

A Man Like None Other

Novel

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For the next two days, they flew north, the surrounding scenery becoming increasingly desolate, and the demonic aura growing ever denser.

The barren mountains stretched endlessly beneath their feet, devoid of any sign of human habitation. Occasionally, a few enormous demonic beasts could be seen traversing the mountains, emitting deafening roars.

The roars were so loud they seemed to shake the very air, sending chills down their spines. Whenever Gui Yuanzi encountered a demonic beast, he tried to avoid it, striving to avoid conflict.

After all, their purpose was to obtain the Eternal Soul Wood, not to fight demonic beasts; it was better to avoid trouble.

At noon on the third day, the sun blazed down, baking the earth. Although the northern climate was relatively cold, the midday sun was still quite blinding.

Gui Yuanzi's flight speed gradually slowed. He looked up into the distance, a hint of joy flashing in his eyes.

Ahead, a mountain range stretching for thousands of miles came into view, shrouded in thick fog, through which towering ancient trees and precipitous peaks could be vaguely seen.

The dense demonic aura emanating from it was overwhelming, creating a powerful sense of oppression.

"Young Master, we've arrived. That's the Ten Thousand Demon Ridge," Gui Yuanzi said excitedly, pointing to the jade bottle in his arms.

David's soul flickered slightly. Through the bottle's walls, he could vaguely see the distant mountain range shrouded in thick fog, and a ripple of emotion stirred within him.

He knew the true test had begun.

Gui Yuanzi slowly descended, landing at the foot of the Ten Thousand Demon Ridge before a canyon.

This canyon was the only passage into the Ten Thousand Demon Ridge. The cliffs on both sides soared into the clouds, covered with ancient vines.

The vines meandered and intertwined, densely covering the entire cliff face.

Unidentified flowers bloomed on the vines, their petals a pale green that emitted a ghostly green light in the sunlight, looking extremely eerie.

They also emitted a faint poison; careless contact would likely result in poisoning.

At the entrance to the canyon stood two demon cultivators.

One male and one female, both at the ninth rank of the True Immortal Realm, possessing powerful auras and solemn expressions.

Their eyes warily scanned the direction from which they were coming, preventing unauthorized intruders.

They were handsome, with fair skin and delicate features.

But unlike humans, their ears were pointed, their pupils vertical, and they exuded a faint demonic aura, clearly not human cultivators.

Upon seeing Gui Yuanzi land, the two demon cultivators immediately became alert.

The male cultivator raised his spear, its surface jet black, covered in demonic runes, radiating a faint chill.

He shouted at Gui Yuanzi, "Halt! This is the sacred ground of Ten Thousand Demon Ridge. Outsiders, stop! Leave immediately, or don't blame us for being impolite!"

Gui Yuanzi remained calm, a gentle smile on his face, his attitude respectful.

He took out a cyan token from his robes, engraved with a nine-tailed celestial fox—a token he had prepared specifically to identify himself and his purpose.

He handed over the token and slowly said, "Fellow Daoists, please don't misunderstand. I am Guiyuanzi, the Sect Master of Guiyuan Sect. I have come today specifically to request an audience with His Majesty the Demon Emperor to discuss important matters."

"Thank you for your trouble in informing him."

The male cultivator took the token, examined it carefully for a moment, and then handed it to the female cultivator beside him.

The female cultivator also examined it carefully, and only after confirming that there was nothing wrong with the token did she return it to Guiyuanzi.

The male cultivator's expression softened somewhat, but he remained wary. He said to Gui Yuanzi, "Wait a moment, I will go and inform His Majesty the Demon Emperor. You must wait here and not trespass."

With that, he turned and walked into the canyon, his figure quickly disappearing into the thick fog.

Gui Yuanzi nodded, standing at the canyon entrance, waiting patiently.

The jade bottle in his arms gently pressed against his chest, David's soul also waited quietly, his mind filled with countless thoughts.

He knew that the upcoming meeting was crucial, directly related to whether they could obtain the Eternal Soul Wood.

Therefore, he had to remain calm and cautious in his words and actions.

After a moment, the male cultivator emerged from the canyon, his expression much more relaxed than before. He said to Gui Yuanzi, "His Majesty the Demon Emperor invites you, please follow me."

Gui Yuanzi felt a sense of relief and quickly said, "Thank you, fellow Daoist."

