

the mans Decree: Kai Ping / Chen Ping

Chapter 5041

Kai took a deep breath and said in a low voice, “We’ve likely been pulled into an ancient ruin... This might be the true secret behind the floating island.”

Mo Qingyun swallowed hard. “Then... can we still get out?”

He was clearly nervous. If they couldn’t escape, things could become very dangerous. The eerie surroundings only heightened his fear.

Kai didn’t respond. Instead, he looked toward the depths of the ruins, where a faint, low roar echoed—something seemed to be awakening...

Suddenly, a flash of white light appeared, startling both Kai and Mo Qingyun.

As the light faded, a man in green slowly emerged. He stood about three feet tall, a large blade strapped to his back, radiating a powerful aura.

Upon seeing Kai and Mo Qingyun, the man paused in shock, staring at them in disbelief.

“How did you get here with such low cultivation levels?” the man in green asked, visibly puzzled.

Kai examined him carefully and realized that this man was at the fifth tier of the Scattered Immortal Realm. This confused Kai—such high-level cultivators weren’t supposed to exist in the First Heaven.

The presence of a fifth-tier Scattered Immortal in the First Heaven was extremely rare.

No wonder the man thought they were weak.

Kai himself was only at the first tier of the Scattered Immortal Realm, while Mo Qingyun had reached the third.

“My friend,” Kai said, “are you saying one can’t come here with lower cultivation?”

“That’s not it,” the man in green replied. “I’m just surprised. How did a first-tier Scattered Immortal like you reach the Second Heaven?”

“The Second Heaven?” Kai was startled. “I haven’t gone to the Second Heaven—I’m still in the First Heaven...”

“Impossible,” the man interrupted. “The entrance to this ruin is located inside Tianxuan Cave Mansion in the Second Heaven. There’s no way a first-tier cultivator like you could’ve entered from the First Heaven.”

He clearly didn’t believe Kai’s explanation.

Kai couldn’t make sense of the situation. Just as he was about to explain, the void in front of him suddenly trembled.

A man in white burst through the air.

He held a folding fan in his hand and radiated a powerful aura that caused the surrounding space to ripple.

Kai could sense that this man in white was no weaker than the man in gray.

The moment he appeared, the man in gray frowned and cursed, “Damn it, you just won’t give up...”

Without another word, he drew the large blade strapped to his back and slashed directly at the man in white.

A thousand-foot blade light instantly tore through the air, sending out violent shockwaves that shook the void.

Seeing this, Kai quickly grabbed Mo Qingyun's hand and retreated to avoid being caught in the blast.

Although he didn't know why the two men had started fighting the moment they met, Kai didn't want to get involved.

Mo Qingyun's hand was fair, soft, and delicate—as if it had no bones—resting in Kai's palm.

Kai didn't think much of it, but Mo Qingyun glanced at him, her cheeks turning red.

It was the first time a man had ever held her hand.

And it just happened to be the man she secretly liked.

Kai, however, remained focused. Holding the Dragon Slaying Sword, he released his sword intent to resist the shockwaves.

Mo Qingyun stood behind him, watching as Kai did his best to shield her from the violent energy.

At that moment, his figure seemed taller and more imposing in her eyes.

Unconsciously, Mo Qingyun leaned her head against his shoulder.

Kai noticed something strange but only glanced briefly, saying nothing. The two men before him were locked in a fierce battle, and the surrounding space looked like it could collapse at any moment.

He had to concentrate on blocking the shockwaves; otherwise, while the two fought without a care, he and Mo Qingyun might pay the price.

Chapter 5042

Kai stood protectively in front of Mo Qingyun, closely watching the fierce battle between the two men.

The man in white and the man in green were evenly matched, with neither gaining the upper hand.

After exchanging a hundred blows, they simultaneously struck with their palms, sending their bodies flying apart by nearly a hundred feet. The resulting force surged toward Kai and Mo Qingyun.

However, Kai noticed something strange—when the shockwave reached the evil ghost statue nearby, it vanished into thin air.

Such immense power could have reduced an ordinary stone mountain to dust, yet the towering pillar remained perfectly still, completely unaffected.

Boom!

The two fighters, having just separated, clashed once more. It was as if they bore a deep grudge and wouldn't stop until one was defeated.

The space around them warped and twisted from the intensity of their blows.

“Both of you, do me a favor and stop fighting...”

Unable to tolerate the chaos any longer, Kai raised the Dragon Slaying Sword and swung it.

A fierce sword light slashed through the air, forcing the two men to retreat in shock.

Startled, they quickly leapt apart to avoid the attack.

Both stared at Kai, their eyes full of disbelief.

In a battle of this magnitude, any ordinary first-grade Sanxian Realm cultivator would've long been reduced to a bloody mess.

But not only was Kai unharmed—he had even managed to interrupt and separate the two with a single strike.

Seeing them finally apart, Kai and Mo Qingyun walked toward them.

“Are we done now? I asked you to give me some face. After all, we're here for fortune—not to fight to the death.”

Kai tried to mediate.

“Who exactly are you?” the man in green asked warily.

“Didn't I already say?” Kai replied casually. “Just a man in search of treasure.” Kai smiled faintly.

“You're just a first-grade Scattered Immortal, yet you possess such power. Are you a hidden prodigy from Tianyuan Pavilion?” the man in white asked, frowning at Kai.

Kai had never heard of Tianyuan Pavilion, so he shook his head and replied, “I told you, I'm here seeking fortune, not from Tianyuan Pavilion.”

“You two—I'm Mo Qingyun, the eldest daughter of the Mo family...” Mo Qingyun took the initiative to reveal her identity.

“So you're from the Mo family?” The man in green was clearly surprised.

The man in white gave a slight bow and said respectfully, “So you're the Mo family's eldest daughter. My apologies...”

“Well, since fate brought us all to this ancient ruin, let's focus on exploring it. If danger arises, we'll need to work together. As for any grudges—let's settle them after we leave,” Kai advised calmly.

Neither of the two men responded. Kai's sword strike earlier had left them both stunned.

If not for his display of power, it would've been laughable for someone at the first level of the Scattered Immortal Realm to try and mediate between two fifth-level cultivators.

Under different circumstances, they might have already taught him a lesson.

But in this world, strength earns respect. If you want others to listen, you need the ability to back it up.

Seeing that neither man objected, Kai dropped the matter and slowly walked toward the two statues of the evil spirits.

As he approached, the feeling of dread and suffocation in his chest grew stronger.

Yet when he glanced at Mo Qingyun walking beside him, she appeared completely unaffected. Kai couldn't help but wonder if he was the only one feeling it.

Suppressing the fear in his heart, he led Mo Qingyun to the base of the two massive statues.

Compared to the towering figures of the evil spirits, he and Mo Qingyun were as small as ants.

Beneath one of the statues, Kai noticed a stone door carved with mysterious runes.

At that moment, the two other men followed and stood silently behind Kai, all eyes fixed on the ominous doorway.

Chapter 5043

“What a strange rune...”

Kai stepped forward and gently brushed his hand over the stone door, but it showed no reaction.

Suddenly, the man in white leapt into the air, folding fan in hand, and swung it forcefully.

Boom!

A tremendous force surged toward the stone door in an attempt to break it open. After all, none of them understood the formation—let alone the runes etched into the stone.

In such cases, brute force seemed the only solution.

But the moment that overwhelming power touched the stone door, the man in white’s expression changed. In the next instant, he was violently flung back by the immense recoil!

The ground quaked as blood slowly trickled from the corners of his mouth.

“You had it coming...” the man in green chuckled softly.

Kai stared at the stone door in disbelief. He hadn’t expected the formation protecting it to be so formidable.

It had withstood a full-force blow from a fifth-grade cultivator of the Scattered Immortal Realm—and even injured him in return.

The man in white returned to the stone door with a solemn expression, though this time, he did not act rashly.

