

A Man Like None Other

Novel

Chapter 6491

A moment later, the white-robed elder snapped out of his shock, his voice cold and resolute: "No matter the reason, you must leave immediately."

With a flick of his whisk, an invisible force pushed Gui Yuanzi back three steps.

Gui Yuanzi steadied himself, raised his head, and looked directly into the elder's eyes.

Those eyes were deep, as if they held the vicissitudes of countless years, yet they were as clear as mountain spring water.

He took a deep breath, clasped his hands, and said, "Senior, I have not come for personal gain. My young master possesses the Great Luo Golden Scripture of the Daoist sect and is the chosen successor of the Daoist patriarch.

His physical body has been destroyed, leaving only a wisp of his soul. He urgently needs the Chaos Spiritual Liquid to reshape his body and revitalize the Daoist sect. I beg you, senior, to grant my request."

The white-robed elder's brow twitched slightly, a flicker of emotion flashing in his eyes, but he quickly regained his composure.

He shook his head, his tone still cold: "Young Master of the Dao Sect? The Great Luo Golden Scripture? I don't care who you are, nor who this so-called Young Master is.

The Chaos Secret Realm has existed for hundreds of thousands of years, and its rules have never changed. If you want the Chaos Spirit Liquid, there are only two paths: either defeat me, or offer something more precious than the Chaos Spirit Liquid in exchange.

Since you can't defeat me and can't offer a treasure of equal value, then please leave."

Gui Yuanzi clenched his fists. He knew the old man was telling the truth, but he couldn't give up.

The Young Master was still waiting in the jade bottle; the Young Master needed him.

He gritted his teeth and said in a deep voice, "Senior, this junior has offended you."

This time, Gui Yuanzi didn't hold back.

He pushed his spiritual power to its limit, and dazzling spiritual light flowed across his cyan longsword. Dense cyan runes appeared on the sword, the secret sword technique passed down through generations of the Gui Yuan Sect—the Azure Dragon Sword Art.

He unleashed a sword strike, the sword energy transforming into a ten-zhang-long azure dragon, baring its fangs and roaring as it charged towards the white-robed elder.

Wherever the azure dragon passed, the mist in the hall was torn apart, space itself distorted slightly, and the air emitted a piercing shriek.

The white-robed elder watched the charging azure dragon, a hint of admiration flashing in his eyes.

He had lived for ten thousand years and seen countless geniuses, but few could unleash such a fierce sword technique at the early stage of the third rank of Golden Immortal.

He raised his right hand, fingers spread, a ball of white light surging from his palm.

The light was pure and warm, without a trace of ferocity, yet it contained world-destroying power.

The light transformed into a massive shield, blocking the azure dragon.

The azure dragon crashed into the shield, unleashing a deafening roar, causing the entire hall to tremble slightly.

The shield trembled violently, yet remained unmoved, showing no sign of shattering.

Gui Yuanzi gritted his teeth and unleashed another sword strike.

This strike was even fiercer and more domineering than the first.

He channeled his primal spiritual power, sacrificing his foundation, pushing the Azure Dragon Sword Technique to its limit.

The Azure Dragon's size doubled, its roar causing the mist in the hall to churn violently, and even the ancient runes on the walls to flicker.

The Azure Dragon slammed into the light shield again; this time, cracks appeared, spreading outwards like a spiderweb.

The white-robed elder frowned slightly.

He withdrew his right hand, and the light shield dissipated.

Freed from its obstruction, the Azure Dragon pounced on the elder with overwhelming force.

The elder didn't dodge, nor did he cast any defensive spells; he simply raised his left hand and casually struck the Azure Dragon on the head.

Boom!

With a deafening roar, the Azure Dragon shattered, transforming into countless azure specks of light that drifted through the hall like fireflies.

Gui Yuanzi was sent flying backward by the backlash, spitting out blood. He tumbled several times in the air before crashing heavily to the ground, sliding several meters away. His cyan longsword was stuck in the ground not far away, its spiritual light completely dimmed, and several fine cracks appeared on the blade.

Gui Yuanzi struggled to stand up, but found that his legs were no longer under his control.

His left arm was broken, his right leg was also injured, and at least two ribs in his chest were broken.

He lay on the ground, panting heavily, blood dripping from the corner of his mouth onto the ground, staining a small patch of bluestone red.