With that, he tightly clutched the jade bottle in his arms and followed the male cultivator into the canyon.

Within the canyon, thick fog blanketed the area, reducing visibility to less than ten feet. The demonic aura in the air was even more intense, mingled with a faint scent of sandalwood—the unique fragrance of the Demon Emperor's palace.

The path beneath their feet wound its way through the valley, flanked by exotic flowers and rare herbs. Some blossoms were vibrant and delicate, while others had bizarre shapes and emitted distinct aromas.

The male cultivator walked ahead, his steps steady and slow, occasionally glancing back to make sure Gui Yuanzi hadn't fallen behind.

Gui Yuanzi followed behind, proceeding cautiously, observing his surroundings with growing vigilance.

He could sense that the canyon was riddled with restrictions; accidentally touching them could trigger danger.

Moreover, the auras of numerous demon cultivators were lurking nearby, though faint, indicating the demons' tight security over this canyon.

After about the time it takes for an incense stick to burn, the thick fog gradually dissipated,

revealing a vast valley before them, teeming with exotic flowers and rare herbs, its streams babbling merrily, their depths crystal clear.

Colorful fish swam in the stream, the spiritual energy in the air so rich it seemed almost condensed into liquid; a single breath was enough to refresh the mind and soothe the soul.

In the distance, a majestic palace stood in the center of the valley.

Built of cyan jade, the palace was ancient and solemn.

Atop the palace roof perched a colossal statue of a nine-tailed celestial fox.

The statue was lifelike, imposing, and radiated a powerful aura, inspiring awe in all who beheld it.

That was the Demon Emperor's Palace, the residence of the Demon Emperor Qingqiu.

The male cultivator led Gui Yuanzi step by step towards the Demon Emperor's Palace.

The path beneath their feet was paved with smooth, warm cyan jade, and exotic flowers and herbs swayed in the breeze, releasing a captivating fragrance.

Occasionally, small, delicate demon beasts could be seen darting through the grass, quite adorable.

But Gui Yuanzi had no time to appreciate the scenery; he remained vigilant, clutching the jade bottle tightly to his chest, fearing any mishap.

Soon, they arrived at the entrance to the Demon Emperor's Palace.

The palace gates were tall and majestic, carved from massive black stones, with two enormous nine-tailed celestial foxes etched upon them.

The foxes were lifelike, their eyes majestic, as if guarding the palace.

On either side of the gate stood four demon cultivators, all at the first rank of the Golden Immortal realm, their auras powerful.

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Upon seeing Gui Yuanzi, they all cast wary glances, but did not stop him, clearly on the orders of the Demon Emperor Qingqiu.

The male cultivator nodded to the four demon cultivators, then pushed open the gates of the Demon Emperor's Palace and said to Gui Yuanzi, "Please come in. His Majesty the Demon Emperor is waiting for you in the main hall."

Gui Yuanzi bowed slightly, said "Thank you," and then cautiously entered the Demon Emperor's Palace.

The main hall of the Demon Emperor's Palace was very spacious, even larger than the main hall of the Guiyuan Sect, but unlike the magnificent and luxurious Tianji Hall, it

exuded an ancient and solemn atmosphere.

The pillars in the hall were carved from ancient wood, tall and thick, and engraved with the history and legends of the demon race.

The patterns were lifelike, recording the rise and fall of the demon race from ancient times to the present, inspiring a sense of awe.

The floor was covered with a soft animal skin carpet, soft and silent underfoot, embroidered with exquisite nine-tailed celestial fox patterns, very delicate.

On either side of the main hall stood a dozen or so demon cultivators, all at the Golden Immortal level.

Their eyes were respectfully fixed on the throne at the far end of the hall; they were clearly subordinates of the Demon Emperor Qingqiu.

Their forms varied: some were foxes, some tigers, and some eagles.

Although they had taken human form, they still retained the characteristics of their original forms, emanating a dense demonic aura that gave off a powerful sense of oppression.

Guiyuanzi entered the hall without any panic, walking step by step to the center and stopping.

He bowed respectfully to the throne at the far end, his tone respectful and humble: "Guiyuanzi of the Guiyuan Sect pays respects to His Majesty the Demon Emperor."

At the far end of the hall, a woman leaned against a large throne.

She wore a long white dress, its fabric light and airy, as pure as moonlight, embroidered with faint nine-tailed celestial fox patterns that swayed gently in the breeze, making her appear exceptionally elegant.

