A Man Like None Other Novel

Chapter 6741

At the northern end of the twentieth heaven lies a desolate ice plain. The further north one travels, the lower the temperature becomes, with howling winds whipping through the air, stinging the face like knives.

The ground is covered with a thick layer of snow and ice, with occasional black rocks peeking out from the snow like silent tombstones.

David and his group flew for most of the day before finally finding ruins at the location marked on the map.

It was a half-collapsed circular stone platform, about a hundred feet in diameter, its surface covered with a thick layer of ice and snow.

Eight broken stone pillars stood along the edge of the platform, each engraved with runes almost invisible due to wind and frost erosion.

A deep crack ran through the center of the platform, splitting it in two.

Xuanzhenzi stepped forward and kicked the stone pillar at the edge of the platform. Snow fell in a rustling sound, revealing the grayish-black stone beneath and a nearly worn-down rune mark. “This is the Tianxuan Formation? It doesn’t look very usable…”

David remained silent. He unfolded the formation diagram and examined every detail, comparing it to the runes on the platform.

The diagram marked 365 rune nodes, corresponding to the number of days in a day, each with a specific position and arrangement.

Comparing it to the actual runes on the platform, he found that most of the nodes were indeed still there, though somewhat blurred by wind and frost. About thirty were truly damaged.

“More than thirty rune nodes need to be repaired,” David said.

“Repair?”

Xuanzhenzi looked at the runes, almost invisible due to wind and frost, and scratched his head. “How do you repair them? I don’t understand these ancient runes…”

“I do.”

David squatted down, took out a small carving knife from his storage ring, and began to recarve the worn-down runes on a stone pillar.

His fingers were steady and precise, each stroke meticulously carved according to the markings on the array diagram.

Chaotic energy flowed from his fingertips, seeping into the stone’s veins along the carving knife, causing the runes to glow faintly with a gray light after completion before disappearing back into the stone.

Jiang Xuelan stepped forward, imitating David, carving the runes according to the array diagram’s markings.

Her fingers weren’t as skilled as David’s, but she was meticulous, repeatedly checking the array diagram after each section to ensure accuracy before moving on to the next.

Xuanzhenzi squatted beside them, unable to help, only able to watch the two work.

The young Taoist boy ran back and forth, handing them carving knives and clearing snow.

They worked from midday until dusk, and from dusk until the moon was high in the sky.

The moment the 365th rune node was reactivated, the entire stone platform emitted a deep hum.

The ancient runes lit up one by one, gray light converging from the edge of the stone platform towards its center, like awakening veins spreading across the platform.

The deep crack in the center of the platform slowly healed in the light, becoming smooth as before.

Three celestial crystals were embedded into the three most crucial nodes of the platform.

Azure light surged from the platform, growing brighter and more intense, eventually transforming into a grayish-blue pillar of light that shot straight into the sky, illuminating the entire night.

Within the pillar of light, space violently distorted, and a portal slowly opened.

On the other side of the portal was a hazy light, the specific scene indistinct, yet a completely different aura could be felt.

A richer, heavier, and more ancient spiritual energy, like an ancient wine that had slumbered for millions of years, exuding a mellow and lingering flavor.

The Twenty-First Heaven.

David stood before the pillar of light, his purple eyes gazing at the slowly opening portal, a slight smile playing on his lips.

“Let’s go.”

He was the first to step into the pillar of light. His

grey robe billowed slightly in the light, and his figure, like a drop of water merging into the ocean, quickly disappeared into the depths of the light.

Jiang Xuelan followed closely behind, her ice-white dress shimmering with a silvery-white halo in the light before she too vanished.

Xuanzhenzi, holding the little Taoist’s hand, took a deep breath, gritted his teeth, and rushed in as well.

After all four had entered, the pillar of light slowly contracted, the newly activated runes dimmed again, and the stone platform returned to silence, as if nothing had happened.

