

the mans Decree: Kai Ping / Chen Ping

Chapter 4701

However, Kai understood that the stronger the body refinement technique, the more intense the pain he would have to endure during the process.

Body refinement was excruciatingly painful and required a vast amount of resources. This was why many cultivators abandoned it altogether, choosing instead to focus on advancing their technique realm.

“Deal. The moment I see Huo Qing, I will take his life...”

Kai smiled faintly.

“Alright then, I won’t disturb you any longer. You should focus on finding a suitable place for body refinement. Given the strength of the Xiao Dynasty, it might be difficult to locate an appropriate site,” Yun Li advised.

Unlike other cultivation methods, body refinement relied on external forces to temper the body. Training in isolation was ineffective, making body refinement not only troublesome but also highly impractical due to the lack of suitable locations.

“Don’t worry about that, Brother Yun,” Kai assured him with a slight bow.

After bidding Yun Li farewell, Kai immediately went to find Xiao Yuanshan. He wanted to ask if there was a place within the Xiao Dynasty’s territory where he could temper his body.

As soon as he stepped out, he caught sight of Ji Yun and his younger sister, their affection for each other growing noticeably stronger over the past few days.

From Kai's perspective, it was likely that the two had begun dual cultivation.

"Mr. Chen..." Ji Yun greeted him hastily upon noticing his presence.

"Ji Yun, now that you've found your soft haven, don't neglect your cultivation. If you still wish to follow me, you must accelerate your progress," Kai warned.

His strength was growing rapidly. If Ji Yun stagnated, the gap between them would only widen, making it difficult for Kai to keep him by his side. The enemies Kai now faced were growing stronger—many were already at the peak of the ninth rank in the Mahayana realm, and some had even stepped into the Immortal Realm.

Against such formidable opponents, Ji Yun would struggle to even protect himself if his cultivation did not advance.

"Mr. Chen, I understand. I will make the most of my time to train," Ji Yun said with a resolute nod.

Kai said no more and headed straight for Xiao Yuanshan. When Xiao Yuanshan heard the reason for Kai's visit, a look of embarrassment appeared on his face.

"Mr. Chen, although the Xiao Dynasty's territory is vast, there are very few suitable places for body tempering," he admitted.

"There are some minor locations, but I fear they won't be of any use to you. After all, attacks that cause no real pain are meaningless for body refinement."

Xiao Yuanshan spoke with clear reluctance.

“Xiao Huang, there’s no need to worry. If there’s no suitable place in the Xiao Dynasty, I’ll simply search elsewhere,” Kai replied with a slight smile.

“That may be the only option. However, even in the entire Tianren Realm, there aren’t many places suitable for body tempering. There are far too few body refinement cultivators left these days,” Xiao Yuanshan remarked.

Just then, Xiao Feng hurried into the room.

“Father, I have a way to create a place for Mr. Chen to temper his body!” he announced.

“Oh? What do you have in mind?” Xiao Yuanshan asked curiously.

“Mr. Chen, how do you feel about using thunder tribulation for body refinement?” Xiao Feng inquired.

“Thunder tribulation is undoubtedly the best method,” Kai said, frowning slightly, “but my realm progresses slowly. I can’t just sit around waiting for a breakthrough to undergo tribulation for body tempering, can I?”

“Of course not,” Xiao Feng said with a confident smile. “Mr. Chen doesn’t need to advance his realm at all. The Xiao Dynasty has many cultivators, and we only need to gather those on the verge of breaking through. The combined effect will surely trigger a massive heavenly tribulation!”

“Mr. Chen can then stand at the center of these tribulations and let the thunder refine his body, right?” Xiao Feng explained enthusiastically.

Hearing this, Kai’s eyes lit up. Why hadn’t he thought of this before?

Xiao Yuanshan also realized the brilliance of the plan and praised, “This is an excellent idea, truly excellent!”

“Feng’er, go find those cultivators who are about to break through. Gather them together and create the ideal conditions for Mr. Chen’s thunder tribulation tempering!” Xiao Yuanshan ordered.

Xiao Feng nodded and immediately set off to carry out the task.

Chapter 4702

The Xiao Dynasty had countless cultivators, with many breaking through realms every day.

Xiao Feng quickly gathered more than a hundred cultivators, all at different stages of advancement but on the verge of a breakthrough.

He assembled them on a remote hilltop, far from the imperial city. If even one of them lost control, the unleashed thunder tribulation could cause chaos.

After all, never before in the heavenly realm had hundreds of cultivators triggered tribulation at the same time!

“Mr. Chen, prepare yourself. Once you’re ready, I’ll have them break through and summon the thunder tribulation,” Xiao Feng informed him.

Kai nodded, inscribing a series of array patterns that soon enveloped the entire mountain.

No matter the realm, every cultivator was at their most vulnerable when undergoing tribulation. If an enemy appeared at that moment, it would spell disaster.

“Let’s begin...” Kai commanded.

Xiao Feng turned to the gathered cultivators and ordered, “Begin!”

As his voice fell, a massive thundercloud rapidly formed in the sky.

The storm clouds thickened, swallowing the heavens in darkness until visibility was nearly nonexistent.

Within the swirling clouds, streaks of lightning writhed like giant serpents, and deafening thunder shook the heavens.

The apocalyptic scene sent a wave of unease through Xiao Feng and Xiao Yuanshan.

“Mr. Chen... Are you sure about this? This seems extremely dangerous!” Xiao Feng asked hesitantly.

“It’s fine,” Kai replied calmly. “You should step back.” As soon as Kai finished speaking, he transformed into a streak of white light and vanished. In the blink of an eye, he reappeared beneath the thundercloud.

The sky rumbled as countless bolts of lightning grew more violent. Then, a thunderbolt as thick as a bucket crashed down, striking directly at Kai.

Below, the hundreds of cultivators held their breath, focusing all their energy and attention. None dared to be careless.

Although Kai was the one enduring the tribulation, if he failed to withstand it, the overwhelming thunder would descend upon them instead—likely wiping them out completely.

The combined tribulation of hundreds of cultivators was unimaginably terrifying.

Yet, as Kai faced the massive bolt of lightning, he remained unfazed. Compared to his own tribulations, this one was far weaker.

Within his body, the Origin Space opened, and the Origin Star of Thunder flickered with dazzling light.

A powerful surge of thunder’s primal force erupted from within him.

As this force spread, Kai could feel his body slowly transforming.

The origin of thunder was merging with the tribulation lightning before him, and at the same time, the power of the three bloodlines within his body stirred ever so slightly.

Boom!

The relentless bolts of lightning continued crashing down on Kai without pause.

A hundred miles away, Xiao Feng and Xiao Yuanshan watched nervously. They had no idea whether Kai could endure such an ordeal.

Meanwhile, thousands of miles beyond the Xiao Dynasty, three figures silently emerged from the void.

Their gazes pierced through layers of clouds and mist, locking onto the distant Xiao Dynasty with unconcealed excitement.

The leader was a strikingly handsome man clad in an opulent brocade robe, embroidered with intricate dragon and phoenix patterns—an unmistakable mark of nobility.

His face was smooth as jade, his eyes shone like the stars, and the corner of his lips curled into a playful smile, as if everything was unfolding according to his plan.

To his left stood a towering, muscular warrior wielding an enormous meteor hammer.

The weapon, weighing ten thousand jin, was bound by several chains that gleamed with a chilling light, appearing capable of rending space itself. His overwhelming physical presence radiated raw power.

On the right was a slender man with piercing eyes, gripping a fiery-red spear.

The spear's body glowed like molten flames, its blood-red hue exuding an ominous aura, while its tip pulsed with a scorching heat that seemed capable of incinerating everything in its path.

Chapter 4703

“The Xiao Dynasty is just ahead, and Kai is among them,” the man in the brocade robe said.

“Brother, what are we waiting for? Let's charge into the Xiao Dynasty, kill Kai, and claim the Ten Palaces' reward!” the burly man urged impatiently.

These men were all part of a hidden force from the Heavenly Realm. Each was extraordinary, standing at the peak of the ninth grade of the Mahayana Realm.

Although they had yet to reach the Immortal Realm, in the Heavenly Realm, ninth-grade Mahayana cultivators were still regarded as supreme beings.

With three of them working together, they could likely sweep through the entire realm.

Now, all they needed was the right opportunity to ascend to the Immortal Realm.

And the reward of 100,000 immortal spirit stones was incredibly tempting—especially for peak ninth-grade Mahayana cultivators like them, who desperately needed immortal spirit stones to break through.

“Do you really think you can kill Kai?” the man in the brocade robe asked.

“Of course! Kai is only at the ninth grade of the Tribulation Realm. I could crush him with a single finger,” the burly man boasted confidently.

The man in the brocade robe chuckled. “If killing Kai were that easy, why would the Ten Palaces offer 100,000 immortal stones for his head?”

“How could a mere ninth-grade Tribulation Realm cultivator be worth such a fortune? He wouldn’t even be worth 100 immortal stones...”

“This...” The burly man fell silent, realizing the contradiction.

“Brother, are you saying the Ten Palaces’ kill order is a trap?” the thin man asked cautiously.

“Exactly. The Ten Palaces think everyone is a fool,” the man in the brocade robe said with a faint smile. “The Heaven Ascension Ladder is about to appear, and now, of all times, they issue this bounty. Clearly, they’re trying to stir the waters—to lure out and observe all the hidden forces in the shadows.”