Her long hair was as black as ink, glossy and flowing down her back, the ends slightly curled like a fox's tail, radiating a faint sheen.

Her face was exquisitely beautiful, her features delicately sculpted like a work of art by the heavens: willow-leaf eyebrows, phoenix eyes, cherry lips, and skin as white as snow, flawless and delicate.

Her eyes possessed an innate allure, captivating anyone who looked at her.

But what was most striking were her eyes—amber eyes, clear and deep, their pupils seemingly burning with flames.

They held both the majesty of a demon queen and a touch of coldness, making one hesitant to look directly at them.

Her pointed ears twitched slightly, as if listening intently to everything around her, and a faint demonic aura emanated from her, intertwining with her aloof demeanor to create a unique charm.

She was Qingqiu, the Demon Queen of Ten Thousand Demon Ridge.

A nine-tailed celestial fox who had cultivated for tens of thousands of years, a top-tier expert at the third rank of Golden Immortal.

Qingqiu's gaze fell on Guiyuanzi, a faint smile playing on her lips.

That smile, like melting snow, instantly dispelled some of the solemnity in the hall, adding a touch of gentleness.

Her voice was clear and melodious, like heavenly music reaching Guiyuanzi's ears: "Guiyuanzi, long time no see."

"The last time I saw you was hundreds of years ago at the Northern Region Dao Discussion Conference. At that time, you were only at the second rank of Golden Immortal. Now you have broken through to the third rank of Golden Immortal, quite an improvement, congratulations."

Hearing Qingqiu's words, Guiyuanzi felt relieved and quickly said humbly, "Your Majesty flatters me. I only broke through by chance; compared to Your

Majesty, I am still far behind." "Your Majesty has cultivated for tens of thousands of years, and your cultivation is unfathomable. I admire you greatly."

He knew that the fact that the Demon Queen Qingqiu could remember things from hundreds of years ago meant that she harbored no ill will towards him, which was undoubtedly a good start.

Qingqiu waved her hand and said in a calm tone, "No need for formalities. You've traveled a long way from Guiyuan Sect to Wanyao Ridge; the journey must have been arduous."

"Speak," she said, "what brings you here today? If it weren't for something important, you wouldn't have dared to intrude into my Wanyao Ridge."

Although her tone was calm, it carried an undeniable authority, leaving no room for concealment. Guiyuanzi

dared not delay in the slightest. He quickly took out the jade bottle containing David's soul from his robes, gently placed it on the ground, and then bowed.

"Your Majesty, I have indeed come today with a request."

"A young friend of mine has met with misfortune; his physical body has been destroyed, and now only a wisp of his soul remains, barely surviving. To rebuild his body, he needs two rare and precious materials: Primordial Divine Water and Eternal Soul Wood."

"I already have a lead on the Primordial Divine Water; it will appear at the Myriad Treasures Auction in Tianque City in three months, and I am confident I can acquire it." "

However, the Eternal Soul Wood grows in the Primordial Soul Forest deep within the Ten Thousand Demon Ridge, a forbidden area for the demon race."

"Therefore, I have dared to come here to beg Your Majesty to grant my young friend permission to enter the Primordial Soul Forest to obtain a piece of Eternal Soul Wood to save his life. I would be eternally grateful."

Qingqiu's brows furrowed slightly, a hint of displeasure flashing in his amber eyes, and his tone turned colder.

"The Primordial Soul Forest is a forbidden area of our demon race. Since ancient times, there has been a rule that outsiders are not allowed to enter without permission. This is the bottom line of the demon race, and it cannot be broken."

"You should know the consequences of trespassing into a forbidden area."

Hearing Qingqiu's words, Guiyuanzi's heart tightened, but he did not give up and still bowed and said.

"Your Majesty, I know that the Primordial Soul Forest is a forbidden area of the demon race, and I also know the rules of the demon race. But my young friend's situation is very special. He did not intend to violate the rules of the demon race. He only wanted to obtain the Eternal Soul Wood to reshape his physical body and save his life."

"Moreover, I dare to say that my young friend has a past with the demon race. Your Majesty will know the reason when you see him."

After speaking, he no longer hesitated and gently opened the lid of the jade bottle.

Instantly, a ball of pale purple divine soul slowly floated out of the jade bottle and hovered in mid-air.