“Can you break the formation on this door?”

Mo Qingyun turned to Kai.

To Mo Qingyun, Kai seemed capable of anything.

“Of course. There isn’t a formation in this world I can’t break.”

Kai replied with a light smile, wearing a smug expression.

“Arrogant...” the man in white muttered, casting a sidelong glance at Kai.

It was clear he, too, was proud. Being repelled and wounded by the door had bruised his ego, and Kai’s confident words only worsened the sting.

Kai gave a cold smile, and just as he was about to attempt breaking the formation, a terrifying aura rushed toward them.

Then, a massive firebird emerged, slicing through the void!

Its sudden appearance left everyone momentarily stunned. Atop the firebird stood a man dressed in lavish clothing. His makeup was strikingly alluring, and his appearance was androgynous—neither distinctly male nor female.

Beside him, a woman clad in only her undergarments crawled submissively at his feet.

Kai stared at the firebird in astonishment. It was massive—several times larger than his own Fire Kirin.

“Tianci, the hidden prodigy of Tianyuan Pavilion?” the man in green exclaimed, his breathing quickening slightly.

Mo Qingyun frowned, his expression turning uneasy, and he quietly stepped behind Kai.

The firebird descended slowly, its blazing flames warping the air around it with intense heat.

Tianci gently stroked the long hair of the woman beside him, his eyes scanning the crowd before settling on Mo Qingyun. A flicker of surprise crossed his gaze.

“Sister Qingyun, you’re here too?” Tianci’s voice was laced with a feminine tone. “I heard you went to the First Heaven—I was just planning to go there to find you.”

Upon seeing him, the man in green quickly bowed and greeted him with respect. “Mr. Tianci, your reputation precedes you!”

Tianci didn’t even spare him a glance. He casually waved his hand, signaling him to step aside.

The man in white stood stiffly, offering no greeting. A faint trace of disdain flickered in his eyes.

Tianci’s gaze shifted to him, his eyebrows lifting slightly. “Oh? Don’t know who I am?”

The man in white replied coolly, “So what if I do?”

“Heh...”

Tianci let out a soft chuckle. Then, with a sudden motion, a cold glint flashed from his fingertips.

Puff!

A sharp light pierced the man in white between the brows. Blood spurted out as he collapsed instantly, unable to even react.

A fifth-grade cultivator of the Scattered Immortal Realm—killed instantly by someone only at the third-grade!

Kai’s pupils contracted in shock. “This guy’s power... it’s way beyond his realm!”

The man in green was drenched in cold sweat, silently thankful he had greeted Tianci earlier.

Tianci withdrew his hand as if swatting a mere insect. “Putting on airs in front of me? That’s asking for death.”

Then he turned his gaze toward Kai, eyes narrowing.

“And you? You don’t recognize me either?”

Chapter 5044

Kai immediately clasped his fists and put on a respectful expression. “Young Master Tianci is renowned—how could I not know of him? I’m new here and simply didn’t recognize you right away.” As the saying goes, it’s wise not to suffer a loss when facing a powerful foe.

Judging by the strength Tianci had just displayed—clearly beyond what was typical for his level, even capable of challenging stronger opponents—Kai knew he had to be extremely cautious.

Since he couldn’t yet gauge Tianci’s full power, Kai decided it was best to take things slowly.

Tianci nodded in satisfaction, then turned to Mo Qingyun with a chilling smile. “Sister Qingyun, you came back from the First Heaven without telling me. How exactly did you end up here?”

Mo Qingyun was still shaken by Tianci’s earlier outburst. This man clearly had no qualms about killing when displeased—his arrogance knew no bounds.

Biting her lip, she replied softly, “I... I came here from the First Heaven.”

“The First Heaven?” Tianci sneered. “Sister Qingyun must be joking. There’s no entrance to these ruins from the First Heaven.”

“We...” Mo Qingyun began to explain, but Kai quickly interrupted her.

“Young Master Tianci, we’re simply curious explorers. We came to look around and see if there might be any hidden treasures.”

Kai was careful not to reveal the existence of the entrance from the First Heaven.

If that information got out, Cangxuan Continent could be in danger—countless cultivators from the Second Heaven might flood into the First Heaven, causing chaos.

“Who are you? And why are you with Sister Qingyun?” Tianci’s expression turned cold as he questioned Kai.

“I...” Kai hesitated, unsure how to explain his relationship with Mo Qingyun.

“Brother Tianci, who is the woman beside you?” Mo Qingyun quickly jumped in to change the subject.

She feared Tianci might turn on Kai.

“Oh, her?” Tianci gave a slight smile, patting the woman beside him. “Just a maid who serves me. If Sister Qingyun doesn’t like her, I’ll send her away.” With a single palm, the woman was killed instantly—her head exploded on the spot.

Mo Qingyun trembled slightly, his face turning pale from fear.

Kai was also stunned, his expression growing solemn and wary.

Facing a strong opponent wasn’t terrifying—but dealing with a madman like this was far more troubling.

The man in green was nearly scared out of his wits.

“Who exactly are you to Sister Qingyun?”

Even after killing the woman, Tianci continued to press Kai with his question.

“Brother Tianci, he’s just a servant of mine,” Mo Qingyun quickly replied. “I saw that he came from a humble background and had low cultivation, so I brought him along to run errands.”

Tianci glanced at Kai and chuckled. “A first-grade cultivator in the Scattered Immortal Realm managing to reach the Second Heaven... you must have some ability.”

“Do you have any special background?”

Kai quickly shook his head. “I was born poor and lived in the First Heaven. I don’t know what happened—one day I was suddenly pulled into a black hole and ended up in the Second Heaven.”

“Compared to Master Tianci, I’m only fit to be a servant...”

Hearing this, Tianci seemed satisfied and gave a faint smile. “The time-space flow between the heavens often distorts, and black holes do appear now and then. Seems like you were just unlucky. If not for Sister Qingyun’s kindness, you’d probably be dead already.”

“A first-grade Scattered Immortal trying to survive in the Second Heaven—what a foolish fantasy...”

The man in green remained silent. He didn’t know Kai’s true identity, but he was certain Kai wasn’t as powerless as he claimed.

He had just witnessed the strength of Kai’s sword with his own eyes.

And if Kai were to advance to the third-grade Scattered Immortal Realm, his explosive power might even surpass Tianci’s.

Chapter 5045

“Mr. Tianci is right. I was just lucky that Miss Mo saved me.”

Kai smiled obsequiously.

“Brother Tianci, can you open this stone door?” Mo Qingyun asked.

“Of course. A mere stone door can’t stop me!” Tianci replied with a cold smile.

He approached the door without saying another word. Suddenly, a short black blade appeared in his hand.

Ding!

A flash of cold light struck the stone door—but it remained completely unchanged.

Then, a terrifying force burst forth. Tianci couldn’t dodge in time and was blasted back a hundred feet.

Everyone was stunned by the sight.

Even Tianci couldn’t move the stone door!

Kai studied the runes carefully. They were unusual. When the force rebounded, the runes had shifted as if alive, radiating a terrifying energy.

His expression grew serious. Clearly, this relic would not be easy to explore.

Tianci, shocked and embarrassed, walked back with a dark expression. He placed his hand lightly on the door, but it didn’t react.

“It seems the formation on this door is extremely strong. We’ll need Elder Tong from Tianyuan Pavilion. He has studied formations,” Tianci said calmly.

Kai remained silent. Truthfully, if given enough time, he could break the formation himself. Though complex, it wasn't beyond his ability to locate the formation's core and dismantle it.

However, as someone only at the first level of the Scattered Immortal Realm, he couldn't afford to reveal too much strength.

If Tianci found out he had formation skills at this level, he would become a target.

For now, Kai had to play the role of a weakling to lower Tianci's guard.

That way, if there was treasure hidden within the relic, Kai could claim it by surprise. But if Tianci became wary of Kai, things would not go smoothly.