“Besides, Kai isn’t as easy to kill as you assume. I’ve looked into him. The Ten Palaces have failed repeatedly. Even the Demon Sealing League, one of their strongest arms, spent a hundred years’ worth of offerings to hunt him down—and still failed.”

The man in the brocade robe smirked, his gaze filled with intrigue. “Brother, since we know this is a trap, why are we still heading there? Wouldn’t our time be better spent cultivating?”

The burly man voiced his frustration.

“Shut up! I have my reasons for making this decision,” the man in the brocade robe said coldly.

The burly man immediately fell silent, lowering his head in submission.

The three of them moved swiftly toward the Xiao Dynasty, their powerful auras instantly sensed by everyone within the kingdom.

Panic spread through the Xiao Dynasty as people gathered in alarm.

Three peak ninth-grade Mahayana cultivators—this was no small matter!

Previously, just one ninth-grade Mahayana cultivator under the Tenth Prince had nearly brought the Xiao Dynasty to its knees. If not for Mr. Shi's intervention, the dynasty might have been wiped out entirely.

And now, three had arrived at once. The sheer threat was unimaginable.

Xiao Yuanshan and Xiao Feng also felt the overwhelming presence and immediately sprang into action.

In the blink of an eye, they appeared before the three intruders.

Xiao Yuanshan stepped forward, scrutinized the newcomers, then gave a respectful bow.

“I am Xiao Yuanshan of the Xiao Dynasty. May I ask where the three of you hail from?”

The man in the brocade robe took a step forward and replied politely, “We three brothers come from Nanhua Peak. Today, we are here to meet Mr. Kai.”

“Nanhua Peak?” Xiao Yuanshan was momentarily taken aback but quickly realized they must belong to a hidden force.

Maintaining his composure, he responded, “Unfortunately, Mr. Chen is currently in seclusion and cannot receive guests. Are you acquaintances of his? If so, you may leave your names, and I will inform him once he completes his cultivation.”

The burly man let out a disdainful snort.

“Acquaintances? That little Tribulation Realm cultivator isn't worthy of being our friend! We're here to kill him. Tell him to come out and accept his fate!”

As soon as the words left his mouth, the man in the brocade robe's expression darkened visibly.

Xiao Yuanshan and Xiao Feng both frowned, their bodies tensing as they prepared for battle.

Chapter 4704

“If you want to kill Mr. Chen, you'll have to destroy the Xiao Dynasty first!”

As soon as Xiao Yuanshan finished speaking, hundreds of cultivators soared into the air, aligning themselves behind him in perfect unison.

The tension between both sides escalated instantly.

Meanwhile, Yun Li was inside a room, calmly painting, while Shi Lan gently patted his back.

“It's getting lively out there. There are still fools who actually believe in that kill order and dare to come to the Xiao Dynasty for Kai,” Yun Li said with a faint smile.

“Yun Li, should we step in? I'm afraid the Xiao Dynasty won't be able to hold them off for long,” Shi Lan asked.

“Don't worry. I'm supposed to be dead, and the dead don't interfere,” Yun Li replied before continuing his painting, completely unbothered.

Above the Xiao Dynasty, the man in the brocade robe smiled at Xiao Yuanshan and said, “Emperor Xiao, don't misunderstand. My brother is blunt with his words. We mean no harm—we simply came to see Mr. Chen.”

“As I said, Mr. Chen is in seclusion. He has no time for visitors,” Xiao Yuanshan replied coldly.

Now that he understood their true intentions, he was in no mood for pleasantries.

The man in the brocade robe chuckled. “That’s fine. We’ll wait until Mr. Chen finishes his seclusion. Please inform us when the time comes.”

With that, he waved his hand, and the three of them retreated, distancing themselves from the Xiao Dynasty.

Seeing them leave, Xiao Yuanshan signaled his forces to stand down and led them back into the city.

Watching Xiao Yuanshan return, the burly man scowled in frustration. “Brother, with the Xiao Dynasty’s strength, we could’ve—”

“Shut up, you fool!” The man in the brocade robe cut him off sharply, his expression dark with irritation, as if he were moments away from slapping him.

The thin man beside him added, “Were you kicked in the head by a donkey? I’ve never seen anyone as stupid as you!”

The burly man’s face darkened, and he snapped, “Brother, I can take it from you, but who the hell do you think you are? I’m still your second brother! Is that how you talk to me?” “So what if you’re the second brother? If you have no brains, then just keep your mouth shut!” the thin man snapped, glaring at him. “Think for a moment! The Xiao Dynasty is nothing more than an ant compared to us, yet why wasn’t Xiao Yuanshan afraid? Why did he act like he was ready to fight to the death?”

“H-He’s just ignorant. He doesn’t understand our strength,” the burly man argued.

“That’s nonsense! We didn’t even bother concealing our aura. How could Xiao Yuanshan not know? If he were truly ignorant, he wouldn’t have confronted us so directly.”

“The fact that he’s completely unafraid proves that there are powerful figures backing the Xiao Dynasty, you idiot!” the thin man scolded.

“To hell with you—” The burly man, now furious, was about to lash out.

“Enough!”

The man in the brocade robe snapped coldly, stopping their argument before continuing, “The third brother is right. The Ten Palaces have sent people to attack the Xiao Dynasty before, yet every attempt ended in failure. That alone proves there’s a hidden force protecting them.”

“I also heard that Luo Ta from the Ten Palaces was killed instantly—only to be resurrected. That’s not something an ordinary cultivator can do.”

“What? Resurrected?” The burly man’s face was filled with disbelief.

“I only heard rumors, but the Ten Palaces wouldn’t offer 100,000 immortal spirit stones for nothing. If killing Kai was easy, they wouldn’t need to pay such a high price.”

“We must be cautious—especially now, with the Ladder to Heaven about to appear,” the man in the brocade robe warned.

The burly man frowned and said, “Brother, that may be true, but you know as well as I do—great rewards come with great risks. If we’re too cautious, we won’t even get a scrap of the benefits. Others will surely come for Kai as well.”

“If they do, we’ll let them go first. Have you ever heard of the snipe and the clam fighting while the fisherman reaps the reward?”

The man in the brocade robe smirked at the burly man.

“I’ve heard of it, I’ve heard of it! I get it now!” The burly man nodded eagerly.

Chapter 4705

On the other side, Xiao Yuanshan brought Xiao Feng back to the imperial city and went straight to check on Kai, who was tempering his body.

At that moment, Xiao Yuanshan's expression was grim.

"Father, why did those three try to kill Mr. Chen? Could he have some connection to these hidden forces?" Xiao Feng asked, puzzled.

Xiao Yuanshan shook his head. "I don't know either. But no matter what, we must wait until Mr. Chen finishes tempering his body. During this time, even if it means putting the entire Xiao Dynasty at risk, we cannot allow anyone to get near him!"

"I understand. I'll mobilize our forces to secure the area," Xiao Feng nodded.

Just then, several powerful aura fluctuations emerged near the Xiao Dynasty, causing Xiao Yuanshan to frown.

"Another master is approaching. Could it be those three again?" Xiao Feng asked.

"No, the aura feels different," Xiao Yuanshan replied.

"What's going on? Why are so many powerful figures suddenly appearing in our Xiao Dynasty? Are they all after Mr. Chen?" Xiao Feng was full of doubts.

Neither Xiao Yuanshan nor Xiao Feng knew about the Ten Palaces' bounty on Kai. They couldn't fathom why so many masters had gathered.

"They're all here for Brother Chen..."

At that moment, Yun Li approached slowly.

"How do you know?" Xiao Feng asked.

“Because the Ten Palaces have placed a bounty of 100,000 immortal spirit stones on Kai’s head. That’s why they’re here,” Yun Li said calmly.

“100,000 immortal spirit stones?” Xiao Yuanshan was shocked. He hadn’t expected the Ten Palaces to offer such a hefty reward.

“If these people are after Mr. Chen, why haven’t they acted yet? If even those three cultivators had attacked earlier, our entire Xiao Dynasty might not have been able to stop them!” Xiao Feng said in confusion.

Xiao Yuanshan gazed at the sky, deep in thought. “Perhaps these people have their concerns. Mr. Shi has strengthened the fortune of my Xiao Dynasty for thousands of years, proving that our dynasty can endure for millennia.”

“If they act within the Xiao Dynasty, they’ll have to think twice. These are intelligent people—they must have investigated thoroughly before coming.”

“Father is right. With Mr. Shi protecting us, who would dare make a move here? I think those three were trying to lure Mr. Chen out so they could strike beyond our borders. As long as we keep Mr. Chen inside, they won’t get the chance,” Xiao Feng said.

“Exactly. We just need to ensure Mr. Chen doesn’t leave the Xiao Dynasty,” Xiao Yuanshan nodded in agreement.

“Do you really think Kai will stay?”

Yun Li spoke before turning to leave.

Though he had only just met Kai, he already understood his character well.

Xiao Yuanshan and Xiao Feng fell silent. Watching Kai endure the torment of the thunder tribulation, they found themselves at a loss.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Suddenly, a deafening roar filled the air as terrifying bolts of thunder struck down upon Kai with relentless force.

Yun Li, who had been walking away, stopped in his tracks and turned back to look at Kai in midair.

Kai's body radiated a dazzling golden light.

Even his skin had taken on a golden hue!

“He achieved this so quickly?”

Yun Li muttered in astonishment.