The night wind howled, stirring up a cloud of snow dust that settled on the cold stone surface, covering the newly formed runes once more.

Silence returned to the icy plain, with only the sound of the wind howling through the wilderness.

David and the others stood in a void, with no ground beneath their feet and no clouds above, only endless pale golden light surging in from all directions, enveloping them in a warm halo.

He blinked, adjusting to the sudden light, and then took a step forward.

His feet touched solid ground.

It was a massive platform floating in the void, entirely composed of a translucent crystal, its surface smooth as a mirror, reflecting the countless twinkling stars in the sky.

The platform's edges were as clean as if sliced by a sharp blade, extending outwards for hundreds of feet before abruptly disappearing into the bottomless void.

The Starry Sky Belt.

David stood at the edge of the platform, gazing down at the magnificent scene below, his purple eyes reflecting layers of light.

Beside him, Jiang Xuelan, Xuanzhenzi, and the little Daoist boy, each involuntarily held their breath the moment they stepped into this new world.

Below was a pitch-black abyss, bottomless, like a fissure in the earth stretching across the void.

Occasionally, a few points of eerie blue light flickered in the darkness, like the eyes of an ancient behemoth opening and closing in the darkness.

That was the Netherworld Abyss, the lowest level of the Twenty-First Heaven.

Above the Netherworld Abyss was a boundless ocean of spiritual liquid.

The crystal-clear seawater surged in the void, creating waves hundreds of feet high, yet at the crest of each wave, it transformed into countless shimmering droplets, suspended in mid-air, refracting a rainbow of colors.

Thousands of islands floated on the surface, some as large as continents, others only a few feet square, like stars scattered across the water.

That was the Void Sea, the second layer of the twenty-one heavens.

Above that, seven enormous floating continents arranged in the shape of the Big Dipper, slowly rotating.

Each continent was shrouded in a pale blue light, like an independent world.

On these continents, one could see mountains, rivers, forests, lakes, cities, villages, and even tiny figures flying through the sky.

That was the Seven Star Continent, the third layer of the twenty-one heavens.

And at the very top, a colossal golden continent, like an ever-shining sun, floated between heaven and earth.

Golden divine light surged from its surface, dyeing the entire sky a dazzling gold.

Golden waterfalls flowed along the continent's edge, cascading into the Void Sea, stirring up a vast expanse of golden mist.

That was the Tian Shu Continent, the core of the ruling power of the three major families of the God Clan.

From the Starry Sky Belt to the Netherworld Abyss, the five layers of heaven and earth were arranged in sequence, like an inverted pyramid, with distinct layers, yet interconnected.

Chapter 6742

David stared silently for a long time before slowly speaking, "No wonder it's called the Twenty-First Heaven."

Xuan Zhenzi, standing beside him, nearly dropped his jaw, his cloudy eyes wide with disbelief. "Good heavens… this is too… too big…"

He pointed to the Netherworld Abyss at the bottom and then to the Celestial Pivot Continent at the top, drawing a huge circle in the air with his finger. "How far is it from bottom to top?"

"The Netherworld Abyss is about a million miles from the Star Belt,"

a hoarse voice came from the void. “At your speed, you wouldn’t get there even after a month of flying.”

Xuan Zhenzi was startled and turned around abruptly. “Who?!”

A black figure slowly emerged from the void, his black robe billowing, like a layer of mist peeled from the shadows.

Gui Qi stood before the crowd, a pair of deep blue eyes peeking out from under his hood. His gaze calmly swept over everyone before finally settling on David.

“Mr. Chen, you’ve arrived.”

David nodded. “Gui Qi, thank you for coming to meet me.”

“It’s nothing.”

Gui Qi’s voice was hoarse and deep. “You’re all new to the Twenty-First Heaven. This place is completely different from the Twentieth Heaven. The terrain, rules, and power distribution are extremely complex. Without guidance, it’s easy to get caught up in unnecessary trouble.”