Tianci took out a token and crushed it with force.

As he crushed the token, a drop of blood was expelled from his fingertip. The blood drifted into the air, gradually spreading into a mist.

Soon, the void within the blood mist began to tremble.

An elderly man with white hair slowly emerged from the mist and stepped forward.

This was Elder Tong of Tianyuan Pavilion.

"Tianci, what's so urgent? I was in the middle of a chess game with the Pavilion Master," Elder Tong said.

"Elder Tong, I came here to explore these ruins, but there's a formation on this stone door that I can't break," Tianci explained. "I know you're skilled in formation arts, so I wanted to ask for your help in opening it."

Tianci's tone was noticeably more respectful than usual—none of his usual arrogance remained.

Elder Tong gave a slight nod, then walked toward the stone door and began carefully examining the runes etched into it.

With a wave of his hand, a glowing screen appeared. All the runes on the stone door were instantly projected onto the screen.

As Elder Tong moved his fingers continuously, the runes on the screen began to shift and rearrange themselves.

Kai recognized at once that Elder Tong was searching for the formation's core.

To break such an ancient formation by force would require tremendous power. But if the core could be located, dismantling it would become far easier.

Kai observed silently, intrigued by Elder Tong's method of identifying the formation's center.

"This formation is truly difficult," Elder Tong muttered with a frown as the light screen gradually faded.

Suddenly, above the stone door, a circular pattern of light and shadow began to spin. A mysterious energy seemed to be gathering within it.

Chapter 5046

"Elder Tong, are you unable to break the formation on this stone gate?"

Tianci asked anxiously.

"Don't worry. The formation is unusual—it just takes some time," Elder Tong replied calmly.

Tianci didn't dare press further and could only wait in silence.

Kai found Elder Tong's struggle amusing. So much time had passed, and he was still hesitating.

If it were up to Kai, he would have already broken the formation.

But now wasn't the right moment for him to act, so he remained patient.

Elder Tong stared at the glowing patterns on the stone gate for a long time. Then, a red light flared in his palm as he slowly pressed his hand against the gate. In response, the runes on the stone surface began to emit the same red glow.

Soon after, the runes started to converge, and with a low rumble, the stone gate slowly creaked open.

Seeing the door open, Tianci smiled and said, "Elder Tong, you're truly incredible. No formation can stop you."

But just as the gate opened and the void trembled, a woman in a white robe with flowing hair suddenly appeared. Behind her stood three old men in black robes.

Tianci's expression darkened upon seeing them.

Elder Tong's face also turned cold, and he sneered, "I didn't expect the Shura Palace to pull the classic trick—the mantis stalks the cicada, unaware of the oriole behind."

"We just arrived and saw you open the gate. Pure coincidence," the white-robed woman replied with a faint smile. She then prepared to lead her group through the entrance.

"You're not allowed to enter..." Tianci said, stepping forward to block them.

"Oh? Does this relic belong to Tianyuan Pavilion?" the white-robed woman asked.

“But we’re the ones who opened the gate,” Tianci retorted. “So what if you opened it? I’ll go in if I want—this isn’t your home,” the white-robed woman sneered.

“And who are you to meddle in others’ business, you genderless freak?”

Her cold words made Tianci’s face flush with anger. As much as he wanted to lash out, he couldn’t bring himself to strike a woman.

Seeing this, Elder Tong quickly pulled Tianci back and signaled him to step aside.

The white-robed woman led her group inside. Tianci’s face darkened. After taking a moment to calm down, he turned to Mo Qingyun and said, “Sister Qingyun, let’s head in too.”

Mo Qingyun nodded and followed Tianci and Elder Tong inside.

Kai also entered behind them. The man in green hesitated for a long time, but in the end, he couldn’t resist the temptation and stepped in as well.

However, the moment everyone entered, they were stunned. Inside the stone gate was a chaotic airspace—completely barren. Even the gate behind them slowly faded and vanished.

As the stone gate disappeared, their surroundings were plunged into swirling gray mist. Everything was hazy, as though they were suspended in the void. Even the ground beneath their feet seemed indistinct.

“Wh-where... are we?” the man in green asked, his face pale and voice shaking.

Tianci snorted coldly. “Why panic? This is a relic—of course it has its mysteries.”

He turned to Elder Tong and whispered, “Elder Tong, can you make sense of this?”

Elder Tong narrowed his eyes, a faint red glow forming in his palm as he sensed the energy around them.

After a moment, he said gravely, “This chaos isn’t an illusion—it’s a true spatial fault. We’ve been teleported to the core of the ruins.”

“Spatial fault?” The white-robed woman frowned. “Then we can’t get out for now?”

“Hmph. We’re already here—why worry about leaving?” Tianci sneered. “This relic belonged to an ancient sect. There must be treasures hidden within. Whoever finds them first gets to keep them.”

With that, he ignored the others and led Elder Tong and Mo Qingyun deeper into the chaotic space.

Chapter 5047

Seeing this, the white-robed woman snorted coldly. “Arrogant fool.”

She turned to the three black-robed elders behind her and said, “Let’s go too—don’t let them get ahead.”

The man in the green robe hesitated briefly, but eventually caught up with Tianci’s group.

After all, in such an unknown environment, it was safer to follow the strong than to act alone.

Kai remained where he was, sweeping his eyes across the chaotic surroundings. The corners of his lips curled slightly.

“Interesting...” he murmured to himself, then calmly followed.

Though this chaotic space appeared disordered, Kai could faintly perceive underlying patterns.

His spiritual sense was far beyond that of other cultivators at his level—and even sharper than many at the fifth level of the Scattered Immortal Realm.

Deeper within the chaos...

The group walked for about half an hour before the mist ahead began to thin. A broken stone platform gradually came into view.

Atop the platform stood three coffins, all blood-red, inscribed with strange and mysterious symbols.

Flanking the stone platform were two armored warriors holding broad swords.

Though clearly stone statues, their craftsmanship was so lifelike that they seemed ready to spring to life at any moment.

Everyone paused, puzzled and wary—who could be inside those coffins?

Kai, too, was full of curiosity. When he extended his spiritual sense to probe the coffins, he found he couldn't sense anything within. What's more, the coffins emitted a heavy, blood-soaked aura.

The group instinctively kept a safe distance from the broken platform. No one dared get too close—not without knowing the danger it might pose.

This relic was riddled with strangeness, so every step had to be taken with caution.

Mo Qingyun instinctively moved closer to Kai, half-hiding behind him.

A faint panic stirred in her heart, and only by staying near Kai did she feel a shred of safety.

Tianci saw this and immediately fumed—Mo Qingyun was standing far too close to Kai for his liking.

However, with Elder Tong and members of the Shura Palace present, he dared not lose his composure. He could only suppress his anger and force a smile.

“It seems these coffins may contain secrets. Someone should investigate them first,” he said.

Everyone turned to look at Tianci. The white-robed woman rolled her eyes and replied coldly, “Then why don’t you go check them out yourself?” Tianci shook his head. “I’m not going.”

Then he turned to Kai and said, “You go investigate.”

Kai was taken aback. “Why me? Why don’t you go?”

“I’m afraid it’s dangerous,” Tianci replied bluntly.

“Then I’m afraid of danger too,” Kai responded, clearly annoyed.

“If you don’t go, I’ll beat you to death. I’m stronger than you,” Tianci threatened. “Choose—investigate or die.”

“...Damn it,” Kai muttered, speechless.

“Brother Tianci, he—” Mo Qingyun began, trying to speak up for Kai.

“Sister Qingyun, there’s no need,” Tianci interrupted impatiently. “He’s just a follower. You don’t have to protect him all the time.”

Mo Qingyun glanced at Kai, helpless and conflicted.

Kai understood all too well—in this world, the weak are preyed upon by the strong. And right now, he was just a first-level Scattered Immortal.