The body-refining scroll was a secret technique of the God Clan. Many of their people had spent centuries—some even thousands of years—practicing it.

Yun Li himself had trained for years, yet he had never seen anyone progress as fast as Kai.

The God Clan considered themselves naturally gifted, yet not a single one of their cultivators had ever mastered the body-refining scroll at such a speed!

The golden light around Kai grew increasingly intense. Even without activating the Indestructible Golden Body, his flesh alone radiated a brilliance never seen before.

“Mr. Chen... you are truly a god...”

Xiao Yuanshan's eyes sparkled with awe, his face full of admiration.

Kai's immense strength signified that the Xiao Dynasty would only grow more powerful. At this moment, Xiao Yuanshan felt incredibly fortunate to have befriended Kai, bringing an unprecedented opportunity to his dynasty.

Chapter 4706

Ten Palaces

Huo Qing lay comfortably in his bedroom, having never left the Ten Palaces. He wasn't the least bit worried about the Ten Palaces Master causing trouble for him.

His purpose in coming here was simply to go through the motions and enhance his reputation. After all, the Huo family was a prestigious name within the God Clan. The Ten Palaces Master might hold authority, but he wouldn't dare act against him.

As Huo Qing lounged lazily, a thin old man entered the room.

"What is it? Is Kai dead?" Huo Qing asked.

"Master, many cultivators have gathered in the Xiao Dynasty, but none have made a move yet. It seems they're hesitating," the old man replied.

"I know exactly what they're afraid of. It's not surprising they haven't acted—after all, there's no guarantee the Ten Palaces can actually produce 100,000 fairy spirit stones."

"Besides, Kai has a powerful backer. These people aren't fools; they must have done their research. We can't just manipulate them at will," Huo Qing said, as if he had anticipated the situation all along.

"Master, Lin Kedong from Sun Moon City has also led his men to the Xiao Dynasty—likely for the bounty," the old man informed him.

"What?" Huo Qing abruptly sat up. "That fool fell for it too?"

"Haha! Lin Chong always boasts about his intelligence, yet he raised such a foolish son. If Lin Kedong actually kills Kai, things will get very interesting!"

“Master, would Lin Kedong really be that reckless? With so many cultivators already gathered near the Xiao Dynasty, if none of them have taken action, why would he?” the old man questioned.

“If he doesn’t, we’ll push him into it.”

With that, Huo Qing retrieved a storage bag and tossed it to the old man. “This contains 20,000 fairy spirit stones. Deliver it to Lin Kedong and tell him it’s an advance payment from the Ten Palaces. Once he sees so many fairy spirit stones, he won’t hesitate!”

“Master, are we really just handing over 20,000 fairy spirit stones like this?” the old man asked reluctantly, clutching the bag.

“You can’t catch a wolf without sacrificing a lamb. If Lin Kedong kills Kai, he’ll surely demand the remaining 80,000 from the Ten Palaces. Let’s see how the Ten Palaces Masters handle that!”

Huo Qing waved his hand dismissively, signaling the old man to carry out his orders.

The old man withdrew, his eyes burning with greed as he stared at the 20,000 immortal spirit stones in his hands.

Twenty thousand immortal spirit stones!

For a moment, he was tempted to kill Kai himself and keep the fortune.

But he knew all too well—he wasn’t strong enough to take on Kai. Sun Moon City

Lin Chong sat across from Taoist Wuji, engaged in a long and deliberate game of chess. It often took them dozens of days to determine a winner.

“Father! Father! My eldest brother is missing! The guards said he left Sun Moon City!”

Lin Kefan, the fourth son, rushed into the hall in a panic.

“Where did he go? If Ruoya is with him, he should be fine,” Lin Chong said calmly, still holding a chess piece, contemplating his next move.

“Father, I think he saw the bounty and went after Kai. One hundred thousand immortal spirit stones is too tempting for him to ignore,” Lin Kefan reasoned.

“What?!”

Lin Chong’s hand trembled, and the chess piece slipped from his fingers. His brow furrowed deeply.

“That fool actually believed the Ten Palaces’ bounty? Those Protoss cultivators are arrogant and self-serving—do you really think they’d just hand over 100,000 immortal spirit stones to anyone?”

“Go and bring him back immediately! He’s walking straight into the Ten Palaces’ trap. This is infuriating! If the Ten Palaces find out about this, I’ll be utterly humiliated!”

Lin Chong’s face turned red with anger, his voice booming through the hall.

“Father, my brother might not listen to me...” Lin Kefan hesitated.

“Take my token. If he refuses to return, tell him he’s no longer welcome in Sun Moon City. He can fend for himself!”

Lin Chong tossed a token to Lin Kefan.

Lin Kefan caught it and hurried off without another word.

Chapter 4707

Above the Xiao Dynasty!

Two powerful auras rushed toward the Xiao Dynasty with overwhelming force.

“Brother, more people have arrived. It looks like they’re also after Kai. Just how many are coming?”

The thin man peered into the distance, his brow furrowed.

“The more, the better. In the chaos, we can take advantage of the situation,” the man in the brocade robe said with a sly smile.

“Brother, if so many people are after Kai, what if someone gets to him first? Wouldn’t that mean we came all this way for nothing?”

“I think we should act now and take him out before anyone else does.”

The burly man, unable to contain his impatience, clenched his fists.

“You fool! So many people are here, yet not a single one has dared to step into the Xiao Dynasty and make a move. Have you even stopped to wonder why?”

“These cultivators have lived for thousands of years; they’re no fools. If they’re holding back, it’s because they’ve done their research. Stay put and don’t act without my command!”

The man in the brocade robe shot the burly man a sharp glare.

The burly man lowered his head, silent but visibly displeased.

Just then, two more figures approached swiftly. As they drew closer, the group saw a male cultivator leading the way, with a woman dressed in white following behind.

It was Lin Kedong and Lin Ruoya.

Sensing that Lin Kedong and Lin Ruoya weren’t stronger than them, the three men stepped forward to intercept them.

Before they could speak, Lin Kedong sneered.

“Move aside. You’re here for the 100,000 fairy spirit stones too? You think you have what it takes to kill Kai?”

The three men were momentarily stunned. They hadn’t expected Lin Kedong to be so arrogant.

“You little bastard! Who do you think you are, telling us to move?”

The burly man’s face darkened with rage. He gripped his meteor hammer, spinning it menacingly.

“I ought to crush you with one swing... and maybe have some fun with the girl behind you afterward!”

“You—!” The moment Lin Ruoya heard those words, anger surged through her. Without hesitation, she drew her sword.

Lin Kedong’s voice turned icy. “You want to know who I am? Listen well—I am Lin Kedong from Sun Moon City. Forget about killing me with a hammer. If you so much as lay a finger on me, Sun Moon City will tear you apart until there’s nothing left of you!”

“Sun Moon City?”

The three men were visibly stunned, instinctively stepping back.

The burly man, in particular, looked extremely unsettled.

They were mere rogue cultivators—how could they possibly go up against Sun Moon City? It was one of the most powerful hidden forces in the Heavenly World.

“Mr. Lin, my deepest apologies. My brother was reckless. Please, forgive his offense.”

The man in the brocade robe put on a flattering smile, his tone dripping with deference.

Seeing this, Lin Kedong finally smirked. Nothing felt better than being fawned over.

“You three just sit back and watch. Once I kill Kai and claim the 100,000 immortal spirit stones, I might even throw you a little reward.”

His tone was arrogant, filled with superiority.

“Thank you, Mr. Lin...”

The man in the brocade robe quickly expressed his gratitude.

But Lin Ruoya frowned, stepping forward.

“Grand Prince, the Xiao Dynasty has been under the protection of powerful masters for thousands of years. We can’t just charge in recklessly and kill someone.”

“Besides, the Ten Palaces aren’t trustworthy. Even if we do kill Kai, there’s no guarantee we’ll ever see those 100,000 immortal spirit stones. Please reconsider!”

She pleaded earnestly.

Lin Kedong burst into laughter.

“Hahaha! How many times do I have to tell you? I couldn’t care less whether the Ten Palaces honor their bounty. If I kill Kai and they refuse to pay up, I’ll march the Imperial Guards straight into the Ten Palaces and raze them to the ground!”

His words dripped with arrogance, his confidence unwavering.

The three men in brocade robes remained silent, not daring to challenge him. After all, Sun Moon City's strength was undeniable—perhaps even superior to the Ten Palaces themselves.

Chapter 4708

“Mr. Lin, the Tenth Palace is not one to go back on its word. You must have misunderstood us!”

At that moment, a thin old man approached slowly.

“You’re from the Tenth Palace?” Lin Kedong asked, eyeing him suspiciously.

“Yes. I’ve come to deliver 20,000 immortal spirit stones as a deposit. Once the task is complete, I will personally hand over the remaining 80,000 immortal spirit stones to you.”

As he finished speaking, the old man tossed a storage bag to Lin Kedong.

Lin Kedong opened it and found that it really contained 20,000 immortal spirit stones. His face lit up with excitement.

“I didn’t expect the Tenth Palace to be so generous. A 20,000 immortal spirit stone deposit? Don’t worry, now that I’ve accepted your payment, Kai is as good as dead.”

His voice brimmed with confidence.

The three other cultivators nearby watched with envy.

“Fellow Daoist, we can help kill Kai too,” the burly man said, unable to resist the temptation of the immortal spirit stones. “We’ll only ask for a 10,000-stone deposit. What do you say?”

Lin Kedong’s face darkened instantly.