An Dao and Ling Yue stood at the entrance of the main hall, watching Gui Yuanzi being severely injured, and then looking at the unfathomable aura of the white-robed elder. The two exchanged a glance and made a decision at the same time.

They were only sent by the Void Merchant Guild to monitor Gui Yuanzi, not to fight to the death.

If they couldn't get the Chaos Spirit Liquid, they could just go back and report; there was no need to lose their lives here.

An Dao sheathed his twin swords, turned and ran.

Ling Yue followed closely behind, and the two rushed out of the main hall one after the other, disappearing into the deep tunnel.

They didn't even leave behind a "take care."

Gui Yuanzi watched the two fleeing figures, a wave of sorrow washing over him.

He didn't blame them; they weren't his comrades to begin with, merely spies sent by Wu Heng to monitor him.

But he still felt a chill, not a physical one, but a chill in his heart.

For his young master, he could fight to the death, but he couldn't expect others to do the same.

"Gui Yuanzi, go...you go too."

David's voice came from the jade bottle, tinged with urgency and helplessness.

He had seen everything outside through the jade bottle: Gui Yuanzi severely injured, An Dao and Ling Yue fleeing.

He knew that if the fighting continued, Gui Yuanzi would die.

"Young master...this subordinate can try one more time..."

Gui Yuanzi gritted his teeth, his hands bracing against the ground, trying to stand.

But his body wouldn't obey him; his elbows buckled, and he collapsed back down.

"Go!"

David's voice turned stern, carrying an unquestionable command. "Don't throw your life away in vain. As long as you're alive, there's always hope. If you live, we still have a chance. If you die, who can I rely on?"

Gui Yuanzi's body jolted violently. The young master was right.

He couldn't die.

If he died, the young master would truly have no hope.

He gritted his teeth, using his last bit of strength to get up from the ground, stumbling towards the entrance of the main hall.

He glanced back at the white-robed elder, the figure standing in the center of the hall, his whisk gently swaying, his expression indifferent.

"Ancestor, you... why did you stop me from reshaping the young master's physical body?"

His voice was hoarse, filled with confusion and a hint of resentment.

The white-robed elder didn't answer, only silently watching him, his eyes devoid of any emotion, like a stagnant pool.

Gui Yuanzi waited for a moment, receiving no response, and could only turn around, staggering into the tunnel.

Behind him, the light in the hall gradually dimmed, and the old man's figure slowly dissipated into the mist, leaving only a barely audible sigh.

"Guiyuanzi, you are stronger than your master."

Guiyuanzi didn't hear these words.

He had already walked far away.

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After leaving the secret realm, Gui Yuanzi dared not linger for a moment, gritting his teeth as he flew towards the Ten Thousand Demon Ridge.

His injuries were severe; two ribs were broken, his left arm hung limply at his side, and every step he took with his right leg was excruciatingly painful.

His face was as pale as paper, cold sweat dripped from his forehead, and his clothes were soaked in blood, clinging to his body, sticky and cold.

But he dared not stop. He feared that the figure would pursue him, and even more so, he feared that the Heavenly Supreme Venerable's subordinates would appear at this moment.

He gritted his teeth, urging on the remaining spiritual power within his body. The auspicious cloud beneath his feet dimmed to the point of almost dissipating, but he still persisted in flying forward.

What he feared most came to pass.

After flying less than a thousand miles, five golden lights appeared in the sky ahead.

The five golden lights moved at extreme speed, tearing through the sky with a piercing shriek, and in the blink of an eye, they blocked Gui Yuanzi's path.

The golden light dissipated, revealing five figures—it was the Heavenly Supreme Venerable and his four Golden Immortal elders.

Elder Zhao, Elder Qian, Elder Sun, and Elder Li.

The combined aura of the four elders was like a mountain, pressing down on Gui Yuanzi, making it hard for him to breathe.

Standing at the forefront was the Heavenly Venerable, a peak third-grade Golden Immortal, his body radiating golden holy light, his pressure as imposing as a mountain, his aura overwhelming.

Gui Yuanzi's face instantly turned deathly pale.

He subconsciously stuffed the jade bottle in his robes deeper into his clothes and gripped the cyan longsword tightly.

The cracks on the sword were glaringly obvious in the sunlight, and the spiritual light on the blade had almost completely dissipated, yet he still held it tightly .

The Heavenly Venerable looked at Gui Yuanzi, a cold smile playing on his lips.