Nearby, the white-robed woman looked over at Kai and gave a mocking smile.

“A first-level scattered immortal in a place like this? He might as well be walking to his death,” she said sarcastically.

Kai only smiled faintly and said nothing. He turned and walked calmly toward the broken stone platform.

“I’ll go with you,” Mo Qingyun said, quickly following after him.

“Sister Qingyun—” Tianci called out, trying to stop her, but she had already caught up to Kai.

Tianci’s face darkened instantly, his jaw clenched in rage and his eyes filled with fury.

“Why are you following me? What if something happens?” Kai asked, turning to Mo Qingyun.

Chapter 5048

“If there’s danger, we’ll face it together. Even if we die, at least we’ll have a companion on the road to the underworld.”

Mo Qingyun smiled faintly.

Kai also laughed. “As long as I’m here, you won’t die.”

His heart remained calm; he was certain he wouldn’t die. After all, if he did, there would be no future stories to tell.

“Don’t you like that sissy guy?” Kai asked.

“Not at all. Just seeing him makes me sick,” Mo Qingyun nodded.

Then he added with a sigh, “But Tianyuan Pavilion is powerful. If I want to make contact with them, I have no choice but to marry him.”

“Have you thought about resisting?” Kai asked.

“I don’t have that kind of strength,” Mo Qingyun shook his head.

“Then wait for the right moment. When the time comes, I’ll kill that sissy guy, and you’ll be free.”

Kai followed closely beside Mo Qingyun.

“You’re no match for him,” Mo Qingyun said.

“Maybe not now, but I have allies. Killing him will be easy.”

Kai smiled faintly and asked the Red Cloud Demon Lord, “Senior, if I kill that sissy guy, will you kill me too?”

“Your body can handle it. And that guy? I could wipe out everyone here if I wanted to,” the Red Cloud Demon Lord replied.

“That’s good to know.” Kai grinned.

“Who are you talking to?” Mo Qingyun asked, puzzled.

“An old friend,” Kai replied with a smile.

As they talked, they soon reached the broken stone platform.

At that moment, Kai began to prepare the Dragon Slaying Sword, staying fully alert—especially toward the two warrior sculptures. Something told him they could attack at any moment.

The Dragon-Slaying Sword in Kai’s hand trembled slightly, likely sensing the presence of danger.

In the distance, Tianci watched Kai and Mo Qingyun coldly. The two were chatting and laughing, a sight that fueled his killing intent. He wanted to strike Kai down right away.

But despite his anger, Tianci stayed cautious. If anything seemed off, he would retreat immediately.

While the ruins contained treasures, they also harbored great danger.

That was why, even though many knew of these ruins, few dared to explore them. A single misstep could mean death. And if you were dead, what good were treasures anyway?

This particular ruin was especially strange, making everyone wary. The slightest disturbance would send them fleeing; none dared to let their guard down.

Kai followed Mo Qingyun and stood before the stone platform. The two warrior statues' eyes seemed fixed on them, their gaze intense.

A cold shiver ran down Kai's spine, and a faint fear stirred within him.

"Let's go..."

Mo Qingyun gently pulled Kai forward. Step by step, they approached the stone platform, moving slowly and cautiously.

But as they neared the three coffins, Kai was startled. The eyes of the two warrior statues had shifted at some point and were still locked onto them.

Kai shook his head, wondering if he was seeing things. Yet upon closer inspection, the warrior statues' eyes had indeed moved.

This realization sent a deeper chill through him. His grip on the Dragon-Slaying Sword tightened, and the blade trembled slightly in his hands.

"Miss Mo, do you notice anything strange about these two warrior statues?"

Kai asked in a low voice.

"No," Mo Qingyun replied, shaking her head.

Her focus was entirely on the three coffins, paying no attention to the warrior statues.

Seeing this, Kai decided to keep his thoughts to himself. If Mo Qingyun hadn't noticed anything, there was no need to alarm her.

Kai steadied his mind, took a deep breath, and fixed his attention on the three coffins.

Three blood-red coffins. On closer inspection, he could see blood flowing across their surfaces—an eerie, unsettling sight.

Chapter 5049

“Could this coffin be made of blood?”

Kai was shocked after taking a closer look.

The coffin emitted a heavy, bloody scent. Strange symbols covered its surface, slowly shifting, like leaves drifting in a river.

A mysterious energy surrounded the coffin, constantly seeping into it, as if being absorbed by whatever lay inside.

Kai and Mo Qingyun examined the three coffins with growing fascination, finding the scene both eerie and mesmerizing.

While the two remained still, Tianci grew impatient.

He thought they had discovered something important, but he dared not approach recklessly.

“You, go take a look,” Tianci ordered the man in green.

The man in green frowned. “Why don't you go yourself?”

“If you don’t go, I’ll kill you,” Tianci said coldly. “Choose: die here, or go over and take a look.”

The man in green’s face darkened. Though anger burned in his heart, it was useless.

He was no match for Tianci. Even if he could fight Tianci, Elder Tong stood nearby—escape was impossible.

After a long hesitation, the man in green finally took a step forward. After a few more steps, he turned back, glancing at the woman in white.

His eyes silently pleaded for help, but she acted as if she hadn’t seen him.

In this world, no one sympathizes with the weak.

If you want to earn respect, there’s only one way: become stronger.

That’s the only path forward.

Left with no choice, the man in green could only grit his teeth and slowly approach Kai and Mo Qingyun.

Meanwhile, Kai and Mo Qingyun remained focused on the coffins, completely unaware of the man in green moving toward them.

Although Kai and his companions had already passed by, the man in green remained extremely cautious.

As he approached the stone platform, he couldn’t help but glance at the warrior statues on either side.

At that moment, the statues’ eyes appeared fixed on Kai and Mo Qingyun. After a brief glance, the man in green carefully stepped onto the platform’s steps.

But just as he did, a sudden gust of wind surged toward him. Startled, he quickly raised his sword to block it.

In that instant, the two warrior statues seemed to come alive, striking at him with their swords in unison.

Boom!

The man in green was instantly sent flying, crashing heavily at the feet of Tianci and the others.

His sword shattered into pieces, and his arm hung limp and useless.

With just one blow, the man in green was completely crippled—his weapon destroyed, and his arm ruined.

Everyone was shocked. Even Kai and Mo Qingyun couldn't help but turn around to look.

When Kai saw that it was the two warrior statues who had attacked, his expression turned grim. He had long suspected something was off about those statues.

The man in green was a fifth-grade cultivator in the Tribulation Realm, yet he was disabled by a single strike.

The strength of these warrior statues was terrifying.

Kai tightened his grip on the Dragon Slaying Sword, staying alert. Mo Qingyun also dared not lower her guard. She hadn't expected the statues to attack at all.

Yet, even after so much time had passed, the statues only watched Kai and Mo Qingyun with their piercing eyes—they made no move to attack.

The man in green slowly stood up, his face twisted in anger and confusion. He couldn't understand it. He had walked the same path

Chapter 5050

“Why did they attack me but not those two?” the green-robed man asked, clearly dissatisfied.

“I just don’t like you,” the white-robed woman replied with a cold smile.

“You...”

The green-robed man was furious, but he didn’t dare confront her.

She was from the Shura Palace, and likely stronger than him. Besides, he was injured now—far from able to fight. If things turned bad, he wouldn’t be able to escape.

“Maybe it’s because of the woman. Otherwise, why don’t you give it a try?” Tianci said to the white-robed woman.

Just earlier, Kai had been walking with Mo Qingyun, a woman, so the warrior statues hadn’t attacked.

Now, only the white-robed woman was female—so Tianci suggested she test the theory.

“If that’s the case, why don’t you try? Those two statues won’t attack either. Aren’t you basically half a woman yourself?”

The white-robed woman sneered.

“You...!”

Tianci’s face turned red with rage.