Around the divine soul, the golden light of the Great Luo Golden Scripture slowly flowed. The golden light was warm and powerful, dispelling some of the demonic energy in the hall, forming a sharp contrast with the demonic energy on Qingqiu's body.

David's soul trembled slightly as he sensed the powerful aura emanating from Qingqiu. He became secretly wary but did not retreat.

He hovered silently in mid-air, awaiting Qingqiu's reaction.

Qingqiu's gaze fell upon the purple soul, initially just a casual glance, not taking it seriously.

In her eyes, it was merely an ordinary remnant soul, insignificant despite the protection of the Great Luo Golden Scripture.

But soon, her pupils contracted slightly, a hint of surprise flashing in her amber eyes, which then became complex.

She sensed it.

She sensed that within the purple soul, besides the aura of chaotic power and the aura of the golden scripture, there was a very faint, almost imperceptible aura.

That aura was incredibly familiar to her.

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That was the scent of the Nine-Tailed Celestial Fox bloodline, the aura of her demon clan's royal blood.

Moreover, although this aura was faint, it was extremely pure, clearly originating from the core bloodline of the Nine-Tailed Celestial Fox clan.

Qingqiu abruptly sat up straight, her previous languid posture vanishing, replaced by a serious and solemn expression.

Her gaze was fixed on the purple soul, her tone becoming heavy, each word carrying immense weight.

"How can your soul contain the aura of my clan's bloodline? And such a pure aura of the Nine-Tailed Celestial Fox royal bloodline at that?"

David remained silent for a moment.

He knew this was the key to obtaining the Eternal Soul Wood, and he had to tell the truth.

He spoke slowly, his voice low and clear, carrying a hint of barely perceptible gentleness.

"Back in the Celestial Realm, I had a confidante. She was the Fox Princess, named Bai Qian, a member of the Nine-Tailed Celestial Fox clan."

"When we were together, our bloodlines merged. That's why her bloodline aura remains in my soul—the bloodline aura of the Nine-Tailed Celestial Fox royal family that His Majesty spoke of."

"Bai Qian? The Celestial Realm?"

Qingqiu murmured, repeating the two names, a hint of reminiscence flashing in her amber eyes.

Then, a faint smile appeared on her lips, a gentle and gratified smile, completely different from her previous cold and dignified demeanor.

"That child is my descendant. Tens of thousands of years ago, I ascended to the Celestial Realm, and since then, I have lost contact with my descendants in the Celestial Realm."

"I thought they were extinct. I never imagined that after tens of thousands of years, I could still hear news of them here, still feel their bloodline aura. It's truly wonderful."

David's heart trembled, and the pale purple aura of his soul quivered violently.

He never imagined that Bai Qian was a descendant of the Demon Emperor Qingqiu, let alone that he would encounter Bai Qian's ancestor in the Seventeenth Heaven.

Countless memories of Bai Qian flooded his mind.

He remembered Bai Qian's gentle smile in the Celestial Realm;

he remembered the days when Bai Qian forced him to fuse their bloodlines for dual cultivation;

he remembered the scene where she almost died, exhausting her own cultivation to save him;

he remembered Bai Qian's reluctant gaze when he left the Celestial Realm.

He thought he was very far away from Bai Qian.

Unexpectedly, he would encounter her ancestor here.

The warmth and longing in his heart intertwined, making David's soul tremble slightly.

He suppressed his emotions and slowly spoke, his voice a little hoarse.

"Your Majesty, Bai Qian is still alive. When I left the Celestial Realm, she was perfectly fine, and her health had already recovered."

"Her father, the old emperor of the Fox Clan, helped me a great deal. At that time, I had just entered the Celestial Realm and knew nothing. It was that old emperor who provided me with resources for cultivation."

"He also entrusted Bai Qian to me, asking me to take good care of her."

David's words made Qing Qiu fall silent for a moment, a trace of relief and emotion flashing in his amber eyes. She nodded gently, her voice tender as she said, "Good, good, it's good that you're alive, it's good that you're alive."

Even after tens of thousands of years, hearing news of her people still stirred Qingqiu

's emotions. After a moment, Qingqiu slowly composed herself, her gaze returning to David's soul. Her tone returned to calm, but with a hint of tolerance.

"Since you have this connection with my clan, and such a deep affection for Bai Qian, I, the Emperor, will make an exception and allow you to enter the Ancient Soul Forest. But there is one condition."