His gaze swept over Gui Yuanzi, landing on his tattered robes, severed left arm, and numerous wounds, his contempt undisguised.

"Gui Yuanzi, why aren't you staying in the Gui Yuan Sect? What are you doing in the Cangmang Mountains? Are you looking for something to help that little remnant soul rebuild its body?"

Gui Yuanzi gritted his teeth, remaining silent.

A mouthful of blood was stuck in his throat, unable to be swallowed or spit out.

He knew that saying anything was useless; the Celestial Venerable would not let him go, nor would he let the young master go.

The Celestial Venerable's gaze fell on the jade bottle in his arms, his greed undisguised.

That purple divine soul, that golden tome, that heaven-defying treasure surpassing even the Golden Immortal, was all inside that small jade bottle.

He only needed to kill Guiyuanzi to obtain everything.

"That purple divine soul is in your arms, isn't it? Hand it over, and I might spare your life."

Guiyuanzi gripped his longsword tightly, raised his head, looked at the Celestial Venerable, and said, word by word, "Dream on."

The Celestial Venerable's face darkened, a hint of killing intent flashing in his eyes. "You won't listen to reason, so you'll have to suffer the consequences. Elder Zhao, kill him."

Elder Zhao responded and stepped forward, his golden longsword unsheathed, its blade shimmering with a blinding light, slashing towards Guiyuanzi's throat.

This strike was swift and ruthless, the blade tearing through the air with a piercing shriek.

Gui Yuanzi raised his sword to parry, the blade clashing and sparks flying. Already severely injured, the blow caused his hand to split open, blood streaming down the hilt of his sword, which nearly flew from his grasp.

He was thrown back several steps, staggering and almost falling.

Elder Qian, Elder Sun, and Elder Li surrounded him, their auras intertwining like an iron wall, sealing off all his escape routes.

Gui Yuanzi's heart sank.

He knew he might not be able to leave today.

He glanced down at the jade bottle in his arms; the purple divine spirit within glowed faintly, as if telling him: Don't give up.

"Young Master, I am incompetent..." he murmured, his voice barely audible. Just then, a white light flew from the horizon at incredible speed, like a shooting star, leaving a long trail of flame, and landed beside Gui Yuanzi.

The light dissipated, transforming into a woman in a long white dress—the Demon Queen Qingqiu.

Qingqiu's figure was as aloof as snow, her white robes as bright as the moon, her long hair as black as ink, gently swaying in the wind.

A faint white spiritual light surrounded her, the primordial power of the Nine-Tailed Celestial Fox, gentle yet resilient.

Her amber eyes were calm and unwavering, sweeping over the four Golden Immortal Elders before finally settling on the Heavenly Venerable.

The Heavenly Venerable narrowed his eyes, a cold smile playing on his lips, "Qingqiu, you also wish to oppose me?"

Qingqiu remained silent.

She raised her right hand, her five fingers spread, and a white spiritual light surged from her palm.

The spiritual light transformed into a colossal phantom of a nine-tailed celestial fox, ten zhang tall, its nine tails swaying gently behind it, each tail shimmering with a different color of light—red, orange, yellow, green, cyan, blue, purple, gold, and silver.

The phantom opened its maw, letting out a silent roar. The roar was soundless, but an invisible shockwave of divine souls surged forth like a tsunami. The

surrounding mist churned violently, and even the four elders behind the Heavenly Venerable involuntarily took a step back.

"Guiyuanzi, take David and leave. I'll hold them off here."

Qingqiu's voice was calm, utterly devoid of emotion, as if stating something utterly ordinary.

But Guiyuanzi sensed the resolute determination beneath that calm.

Guiyuanzi hesitated, glancing down at the jade bottle in his arms, then at Qingqiu's retreating figure.

He knew that Qingqiu was risking her life to buy him time.

He couldn't let her down.

"Your Majesty, take care!"

He gritted his teeth, turned, and flew towards the direction of Ten Thousand Demon Ridge.

Elder Zhao wanted to give chase, but as soon as he moved, he was blocked by the nine-tailed celestial fox phantom of Qingqiu.

The nine tails swept across like nine giant dragons, and Elder Zhao hurriedly raised his sword to block, but was forced back several steps.

The Heavenly Venerable's face was gloomy, and he raised his hand to strike Qingqiu.