He hated being called feminine. Even though he dressed like a woman every day, he refused to let others point it out.

Perhaps geniuses from certain sects develop twisted personalities.

“If it’s really because of the woman, just have those two come back. Then let the boy—who’s only first-grade in the Sanxian Realm—go alone. That should make things clear, right?”

The white-robed woman said with a faint smile.

Upon hearing that, Tianci immediately called out to Kai and Mo Qingyun. “Sister Qingyun, both of you, please come back.”

Mo Qingyun stayed silent and didn’t move.

Kai looked at Tianci and asked, “What are you trying to do?”

“I’m just worried that you might get hurt. I mean no harm. But if you don’t come back... I might get angry.”

“And I think you know what happens when I’m angry.”

Tianci’s voice turned threatening.

Mo Qingyun, clearly frightened, gently tugged at the corner of Kai’s sleeve.

The memory of Tianci killing someone earlier still haunted her.

“Don’t be afraid, we’ll go back,” Kai whispered, comforting her.

Then, the two of them turned around and walked back.

As they did, Tianci’s eyes filled with murderous intent—he strongly wished he could kill Kai with a single blow. But for now, Kai was still useful—Tianci wanted to use him as a guinea pig.

“You, walk back,” Tianci ordered Kai coldly.

“Damn, you’re really pushing it...” Kai muttered, feeling a flash of irritation.

“Die, or walk back. Your choice,” Tianci threatened.

Kai stared at him coldly. In his heart, Tianci was already marked for death. Sooner or later, Kai would find the right moment to kill him.

But now wasn't the time. He couldn't turn hostile yet.

Kai took a deep breath and prepared to walk back toward the stone platform.

“I'll go with you...” Mo Qingyun stepped forward to follow, but Tianci blocked her and snapped, “Let him go alone.”

“Don't worry, I'll be fine.”

Kai smiled at Mo Qingyun, then turned and walked alone toward the stone platform.

This time, Kai kept his eyes fixed on the two statues.

If they moved, he would dodge immediately.

Even a fifth-grade Tribulation Realm cultivator couldn't survive a single blow. Kai knew better than to take that risk.

Step by step, he approached the stone platform cautiously.

The two statues did not attack, but their eyes followed him, turning in sync as he moved.

“Huh?”

Tianci frowned slightly.

The others were also puzzled, unable to figure out what was happening.

“It seems it has nothing to do with being a woman, then,” said the woman in white calmly.

“Then why? Why did they attack only me?”

The man in green was completely bewildered.

“Maybe it’s because I’m better-looking than you. That must be it,” Kai teased with a grin, standing tall on the platform.

Feeling the tension ease slightly, Kai relaxed a little.

“That’s nonsense! I’m way more handsome than you!”

The man in green snapped furiously.

Chapter 5051

“Try again...”

Tianci said coldly to the man in green.

The man in green wore a gloomy expression. If he had the strength to defeat Tianci, he wouldn’t hesitate to kill him.

But unfortunately, he was no match for Tianci now.

He regretted coming in—he should never have stepped into this place.

Now he wanted to flee, but it was too late. Tianci’s aura had locked onto him, preventing any chance of escape.

If he dared make a move, Tianci would strike without hesitation.

This man was ruthless and cruel.

But if he walked forward again, the warrior statue might attack, and he doubted he could withstand it.

While he was torn between choices, Kai suddenly shouted:

“If you think you’re more handsome than me, then come on over!”

“These statues don’t attack handsome guys...”

“What are you waiting for?” Tianci asked coldly.

“Mr. Tianci, can’t you spare someone? I’ve already tried once and was seriously injured,” the man in green protested.

“What? If you won’t try, do you expect me to go instead?” Tianci asked, eyes fixed on him.

“You could...”

The man in green looked around. He couldn’t suggest the child elder, so his gaze shifted to the black-robed old men standing behind the woman in white.

“You could send them...” he said.

“What? You fear Tianyuan Pavilion but not our Shura Palace?” The woman in white spoke, her eyes gleaming with murderous intent.

The man in green trembled and dared not respond.

He sighed deeply. His face darkened, but under such pressure, he could only grit his teeth and step toward the stone platform again.

With each step, he watched the two warrior statues carefully, dreading the moment they might suddenly move.

And just as he stepped onto the platform— Boom! Boom!

The two statues suddenly opened their eyes and swung down their long swords!

“Damn it!”

The man in green roared, frantically unleashing all his spiritual power in an attempt to defend himself.

But his defense was like paper before the statues' strike—it was instantly shredded!

Puff—

Blood sprayed wildly as he was sent flying, crashing heavily to the ground. A gruesome wound split his chest, and his breath became extremely weak.

“Why... why only me?” he screamed in fury and frustration.

Everyone exchanged confused glances.

Why had the statues attacked only the man in green, but not Kai?

Tianci frowned, his eyes shifting between Kai and the statues. He finally said coldly, “It seems the statues' attack mechanism isn't simply triggered by gender or strength.”

“Then what is it?” the woman in white asked, her brows furrowed.

“Maybe... it's blood,” Tianci muttered, narrowing his eyes at Kai. “This kid might have something special in his bloodline.”

Kai's heart skipped a beat, but he remained calm. He shrugged and said casually, “Maybe I'm just lucky?”

“Hmph!” Tianci snorted coldly, clearly unconvinced.

But now, with the man in green seriously injured, no one else dared to make a move. Kai was the only one able to approach the stone platform.

“Go open the three coffins!” Tianci ordered.

Kai glanced at him and replied calmly, “Why should I listen to you?”

“You won’t?” Tianci’s eyes flared with killing intent. “Then I’ll kill you right now!”

Mo Qingyun anxiously grabbed Tianci’s sleeve and whispered, “Brother Tianci, don’t act impulsively...”

He was afraid Tianci might really strike Kai.

Now that Tianci was with Elder Tong, Kai stood no chance in a direct fight.

“I’ll do it...” the woman in white said disdainfully as she looked at Tianci, then stepped toward the stone platform.

Her movements were slow and deliberate. With every step, ripples spread through the void.

Chapter 5052

When she reached the stone platform, the woman in the white robe took a deep breath, then slowly stepped onto it.

At the same time, a ball of scorching light formed in her hands, ready to strike at any moment in case the two warrior statues attacked. But as she stepped onto the platform, the statues remained motionless.

Seeing this, she couldn’t help but breathe a sigh of relief.

“What’s going on?” Tianci frowned, looking slightly embarrassed.

With a wave of her hand, the woman in white signaled the three black-robed elders to come forward. They approached the stone platform cautiously—but the warrior statues still didn’t react.

Once the members of Shura Hall had safely reached the platform, Tianci grew impatient.

“Elder Tong, I’ll try next...” Tianci said.

“Let’s go together. I suspect these two statues won’t attack anymore,” Elder Tong replied, stepping onto the platform.

Tianci followed closely behind, with Mo Qingyun beside him.

To their relief, the statues didn’t move. Tianci glanced at them, visibly surprised, but avoided staring for too long.

“Ah... this is so unfair...”

The man in green lay on the ground, severely injured.

Seeing everyone else safely on the platform, he was stunned.

“Why? Why did they only target me?” he shouted in anger and disbelief.

“I told you—it’s because you’re not handsome enough,” Kai said casually.

Puff—

The man in green was so enraged he coughed up blood and passed out.

But no one paid him any attention. They weren’t related to him, and no one was willing to waste time on someone irrelevant.

Everyone stood silently on the stone platform, staring at the three coffins before them.

The blood-red glow flowing across the coffins and the strong stench of blood left them puzzled.

The woman in white immediately released her divine sense, trying to probe what was inside. But spiritual sense couldn’t penetrate the coffins at all. The moment it touched them, it vanished completely.

Everyone tried, but it was useless.

Kai believed his spiritual sense was the strongest among them, yet even he couldn't pierce through the coffins—so the others stood no chance.