Xuan Zhenzi looked Gui Qi up and down, then at the Starry Sky Belt platform beneath his feet. His expression was still somewhat bewildered. “Um… Brother Gui Qi, right?

I have a question—where exactly is this place we’re standing in? This heaven and earth, I’m a little dizzy…”

Gui Qi raised his hand and pointed downwards. “We are currently in the Starry Sky Belt. This is the top layer of the Twenty-First Heaven, closest to the void, with the thinnest spiritual energy, but the most complete laws.

From here downwards, in order are—the Heavenly Pivot Continent, the Seven Star Continent, the Void Sea, and finally the Netherworld Abyss.”

Xuan Zhenzi followed his finger downwards, his gaze falling layer by layer. With each layer he looked at, his face paled a little. “So… we’re at the highest point right now?”

“That’s right.”

“What if you fall down…” Xuanzhenzi’s voice trembled slightly.

“It will take about seven days to fall into the Netherworld Abyss.”

Guiqi’s tone was calm. “If you’re lucky, you’ll be swallowed by the sea beasts of the Void Sea, and you won’t have to wait seven days.”

Xuanzhenzi’s legs went weak, and he almost sat down on the ground.

The young Taoist boy hurriedly tugged at his sleeve: “Master! Stand firm!”

David slightly curled the corners of his mouth, suppressing his smile, and his gaze returned to Gui Qi: “Gui Qi, the Twenty-First Heaven is completely different from the Twentieth Heaven. Why is the structure here so special?”

Gui Qi was silent for a moment, then spoke in a hoarse voice: “Legend has it that the Twenty-First Heaven was originally a complete continent. In ancient times, a Celestial Emperor-level powerhouse fought a great battle with the gods, splitting the continent in five layers with a single sword strike.

The bottom layer sank into the void abyss, becoming the Netherworld Abyss.

The middle layer was submerged by seawater, becoming the Void Sea.

The upper layer was shattered into seven pieces, becoming the Seven Star Continent.

The top layer was raised by the gods using divine power and refined into the Celestial Pivot Continent.

And the star belt at the very top is the remnant of that sword strike, which can never be repaired."

The young Taoist boy's eyes widened: "A single sword strike splitting the entire continent? How powerful must that be…"

"That Immortal Emperor later perished,"

Gui Qi's voice was soft. "His body lies in the deepest part of the Netherworld Abyss. The ancestors of the Ghost Clan were descendants of the tomb guardians."

A moment of silence fell over the crowd. David's gaze pierced through layers of void, looking down into the pitch-black abyss, a profound light flashing in his purple eyes.

He didn't press further, simply nodding: "The Netherworld Abyss is Ghost Clan territory?"

"Yes."

Gui Qi nodded. "The Netherworld Abyss is divided into nine levels, with the concentration of Yin energy increasing from the first to the ninth.

The core territory of the Ghost Clan is on the seventh level of the Netherworld Abyss.

If Mr. Chen is not in a hurry to go to other levels, you can rest in the Netherworld Abyss first. The Ghost Clan can provide you with a place to stay."

David glanced at Jiang Xuelan and Xuan Zhenzi, who both nodded.

"Alright, let's go to the Netherworld Abyss first."

Gui Qi turned around, and as his black robe billowed, a black void rift opened in front of him: "Follow me."

David and his group followed behind Gui Qi, passing through the void rift.

The scene before them instantly changed, from the bright and empty starry sky to a dark and deep space.

A chilling aura surged from all directions, like invisible tentacles wrapping around their limbs and bones, causing them to shiver involuntarily.

This was the entrance to the Netherworld Abyss—the first level of the nine-layered Yin energy barrier.

Gui Qi's voice echoed in the darkness: "The Netherworld Abyss is divided into nine layers of Yin energy barriers, each requiring a specific technique to pass safely.

Ordinary cultivators will have their souls frozen to death upon reaching the third layer.

Follow me, and do not stray more than ten feet from my side."