Hearing that Qingqiu was willing to make an exception, Guiyuanzi was overjoyed and quickly bowed, saying, "Your Majesty, please speak. Whatever the condition, the young master and I are willing to agree."

Qingqiu's gaze was fixed on David's soul as she spoke solemnly.

"The Eternal Soul Wood in the Primordial Soul Forest is not so easy to obtain. The forest is filled with ancient restrictions and formations, and countless powerful soul beasts inhabit it."

"These soul beasts feed on divine souls and are incredibly powerful. Even a Golden Immortal cultivator must be extremely cautious when entering; a slight mistake can lead to death."

"You only have a wisp of divine soul left. Without a physical body to support you, your spiritual power cannot circulate properly. Going in would almost certainly be suicide."

David remained silent for a moment.

He knew Qing Qiu was telling the truth.

The Primordial Soul Forest was fraught with danger, and in his current state, entering would indeed be a near-certain death.

But he did not back down.

Reconstructing his physical body was his only way out, and the Eternal Soul Wood was something he absolutely had to obtain.

No matter how dangerous the path ahead, he had to venture forth.

He spoke slowly, his tone firm: "Your Majesty, I know the Ancient Soul Forest is dangerous, but I have no way out. I'm willing to accept any conditions, please give me a chance."

"I can let you in, but you must pass the trials." Qingqiu's voice was calm and authoritative, leaving no room for negotiation.

"The trials are divided into three stages: the Soul Forest maze, a battle against soul beasts, and obtaining wood from the Soul Tree. If you pass all three, the Eternal Soul Wood will be yours, and I will not stop you."

"But if you fail and die in the Ancient Soul Forest, I will not be responsible, nor will I send anyone to rescue you. Think carefully, are you willing to accept the trials?"

Guiyuanzi's expression changed instantly, and he hurriedly tried to dissuade him.

"Your Majesty, no! The young master only has a wisp of his soul left, his body is weak, and he simply cannot withstand such a difficult trial."

"If he is forced to accept the trial, his life will be in danger. Please, Your

Majesty, have mercy and offer a different condition. Whatever the condition, I am willing to bear it for the young master!" "I know he only has a wisp of his soul left." Qingqiu interrupted Guiyuanzi, his tone still firm.

"But rules are rules. The Primordial Soul Forest is a forbidden area for the demon race. I have already made an exception and allowed him to enter, which is the greatest concession I can make. If he cannot even pass the trial, even if he enters, he will not be able to obtain the Eternal Soul Wood; he will only be throwing his life away."

"Moreover, to reshape his physical body and become stronger, he must undergo trials. If he cannot even withstand this trial, even with the Eternal Soul Wood and the Primordial Divine Water, he will not become a great man."

Guiyuanzi wanted to say something more, but was interrupted by David's voice.

"Guiyuanzi, do not worry." David's voice was calm, but it carried an undeniable firmness.

"Your Majesty is right. To become powerful and to reshape one's physical body, one must endure hardship. What kind of life and death haven't I seen along the way?"

"An ancient soul forest and a trial cannot hold me back. I promise Your Majesty that I will accept the trial."

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"Young Master!" Gui Yuanzi cried out anxiously, unable to bear seeing David risk his life to undergo the trial.

Qing Qiu looked at David's soul, a hint of admiration flashing in his amber eyes, and nodded.

"Good, you have guts. No wonder my people have chosen you."

"In that case, tomorrow morning, I will personally escort you to the entrance of the Primordial Soul Forest. Today, you should rest at Wan Yao Ridge, recuperate your soul, and prepare for tomorrow's trial."

"Thank you, Your Majesty." David's soul bowed slightly as a sign of respect, his tone full of gratitude.

He knew that although Qing Qiu had set harsh conditions, he was also giving him a chance.

Without Qing Qiu's exception, he wouldn't even have the qualification to enter the Primordial Soul Forest.

Qingqiu waved her hand and said to a demon cultivator beside her, "Take Guiyuanzi and this young friend to the side hall to rest. Treat them well and do not neglect them."

"Yes, Your Majesty." The demon cultivator bowed and then turned to Guiyuanzi, saying, "Sect Master Guiyuan, please follow me."

Guiyuanzi bowed to Qingqiu again, then carefully put away the jade bottle and followed the demon cultivator out of the main hall.