The woman in the white robe examined the strange runes carved on the surface, but she couldn't make sense of them.

Elder Tong slowly crouched down, studying the markings closely. Tianci stood nearby, watching silently, not daring to interrupt.

Kai quietly pulled Mo Qingyun aside.

If anything unusual happened with the coffins, they could at least retreat in time.

Although ancient relics offered great opportunities, they were often accompanied by danger. After all, risk and reward always went hand in hand.

“Senior, do you know which sect this relic belonged to?” Kai asked the Red Cloud Demon Lord.

“I have no idea. How would I know anything about a relic from the Second Heaven? Don't forget—I'm from the Ninth Heaven,” the Red Cloud Demon Lord replied, shaking his head.

“You weren't born in the Ninth Heaven. Can't I just ask?” Kai rolled his eyes.

“Damn it, I was born in the Ninth Heaven!” the Red Cloud Demon Lord roared.

Kai was speechless...

This guy's so lucky—it's like being born in Rome...

Meanwhile, Elder Tong continued examining the runes, while the people from Shura Palace watched with bated breath.

They knew that, among everyone here, only Elder Tong understood formation techniques.

The runes on the coffins were likely formation seals.

Using the same method he'd employed to open the stone door, Elder Tong began to apply it again—this time to unlock the three coffins.

Seeing this, Kai tugged Mo Qingyun and quietly moved beneath the stone platform.

If breaking the formation triggered something—and a huge “zongzi” monster jumped out—it would be a serious problem.

Chapter 5053

Just as Kai pulled Mo Qingyun beneath the stone platform, the runes on the coffin suddenly erupted with a terrifying surge of power.

Caught off guard, everyone was blasted away by the violent force.

Fortunately, Kai had anticipated the danger and brought Mo Qingyun below the platform in time, so the eruption didn't harm either of them.

But the others weren't so lucky. Their faces turned pale, and blood trickled from the corners of their mouths.

Elder Tong was in the worst condition—his expression twisted in pain, and his chest was visibly sunken.

Seeing Elder Tong like this, Tianci's arrogance vanished. His face turned solemn, replaced by a deep sense of caution.

He realized that retrieving treasures from this relic might not be as easy as expected.

At that moment, the entire surrounding void was filled with a suffocating, oppressive atmosphere.

Kai stared at the stone platform. The three coffins remained undisturbed in place, showing no signs of having opened.

But then—where had that terrifying force come from?

Kai instinctively kept pulling Mo Qingyun backward. He could feel that these three coffins were far too strange, giving off a deeply unsettling aura.

“Creak... creak...”

Suddenly, a sharp noise echoed as the coffin in the center began to slowly open on its own.

Everyone tensed up at the sight, their nerves stretched tight as they readied themselves.

Kai stepped in front of Mo Qingyun, shielding her as he gripped the Dragon-Slaying Sword, eyes locked on the opening coffin.

Tianci, seeing Mo Qingyun once again sticking closely to Kai, was furious. Their closeness irritated him deeply.

But now wasn't the time for petty grudges. With danger looming, everyone needed to stay united.

Kai glanced toward the stone gate and whispered, “If anything goes wrong, run—don't stay and fight.”

“Got it!” Mo Qingyun nodded firmly.

She always listened to Kai. As long as he ran, she would follow without hesitation.

Boom— The lid of the central coffin slowly opened, and an ancient, boundless aura instantly swept through the entire ruin.

Then, an illusory figure rose from the coffin and floated in mid-air.

It was a white-haired old man in a plain robe, his eyes deep like the starry sky, as if he could see through all things.

“Finally... someone has arrived,” the old man said slowly, his voice filled with age and authority.

Everyone widened their eyes, staring at the old man with expressions full of greed.

“Senior! I am Tianci from Tianyuan Pavilion. I greet you with respect!” Tianci quickly stepped forward and bowed.

“Bai Shuang from Shura Palace. I pay my respects!” the woman in the white robe added promptly.

“Tianyuan Pavilion? Shura Palace?” The old man shook his head. “I don’t know them. I’ve never heard of such names.”

“May I ask what sect you’re from, Senior?” Kai stepped forward and inquired.

“Gan Tian Sect...” the old man said slowly.

“Gan Tian Sect?” Everyone was confused.

What kind of sect was that?

It sounded impressive—but no one had ever heard of it, nor had it been mentioned in any known records.

Seeing their confusion, the old man smiled and said, “Our sect was founded tens of thousands of years ago. It has long since perished. Of course, you youngsters wouldn’t know of it.”

“But the First, Second, and Third Heavens of this world were all created by my Gan Tian Sect,” the old man added.

“What?” Everyone was stunned.

“Senior... your Gan Tian Sect dared to defy the will of heaven?” Kai asked.

“Yes, we went against the will of heaven. Originally, this realm only had Thirty-Three Heavens.”

“It was my Gan Tian Sect that opened the Third Heaven. Without us, cultivators below the level of Immortal Transformation would never reach the heavens—unless they ascended.”

“I was the one who created the Three Heavens and set the rules. Those with extraordinary talent who pass the trials could be guided into the heavens,” the old man explained slowly.

Chapter 5054

Upon hearing the old man’s words, everyone was stunned, their faces filled with disbelief.

None of them had imagined that the Three Heavens were actually created by the very man standing before them.

In ancient times, there were only Thirty-Three Heavens. The ability to carve out new realms within the heavens spoke volumes about the old man’s immense power.

No wonder his sect was called Gan Tian Sect—he had truly reshaped the heavens.

After all, none of those present had any knowledge of what had happened tens of thousands of years ago, nor could they be sure if the old man’s words were true or false.

“Senior, is what he said true?” Kai asked the Red Cloud Demon Lord through his sea of consciousness.

After all, the Red Cloud Demon Lord was from the Ninth Heaven and had lived for countless years—surely, he would know more than most.

But just as Kai posed the question in his consciousness, the mysterious old man smiled faintly and said, “No need to ask the soul in your sea of consciousness. He doesn’t know either—he simply hasn’t lived that long.”

Kai was stunned. He hadn’t expected that the old man could sense him speaking with the Red Cloud Demon Lord internally. It was both astonishing and unsettling.

Tens of thousands of years... that was a truly unimaginable span of time.

“If your Gan Tian Sect had the power to open realms within the heavens, how did it eventually fall?” Mo Qingyun asked the old man curiously.

The fact that the Gan Tian Sect was now just a ruin clearly indicated it had been destroyed long ago. Only fallen sects become relics.

Kai was startled by her question. He quickly pulled Mo Qingyun back and said hastily to the old man, “Senior, she’s young and ignorant. Please don’t take offense.”

He didn’t even dare imagine the level of power a man capable of creating a realm within the heavens must have wielded.

Even if this mysterious old man was now only a lingering spirit, any residual strength could easily overwhelm them.

“Hahaha, I’ve been dead for so many years—I’ve long let it go,” the old man laughed.

“There are always mountains beyond mountains, and people greater than oneself. Even if my Gan Tian Sect once created the Third Heaven, what of it?”

“Even this entire heaven was created by the Supreme God—so what is my Gan Tian Sect in comparison?”

“The cycle of the heavens causes all things to wither. Nothing is truly eternal. Only the heavenly cycle ensures the universe continues in balance.”

“The fall of my Gan Tian Sect was fated. Who am I to defy the will of the heavens?”

After hearing the mysterious old man’s words, everyone’s expression turned grim.

Especially Tianci, who had always believed himself a genius—arrogant and dismissive of others. But now, a deep sense of frustration welled up within him.

They had all been struggling to break through the Three Heavens, striving to become immortals revered by others.

Yet they never realized that the entire heavenly system had been shaped by the Supreme God. In the grand scheme of the heavens, their desperate struggles might not even amount to a speck of dust.

“Senior, we mean no offense. We’re only here to explore the ruins and seek opportunities.”