The group followed Gui Qi closely, stepping into the darkness.

Black Yin energy surged like a tide, emitting low, mournful sounds, like countless ghosts whispering in their ears.

A chilling aura pressed in from all directions, attempting to penetrate their skin and freeze their blood.

Jiang Xuelan's Ice God Power automatically activated, isolating her from the cold.

Xuan Zhenzi's palm glowed with a blue light, protecting the young Daoist boy behind him.

First layer, second layer, third layer…

the deeper they went, the denser and more piercing the Yin energy became.

By the fifth layer, David could feel the Yin energy beginning to resonate subtly with his Chaos Power—it was a power of the same origin but different nature, probing and colliding with each other.

“You can sense the Daoist runes and evil energy?” Gui Qi’s voice came from ahead, carrying a hint of surprise.

“Hmm,”

David said, “The power of chaos, all laws return to their origin. Yin energy is also a kind of law, so it can naturally be sensed.”

Gui Qi didn’t speak again, but his pace noticeably quickened.

After passing through the seventh layer of Yin energy barrier, the scene before them suddenly opened up.

An upside-down city appeared before them.

Steep black cliffs were carved with countless caves and passages, layer upon layer, like a giant beehive.

Dark red light shone from the caves, illuminating the entire cliff face like burning charcoal.

Many ghost cultivators dressed in black robes moved silently across the cliffs, blending into the darkness like shadows.

Countless slender black rope bridges spanned the cliffs, connecting different caves and platforms, and the ghost cultivators walked on the rope bridges as if on flat ground.

Ghostly blue flames burned on both sides of the rope bridges, their cold flames illuminating the pale faces beneath the black robes.

An ancient and tranquil aura permeated the air, like a slumber in an ancient tomb.

The seventh level of the Netherworld Abyss.

Chapter 6743

“This is the Ghost Clan’s territory.”

Ghost Seven stopped. “All the Ghost Clan’s buildings are attached to the cliffs of the abyss, appearing from the outside like an inverted city.

At the bottom is an underground river, flowing with Yin Spirit Spring water. The cave at the top is the residence of the clan’s elders. I’ll take you to find the Netherworld Elder.”

Ghost Seven led the group up a winding stone staircase.

The staircase was narrow and steep, with a solid rock wall on one side and a bottomless abyss on the other.

Along the way, at several cave entrances, Ghost Clan cultivators peeked out, scrutinizing David and his companions with appraising and curious eyes, but no hostility.

After walking for about fifteen minutes, they arrived at a relatively open cave.

A black curtain hung at the entrance, embroidered with a ghostly blue rune that emitted a faint glow of Netherfire.

Ghost Seven lifted the curtain and stepped aside: “Mr. Chen, please.”

The cave interior was much larger than it appeared from the outside.

Several pieces of mineral stone, emitting a ghostly blue light, were inlaid in the ceiling, enveloping the entire cave in a soft halo.

The walls were covered with ancient ghostly runes, each line slowly flowing and radiating profound divine power.

In the very center of the cave sat a thin, elderly man.

He was hunched over, like an old tree bent by the weight of time, wearing a wide black robe that trailed on the ground, almost covering his feet.

His face was gaunt and aged, his skin a near-transparent pale white, wrinkles etched deeply into his features.

His eyes were a ghostly blue, like two concentrated flames of the underworld, burning with a profound light in the shadows.

Those eyes brightened slightly the moment they saw David.

“Guests of the Ghost Clan, I am the Old Man of the Netherworld.”

The old man’s voice was hoarse and deep, like sandpaper rubbing against a wooden board. “I have received Ghost Seven’s message. You must be the young man who confronted the God Clan and used the power of chaos to kill a Grand Luo Golden Immortal?”

David bowed slightly: “Junior David greets Senior Netherworld. Senior is too kind. Those matters were handled by a highly skilled person; I was merely acting according to circumstances.”