Golden holy light condensed in his palm, transforming into a huge golden hand that blotted out the sky and crushed towards Qingqiu.

This palm strike used seventy percent of the Heavenly Venerable's power, enough to level a mountain.

Qingqiu did not retreat.

She activated the nine-tailed celestial fox phantom, and the nine tails lit up at the same time. The nine colors of light intertwined and transformed into a nine-colored pillar of light, meeting the golden palm.

Boom!

The two forces collided, exploding with a deafening roar.

The entire sky trembled, the ground cracked, and debris flew everywhere. The shockwave tore apart the mist within a hundred-foot radius, revealing a gray sky.

Qingqiu was blasted back dozens of steps, a trace of blood trickling from the corner of her mouth, but her figure remained upright, her eyes still resolute.

Her white dress was torn in several places by the aftershocks, revealing her fair skin, but she didn't care.

Her cultivation was inferior to that of the Heavenly Venerable; in a head-on confrontation, she was no match.

But this was the Cangmang Mountain Range, not far from the Ten Thousand Demon Ridge. She could use the restrictions of the Ten Thousand Demon Ridge for protection, and the Heavenly Venerable couldn't kill her for a short time. The

Heavenly Venerable's expression was grim, a hint of fear flashing in his eyes.

He hadn't expected Qingqiu to fight so desperately, and even less had he expected her to completely break with the Heavenly Palace for an outsider.

"Qingqiu, do you think you can stop me?" His voice was icy, filled with suppressed anger.

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Qingqiu wiped the blood from the corner of her mouth and smiled.

The smile was faint, yet carried a chilling stubbornness. "Even if you can't stop me, you will. I've said it before, the Ten Thousand Demon Ridge is not a place for your divine race to run wild. Today, unless you step over my dead body, don't even think about passing."

The Heavenly Extreme Venerable's fists clenched, veins bulging.

He wanted to kill Qingqiu, but he couldn't.

At least not now.

Although Qingqiu's cultivation was inferior to his, this was the Vast Mountain Range, not far from the Ten Thousand Demon Ridge. Qingqiu could use the Ridge's restrictions to her advantage; he couldn't kill her in a short time.

Moreover, if Qingqiu died, the demon race would surely retaliate fiercely, making the Heavenly Extreme Palace's situation in the Northern Region even more difficult.

He took a deep breath, suppressing his anger, and said in a deep voice, "Withdraw."

The four Golden Immortal elders were stunned for a moment, but seeing the Palace Master's expression, they dared not ask further questions, quickly sheathing their weapons and retreating behind him. Five golden lights pierced the sky and disappeared into the horizon.

Qingqiu stood in the void, watching them depart, and let out a long breath.

Her face was pale, her lips bloodless, and cold sweat streamed down her face.

That palm strike had seriously injured her, and most of her spiritual energy had been depleted.

But she couldn't fall; she had to go back, to see David rebuild his physical body, and to lead the demon race to continue their struggle against the gods.

She turned and flew towards the Ten Thousand Demon Ridge.

Guiyuanzi staggered into the Ten Thousand Demon Ridge, passing through layers of thick fog and overcoming numerous restrictions, finally returning to the Demon Emperor's Palace.

Qingqiu had returned a step earlier and was already waiting in a side hall.

Her face was still pale, and her breath was somewhat weak, but her eyes remained resolute.

She sat on the warm jade bed, holding a cup of spiritual tea in her hand. The tea had gone cold, but she didn't drink it, simply gazing quietly out the window.

Gui Yuanzi entered the side hall, his knees buckling as he knelt on the ground. "Your Majesty, thank you for saving my life. Otherwise, both the young master and I would be finished."

Gui Yuanzi wasn't afraid of death, but if David's soul in his arms were also taken away by the Heavenly Venerable, he would be a sinner, a sinner of the entire Daoist sect.

Qingqiu put down his teacup and shook his head. "Get up. It was I who took the initiative to help you. I didn't do it for you, but for David. After all, he also has the bloodline of my Fox Emperor clan within him."

Gui Yuanzi stood up, looking at Qingqiu, his eyes red-rimmed. "Your Majesty, the guardian in the Chaos Secret Realm is too powerful. I can't defeat him, and the Chaos Spirit Liquid... I can't get it."

Qingqiu was silent for a moment. "What realm is that guardian at?" "

Peak of the third rank of the Golden Immortal Realm, but I don't know if that's his peak cultivation."