“You bastards dare steal my business right in front of me?”

His aura erupted, and it looked like he was about to strike at any moment.

“Mr. Lin, please calm down! We wouldn’t dare compete with you. We’ll leave right away!”

The man in the brocade robe quickly forced a smile, grabbed the burly man, and dragged him away.

Once they were at a safe distance, the man in the brocade robe glared at his companion.

“Second Brother, you’re an idiot! You nearly got us all killed just now. Do you have any idea who you just provoked? That’s the eldest young master of Sun Moon City!”

The burly man scratched his head, looking aggrieved.

“Brother, I... I just couldn’t help myself when I saw all those immortal spirit stones.”

“And the Tenth Palace actually seems trustworthy—they even paid a deposit.”

The man in the brocade robe let out a frustrated sigh.

“We’re just independent cultivators, with no background and no one to rely on. If we acted recklessly like you all the time, we’d have died without a burial place long ago!” “If this continues, my eldest brother and I will end up dead because of you!”

The thin man spoke with clear frustration.

“Shut up! Everyone is responsible for their own actions. Lin Kedong is only at the peak of the ninth level of the Mahayana Realm—what’s so terrifying about that? The three of us could take him down in minutes!”

“Once Lin Kedong is dead, how would Sun Moon City ever know who did it? You’re just a coward!”

The burly man roared at the thin man, his anger boiling over. He didn’t dare challenge his eldest brother, but he had no reservations about taking it out on their third brother.

Hearing the burly man’s reckless words, the man in the brocade robe let out a soft sigh, his face filled with disappointment.

Just as the sigh escaped, the thin man suddenly struck—his spear shot forward, its fiery red tip aimed straight for the burly man’s chest!

Caught off guard, the burly man barely managed to block with his meteor hammer, roaring in shock.

“Damn it! Are you insane? You’re actually trying to kill me—”

“Second Brother, it’s not just me who wants you dead. My eldest brother and I both do...”

The thin man’s voice was cold and firm.

“What...?” The burly man turned in disbelief toward the man in the brocade robe. Before he could say another word, a powerful fist slammed into him.

Boom!

His body shattered instantly, leaving only a wisp of his soul struggling to escape.

“Big Brother... why?” His soul trembled with fury and grief.

“You’re a fool. If we let you live, you’ll get us all killed sooner or later. It’s better to deal with the problem now.”

The man in the brocade robe waved his hand.

In an instant, the burly man's soul was completely erased—vanishing as if he had never existed.

Only his meteor hammer remained, crashing heavily to the ground and leaving a deep pit in its wake.

Chapter 4709

“Third Brother, you don't blame me for this, do you?” the man in the brocade robe asked.

“Big Brother, I've wanted to get rid of that idiot for a long time. He has brute strength but no brains. If it weren't for the two of us constantly saving him, he would've died countless times by now.”

“And today, he even said he'd kill the son of Sun Moon City. A fool like that was bound to bring us trouble sooner or later.”

The thin man spoke with disdain.

“Now, it's just the two of us. We must trust each other. One hundred thousand immortal spirit stones are tempting, but nothing is more important than staying alive.”

“If you lose your life, even a million immortal spirit stones are worthless.”

The man in the brocade robe sighed.

“Big Brother, I understand. Don't worry—I won't be blinded by greed!”

The thin man nodded in agreement.

“It's good that you understand. We are just casual cultivators. Even though we've worked hard to reach the ninth level of the Mahayana Realm, compared to the great clans and hidden forces, we're nothing more than ants.”

“Now, with so many powerful figures gathered around the Xiao Dynasty, even if we manage to kill Kai and claim the 100,000 immortal spirit stones, do you really think we’ll live to enjoy it?”

“Besides, do you really believe the Ten Palaces will hand over the full reward?”

The man in the brocade robe spoke helplessly.

Though their strength allowed them to act freely in the Tianren Realm, in the eyes of those powerful hidden factions, they were still insignificant.

The biggest problem was that they had no backing—no clan or force to rely on. Survival as a casual cultivator in the Tianren Realm was an uphill battle.

“Big Brother, what should we do next?”

The thin man asked.

“Wait. Wait for the right opportunity...”

The man in the brocade robe replied.

“What opportunity?” the thin man asked.

But the man in the brocade robe remained silent, his gaze fixed on the distant Xiao Dynasty.

...

Xiao Dynasty.

“Father, there are already more than a dozen terrifying auras gathered around the Xiao Dynasty.” Xiao Feng looked at Xiao Yuanshan, his face filled with concern.

Xiao Yuanshan remained silent, his expression solemn as he gazed in the direction of the thunder tribulation.

Right now, his only hope was for Kai to complete his body tempering as soon as possible—after all, all these people had come for him.

Just then, a sudden thunderclap echoed across the sky!

A golden light shot up, its immense power signaling that someone had successfully overcome the tribulation.

As more cultivators crossed the tribulation, the dark clouds in the sky gradually thinned, and the intensity of the lightning weakened.

Finally, when the last bolt of tribulation lightning struck Kai, his eyes suddenly snapped open!

Boom!

A brilliant golden light erupted from his body, surging skyward before exploding in the air. An overwhelming aura spread across the entire Xiao Dynasty, filling everyone with an oppressive sense of awe.

Under the gaze of countless cultivators, Kai slowly emerged from the golden light.

At that moment, his entire body glowed with a golden hue—even his hair shimmered with radiant light. He emanated a terrifying strength and pressure, yet there was no trace of spiritual energy.

This was pure physical power.

From a distance, Yun Li stepped out of his room and looked at Kai, his eyes filled with both admiration and envy.

“Mr. Chen, congratulations! Your physical body has reached an incredible level of strength!”

Xiao Yuanshan was the first to step forward, his face lighting up with joy.

Kai smiled faintly and glanced around at the hundreds of cultivators.

Although they had successfully passed their tribulations, the path ahead would only become more difficult. After all, Kai had endured the full force of the tribulation for them.

While this allowed them to break through, it came with a price—future cultivation would be far more challenging, and their realms might stagnate. This was precisely why most cultivators preferred to face tribulation alone rather than relying on external help.

“Emperor Xiao, I hope you can take care of these cultivators,” Kai said, turning to Xiao Yuanshan.

“Rest assured, Mr. Chen. The Xiao Dynasty will not forget the sacrifices they made to help temper your body. I will have Xiao Feng record their contributions and ensure they receive additional resources.”

Xiao Yuanshan promised with sincerity.

Chapter 4710

Kai nodded, then looked up at the sky and said slowly, “With so many powerful auras gathered, it seems that 100,000 immortal spirit stones are indeed quite tempting.”

Xiao Yuanshan was taken aback. “Mr. Chen, you know about the Ten Palaces Killing Order?”

“Of course I do. These people must be coming for me, right?”

Kai chuckled.

Xiao Yuanshan nodded before explaining everything that had happened since Kai tempered his body.

“Mr. Chen, these individuals belong to the hidden forces of the Heavenly Realm. I’ve recognized three of them—each at the peak of the ninth grade in the Mahayana Realm. They are not to be underestimated.”

“They won’t dare step into the Xiao Dynasty to trouble you, so I suggest you remain here and avoid going out recklessly.”

“The peak of the ninth grade in the Mahayana Realm?”

Kai smirked, and in an instant, his figure vanished.

Xiao Yuanshan was startled and immediately shouted, “Everyone, move out and protect Mr. Chen!”

In an instant, hundreds of cultivators across the imperial city soared into the sky, following after Kai.

“It’s starting...”

Lin Kedong smiled faintly as he watched the cultivators emerge from the imperial city of the Xiao Dynasty.

Moments later, Kai appeared before Lin Kedong.

Glancing at Lin Kedong and Lin Ruoya standing behind him, Kai felt reassured.

With the two of them working together, there was nothing for him to fear.

“A Mahayana Realm second-level cultivator... Not bad, not bad...”

Lin Kedong eyed Kai arrogantly, a sneer on his lips. “So, you’re Kai?”

“That’s right. And who are you?”

“The one who’s going to kill you...”

As soon as Lin Kedong finished speaking, he flashed forward, appearing directly in front of Kai! Without hesitation, Lin Kedong lunged at Kai, intent on killing him as quickly as possible, claiming the 100,000 fairy stones, and returning to Sun Moon City before any more trouble arose.

His figure shot forward like lightning, but just as he was about to strike, Kai vanished like a phantom. Lin Kedong's attack missed completely, and a flicker of shock flashed in his eyes.

“How is this possible?”

A chill ran down his spine. He spun around abruptly—only to see Kai standing behind him, a mocking smile on his lips.

“Your speed is truly disappointing.”

Kai's voice was calm as he struck out with his palm, landing a heavy blow on Lin Kedong's back.

Lin Kedong groaned as he was sent flying, his body tumbling like a kite with a broken string before crashing to the ground. A cloud of dust billowed into the air.

Not far away, two men in brocade robes witnessed the scene, their expressions frozen in shock.

“This... is the strength of a second-level Mahayana cultivator?”

The thin man muttered, his eyes filled with disbelief.

Lin Kedong pushed himself up from the ground, his face as dark as storm clouds, fury burning in his heart. He hadn't expected to be humiliated so easily in front of Kai, and the realization only deepened his frustration.

Kai had effortlessly neutralized his attack—he hadn't even had the chance to retaliate.

“Do you dare to try again?”

Kai smirked, his eyes glinting with amusement.