The Old Man of the Netherworld nodded slowly, his dark blue gaze lingering on David for a long time: “Not bad, neither arrogant nor impatient. The fact that the power of chaos can take root in you shows that your foundation is solid enough.

The Ghost Clan has not received guests from other races for many years. I am very pleased that you have come."

He raised his withered finger and waved it lightly, and several black stone benches rose from the ground: "Sit down."

David and the others sat down.

The young Daoist boy sat next to Xuan Zhenzi, curiously examining the runes on the cave walls.

The old man of the Netherworld looked at David and said, "Young man, I know you're new to the Twenty-First Heaven and there are many things you don't understand.

I can tell you the most important thing first.

The gods of the Twenty-First Heaven are completely different from those of the Twentieth Heaven.

The gods of the Twentieth Heaven are a disorganized bunch, each ruling their own way.

But the gods of the Twenty-First Heaven are centered around families, with three major families jointly governing the Tian Shu Continent:

the Golden Crow Family, the Silver Moon Family, and the Star Family. Each family controls a supreme divine authority."

David listened without interrupting.

The old man of the Netherworld continued, "The Golden Crow Family holds the divine authority of the sun, the Silver Moon Family holds the divine authority of the moon, and the Star Family holds the divine authority of the stars.

On the surface, the three families govern together, but in reality, each harbors their own agenda. The Golden Crow Family is powerful and domineering, the Silver Moon Family operates covertly, and the Star Family remains unassuming."

"And the white-robed man you killed in the twentieth heaven was the eldest son of the Golden Crow family."

David raised an eyebrow slightly: "The eldest son?"

"That's right."

The Netherworld Elder said, "The patriarch of the Golden Crow family, Jin Wuyai, is a peak third-grade Great Luo Golden Immortal. His son died at your hands, and he won't let it go.

I estimate he's already sending people to investigate your whereabouts. Since you've just arrived in the twenty-first heaven, it's best not to rush to the Heavenly Pivot Continent.

Settle down in the Netherworld Abyss first, and then act after you've figured out the situation."

David was silent for a moment: "Is the Netherworld Abyss safe?"

"Safe."

The Netherworld Elder said, "The Yin energy barrier of the Netherworld Abyss is so strong that even divine cultivators cannot cross it. Even a third-grade Great Luo Golden Immortal would have their soul eroded by the Yin energy if they forced their way in.

The Ghost Clan has lived in this abyss for hundreds of thousands of years, and the divine race has never set foot in the depths of the Netherworld Abyss. As long as you don't leave the Netherworld Abyss, you're safe." Chen

Ping nodded, a complex light flashing in his purple eyes.

Safety was temporary; he couldn't stay in the Netherworld Abyss forever.

He still needed to go to the Void Sea, the Seven Star Continent, and the Heavenly Pivot Continent.

He needed to find clues about the Myriad Swords Star and the entrance to the Twenty-Second Heaven.

But the Netherworld Elder was right; now was not the time to act rashly.

He needed to understand the rules of the Twenty-First Heaven and find his footing.

"I understand,"

David said. "Thank you for your guidance, Senior." Chen

Ping settled down in the Netherworld Abyss.

The Ghost Clan provided them with a secluded cave on the cliff face, small but enough for four people.

The cave walls were smoothly carved, and a piece of ore emitting a dark red glow was embedded in the ceiling, enveloping the entire cave in a warm yet dim light.

A black curtain at the entrance blocked out the yin energy and most of the sound, making the place exceptionally quiet.

For the first few days, David didn't stray too far from the cave.

He was adapting to the environment of the Netherworld Abyss, to the perpetual darkness overhead, and to the omnipresent chill.

Ghost Clan cultivators came and went, mostly silent, occasionally glancing at their cave with curious but not hostile eyes.