Inside the main hall, Qingqiu watched their departing figures, a complex expression flashing in her amber eyes.

She sighed softly and murmured to herself, "Child, I hope you haven't misjudged him."

"I hope this David can pass the trial smoothly and live a good life."

That night, David was arranged to rest in a side hall of the Demon Emperor's Palace.

This side hall was not large, but it was exquisitely decorated, clean and tidy, exuding a faint demonic aura, yet it did not make people feel oppressed, but rather very at ease.

In the center of the side hall stood a warm jade bed. The bed was pure white, radiating a faint warmth, and covered with soft animal hide.

The hide was made from the fur of a thousand-year-old spirit fox, soft and comfortable, its gentle touch soothing to the soul.

In a corner of the side hall sat a stone table and several stone chairs. On the table sat an incense burner, from which burned a faint scent of sandalwood.

The fragrant aroma permeated the entire side hall, refreshing the mind and bringing peace.

The windows of the side hall were open, revealing a dense bamboo forest outside. Moonlight filtered through the bamboo, casting soft, silvery rays onto the warm jade bed.

This, combined with the bed's warmth, created a particularly cozy atmosphere.

Gui Yuanzi gently placed the jade bottle containing David's soul at the head of the bed, then sat down on a stone chair beside it.

His expression was grave, his brow furrowed, his face filled with worry.

He had been thinking about David's trial tomorrow, feeling extremely uneasy.

The Primordial Soul Forest was far too dangerous, and the trial was even more difficult. David now only had a wisp of his divine soul left, and he had no ability to cope with those dangers.

He was truly worried that something might happen to David during the trial.

David's divine soul floated in the jade bottle, and through the bottle's walls, he saw Gui Yuanzi's worried expression, feeling deeply moved.

He knew that Gui Yuanzi genuinely cared about him and was truly worried about his safety.

He slowly circulated the Great Luo Golden Scripture's cultivation technique, absorbing the surrounding spiritual energy, and said at the same time,

"Gui Yuanzi, you don't need to worry too much. I will definitely pass the trial smoothly."

David's voice was soft, but it carried a hint of comfort and a hint of determination.

Gui Yuanzi raised his head, his gaze falling on David's divine soul in the jade bottle, his tone full of worry.

"Young Master, are you really going to participate in the trial? I've been to the Primordial Soul Forest once. Although I didn't venture deep into the core area, only wandering around the outer perimeter, the outer restrictions were already terrifying. A slight mistake could cost you your life."

"You only have a wisp of your soul left now. Without a physical body to support you, your spiritual power can't circulate properly. Even with the protection of the Great Luo Golden Scripture, it will be difficult to cope with the dangers of the trial."

"What if... what if something happens to you? How can I explain this to the Guiyuan Sect? How can I explain this to the disciples of those Daoist sects?"

"There's no such thing as 'what if'." David interrupted Gui Yuanzi, his tone calm and firm.

"Gui Yuanzi, do you know why I've been able to live until now?"

Gui Yuanzi shook his head, his eyes full of doubt.

"From the mortal realm to the celestial realm, and then to the seventeenth heaven, I have experienced countless life-and-death situations and countless hardships. Each time I was on the verge of death, but I survived."

"It wasn't because I was lucky, but because I never left myself a way out. Every battle, every hardship, I treated as if it were my last, fighting with all my might."

"It wasn't that I wasn't afraid of death, but that I knew fear was useless, retreating would only hasten my death. Only by forging ahead could I have a glimmer of hope."

He paused, then continued, "This trial, though dangerous, is my only chance. Only by passing the trial and obtaining the Eternal Soul Wood can I reshape my physical body and become stronger."

"Only then can I have a chance to return to the sixteenth heaven, rescue my companions imprisoned by the gods, and find Bai Qian. I cannot give up, and I will not give up."

"You don't need to worry about me. I will definitely pass the trial smoothly and return safely."

David spoke with great determination, but there was one thing he didn't tell Gui Yuanzi: behind him was Mr. Shi.

His physical body was destroyed, and Mr. Shi didn't appear, but if his divine soul was in trouble, he would be utterly destroyed. He didn't believe Mr. Shi wouldn't appear.

Even if Mr. Shi didn't appear, David believed Mr. Shi had a way to bring him back to life.

This was his confidence, so David feared nothing.

