, every county, every village, there are Demon Buddha Monk Officials, guiding Mortals to chant the Demon Buddha Scripture, light Human Incense, and offer sustenance to the Buddhas... Without such exploitation, how could this luxurious provincial city have been constructed?"

"In such a territory, with Cheng Arhat as the nominal 'Lord of Buddha Country' and the blessings of that treasure, his mission to save people is as natural as water flowing along its course."

"Great Abyss Zen Master has no Cultivation Power and is an outsider, how could he possibly compete?"

Like Tao Qian, after hearing the detailed rules of the third Salvation Battle, everyone felt these thoughts well up in their hearts.

However, what was different was that all the warlords and strong people, despite perceiving the unfairness, still sided with the Demon Buddha Temple in their hearts. They secretly thought: Unfairness is right; who would honestly compete in a fair fight when they have the home ground advantage? Wouldn't that just be foolish?

Yuan Gong also guessed what Tao Qian was thinking at that time and sent a message directly to him:

"Those three old thieves, Kongchan, Shipi, and Lian Sha, wouldn't have agreed to the battle with the Free Temple unless they were fully confident."

"Especially now that they've seen the ferocity of the 'Great Foolish Monk', the three old thieves must be plotting some other scheme. In any case, whether it's cheating or playing dirty, they must ensure a complete victory in the next two matches."

"Watch, the three old thieves will call for you tonight, offering treasures and imparting techniques to ensure your victory over Shenxiu tomorrow."

"Hey... Maybe Duobao has also foreseen this and is deliberately using this method to trap the possessions of the three old thieves?"

The last sentence, though a question,

was spoken with certainty.

After hearing it, Master Tao strongly agreed and, feeling eager in his heart, he said:

"Master must have foreseen this. So it seems, tonight I shall have treasures coming into my possession."

"If it were other seniors or experts offering treasures, I'd be thinking about returning them. But those three bald thieves? Forget it, the more the better; I should take as much as I can."

While Tao Qian was plotting about which treasures the Three Arhats might lend him, the entourage from the Free Temple had already begun to leave.

At the same time, Tao Qian's mind also received a message relayed through the "Heavenly Track" from Zheng Yin.

It said that a meeting opportunity had not yet been found and to postpone for a few hours more.

Tonight at the third watch, they would still use Zheng Yin's Heavenly Track Dream Travel Technique to meet secretly in dreams.

Truly, the Secret Technique given by the Great Abyss Zen Master was too effective.

Ordinary scripture debating battles!

Invariably, they start after several hours.

Days, or even months, are quite normal.

However, with Xie Lingzhu's recitation of the "All Living Beings Love and Desire Root Scripture," it directly hit the weakness of the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva.

Not even 15 minutes had passed, and Shipi Arhat had to make a move.

As a mentor, he couldn't watch the Beautiful Corpse Bodhisattva easily suffer a loss.

...

With opposing camps, naturally, they looked upon each other with disdain.

Although the Three Arhats put on a pretense and allowed the Free Temple group to stay and continue observing, the monks still departed.

However, before leaving, the unrelated people suddenly experienced first-hand the methods of the widely renowned "Devil Concubine".

Yuann Mingzhen seemed to have no awareness of being a prisoner, standing on the Spring and Autumn Chariot, overlooking everyone.

Then, her gaze swept directly through a group of military leaders and strong people, finally resting on You Changqing, Shi Zhongsheng, and Gao Tianci.

Speaking with an icy voice, she prophesized:

"My methods have failed, and I've lost the Imperial City. With this, I am exiting the struggle for the Northern Land. I harbor no grudges against anyone."

"I only hope that the successors who take over the legal and royal lineage will prioritize the people, understanding that we are all from the Human Clan, and act in the best interest of our people."

"Zhang Jinluan has the greatest potential to become the Human Emperor, but I've heard that Si Xixin and Hong Fu are to be wed. If that's the case, the Northern Land Provinces will likely belong to these two."

"That is for the best, far superior to those other regional chickens and dogs."

"When you return, you may convey to your masters that on their grand wedding day, I will surely present a generous gift."

As the last sentence fell,

the unrivaled beauty of the Devil Concubine revealed an unmistakable look of reluctance on her face, then reached out and gently stroked the Spring and Autumn Chariot beneath her.

A hint?

No, it was almost an overt declaration.

Although Yuann Mingzhen didn't make it explicit, everyone was certain: if Si Xixin and Hong Fu married, she would present the Spring and Autumn Chariot, an Ancestor God Treasure, as a wedding gift.

If this promise had been made in private, it wouldn't have been a big deal.

You Changqing and Shi Zhongsheng would have been quite happy.

But in this public setting, it was completely different.

Even though Yuann Mingzhen had been driven out of the Imperial City by a collective of over a dozen warlords, her capabilities in governance were well-known, almost as if she were blessed with the Heavenly Phoenix Destiny and her robust Human Dao Fortune.

When she personally stated that the future leaders of dozens of provinces in the Northern Land would be Si Xixin and Hong Fu,

in some way, it was as if she had already bestowed the legal pedigree, especially by including the Spring and Autumn Chariot.

Instantly, the two young generals felt the dissatisfied glances from the crowd.

Especially Gao Tianci, who displayed an undisguised snort of disdain on his face.

Yuann Mingzhen's words directly made Si Xixin and Hong Fu the targets of everyone, instantly exacerbating the existing conflicts.

Just as You Changqing and Shi Zhongsheng were about to say something to defend themselves, a white-clothed scholar sitting at the table, the remnant of the Zhu Dynasty, Zhu Xun, suddenly couldn't help but say:

"Imperial Sister-in-law!"

"Since you admit that your methods weren't enough to restore the Zhu Family's rule, why not join me?"

"I am Zhu Xun; I grew up practicing in Lou Guandao, your husband is my elder brother, and you may call me 'Little Uncle.'"