Xuan Zhenzi couldn't sit still for more than two days in the cave, muttering, "This damned place is too stuffy," and spending all his time dragging the young Taoist boy back and forth on the suspension bridge on the cliff

. The cultivators of the Ghost Clan were quite tolerant of these two lively outsiders, occasionally even giving them directions and telling them which suspension bridge led to which place.

Jiang Xuelan meditated and cultivated in the cave.

The Yin energy of the Netherworld Abyss resonated with her Ice God power in an inexplicable way. Every time she circulated her cultivation technique, she could feel her Ice God bloodline slightly warming, as if something deep within this abyss was echoing her from afar.

David, on the other hand, often ventured out of the cave alone, exploring deeper into the Netherworld Abyss along the stone steps and suspension bridges on the cliff face.

The Ghost Clan's territory was vast, extending downwards from the seventh level, with an eighth and ninth level as well.

He hadn't yet ventured to the very bottom, but he had already familiarized himself with most of the terrain on the seventh level.

It was during this exploration that he discovered the crack.

It was on a rock wall at the boundary between the seventh and eighth levels, a long, narrow crack like the mark left by a blade cutting through the rock, about a meter high and half a zhang wide, with edges as smooth as a mirror.

Chapter 6744

No light shone through the crack; it was as black as solidified ink. Standing before it, one could sense a faint current emanating from within, carrying an indescribable aura.

When David first noticed the crack, he saw a ghost cultivator approach it, and without hesitation, step inside.

The cultivator's figure vanished into the crack as if swallowed by darkness, leaving no sound or trace.

David waited a moment; there was no movement from within, and the cultivator did not emerge.

He began to observe the crack

closely. Over the next few days, he observed ghost cultivators arriving at the crack and entering, none ever emerging.

Most of these cultivators entered expressionlessly, their steps steady, showing neither fear nor anticipation, as if completing a perfectly ordinary task.

"Could it be a teleportation array?" David murmured to himself.

But he doubted it.

Teleportation arrays usually exhibited fluctuations of spiritual energy, lit runes, and signs of spatial distortion.

The crack showed no energy reaction from beginning to end; it simply stood there, quiet as an ordinary rock fissure, yet it swallowed up life after life that entered it.

He decided to find an opportunity to ask Gui Qi.

But before he could speak, he witnessed the scene firsthand.

That evening, if the “evening” of the Netherworld Abyss could be considered evening,

the dark red light of the mineral bathed the entire cliff like dusk.

David was standing on the edge of the suspension bridge, watching the surging Yin energy in the abyss below, when he suddenly heard a commotion in the distance.

He turned his head and saw several ghost cultivators escorting a person toward the crack.

The ghost cultivator being escorted looked very young, with a pale face, struggling violently to break free of his restraints, but was held down firmly by several cultivators much stronger than him.

“Let me go! I don’t want to go! I don’t want to die!”

The young cultivator’s voice was hoarse and desperate, echoing in the dark abyss. “I haven’t lived enough! Why me?!”

“Quiet.”

The voice of one of the old men holding him was cold and hard. “This is the rule of the ages. When it’s your turn, it’s your turn. Struggling is useless.”

“What do you mean ‘when it’s my turn’! I haven’t done anything wrong! I don’t want to be sacrificed!”

Sacrifice.

David’s body tensed slightly.

That word was like a needle piercing his eardrums.

The young cultivator was dragged to the front of the crevice.

He desperately tried to pull back, his fingernails scratching the rock wall with a harsh sound, leaving several white marks, but he was eventually held down by the two cultivators.

The old man who was escorting him walked up to him, looked down into his eyes, and said in a voice that was calm to the point of cruelty: “Don’t be afraid. Once you’re inside, it will be over soon.”

“I don’t want to—”

The young cultivator didn’t finish his sentence.

The old man pushed him hard, and his body staggered into the crevice, as if swallowed by darkness, disappearing without a trace in an instant.

The crack remained silent, devoid of any sound. The traces of the young cultivator’s struggle, the echoes of his screams, all vanished the moment he disappeared.