Gui Yuanzi's voice was full of self-reproach. "And... and he is also..."

"And what?" Qingqiu asked.

"He's still our Guiyuan Sect's ancestor. I don't know why he became the guardian of the secret realm, how he's survived until now, or why he only has the peak cultivation of the third rank of the Golden Immortal Realm."

Guiyuanzi knew nothing about his ancestor.

"What?" Qingqiu was full of doubt. "The Guiyuan Sect's ancestor is actually the guardian of the secret realm?" Qingqiu was also puzzled, not understanding what was going on. What did the Chaos Secret Realm have to do with the Guiyuan Sect, or rather, the Daoist sect?

"Alright, let's talk about the secret realm later. You go and heal your injuries first. I also need to arrange the defense of the Ten Thousand Demon Ridge. The Wuji Palace won't let this go easily,"

Qingqiu waved his hand and said.

"Yes!" Guiyuanzi nodded and then withdrew.

...

In the Cangmang Mountains, Andao and Lingyue remained hidden in the shadows.

Only after Guiyuanzi left, and Qingqiu and the Heavenly Extreme Venerable and the others had all left, did they dare to show themselves.

"Let's go back..." Andao said, his figure disappearing instantly.

This time, they didn't dare to take the spirit boat, fearing their whereabouts would be discovered.

Andao and Lingyue sped along, not daring to stop for a moment.

The nights in the Cangmang Mountains were more dangerous than the days. Thick fog surged in the darkness, like invisible giant beasts, opening their mouths, waiting to devour every lone cultivator.

The roars of demonic beasts echoed from the distant valleys, rising and falling, filled with a bloodthirsty thirst.

An Dao gripped his twin blades tightly, while Ling Yue's whisk constantly shimmered with spiritual light. Their divine senses were always extended outwards, covering a radius of a hundred feet, vigilant against any potential danger.

They traversed layers of thick fog, bypassed the treacherous peaks where demonic beasts roamed, and finally returned to Tianque City the following evening.

The setting sun dyed the entire city golden-red, the three blazing suns on the horizon slowly sinking below the horizon, the last rays of light falling on the black stone tower of the Void Merchant Guild, gilding its nine-story body with a dark golden glow. The towering stone tower reached

into the clouds, solemn and oppressive, like a colossal beast lurking within the city, silently watching over everything.

The two landed before the stone tower, straightened their robes, and strode through the gate.

The hall was brightly lit, and several cultivators were handling business at the counters—some selling spiritual herbs, some buying magical artifacts, and some consigning items for auction.

Behind the counter, the staff busily recorded each transaction, spirit stones piled high on the table, shimmering with spiritual light. An Dao and Ling Yue's entry went largely unnoticed; they walked straight through the hall and into the back corridor.

The corridor was deep and dark, with pale blue spirit lamps embedded in the walls, their dim light barely enough to see the path. The two walked quickly, one after the other, to the stone door at the end of the corridor.

An Dao took out a token from his robes. The token was jet black, with the character "令" (command) engraved on the front and the Void Merchant Guild's mark on the back—an open eye, symbolizing all-seeing insight.

He affixed the token to the stone door and infused it with spiritual power.

A flash of light, and the stone door slowly opened.

Inside the secret chamber, Wu Heng sat at a stone table, drinking tea, engrossed in an ancient scroll.

The cover of the scroll bore the title "Northern Domain Secret Records," which he had retrieved from the Void Merchant Guild's main treasury. It contained the hidden history and legends of the major powers of the Northern Domain.

He had already flipped through most of the pages but hadn't found any clues about the Guiyuan Sect's patriarch.

Hearing the sound of the stone door opening, he slightly raised his eyelids, but without looking up, he simply said, "You're back? Did you get the Chaos Elixir?"

His tone was flat, revealing no expectation whatsoever.

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An Dao knelt on the ground, head bowed, his voice hoarse: "Guild Master, I am incompetent."

He paused, seemingly choosing his words carefully, before finally speaking truthfully, "There is a guardian in the Chaos Secret Realm, whose cultivation is at least at the peak of the third rank of Golden Immortal. Even Gui Yuanzi, fighting with all his might, was no match for him. Ling Yue and I... did not even make a move."

His forehead pressed against the cold ground, not daring to look up.