Gui Yuanzi remained silent for a long time, looking at the resolute purple divine soul in the jade bottle, his worries still lingering.

But he also knew that once David made a decision, he wouldn't easily change it.

He sighed deeply, a hint of helplessness flashing in his eyes, yet also a trace of respect.

"Young Master, you are so much like the Daoist Ancestor."

"The Daoist Ancestor back then was also like this. Once he set his mind on something, he would do everything in his power to achieve it, never leaving himself a way out, no matter how dangerous the road ahead, he would not back down."

David didn't speak, just listened quietly, because he had no idea who the Daoist Ancestor was.

This Great Luo Golden Scripture recognized him, and David didn't know why. Before, it was a wordless heavenly book, and now it had become the Great Luo Golden Scripture. David knew nothing about it.

It was as if an invisible hand was giving him something, pushing him forward.

"The Great Luo Golden Scripture is the personal treasure of the Daoist patriarch. Years ago, the patriarch traveled through countless realms, delving into ancient ruins, and by chance obtained this scripture. He comprehended the supreme Dao, his cultivation skyrocketed, and thus he founded the Daoist lineage, which has been passed down to this day."

"Later, the patriarch ascended, and the Great Luo Golden Scripture disappeared without a trace. The sect's patriarchs searched for tens of thousands of years without success."

"Unexpectedly, it chose you, young master. This is fate, and fate cannot be defied."

"Guiyuanzi, I will live well and will not let down the Daoist patriarch's expectations." David's voice was low and firm.

Silence returned to the side hall.

Moonlight streamed through the window, illuminating the warm jade bed. The air

was thick with the fragrance of sandalwood, creating a warm yet somber atmosphere.

David's soul floated quietly in the jade bottle, slowly circulating the Great Luo Golden Scripture's techniques, conserving his energy in preparation for tomorrow's trial.

Gui Yuanzi sat by the bed, his gaze fixed on the jade bottle, his expression solemn.

He silently vowed to protect David, ensuring his safe passage through the trial and his return.

Neither of them rested that night.

David recuperated, gathering his strength; Gui Yuanzi silently watched over him, worried about tomorrow's trial.

They both knew that tomorrow's trial would be a daunting ordeal.

Success or failure hinged on this moment; there was no room for carelessness.

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The Heavenly Palace, the main hall.

The luminous crystals embedded in the dome illuminated the entire hall, golden light flowing within and reflecting on the figure on the throne, coating him with a cold, golden glow.

The stone pillars on either side of the hall stood silently, their carved divine battle reliefs flickering in the light, seemingly bearing silent witness to the oppressive and chilling atmosphere.

The Heavenly Venerable sat on the throne, his face as somber as the sky before a storm.

His fingers tapped lightly on the armrest, once, once, and again, the sound echoing in the empty hall like the tolling of a death knell.

Before him knelt four Golden Immortal elders—Elder Zhao, Elder Qian, Elder Sun, and Elder Li.

Their foreheads were pressed to the ground, afraid to raise their heads, afraid to utter a sound, cold sweat pouring down their bodies.

The hall's floor tiles were forged from extraterrestrial cold iron, icy and bone-chilling, the cold seeping into their bones from their knees, yet not one dared to move.

They had been kneeling for a full hour.

An hour ago, they brought back news—the Soul-Suppressing Pearl had shattered, and David's soul had escaped.

The four Golden Immortal elders had chased for three days and three nights, but failed to catch him, returning only exhausted and filled with fear.

They knelt there, their knees numb, but the fear in their hearts was more agonizing than the pain in their knees.

The palace doors were tightly shut, and the guards outside dared not make a sound. The entire hall was like an ice cellar, with only the dull sound of Venerable Tianji's fingers tapping on the armrests, one tap after another.

"You said... the soul escaped?"

Venerable Tianji's voice was calm, so calm that it lowered the temperature of the entire hall.

Everyone present knew what was suppressed beneath this calm—a boundless rage about to erupt.

Elder Zhao forced himself to speak, his voice hoarse and trembling uncontrollably.

He had lived for tens of thousands of years, experienced countless life-and-death battles, and had never feared any enemy.

But at this moment, kneeling beneath the throne, he couldn't suppress the fear in his heart.

The person sitting upon him was not only his Palace Master, but also a powerful Golden Immortal of the third rank, capable of crushing him with a single finger.