The escorting cultivators stood before the crack for a moment, then turned and left.

No one spoke, no one looked back; each face wore an almost numb calm, as if it were all just routine.

David stood on the suspension bridge, watching the cultivators’ departing figures, his purple eyes swirling with complex light within the dark red glow.

Sacrifice.

The crack.

The vanished.

Back in the cave, he found Gui Qi.

Gui Qi was sitting cross-legged on a secluded platform, a ghostly blue flame slowly swirling around him, enveloping him in a hazy halo.

David sat down opposite him and cut to the chase: “What was that crack?”

Gui Qi opened his eyes, a barely perceptible flicker in his ghostly blue pupils.

He was silent for a moment, his voice hoarse: “You saw it.”

“I saw a sacrifice,”

David said. “A young cultivator was pushed in and never came out.”

Gui Qi didn’t speak.

His gaze lowered, his fingers clenching and unclenching lightly on his knees, repeating this several times.

“Gui Qi,”

David’s voice was calm yet carried an undeniable force, “what exactly happened with that crack? Where did those who went in… go?”

Gui Qi raised his head, a complex light swirling in his ghostly blue eyes.

His lips moved, as if he wanted to say something, but in the end he only shook his head: “Mr. Chen, this matter… please don’t ask anymore.

This is an internal matter of the Ghost Clan, I can’t tell you. Besides, that rift is very dangerous, please… don’t go near it.”

David looked into his eyes: “Can you tell me, after those people went in, are there any survivors?”

Ghost Seven was silent for a long time.

His gaze flickered several times, avoiding David's eyes, and finally he only said two words: "I don't know."

"You don't know?"

"Nobody knows."

Ghost Seven's voice was even lower, "Those who went in have never come out. Never."

David didn't continue to ask.

He looked at Ghost Seven's pair of dark blue eyes, which were churning with too many complex emotions, helplessness, pain, and a kind of heaviness that he couldn't understand.

He didn't press him any further, but just nodded: "Okay, I won't ask anymore."

Ghost Seven seemed to breathe a sigh of relief, but also seemed even heavier.

He closed his eyes again, the dark blue Netherfire flowing around him again, and he resumed his meditative posture.

But David noticed that his clasped fingers were trembling slightly.

David stood up, turned and left.

Of course, he wouldn't give up so easily.

Gui Qi's reaction had already revealed a lot; behind that crack lay the secret of the Ghost Clan, a secret that even Gui Qi couldn't or dared not speak of.

But directly asking Gui Qi was clearly not going to work; he needed to find another way.

The next day, David went directly to the Netherworld Elder.

The Netherworld Elder was still sitting in his dark cave, his hunched figure like a frozen sculpture in the dark red light.

Seeing David enter, he showed no surprise, as if he had expected David to come.

“Young friend Chen, sit down and talk,”

the old man said, pointing to the stone bench in front of him, his voice hoarse and deep.

David didn’t beat around the bush: “Senior, I want to know about that crack.”

The Netherworld Elder was silent for a moment, his thin figure motionless in the shadows.

He raised his dark blue eyes, looked at David for a long time, and then slowly spoke: “You saw it?”

“I saw it,” David said, “Someone is making a sacrifice.”

Chapter 6745

The old man nodded, tapping his fingers lightly on his knee a few times, producing a soft sound.

His voice carried a weariness, as if he had carried an unbearable burden for many years: “That rift… it existed ten thousand years ago.

It appeared at the boundary between the seventh and eighth layers of the Netherworld Abyss, as if it had been torn open out of thin air.

Initially, the rift was very small, only the width of a finger, but it would widen every now and then."

"And then?"

"Then we discovered that if we didn't periodically send… send a living person into the rift, the rift would begin to stir up the Yin energy of the Netherworld Abyss.

The Yin energy would surge and riot, and the entire Netherworld Abyss would violently tremble."