The floor tiles of the secret chamber were made of obsidian, icy cold, the chill seeping into his bones from his knees.

But that wasn't the coldest thing; the coldest thing was that Wu Heng didn't utter a sound. That silence was more unsettling than any reprimand.

Ling Yue also knelt down, her voice trembling slightly: "Guild Master, that guardian's aura was too terrifying. I knew I was no match for him. Making a rash move would only have been a pointless death. I... I took An Dao and retreated. Please punish me, Guild Master."

Wu Heng's fingers paused slightly. He put down the ancient book in his hand and looked up at An Dao.

His gaze was calm, without reproach or anger, only a hint of scrutiny.

He had lived for tens of thousands of years and seen countless cultivators like An Dao. They were loyal, but not blindly so; they knew when to fight and when to run.

He didn't blame them; the Void Merchant Guild didn't tolerate reckless fools.

"How is Gui Yuanzi?" Wu Heng asked.

"Gui Yuanzi was injured but escaped the secret realm. He was later ambushed by the Heavenly Extreme Venerable and his men, and almost died," An Dao said.

Ling Yue quickly chimed in, "However, the Demon Emperor of the Ten Thousand Demon Ridge intervened and saved Gui Yuanzi."

"Ten Thousand Demon Ridge, Heavenly Extreme Palace, interesting. The Seventeenth Heaven is about to fall into chaos." Wu Heng smiled coldly, then asked, "What does the guardian look like? What are his characteristics?"

An Dao thought for a moment, recalling the appearance of the white-robed old man.

"He wore a white robe, with a faint spiritual light flowing through it, like moonlight shining on snow. In his hand, he held a whisk, its white bristles fine and resilient, each one seemingly alive, gently swaying in the mist.

His face was aged, but his features were regular; he must have been handsome in his youth. His eyes were calm, devoid of murderous intent, yet they inspired awe and fear.

His aura... I can't quite put my finger on it; it seemed peaceful, yet unfathomable, like a bottomless abyss hidden beneath a calm sea."

Lingyue added from the side, "That guardian, Guiyuanzi calls him 'Ancestor.' Moreover, his whisk is engraved with the Dao patterns of the Guiyuan Sect, which I saw with my own eyes. Those Dao patterns are exactly the same as the whisk in the portrait of the Guiyuan Sect's founder; there's no mistake."

Wu Heng's eyes narrowed.

He put down his teacup, stood up, and walked to the wall with his hands behind his back, looking at the landscape painting on it.

The painting depicted a majestic mountain peak, upon which stood an ancient Taoist temple. Before the temple stood an elderly man with white hair, holding a whisk, gazing up at the sky.

It was a portrait of the founder of the Guiyuan Sect, which he had specially commissioned to be painted.

Hadn't the founder of the Guiyuan Sect ascended to immortality tens of thousands of years ago?

How could he appear in the Chaos Secret Realm, and even become its guardian?

This defied logic and the laws of nature.

An ascended powerhouse wouldn't remain in the lower realm, much less lower their cultivation to guard a secret realm.

"Are you sure you haven't misread it?"

Wu Heng turned around, his gaze sharp, as if trying to pierce Ling Yue's eyes and see into the depths of her soul.

Lingyue shook her head, her tone firm: "I have cultivated for thousands of years and know the Dao patterns of the Guiyuan Sect inside and out. I am absolutely certain I am not mistaken.

The whisk in the guardian's hand is indeed the possession of the Guiyuan Sect's founder. Moreover, the spiritual light on that whisk is exactly the same as the aura of the founder recorded in the Guiyuan

Sect's scriptures." Wu Heng was silent for a moment, then nodded. "I will investigate this matter thoroughly. The Void Merchant Guild's intelligence network covers all the heavens; no secret in the Seventeenth Heaven can escape our notice.

You two will have to go through the trouble again and guard the vicinity of the Chaos Secret Realm, keeping an eye on the entrance. Report any unusual activity immediately, but do not approach or disturb the guardian."

An Dao raised his head and looked at Wu Heng, "Guild Master, the guardian of that secret realm is too powerful, I..." "I'm not asking you to venture into the secret realm,"

Wu Heng interrupted him. "I'm just asking you to keep an eye on things and see if anyone else enters, especially people from the Guiyuan Sect. If they do, report back immediately. You only need to watch from a distance; even if you only see a single figure, send a message immediately."