“You...!” Lin Kedong’s expression twisted in rage as he clenched his teeth.

He knew he wasn’t Kai’s match, but he refused to accept defeat. Taking a deep breath, he gathered all his spiritual energy and prepared to strike once more.

“Hah! Ridiculous.”

Kai shook his head before vanishing again. In the blink of an eye, he reappeared in front of Lin Kedong. Spiritual energy gathered in his palm, condensing into a brilliant ray of light as he launched his attack.

“Stay back!” Lin Kedong staggered in fear, trying to retreat—but it was useless. Kai’s speed was overwhelming, and within an instant, he had cornered him completely.

“Is this the outcome you were hoping for?”

Kai’s voice was cold as the radiant energy in his palm erupted, striking Lin Kedong squarely in the chest.

Chapter 4711

“Ah!” Lin Kedong screamed as he was sent flying once again, like a kite with a broken string. He crashed heavily to the ground, coughing up blood.

“You dare—!”

Seeing this, Lin Ruoya drew her sword and charged at Kai.

No matter how arrogant Lin Kedong was, he was still the eldest prince. As his follower, if anything happened to him, she would face certain death—her entire family would be implicated as well.

Before Lin Ruoya's attack could land, Xiao Yuanshan leaped forward, leading a group of Xiao Dynasty cultivators to surround her.

Despite being at the eighth level of the Mahayana Realm, Lin Ruoya was no match for Xiao Yuanshan and his forces. Within moments, she was subdued.

The man in the brocade robe stood frozen, unable to believe what he had just witnessed.

Lin Kedong, a peak ninth-level Mahayana expert, had been completely overpowered by Kai without even the chance to fight back—it was unthinkable.

Just moments ago, they had been eager to kill Kai and claim the 100,000 fairy stones. But now, after seeing this display of power, their confidence wavered.

“What are you standing there for? Help me!”

Lin Kedong roared at the man in the brocade robe, his voice laced with both fury and humiliation.

But the man hesitated. Fear of Kai's strength gripped his heart, and no one dared to step forward.

At that moment, Kai stood like a lion, poised to tear apart his prey at any time.

“It seems you're nothing special after all,” he said calmly, a flicker of disdain in his eyes.

Lin Kedong clenched his teeth, seething with rage, yet utterly helpless. He knew he was trapped—Kai was far beyond anything he could handle.

Never in his wildest dreams had he imagined that someone at the second level of the Mahayana Realm could be this powerful. Against Kai, he was completely defenseless.

“Boy, do you even know who I am?”

Lin Kedong growled, his glare burning with anger.

“I don’t care who you are. Since you’re so eager to die, I’ll grant your wish.”

With that, Kai struck again, delivering another powerful blow to Lin Kedong.

He had assumed Lin Kedong was part of the Ten Palaces. After all, Yun Li had told him that Huo Qing from the Ten Palaces had been sent to deal with him.

And since Kai had already promised Yun Li that he would kill Huo Qing, he showed no mercy. Had Kai known that Lin Kedong was Lin Keting’s elder brother, he would never have struck so ruthlessly!

Seeing Kai attacking again, Lin Kedong panicked and tried to retreat, but he wasn’t fast enough!

Bang!

Kai’s palm struck Lin Kedong’s back, sending him crashing to the ground like a fallen dog. Blood spurted from his mouth, leaving him looking utterly wretched.

At that moment, Lin Kedong’s eyes filled with terror.

“Let me send you on your way...”

Kai glanced down at the humiliated Lin Kedong and raised his foot, ready to stomp on his head.

“Stop!”

A sudden flash of light streaked through the air, and in the next instant, Lin Kefan appeared in front of Kai. With a single palm strike, he forced Kai to take two steps back.

“Brother, are you alright?”

Lin Kefan stepped forward and helped Lin Kedong to his feet.

With Lin Kefan’s arrival, Lin Kedong immediately regained his confidence.

“Fourth Brother, kill him! Kill him for me!”

Lin Kedong gritted his teeth, his bloodshot eyes filled with murderous intent.

Lin Kefan ignored his brother’s rage and turned his gaze to Kai.

“You’re Kai?” he asked.

“I am,” Kai replied with a nod, then glanced at Lin Kedong. “Are you here to die as well?”

Lin Kefan remained unfazed by the disrespect, instead looking back at Lin Kedong.

“Brother, the emperor has ordered you to return with me immediately.”

“I want—” Lin Kedong started, but his fury drowned out any reason. All he could think about was killing Kai.

Being humiliated in public was something he could never tolerate!

At that moment, Lin Kefan pulled out a token and spoke in a firm voice.

“The emperor has given his order. Either you come with me now—or you never return at all.”

Chapter 4712

Seeing the token, Lin Kedong instantly deflated. He had no choice but to glare fiercely at Kai before turning to Lin Kefan.

“I’ll go back with you...” he muttered.

But just as Lin Kedong was about to leave with Lin Kefan, Kai raised the Dragon Slashing Sword, blocking their path.

“You think you can come and go as you please? It’s not that simple. If you want to leave, then leave your life behind...”

With a flick of his wrist, Kai swung the Dragon Slashing Sword, and a surge of sword energy rippled through the heavens and earth.

Lin Kefan’s brows furrowed, while Lin Kedong’s eyes widened in fury.

“Boy, you’re playing with fire...” Lin Kedong sneered.

“I’m playing with your mother—today, I—”

Before Kai could finish, two men in brocade robes suddenly approached at high speed.

Sensing their powerful auras, Kai’s expression shifted slightly.

He was confident in his ability to fight Lin Kedong and Lin Kefan.

But if these two ninth-grade Mahayana experts joined the battle, he knew his chances of winning were slim.

“You two—get lost!”

Kai waved a hand, signaling Lin Kedong and Lin Kefan to leave.

“Go to hell!” Lin Kedong roared, but Lin Kefan quickly pulled him away.

Lin Ruoya followed closely behind, but Kai didn't stop her. Instead, his attention remained locked on the two brocade-robed men, his guard up.

"Mr. Chen, it was those three who came after you first..."

Xiao Yuanshan stepped forward, but as he spoke, he suddenly noticed something.

"Wait—weren't there three of them? Where's the big guy with the meteor hammer?"

The brocade-robed man ignored Xiao Yuanshan's question and instead approached Kai, bowing respectfully.

"Greetings, Mr. Chen. My name is Xuan Bin, and this is my third brother, Zhou Tang."

Kai was slightly taken aback by their polite demeanor.

"Weren't there three of you? Where's your second brother?" he asked.

"He's dead," Xuan Bin replied without hesitation.

"Dead?"

Both Xiao Yuanshan and Kai were shocked.

"I killed him myself," Xuan Bin admitted. "He was blinded by greed. He wanted to kill you and claim the 100,000 immortal spirit stones from the Ten Palaces." "I had no choice but to kill him," Xuan Bin admitted honestly.

Kai and Xiao Yuanshan were stunned upon hearing the reason behind Xuan Bin's actions.

"You killed your own brother just for that?"

Kai looked at Xuan Bin in disbelief.

“That reason was more than enough. I knew that if he attacked you, Mr. Chen, all three of us would end up dead with no burial place.”

“For my own survival and the safety of my third brother, I had no choice but to eliminate him first,” Xuan Bin explained.

Kai frowned. “And you’re so certain I could have killed all three of you?”

He couldn’t understand how Xuan Bin, who had just met him, was so convinced of his strength.

“I’m not certain,” Xuan Bin admitted. “But I do know that your future is limitless. Even if you failed to kill us now, we would eventually die at your hands.”

“Seeing you defeat Lin Kedong so effortlessly only confirmed my suspicions,” Xuan Bin continued, his tone sincere and devoid of flattery.

“Wait a minute!”

Kai’s expression froze as he stared at Xuan Bin.

“What did you just say? What’s the name of the guy I just beat?”

“Lin Kedong, the eldest prince of Sun Moon City,” Xuan Bin replied.

“Fuck...”

Kai inhaled sharply, his mind going blank.

All this time, he had assumed Lin Kedong was Huo Qing from the Ten Palaces, which was why he hadn’t held back.

But now he realized—Lin Kedong was actually his brother-in-law?!

This was bad.

Very bad.

He had beaten up his own brother-in-law—how was he supposed to face Lin Keting after this?

And worse... had he just cursed at him in public, yelling, “I’m going to play with your mother...”?

Wasn’t Lin Kedong’s mother also his future mother-in-law?!

A wave of horror washed over Kai. His entire body went numb.

Chapter 4713

“Mr. Chen, what’s wrong? Are you worried that Sun Moon City will come after you?”

Noticing Kai’s expression, Xiao Yuanshan lowered his voice and asked.

“Oh, it’s nothing,” Kai snapped back to reality. “I’m not afraid of Sun Moon City. In fact, I’m planning to go there myself.”

“Mr. Chen, Sun Moon City isn’t a place you can just walk into,” Xuan Bin warned. “And after injuring their eldest prince, if you go there now, you’ll definitely face retaliation.”

“It’s fine,” Kai replied with a faint smile. “It might just be a misunderstanding. I’ll handle it, and that’ll be the end of it.”

Even though he had injured Lin Kedong, it wasn’t a fatal wound. They wouldn’t execute him the moment he arrived.

At worst, he’d be given a lecture or scolded by Lin Keting.

Seeing that Kai wasn’t concerned, Xuan Bin dropped the subject. Instead, he asked, “Mr. Chen, is it true that the entire Xiao Dynasty has been blessed by someone?”