The old man's voice lowered even further, "If there were no sacrifices for a long time, the area of the Yin energy riots would continue to expand, and eventually… the entire Netherworld Abyss would collapse."

David frowned: "Has no one gone in to investigate?"

The old man of the Netherworld Abyss shook his head: "They have investigated. Over the past ten thousand years, the Ghost Clan has sent more than a dozen groups of elite cultivators into the rift to investigate, each group consisting of the clan's experts.

But the result was always the same—once they went in, they never came out."

"So you have never stopped offering sacrifices?"

"We stopped,"

the old man's voice held a bitter tinge. "We tried. Three thousand years ago, a newly appointed lord of this Netherworld Abyss disbelieved in the evil and forbade sacrifices, wanting to find another way to suppress the rift.

As a result, in less than three days, the Yin energy of the Netherworld Abyss surged for half a month, all the buildings above the seventh level collapsed, and nearly a thousand ghost cultivators died.

That lord was severely injured in the riot and succumbed to his wounds half a month later."

A long silence fell over the cave.

The dark red light of the mineral burned quietly at the top, casting long shadows of the two men.

David looked at the old man's aged and weary face, his sunken eyes and tightly pursed lips, and a complex emotion welled up within him.

This old man, burdened with a secret passed down through generations for ten thousand years, decided year after year which member of his clan would be sent into that rift, watched familiar faces disappear into the darkness year after year, yet he still remained in this position, maintaining the existence of the entire Netherworld Abyss.

"Senior,"

David said, "have you ever thought about… what exactly is that rift? Why did it appear in the Netherworld Abyss? Where does it lead? What exactly did that so-called 'sacrifice' satisfy?"

The Netherworld Elder raised his head, a complex light flashing in his deep blue eyes: "I have thought about it. Every generation of Abyss Lord has thought about it. But there are no answers.

We once collected fragments of residual aura near the rift and sent them to the Void Merchant Guild for identification, and the only reply we received was four words—'unidentifiable'."

"Those auras don't belong to any known cultivation method, any known law, or any known power system."

David's pupils contracted slightly: "Don't belong to any known one?"

“That’s right,”

said the Netherworld Elder. “That’s why I told you that the rift is not something you should touch.

Even the Ghost Clan hasn’t figured out its secrets for ten thousand years. If you, an outsider, rashly interfere, you’ll only get yourself killed.”

David remained silent for a long time, then slowly nodded: “This junior understands.”

The Netherworld Elder looked at him, seemingly judging the truthfulness of his words.

After a moment, the elder nodded slightly: “Good that you understand. Young friend Chen, although the Ghost Clan is not as powerful as the God Clan, I can guarantee your safety in this Netherworld Abyss.

As long as you don’t interfere with the rift, you can stay as long as you want.”

“Thank you, senior.” Chen

Ping rose, cupped his hands in a respectful bow, and turned to leave the cave.

A dark red curtain fell behind him, once again shutting out the cave’s dim light.

David walked up the narrow stone steps, his purple eyes gleaming with a deep, unsettling light in the shadows.

He had indeed promised the Old Man of the Underworld, and he truly understood the old man’s good intentions and warning.

But understanding was one thing, promising was another; the uneasy premonition in his heart hadn’t dissipated.

The crack, the vanished cultivators, that “unidentifiable” aura—

all of these things, linked together, made him feel a vague, inexplicable unease.

The rift that appeared ten thousand years ago requires human sacrifice to maintain its stability. No one knows where the rift leads, nor who the sacrifices are.

The Ghost Clan has been sacrificing for ten thousand years, generation after generation disappearing into the darkness, yet they have never questioned the legitimacy of it all.

David stopped, standing at the corner of the stone steps, gazing at the bottomless Abyss below.

A dark red light flickered across his face, casting his expression in shifting shadows.

He had indeed promised the Old Man of the Netherworld he would not concern himself with this matter again.

But some things, suppressed for too long, always compelled him to seek the truth.