“Meeting you is a great honor. May I ask if you would be willing to guide me and help me grow stronger?”

Tianci shed his usual arrogance and addressed the mysterious old man respectfully, like an eager student seeking wisdom.

“Hahaha, of course. Those who arrive are destined to be here. I am glad someone is willing to inherit the legacy of my Gan Tian Sect,” the old man laughed heartily.

“Please accept me as your disciple...”

Tianci dropped to his knees before the mysterious old man.

The old man waved his hand lightly, and a flash of light burst forth.

In an instant, both Tianci and the mysterious old man vanished.

Only Kai and the others remained at the scene, as if the two had vanished into thin air.

“Tianci! Tianci!”

Elder Tong of Tianyuan Pavilion turned pale with fear. He called out frantically, but there was no reply.

Chapter 5055

Tianci was the pride of Tianyuan Pavilion—able to battle opponents above his level. If something were to happen to him, how could Elder Tong explain it upon returning?

At that moment, Tianci was in a void space with the mysterious old man.

“Your strength is far too weak. Right now, you’re just a low-tier scattered immortal. I’ll directly elevate you to the Earthly Immortal Realm. Go earn your place in the Fourth Heaven.”

The mysterious old man spoke calmly.

Upon hearing this, Tianci was overwhelmed with emotion, nearly bursting into tears. He dropped to his knees and nearly kissed the old man’s feet.

“Thank you, senior! Thank you so much...”

Tianci kept kowtowing.

The mysterious old man placed his palm gently on Tianci's head, and a soft glow enveloped him.

Tianci's body trembled violently, as if he were being torn apart from within.

He clenched his teeth and endured it, finally collapsing to the ground drenched in sweat.

"Your talent is decent, but your physical body is too weak. You couldn't withstand a direct promotion to the fifth tier of the scattered immortal realm," the old man said, shaking his head.

Tianci felt slightly disappointed, but being promoted to the fifth level of the scattered immortal realm was still an incredible breakthrough. He could now fight opponents at the seventh level or higher.

"Thank you, senior..."

Tianci knelt and kowtowed once more.

The old man waved his hand, and—

In the blink of an eye, both their figures reappeared in front of the others, causing everyone's eyes to widen in disbelief.

"Fifth level of the Sanxian Realm?!"

"You jumped two levels in such a short time?!"

Elder Tong was so excited he trembled. He rushed forward to examine Tianci's condition.

Tianci stood proudly, feeling the powerful energy surging through him. He looked at Kai smugly and said, "Hmph, still daring to act arrogant in front of me now?"

Kai simply frowned, ignored Tianci's provocation, and continued observing him quietly.

Something felt off...

Tianci's cultivation had indeed advanced, but a strange aura of decay surrounded him—as if part of his life force had been drained.

“Senior, I also wish to increase my strength!” the white-robed woman said eagerly, dropping to her knees. Her eyes burned with desire.

“Alright, alright...” the mysterious old man nodded with a smile. He waved his hand again and vanished with the white-robed woman.

Moments later, she returned—and her cultivation had also soared!

“Hahaha! I've broken through!” she shouted joyfully. Yet her laughter carried a raspy edge, as though she'd aged slightly.

Soon after, Elder Tong and the three black-robed elders also stepped forward, seeking guidance from the mysterious old man.

The old man welcomed them all, raising their cultivation levels one by one.

Before long, everyone was celebrating their sudden surge in power—everyone except Kai, who grew more uneasy the longer he observed.

Though their cultivation had risen, the vitality in their bodies was visibly diminishing.

At this rate, despite gaining power, their lifespans would likely be shortened, and future cultivation might stagnate altogether.

“Kai, let's go too!” Mo Qingyun tugged on his sleeve, her eyes full of hope.

“No.” Kai grabbed her hand and whispered, “There’s something wrong with that old man.”

“Huh?” Mo Qingyun froze. “But their cultivation clearly increased...”

“It did, but at the cost of their life force,” Kai said grimly. “Didn’t you notice? Their vitality is visibly fading.”

Mo Qingyun shook her head. She couldn’t sense vitality—only that their strength had grown.

“Then... what should we do?” she asked nervously.

Kai narrowed his eyes, then suddenly smiled. “Since he wants to play, I’ll play along.”

With that, he stepped forward confidently, bowed respectfully, and addressed the mysterious old man: “Senior, I believe I possess great talent—versatile, hardworking, and gifted. I humbly ask you to pass on the mantle of the Gantian Sect to me.”

“If I can inherit the Gantian Sect and improve my cultivation, I’ll burn incense and offer prayers for you daily.”

Chapter 5056

A flicker of barely noticeable greed flashed in the mysterious old man’s eyes, and he smiled. “Alright, alright...”

With a wave of his hand, Kai was instantly transported into a chaotic void.

The old man still wore a kind smile as he looked at Kai. “Young man, you have excellent potential. I can help you ascend directly to the Earth Immortal Realm.”

Kai feigned excitement. “Thank you, Senior!”

The old man raised his hand and pressed it to the top of Kai's head. A soft light enveloped Kai's entire body.

"Come, let me raise your cultivation..."

But suddenly, the old man's voice grew cold and sinister. His palm transformed into a dark vortex, wildly absorbing Kai's life force!

Just when he thought he had succeeded—

"Heart Focus Technique!"

Kai's eyes snapped open. The Heart Focus Technique within his body surged, reversing the flow and devouring the old man's power instead!

"What?!" The old man was stunned. He tried to pull his hand away, only to find that his spirit body was tightly bound.

"Old man, you may have fooled the others—but not me," Kai said with a cold smirk. "You lure people with promises of power, then drain their lifespans to hijack their bodies for resurrection, right?"

"You... how do you know the Ancient Divine Technique?!" The old man was horrified. His spirit began to tremble violently.

"Unfortunately, you chose the wrong person," Kai's eyes gleamed with icy light. "Your cultivation now belongs to me."

Boom!

A powerful force of reversal exploded. The old man's spirit rapidly shrank before their eyes!

"No!!!"

With a final, piercing scream, the old man's spirit completely collapsed and dissolved into pure energy, which surged into Kai's body.

Kai's cultivation began to rise. In the blink of an eye, he reached the third level of the Scattered Immortal Realm.

Feeling his power rapidly increase, Kai was overjoyed.

Now, he no longer needed to compromise. If Tianci dared to provoke him again, Kai could slap him down without hesitation.

At the third level of the Scattered Immortal Realm, Kai wasn't afraid to go head-to-head with someone at the eighth level.

...

When Kai emerged alone from the chaotic space, everyone was stunned.

"Where is the senior?" Tianci asked urgently.

Kai gave him a cold glance. "What senior? He's just an old ghost who survives by devouring other people's lifespan!"

"What?!" Everyone's expression changed dramatically.

"You're spouting nonsense!" Tianci shouted angrily. "My cultivation has clearly improved—hasn't yours also advanced?"

"Yes, it has. But have you checked how much life you have left?" Kai sneered.

Tianci froze, quickly turned his senses inward—then his face went pale.

His lifespan was less than ten years!

"No... This can't be!" He shook his head frantically, unwilling to believe it.

The white-robed woman, Elder Tong, and the others also examined themselves. Their faces soon turned ashen.

“We... We’ve been deceived...”

Mo Qingyun clutched Kai’s hand in fear. “Thank goodness you discovered it...”

Kai nodded, then turned to the three coffins. “This so-called Gantian Sect ruin is nothing but a trap.”

“That old thing sustains his spirit form by feeding on the lifespan of intruders—waiting for a chance to resurrect,” Kai declared.

Though everyone was still somewhat skeptical, they could clearly feel the vitality draining from their bodies.

As mere wandering cultivators, they didn’t have endless lifespans.

Once their life force was gone, and if they couldn’t advance further, they would decay and die.

“Ah...”

Tianci suddenly went berserk, attacking the coffin in front of him.