"Yes," An Dao and Ling Yue replied in unison, rising and leaving the secret chamber.

The stone door slowly closed, and the secret chamber returned to silence.

Wu Heng stood alone by the wall, looking at the landscape painting, his fingers lightly tapping the table, once, then again.

An Dao's words flashed repeatedly in his mind—the patriarch of the Guiyuan Sect, the guardian of the secret realm.

What secrets does the Guiyuan Sect hold?

What is the connection between the Chaos Secret Realm and the Guiyuan Sect?

He had to find out.

His intuition told him that what was involved in this matter was far more important than a bottle of Chaos Elixir.

Perhaps, the entire Northern Region's (geju, a concept encompassing both structure and overall situation) would change because of this.

He stood up, walked to the other side of the secret chamber, and opened a hidden door.

Behind the hidden door was an even larger secret chamber. In the center of this chamber floated a massive crystal ball, several feet tall, completely transparent, with countless tiny points of light swirling within.

This was the Void Merchant Guild's intelligence network—each point of light represented a message, and behind each message lay a secret.

He raised his hand and placed it on the crystal ball, probing it with his divine sense to search for all information about the Guiyuan Sect, the Chaos Secret Realm, and the Guiyuan Sect's patriarch.

The points of light within the crystal ball flickered intensely, information surging forth like a tidal wave, traversing millennia to converge before him.

Wu Heng's brow furrowed deeper and deeper.

The Guiyuan Sect's patriarch had ascended to immortality 38,000 years ago from the back mountain of the Guiyuan Sect.

On the day of his ascension, extraordinary phenomena graced the heavens and earth; auspicious clouds stretched for miles, spiritual energy rained down, and the entire Northern Region could feel the immense pressure of the Heavenly Dao.

After his ascension, successive patriarchs of the Guiyuan Sect had tried to contact him, but never received a response.

Everyone assumed he had ascended to a higher realm, severing all ties with the lower world.

But now, he appears in the Chaotic Secret Realm as a guardian, his cultivation suppressed to the peak of the third rank of Golden Immortal.

What exactly happened?

Who trapped him there?

Or did he choose to stay there himself?

If it was his own choice, why?

Wu Heng withdrew his divine sense and let out a long breath.

He knew that the Void Chamber of Commerce's intelligence network in the seventeenth heaven probably wouldn't be able to uncover the deeper secrets.

This matter might require higher-level authorization, or even the use of headquarters resources.

But that was for later.

Right now, he had to keep an eye on the entrance to the secret realm and see if the Guiyuan Sect would go again.

He could tell that Guiyuanzi was relentless in achieving his goals.

He would definitely go again.

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An Dao and Ling Yue left Tianque City overnight, heading once more towards the Cangmang Mountains.

The night was thick; there were no stars or moon in the sky, only heavy, dark clouds obscuring the entire expanse.

A howling wind whipped up pebbles and withered grass, stinging their faces.

The two traversed the mountains, avoiding a group of nocturnal beasts and navigating several natural traps, finally arriving near the Chaos Secret Realm around midnight.

Instead of approaching the entrance, they lay in ambush on a mountaintop a hundred miles away.

This mountaintop was the highest point within a hundred miles, offering a wide-open view and excellent visibility, clearly showing the entrance to the secret realm.

An Dao set up a concealment array on the summit, while Ling Yue took out two gray cloaks from her storage ring, draping them over herself to completely conceal their presence, blending into the surrounding vegetation.

From a distance, it appeared as a barren mountain, completely unremarkable.

"What do you think the Guild Master is thinking?"

Ling Yue leaned against the stone wall, gazing at the distant entrance to the secret realm, and asked in a low voice.

The stone gate leading to the secret realm in the distance glowed with a faint blue light in the night, like a half-closed eye.

An Dao shook his head, remaining silent.

He wasn't one for speculation; he only did what he was supposed to do.

Wu Heng had told him to keep watch, so he kept watch.

As for why, that wasn't his concern. His task was simply to monitor, not to ponder.

Ling Yue didn't seem to care, continuing, "The fact that the patriarch of the Guiyuan Sect has become the guardian of the secret realm is too strange.

The Guiyuan Sect isn't a major power in the Seventeenth Heaven, but Guiyuanzi is no ordinary person, and the young master he's chosen is even more extraordinary.