"Palace Master, I am incompetent. That divine soul was protected by the Great Luo Golden Scripture; its speed was too great. We chased it for three days and three nights, but failed to catch it. I deserve to die; please punish me, Palace Master."

His forehead slammed heavily against the floor tiles, producing a dull thud.

The other three elders also hurriedly kowtowed, the sounds of their foreheads striking the ground echoing like drumbeats in the empty hall.

"Chased it for three days and three nights, and failed to catch it?"

The Heavenly Extreme Venerable's lips twitched, and he slowly rose from the throne.

His golden robe trailed on the ground, rustling softly.

He descended the steps step by step, each step feeling like a blow to the hearts of the elders.

He stood before Elder Zhao, looking down at him with disdain.

"You four Golden Immortals, chasing a wisp of divine soul for three days and three nights, and you still haven't caught up?"

His voice wasn't loud, but each word seemed to be squeezed out from between his teeth, carrying suppressed rage to the extreme.

His hand slowly clenched, his nails digging into his palm, as if he were about to unleash this rage into a slam.

Elder Qian hurriedly kowtowed, his forehead hitting the cold ground with a dull thud, his voice filled with fear and self-reproach: "Palace Master, that divine soul's speed is simply too fast.

We have tried our best to catch up, but it seems to sense our location. Every time we are about to catch up, it suddenly changes direction and disappears without a trace." "It's not that we didn't try our best, it's just that we were powerless!"

"Perceive location?"

Venerable Tianji's eyes narrowed slightly, a cold glint flashing in them, flames seemingly dancing in his golden pupils.

He bent down, staring into Elder Qian's eyes, and asked, word by word, "It only has a wisp of divine soul left, no physical body, no spiritual power, how could it possibly perceive your location?"

Elder Qian's body trembled slightly, cold sweat dripping from his forehead onto the floor tiles with a soft thud.

He dared not look up, dared not meet his gaze, and even deliberately held his breath.

He didn't know how to answer this question, because it was completely beyond common sense.

Elder Zhao hesitated for a moment, then said in a low voice, "I suspect that the protective golden light of that book might have some kind of ability we don't know about. It can sense danger in advance and then control its divine soul to avoid it."

He paused, then added, "Palace Master, the level of that book far exceeds all of our understanding, and its abilities are beyond our comprehension."

It can withstand the Golden Immortal Soul Refining Array, release an aura that severely injures the Palace Master, and carry a wisp of divine soul through the Seventeenth Heaven for three days and three nights without perishing.

It's perfectly normal for such a treasure to have one or two abilities that we are unaware of. The Celestial

Venerable paused for a moment, his fingers trailing off before resuming their tapping.

He straightened up, walked back to his throne, and slowly sat down.

His golden robes cascaded down either side of the throne like two golden waterfalls. His fingers returned to the armrests, and he began tapping again, one tap after another, the rhythm slow and heavy.

He knew Elder Zhao was telling the truth.

The level of that book far exceeded his understanding, far surpassing any treasure he had ever seen.

It could withstand the Soul Refining Array activated by nine Golden Immortals working together, could severely injure his soul with a single wisp of its aura, and could carry a wisp of his remnant soul through the violently powerful Seventeenth Heaven for three days and three nights without perishing.

Such a treasure possessed abilities beyond reason, which was not surprising at all.

But he could not accept it.

He was the Lord of the Celestial Palace, a top expert in the Northern Region of the Seventeenth Heaven.

He had never failed to obtain what he desired.

"Continue searching."

His voice was cold, so cold that the air in the hall seemed to freeze. "I want to see him alive or dead." "If your spirit has wandered off, go find it. If you can't find it, you don't need to come back."

This wasn't an order, it was a judgment.

The four elders trembled simultaneously, cold sweat pouring down their foreheads.

They dared not utter a single word of dissent, replying in unison, "Yes!"

Their voices echoed in the hall, filled with fear, resentment, and a hint of despair.

They knew the rules of the Heavenly Palace better than anyone—if the Palace Master said “you don’t need to come back,” then it truly meant you didn’t need to return.

It wasn’t leaving the Heavenly Palace, it meant disappearing from this world.

The four stood up, bowed, and left the hall.

Their steps were heavy, their robes trailing on the ground with a rustling sound.

The hall doors slowly closed, shutting out their figures.

Silence returned to the hall once more.