Kai nodded. “Yes.”

“Who did it?” Xuan Bin pressed further.

“Just an elder from my family. Why do you ask?” Kai frowned, puzzled by Xuan Bin’s curiosity.

Xuan Bin observed Kai’s casual demeanor and sighed with a wry smile. “No wonder you’re not afraid of Sun Moon City. With such an elder backing you, you have nothing to fear in the entire Tianren Realm!”

“It’s just a minor blessing—only a few thousand years of luck added to the Xiao Dynasty. Nothing extraordinary,” Kai said calmly. “If Mr. Shi were truly displeased, he could erase this entire star field in an instant.”

Xuan Bin fell silent. He couldn’t even fathom the power of the force behind Kai.

Erase a star field?

The Tianren Realm was just a single world, and there were countless worlds within the star field.

To destroy an entire star field in a minute? In front of such power, the cultivators of the Heavenly Realm were no better than ants.

“Don’t worry,” Kai said, noticing Xuan Bin’s fear. “I won’t provoke anyone unless they provoke me first. As long as you don’t offend me, I won’t kill you for no reason.”

In truth, Kai was just bluffing. He had no idea if Mr. Shi could truly destroy an entire star field in mere minutes.

He didn’t even know the full extent of Mr. Shi’s strength—but he had always seen him as an elder, someone capable of anything.

“Kid, you’re not the only one who can brag. Don’t feel pressured—I can destroy a star field too,” the Red Cloud Demon Lord chimed in.

“Star fields in lower-level universes are nothing. Wiping them out isn’t difficult at all!”

Kai looked at him skeptically. “Are you serious, or are you just boasting?”

“What’s there to boast about?” the Red Cloud Demon Lord scoffed. “Many of the worlds in low-level star fields are even weaker than this Heavenly Realm. I’ve destroyed a star field with a single punch before.”

“It’s a fact—you can check the records. I don’t brag.”

His eyes gleamed with pride as he recalled his past glory.

“A true hero doesn’t dwell on past achievements. Shut up,” Kai retorted before turning back to Xuan Bin.

“You didn’t come to the Xiao Dynasty just to find me, did you? Are you here because of the Ten Palaces’ kill order?”

Xuan Bin nodded. “Yes. The bounty of 100,000 immortal spirit stones is tempting, but we knew from the start we wouldn’t actually get it.”

“Even if we managed to kill you, the Ten Palaces wouldn’t hand over the reward so easily.”

“And even if they did, we three brothers wouldn’t be able to keep it. That 100,000 immortal spirit stones would turn into our death warrant.”

“Then why are you still here?” Kai asked, puzzled.

Chapter 4714

“Mr. Chen, we are independent cultivators. We’ve endured countless hardships to reach our current realm, yet we remain stuck at the peak of the ninth level of the Mahayana realm, unable to break through.”

“Unlike you, we have no powerful backing—we’ve only ever had each other to rely on.”

“Now that we’ve met you, my brother and I are willing to follow you, through fire and water, without hesitation...”

As Xuan Bin spoke, he suddenly dropped to his knees before Kai!

Xiao Yuanshan was instantly stunned, and even Kai was taken aback. He had never expected Xuan Bin—a peak ninth-level Mahayana cultivator—to kneel before him in front of everyone!

Cultivators of such power valued their pride above all else. To them, dignity was often more important than life itself.

Yet, Xuan Bin showed no concern for his pride at all.

Even Zhou Tang, who stood beside him, was wide-eyed in disbelief.

“Brother, what are you doing...?” Zhou Tang stammered, clearly bewildered.

“Kneel down,” Xuan Bin ordered coldly.

Zhou Tang hesitated for a moment but ultimately followed suit, kneeling beside his brother.

“My fellow Taoists, what are you doing? Get up, quickly!” Kai said, flustered. “Both of you are among the strongest in the Heavenly Realm.”

“My strength is nowhere near yours—this has to be some kind of joke!”

Kai hurried to pull them up.

In terms of cultivation and age, these two were far beyond him. The idea of them kneeling and pledging loyalty to him was something he dared not accept.

“Mr. Chen, this is no joke. If you refuse to accept us, we will remain kneeling forever!” Xuan Bin declared with unwavering sincerity.

“That’s right, I won’t get up either,” Zhou Tang added, standing firm in his decision, even if he didn’t fully understand his brother’s reasoning.

Kai sighed. “The Tenth Prince has issued a kill order on me, and yet you still wish to follow me? Aren’t you afraid of him?”

Xuan Bin smiled. “If Mr. Chen isn’t afraid of the Tenth Prince, why should we be?”

Xuan Bin spoke firmly.

Kai glanced around and said, “I have no idea how many masters are lurking nearby, waiting to kill me. Aren’t you afraid?”

“If anyone wants to harm Mr. Chen, they’ll have to step over our dead bodies first!”

Xuan Bin’s resolve was unwavering.

Seeing this, Kai nodded and smiled. “Alright...”

“Thank you, Chen—Mr. Chen...”

Xuan Bin quickly corrected himself, addressing Kai with the same respect as Xiao Yuanshan.

“Since you two have chosen to follow me, we’re family now. You can get up,” Kai said. “You’re both at a critical stage in breaking through to the Immortal Realm, and you’ll need a lot of resources.”

“I have 20,000 immortal spirit stones here—take 10,000 each.”

Without hesitation, Kai tossed two storage bags to Xuan Bin and Zhou Tang.

The 10,000 stones originally belonged to Yun Li, but Kai didn't feel the least bit regretful. Besides, with an entire spirit stone vein under his control in Beast City, he estimated he could mine 80,000 to 100,000 more.

20,000 immortal spirit stones?!

Xuan Bin and Zhou Tang stood up, their faces instantly lighting up with joy.

Such generosity!

Holding the storage bag, Xuan Bin beamed and said respectfully, "Thank you, Mr. Chen! We would follow you even to our deaths!"

Zhou Tang, equally overwhelmed, suddenly dropped to his knees with a loud thud!

"Thank you, Mr. Chen! From now on, I'm your dog—just say the word, and I'll bite whoever you tell me to!"

This time, Zhou Tang knelt of his own free will.

Before, he had only done so because of Xuan Bin. But now, he was more than willing—even if it meant kneeling for an entire day!

They say a man's dignity is worth its weight in gold, but what Kai had given them was far more valuable than gold itself!

"That's a bit much..."

Kai chuckled faintly.

Chapter 4715

At that moment, the surrounding void trembled as several Mahayana masters encircled them.

Each of these individuals was a ninth-grade Mahayana master exuding an intimidating aura.

Seeing the situation, Xiao Yuanshan frowned and immediately led his people to shield Kai.

Xuan Bin and Zhou Tang also drew their weapons.

Although they were clearly no match for the numerous ninth-grade Mahayana cultivators, having just pledged loyalty to Kai, they felt compelled to stand by him. Whether they could win or not was secondary—what mattered was showing their loyalty.

“I am Xuan Bin from Nanhua Peak. I now follow Mr. Chen. If you dare to attack him, my brothers and I will fight to the death!” Xuan Bin shouted boldly at the cultivators.

To their surprise, the cultivators ignored Xuan Bin entirely and walked straight toward Kai.

Just as Xuan Bin and Zhou Tang prepared to fight, the cultivators suddenly knelt before Kai.

“Mr. Chen, please accept us,” they pleaded in unison.

The sight left Xuan Bin, Xiao Yuanshan, and the others utterly stunned.

Even Kai was visibly shocked.

What was happening today?

Why were so many ninth-grade Mahayana cultivators eager to pledge loyalty to him?

“What is the meaning of this?” Kai asked, bewildered.

A bearded man raised his head and explained, “Mr. Chen, we are also independent cultivators and hope to follow you.”

The others echoed in unison, “We hope to follow Mr. Chen!”

“This...” Kai was momentarily speechless.

“Mr. Chen, we are willing to go through fire and water for you without hesitation,” the bearded man declared sincerely.

“Even if we must act as your dogs, we’ll bite whoever you command us to,” he added.

Zhou Tang was stunned—wasn’t that exactly what he had said before? How had this guy learned it so quickly?

“Mr. Chen, this is cause for celebration,” Zhou Tang remarked. “So many ninth-grade Mahayana cultivators want to follow you!” “If you accept these people, you’ll be unstoppable in the world of heaven and man. Even against the Ten Palaces, you’ll have a fighting chance!” Xiao Yuanshan whispered to Kai.

His message was clear—Kai should accept these cultivators.

Each of them was a ninth-grade Mahayana Realm master, far superior to Xiao Yuanshan himself.

Kai nodded in agreement. Since they had willingly come to him, there was no reason to refuse.

Having these powerful ninth-grade Mahayana cultivators by his side would be a tremendous advantage. One might not be impressive alone, but with so many, even an opponent recently ascended to the Immortal Realm wouldn’t be a threat.

“Alright, I accept you. From now on, you’ll follow me,” Kai declared with a casual wave of his hand.

“Thank you, Mr. Chen,” the bearded cultivator said gratefully before leading the group to stand.

After rising, they fixed their eyes on Kai, making him slightly uneasy.

“Mr. Chen, looks like you’ve got charisma. So many masters are now following you,” Xuan Bin exclaimed excitedly.

“With this many ninth-grade Mahayana masters, why should we fear the chicken-feathered Ten Palaces?”