The Great Luo Golden Canon chose that young master; there must be a reason. Tell me, what is the young master's background?"

An Dao still didn't speak, only staring intently at the entrance to the secret realm, his eyes unblinking.

Ling Yue sighed and fell silent as well.

The two of them silently guarded the realm, from night to day, and from day to night.

...

Heavenly Palace, 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 reliefs of divine battles flickering in the light, seemingly bearing silent witness to the oppressive and chilling atmosphere.

The Celestial 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.

The four Golden Immortal elders stood in the center of the hall, heads bowed, not daring to raise their heads or utter a sound.

Fine beads of sweat glistened on their foreheads, and the backs of their robes were soaked with cold sweat.

They had stood there for a whole day, their legs numb, yet none dared to move.

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 tapping his fingers on the armrests, one tap after another. "Qingqiu... Guiyuanzi..." Venerable Tianji's voice was soft, but each word seemed to be squeezed out from between his teeth, filled with suppressed rage. "A mere demon king of the demon race, a minor sect leader of the human race, dare to oppose me? Dare to block my path?"

The scene from that day flashed repeatedly in his mind.

Guiyuanzi was covered in wounds, yet he clutched the jade bottle in his arms tightly, refusing to hand it over.

Qingqiu, dressed in white as snow, his nine-tailed celestial fox phantom blotting out the sky, took his palm strike head-on, not retreating a single step even as blood trickled from the corner of his mouth.

Those two ants actually dared to challenge him.

He slammed his palm on the armrest, shattering it and scattering wood chips everywhere.

The four elders shuddered simultaneously, their heads bowing even lower.

Elder Zhao stepped forward with a stiff upper lip, clasping his hands and saying, "Palace Master, I have something to say, but I don't know if I should."

"Speak." Venerable Tianji's voice was cold, so cold that it lowered the temperature of the hall several degrees.

Elder Zhao took a deep breath, trying to make his voice sound steady.

"Palace Master, the Myriad Demon Ridge is guarded by Qingqiu, protected by ancient restrictions, making it easy to defend and difficult to attack.

Although the Guiyuan Sect isn't strong, Guiyuanzi is no ordinary person; he was able to gather all the disciples of the Guiyuan Sect in just a few days, so his strength shouldn't be underestimated.

Although our Tianji Palace is stronger than them, if we fight head-on, we will suffer heavy losses."

He paused, carefully observing the Tianji Venerable's expression. Seeing that he wasn't angry, he continued, "Palace Master, the Seventeenth Heaven isn't just home to our Tianji Palace. The Northern Region has the Shenyuan Pavilion, and the Western Region has the Tiansheng Palace.

If we attack the Myriad Demon Ridge alone, even if we win, we will be severely weakened. Will other forces take advantage of the situation? Will they reap the benefits? Palace Master must be wary." The

Tianji Venerable frowned.

Elder Zhao was right; he had to be wary.

Although the gods belonged to the same race, the open and covert struggles between various forces had never ceased.

If the Heavenly Pole Palace suffers a significant loss of strength, the Divine Abyss Pavilion and the Heavenly Saint Palace will certainly not let this opportunity pass.

At that time, not only will he fail to obtain the Great Luo Golden Scripture, but he might even lose the Heavenly Pole Palace itself.

"What do you mean?"

Elder Zhao raised his head, a glint of light flashing in his eyes. "Palace Master, I suggest we unite with other forces of the Divine Race in the Northern Region to jointly launch an attack and besiege the Myriad

Demon Ridge. Explain the advantages and disadvantages to them, letting them know that allowing the Myriad Demon Ridge and the Guiyuan Sect to grow stronger will benefit no one. Then, with the combined forces, the Myriad Demon Ridge can be destroyed in the blink of an eye."

The Heavenly Pole Venerable remained silent for a moment, his fingers lightly tapping the armrest, again and again.

He was weighing the pros and cons.

Uniting with other forces meant sharing the spoils.

He couldn't guarantee he could monopolize that Great Luo Golden Scripture and that purple divine soul.

But without uniting, he wouldn't even have a chance to obtain them.

"Very well."

He stood up, a resolute glint in his eyes. "I will personally go to the Divine Abyss Pavilion and the Heavenly Saint Palace. You will remain at the Heavenly Extreme Palace, strengthen security, and forbid anyone from approaching."

"Yes!" the four elders replied in unison, relieved.