“If any of them dare show up, I’ll take them down one by one!” Xuan Bin declared triumphantly.

The sight of such a formidable force following him filled Kai with joy.

It seemed he did have charisma after all.

“The world hustles for gain; all desires boil down to gain,” the Red Cloud Demon Lord suddenly muttered cryptically.

“Senior, what do you mean?” Kai asked, puzzled.

“You’ll understand soon enough,” the Red Cloud Demon Lord replied with a knowing expression.

Kai couldn’t help but curl his lips at the Demon Lord’s pretentious demeanor.

Chapter 4716

“Mr. Chen, since we’re following you, do you have any gifts for us?” the bearded man asked when Kai remained silent.

“Oh, yes, of course...” Kai said hurriedly as he rummaged through his storage ring. He took out some immortal herbs and elixirs and distributed them among the ninth-grade Mahayana cultivators.

“That’s it?” the bearded man asked, his face showing clear disappointment.

The others also looked dissatisfied.

“These immortal herbs and elixirs are priceless treasures,” Kai defended himself.

“Mr. Chen, aren’t followers supposed to receive 10,000 immortal spirit stones?” the bearded man bluntly questioned.

Kai was taken aback. “Where would I get that many immortal spirit stones for you?”

“Well, damn it! You should’ve said so earlier. Wasting our time and making us kowtow for nothing!”

The bearded man cursed, tossing the herbs and elixirs aside.

The other cultivators also grumbled and turned to leave, quickly disappearing from sight.

Xuan Bin and Xiao Yuanshan stood there, dumbfounded.

Even Kai was at a loss. When he finally recovered, he shouted angrily, “You ungrateful bastards...”

Before he could finish, the cultivators were already gone.

“Hahaha...”

The Red Cloud Demon Lord burst into laughter.

Kai finally understood what the Demon Lord had meant earlier.

“Mr. Chen, don’t be too upset. Those guys were only interested in the fairy stones. They were never genuinely willing to join you,” Xuan Bin consoled him.

“We know plenty of ninth-grade Mahayana cultivators who could be recruited,” he added with a grin. “But I wonder—how many fairy stones

do you actually have, Mr. Chen?” “What? You think 10,000 fairy stones aren’t enough?” Kai asked, clearly displeased.

“No, no, Mr. Chen, you misunderstood. 10,000 fairy stones are a huge amount for us,” Xuan Bin said quickly. “I just wanted to help recruit some followers for you. As you know, for ninth-grade Mahayana cultivators, fairy stones are the best cultivation resource.”

He continued, “Mahayana cultivators crave fairy stones even more than those in the Immortal Realm. After all, with enough fairy stones, ascending to the Immortal Realm becomes much easier.”

“If Mr. Chen still has fairy stones and is willing to offer some, I can definitely recruit more people for you!”

Kai snorted coldly. “To be honest, I own a fairy stone mine. I have as many stones as I need.”

“If those fools earlier had been a bit more sincere, they could’ve had an endless supply!”

It was true Kai had a fairy stone mine, though claiming it was inexhaustible was a bit of an exaggeration.

“What? Mr. Chen, you actually have a fairy stone vein?” Xuan Bin and Zhou Tang exclaimed, their eyes wide with shock.

“Of course. Where do you think I got these fairy stones?” Kai replied confidently.

Xuan Bin and Zhou Tang swallowed hard, their eyes gleaming.

“Mr. Chen, we’ll contact people right away. If you really have a fairy stone mine, those cultivators will practically worship you as their grandfather!” Xuan Bin declared before grabbing Zhou Tang and rushing off.

“Mr. Chen, do you really have a fairy stone vein?” Xiao Yuanshan asked cautiously.

“If you don’t, and a bunch of monks show up expecting fairy stones, they’ll likely abandon you in a flash. Interests rule this world of heaven and man,” he warned.

“You don’t believe me?” Kai asked with a sly smile.

Xiao Yuanshan quickly nodded. “Of course I believe you...”

“But what if those two guys run off with the fairy stones and never come back?” he added, still concerned.

Chapter 4717

“They’ll definitely come back,” Kai said confidently.

He wasn’t relying on Xuan Bin and Zhou Tang’s loyalty but rather on the allure of the fairy stones in his possession.

Kai then returned to the imperial city with Xiao Yuanshan.

Meanwhile, Xuan Bin and Zhou Tang stopped thousands of miles away from the Xiao Dynasty.

“Brother, do you think the fairy stone vein is real?” Zhou Tang asked cautiously.

“I don’t know,” Xuan Bin admitted, shaking his head.

Zhou Tang frowned. “If it’s fake, even if we recruit people, they won’t stick around.”

“Whether they stay or not isn’t our problem. Our job is just to find people,” Xuan Bin replied before moving toward a void.

Zhou Tang followed closely, a solemn expression on his face. “Brother, is it really worth becoming enemies with the Ten Palaces and Sun Moon City for Kai?”

Despite his earlier pledge to Kai, Zhou Tang now harbored doubts. After all, they already had 10,000 fairy stones—more than enough for their cultivation needs. Those stones might even help them ascend to the Immortal Realm.

“Don’t worry,” Xuan Bin reassured him. “Sun Moon City won’t become Kai’s enemy. Didn’t you see how Lin Kedong left the city privately to deal with him? The fourth prince came later specifically to pull him back. It’s clear Sun Moon City wants no part in the execution order.”

“As for Lin Kedong’s injury, he’ll recover after some rest. His life isn’t in danger.”

Zhou Tang listened intently, his respect for Xuan Bin growing with each word.

Sun Moon City

Lin Kedong, supported by Lin Kefan, returned to the city in disgrace.

On the throne, Lin Chong sat with a furious expression, radiating rage.

“You’ve got some nerve! How dare you leave the city without my permission? Do you think I won’t punish you just because you’re the eldest prince?” Lin Chong roared at Lin Kedong, his voice echoing through the hall. Lin Kedong knelt heavily on the ground, his face filled with grievance. “Father, the resources you’ve provided are far too few. I barely have enough for cultivation. At this rate, how will I ever break through the Mahayana realm and ascend to the Immortal Realm?”

“Even though the Ten Palaces lack credibility, they gave me 20,000 immortal spirit stones as a deposit. There’s no way these are fake!”

To prove his point, Lin Kedong boldly displayed the 20,000 immortal spirit stones in front of Lin Chong.

Seeing this, Lin Chong's fury intensified. He breathed heavily and bellowed, "You idiot! Why do you think the Ten Palaces gave you a deposit but not anyone else?"

"They're using you! Is your brain filled with nothing but garbage?"

Turning to Lin Ruoya, he demanded, "Ruoya, why did I assign you to stay by the eldest prince's side?"

"Your Majesty, I... I tried to dissuade him but failed!" Lin Ruoya quickly knelt, her voice trembling.

"Father, my elder brother is injured. Let him recover first—we can discuss everything afterward," Lin Kefan interjected in an attempt to calm the situation.

"Kefan, you said Kai is only at the second level of the Mahayana realm?" Lin Chong asked.

"Yes, the second level," Lin Kefan confirmed with a nod.

Lin Chong's eyes narrowed. "The second level of the Mahayana realm managed to defeat your brother, who's at the peak? That makes him quite interesting."

"Kefan, if you were to fight him, what are your chances of winning?"

Lin Kefan hesitated for a moment before raising a single finger.

"Why? Only 10%?" Lin Chong was stunned.

"Father, it's not even 10%," Lin Kefan said with utmost seriousness.

Lin Chong's lips curled into a smile. "Fascinating. Kai is truly intriguing. It looks like I need to meet him personally."

Lin Kedong, still kneeling, was seething with anger. Beaten by Kai and humiliated, his father didn't offer to seek revenge—instead, he was praising Kai?

Chapter 4718

“Father, Kai beat me to this state—you have to avenge me!” Lin Kedong demanded.

“Revenge?” Lin Chong's eyes blazed with anger. “Do you have no shame? You're at the peak of the ninth level of the Mahayana Realm, and yet a cultivator at the second level managed to beat you until you spat blood. And you have the audacity to demand revenge?”

“Go to the Cliff of Regret and reflect on your actions. Aside from essential healing medicine, you're banned from receiving any resources!”

Lin Kedong was stunned and shouted in protest. “Father, that's not fair! It's not fair—my little sister—”

“Take him away!” Lin Chong waved impatiently.

Lin Kefan stepped forward to escort Lin Kedong, but Kedong suddenly stood up and yelled, “Father! Fine, if you don't want to avenge me for the beating, that's one thing. But Kai insulted my mother—you can't ignore that, can you?”

Lin Chong's brows furrowed. “He insulted your mother? What did he say?”

“Kai is unbelievably arrogant! Not only did he beat me, but he also said he wanted to play with my mother. You can't let that slide, can you?”

Boom!

Lin Chong's fury erupted. The air around him trembled as he slammed his palm against the stone table, shattering it into dust.

“What audacity! How dare he utter such vile words?” Lin Chong’s face was red with rage, his voice trembling. “Kefan, take men with you and bring Kai to me immediately!”

“Father, about Kai—”

“Silence! I said bring him now!” Lin Chong’s eyes blazed, his expression fierce enough to spit fire.

Lin Kefan, sensing the gravity of the situation, dared not speak further and hurriedly left to carry out the order.

Lin Kedong grinned smugly. He was certain that Kai was doomed now.

Lin Chong was famous for his devotion to his wife. Blasphemous words directed at her? There was no way Lin Chong would let Kai walk away unscathed.

“Get out!” Lin Chong roared, his fury still burning. Seeing Lin Kedong’s smug expression, Lin Chong roared in anger.

Lin Kedong’s body trembled, and with Lin Ruoya’s support, he hurriedly left the hall.

“Emperor Lin, please calm down. There may be some misunderstanding here,” Taoist Wuji said as he stepped forward from the back of the hall.

“Taoist, is this the kind of man you found for Ting’er? He has no manners whatsoever!” Lin Chong fumed. “He even... even dared to talk about playing with his mother-in-law! How can this be tolerated?”

His rage was so intense that he struggled to say it out loud.

“Emperor Lin, I believe that if Kai did say such a thing, it was likely a thoughtless slip of the tongue,” Taoist Wuji reasoned.

“I urge you to think carefully. Ting’er is deeply attached to Kai, thinking about him day and night. Please don’t make her suffer.”

Taoist Wuji hoped to prevent Lin Chong from making a rash decision and killing Kai outright.

Despite Kai's impressive strength—strong enough to defeat a peak ninth-level Mahayana cultivator—he was still no match for Lin Chong. The Emperor of Sun Moon City could crush him effortlessly.

“Master, whether it was a misunderstanding or not, I'll find out when the boy is brought here. But I won't let him off easily. He needs to suffer some physical pain.”

“Talking about playing with someone else's mother at such a young age—unacceptable! For Ting'er's sake, I must teach him a lesson!”

Lin Chong's determination was evident. Even if he didn't kill Kai, a severe punishment was inevitable.

Taoist Wuji sighed and chose not to press further. As long as Kai's life was spared, enduring some physical punishment was expected.

Now, Taoist Wuji's primary hope was that Kai wouldn't provoke Lin Kefan when they crossed paths.

If the two clashed, chaos would erupt, and any injuries would only deepen the misunderstanding.

“Stubborn boy, you'd better come quietly and keep your mouth shut,” Taoist Wuji muttered under his breath, silently hoping Kai wouldn't aggravate the situation.

Chapter 4719

Xiao Dynasty

Kai sat with Yun Li, deep in conversation.

He knew very little about the hidden forces in the world of heaven and man, especially the Ladder to Heaven. Hoping to gain a better understanding, Kai decided to stay with Yun Li for a few more days to gather information.

Moreover, with numerous powerful cultivators lingering around the Xiao Dynasty, it was impossible for Kai to leave immediately. Once matters in the Xiao Dynasty were resolved, he planned to head to Sun Moon City to clarify the situation.

He hadn't expected events to escalate like this.

"There are no fewer than ten peak ninth-grade Mahayana masters around the Xiao Dynasty right now," Yun Li said calmly. "They are clearly here for you."

"The Immortal Stones are too valuable to cultivators at that level," she added.

Kai sighed with a helpless smile. "These people really aren't thinking straight. Even if Immortal Stones are crucial to them, do they honestly believe the Ten Palaces will keep their promises?"

"If they kill me and the Ten Palaces refuse to pay, won't it be a complete waste of time and effort?"

"That's why they haven't attacked yet. They're waiting," Yun Li explained. "But greed is a dangerous thing. Sooner or later, they'll lose patience and make their move."

"A hundred thousand Immortal Stones... that's enough to drive anyone mad."

"In the end, they'll gamble. If they lose, all they waste is time by killing you. But if they win, and the Ten Palaces actually pay, it could change their entire fate."

“For those stuck at the peak of the ninth grade of the Mahayana Realm, breaking through to the Immortal Transformation Realm is a near-impossible dream.”

Kai’s tone was resolute. “It’s just a few peak Mahayana cultivators. If one shows up, I’ll kill one. If two come, I’ll take them both down.”

Yun Li’s expression grew serious. “But what if all ten attack together? How confident are you that you’ll win?” Yun Li’s question hung in the air, prompting Kai to fall silent.

Ten peak ninth-grade Mahayana cultivators—Kai had to admit his chances of victory were slim.

“If you hadn’t revealed your true strength right away, they might not have united against you,” Yun Li said calmly.

“But after beating Lin Kedong, many people witnessed your power. They won’t approach you individually anymore; they’ll band together.”

“More powerful cultivators are gathering around the Xiao Dynasty. If this continues, you’ll be surrounded and trapped.”

Yun Li’s amused expression carried a clear message: Kai had been too arrogant, treating a peak Mahayana master like a mere child. Though it made him appear impressive, it also painted a target on his back, prompting everyone to act cautiously and in unison.

Kai’s expression hardened. “You’re suggesting I leave the Xiao Dynasty?”

Yun Li nodded. “Exactly. While there aren’t too many masters here yet and they haven’t fully united, it’s your best chance to slip away and hide.”

“I won’t leave. Staying in the Xiao Dynasty is safer,” Kai said, shaking his head.

He was well aware that the Xiao Dynasty had been protected by Mr. Shi's blessings for thousands of years. No one dared to act recklessly within its borders.

But just as Kai finished speaking, a sudden disturbance rippled through the sky above the Xiao Dynasty. A powerful aura spread across the heavens and earth.

"An Immortal Realm master?" Yun Li's eyes lifted toward the sky in surprise.

Kai frowned, his expression darkening. He could dismiss ninth-grade Mahayana masters, but an Immortal Realm cultivator was a threat he couldn't ignore.

Yun Li chuckled. "Well, this just got interesting. I didn't expect Immortal Realm fools to believe the Ten Palaces' killing order."

Kai's face remained serious as he walked out of Yun Li's room without saying a word.

Chapter 4720

A void loomed over the Xiao Dynasty.

Lin Kefan and his men arrived, following his father's orders to take Kai to Sun Moon City.

To Lin Kefan's left stood an old man in a checkered robe, leaning on a cane. His disheveled hair and peculiar appearance made him look rather strange.

To his right stood a man clad in a black ink robe, his posture straight and imposing. A murderous aura lingered between his brows, exuding an oppressive presence.

The old man was Huazhang Weng, and the man was Mo Shaying. Both were Lin Kefan's trusted companions, much like the left and right blind elders who had once fiercely protected Lin Keting.

Lin Kefan's arrival sent a shiver through the powerful figures surrounding the Xiao Dynasty, prompting them to distance themselves from its borders.

With his hands clasped behind his back, Lin Kefan gazed down at the Xiao Dynasty beneath him.

"Fourth Prince, if you prefer not to act yourself, shall the two of us retrieve Kai for you?" Huazhang Weng asked in a hushed tone.

Lin Kefan remained silent, continuing to observe the land below.

"Hua Zhang Weng, you talk too much. So many masters hover around the Xiao Dynasty, yet none dare to make a move. Clearly, the Xiao Dynasty is not as simple as it seems," Mo Shaying remarked.

"What's so complicated about it? The Xiao Emperor is only at the eighth level of the Mahayana Realm. I alone am more than enough to take on the Xiao Dynasty," Huazhang Weng scoffed, dismissing any concern.

"Even if you can handle the Xiao Dynasty, can you defeat Kai? He made the eldest prince cough up blood," Mo Shaying countered.

"A mere second-level Mahayana Realm cultivator left the eldest prince with no ability to fight back? That boy must have some backing," he added.

"The eldest prince is useless. If the Fourth Prince makes a move, capturing Kai will be effortless," Huazhang Weng sneered.

Lin Kefan slowly turned his gaze toward Huazhang Weng, his eyes sharp with disapproval.

Though they all knew his relationship with his elder brother was strained, that did not give servants the right to mock him so freely.

Feeling the weight of Lin Kefan's stare, Huazhang Weng immediately fell silent.

And so, the three of them remained suspended above the Xiao Dynasty in quiet anticipation.

Time passed without measure until, suddenly, the void trembled. A terrifying aura surged forth, sweeping across the sky. At that moment, a mocking voice rang out:

“You want 100,000 immortal spirit stones, yet you don't dare make a move? How cowardly! Where is the dignity of a true warrior? If any of you dares to act, I will as well...”

A black shadow shot toward the Xiao Dynasty's imperial city like a bolt of lightning, heading straight for Kai.

The figure moved so fast that the very fabric of the void twisted in its wake.

Seeing someone attack Kai, Lin Kefan reacted instantly and gave chase.

He couldn't stand by and let someone else take Kai's life.

If that happened, his little sister would never forgive him!

But just as Lin Kefan was about to catch up, the black shadow had already breached the imperial city's perimeter.

However, the moment it entered, a brilliant white light flashed across the heavens!

“Ahhh!”

A blood-curdling scream echoed—then, the black shadow vanished without a trace.

In the blink of an eye, peace returned to the imperial city, as if nothing had ever happened.

Lin Kefan froze, stunned, while everyone around him stared in shock.

A deafening silence filled the air—you could hear a pin drop.

Without hesitation, the powerful figures surrounding the Xiao Dynasty turned and fled in terror, leaving only Lin Kefan and his two companions hovering in the sky.

“Old man... d-did you see that? That black shadow was stronger than both of us,” Mo Shaying stammered, swallowing hard.

“No... I couldn’t see clearly,” Huazhang Weng muttered, beads of cold sweat forming on his forehead. “I just heard a whoosh, then a scream... and he was gone!”

Moments ago, he had boasted about handling the Xiao Dynasty with ease, dismissing it as insignificant.

But now?

A figure far stronger than him had stepped into the imperial city—only to be instantly erased before anyone could even glimpse what happened!