But while the coffin in the center was smashed to pieces, the two on either side remained unmoved. Strange runes flowed continuously across their surfaces.

Kai looked at the coffins and decided to open them to see if there were any treasures inside.

After all, they couldn’t leave this place empty-handed.

He crouched down and began to study the mysterious runes on one of the coffins.

Seeing this, Elder Tong scoffed coldly. “What could you possibly understand?”

Chapter 5057

Kai shot Elder Tong a cold glance, and a sudden thought crossed his mind.

If he opened the coffin now and there was a treasure inside, the others would definitely try to snatch it.

Although Kai had already reached the third level of the Sanxian Realm and wasn't afraid of them individually, he still felt some apprehension if they joined forces.

With that in mind, he calmly turned his gaze to the two remaining coffins, as if contemplating something.

A red glow appeared in Kai's palm and began to surround the coffins. The blood-red hue flowing on the coffins gradually merged with the light from his hand.

Everyone stared at him, unsure of what he was trying to do.

"Rise..."

Kai commanded, and to everyone's shock, the two coffins slowly lifted into the air. A flash of white light followed—and both coffins vanished.

Kai had stored them in his storage ring. Whatever was inside, he planned to inspect it after they left this place.

Opening the coffins here would only invite trouble.

If treasures were truly inside, the others would certainly turn hostile.

When they saw both coffins disappear into Kai's ring, everyone froze in surprise.

Their gazes turned toward Kai, each filled with conflicting emotions.

“Hey! The coffins are part of this ruin. Whatever’s inside should be shared. Why are you taking them all for yourself?” Tianci shouted angrily.

“Is this ruin yours?” Kai asked calmly.

“No!” Tianci replied, shaking his head.

“Then what business is it of yours if I collect them?” Kai said, unbothered.

He no longer feared Tianci. In a real fight, Tianci was no match for him.

Tianci was stunned. He hadn’t expected the once respectful Kai to speak so boldly now.

“Are you talking to me, boy?” Tianci asked in disbelief.

“I’m talking to a dog,” Kai replied with a smirk.

The white-robed woman couldn’t help but burst out laughing. Mo Qingyun also smiled, covering her mouth with her hands.

Tianci’s eyes widened in fury. “Boy, you’re asking for death...”

With that, he launched a direct attack on Kai.

His fury erupted with the aura of a fifth-rank Scattered Immortal, shaking the entire ruins’ space.

Golden light surged from his body, dazzling like the blazing sun. Each step he took cracked the ground beneath him like a spiderweb.

“Boy, I’ll show you how vast the sky is and how deep the earth runs!”

A brilliant golden light condensed in his palm, transforming into a three-meter-long golden spear. The spear’s tip shimmered with sharp energy as it shot toward Kai’s throat.

Tianyuan Pavilion's signature move—Sky-Breaking Spear!

As the spear thrust forward, space around it warped slightly. A shrill tearing sound echoed where the tip passed, ripping through the air.

It carried the power of a dragon, its momentum overwhelming—enough to instantly kill an ordinary sixth-rank Scattered Immortal!

“Kai, watch out!”

Mo Qingyun cried out, her beautiful eyes filled with worry. Her delicate hands unconsciously clutched the corners of her clothes.

Seeing this, Elder Tong let out a cold snort. He thought Tianci was overestimating Kai.

To him, a mere third-rank Scattered Immortal didn't warrant a Sky-Breaking Spear—one punch should've sufficed.

The white-robed woman and three black-robed men also observed silently. In their eyes, Kai didn't stand a chance.

But Kai remained still, the corners of his mouth lifting slightly as a flash of disdain passed through his eyes.

Just as the spear tip came within three inches of his throat—

Swish!

Kai's figure suddenly blurred. Like a ghost, he dodged sideways, and at the same time, golden light burst from his right fist as it struck Tianci square in the chest.

“Holy Light Fist!”

Boom!

Startled, Tianci quickly formed a golden shield on his chest and tried to dodge—but he was too late.

The punch landed solidly, its force layered like crashing waves.

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The golden light protecting Tianci's chest shattered instantly. His entire body was sent flying like a kite with a broken string, crashing into the stone wall and creating a deep pit!

“What?!”

Elder Tong's pupils shrank, his face filled with disbelief.

The hand that had been leisurely stroking his beard froze mid-air, and several strands were unknowingly torn off.

A third-rank Scattered Immortal had actually repelled a fifth-rank cultivator with a single punch?

Tianci crawled out of the rubble, his face ashen. Blood trickled from the corner of his mouth.

He looked down at the charred fist imprint on his chest, and a flash of horror appeared in his eyes.

The white-robed woman was equally shocked. She knew Tianci's strength—he was the pride of Tianyuan Pavilion, someone who could fight above his rank.

And yet, this same Tianci, two whole realms higher than Kai, had just been knocked back by one punch?

Wasn't this too absurd?

What made it worse was that Tianci had used a weapon, while Kai fought bare-handed.

The gap was obvious. Not using a weapon was practically an insult to Tianci.

Mo Qingyun let out a breath of relief upon seeing Kai defeat Tianci in a single blow. Her admiration for Kai deepened.

After all, what woman wouldn't fall for a strong and handsome genius like him?

"You've got some skill... but unfortunately, it's not enough!"

Tianci slowly stood up, roaring with rage. The humiliation was unbearable.

He was a prodigy of Tianyuan Pavilion, admired by countless people.

And now, as a fifth-rank Scattered Immortal, he'd been bloodied by a third-rank—and without the opponent even using a weapon.

He spat out a mouthful of blood as golden light surged around him. Behind him, a ten-foot-tall golden figure materialized—a mighty god clad in golden armor, wielding a long halberd, its lightning-like eyes radiating oppressive power.

"A Dharma Body?" Elder Tong frowned at the sight.

As the Dharma Body appeared, the entire ruins trembled. Tianci's aura surged dramatically, faintly approaching the sixth rank of the Scattered Immortal Realm.

"This guy's lost it... Using his Dharma Body this early is a huge strain on his body," Elder Tong muttered.

The white-robed woman looked at the frenzied Tianci and gently shook her head.

“Die!”

Tianci pressed his palms together, and his golden Dharma image mimicked the movement. A colossal golden palm descended from the sky, vast enough to blot out the sun.

The palm’s lines were distinct, and in its center condensed an ancient “Zhen” seal, radiating the power to suppress all things as it slammed toward Kai.

Tianyuan Demon-Suppressing Palm!

This was Tianci’s strongest killing technique. Even before the palm wind arrived, the ground had already begun to collapse, and the stone slabs beneath Kai’s feet cracked inch by inch.

Kai looked up. A flash of seriousness crossed his eyes, but there was no panic.

He swiftly formed hand seals, channeling all the forces in his body. A massive black vortex emerged around him, swirling with cosmic energy—faint stars shimmered within it, as if it could devour all power.

The golden palm slammed down with a thunderous boom, but the moment it touched the black vortex, it began to disintegrate and was slowly absorbed.

The ancient “Zhen” seal trembled violently, then crumbled into countless glowing fragments.

Rumble!

What remained of the palm’s power gouged a ten-foot-deep crater in the ground, sending smoke and dust soaring into the air.

As the dust settled, Kai was still standing. A trace of blood stained the corner of his mouth, and his robe was slightly torn.

“Impossible!”

Tianci was utterly stunned, his face pale as paper. He had used his full strength—and yet Kai endured it!

“Now it’s my turn.”

Kai wiped the blood from his mouth. Suddenly, a Dragon-Slaying Sword appeared in his hand, and the spiritual power within him erupted like a volcano.

With a wave of the blade, thousands of sword shadows burst forth from his body, weaving into a sword net in the sky.

Swish, swish, swish—!

In an instant, the shadows converged into a single massive sword, a hundred feet long. Blood-red dragon patterns coiled along its blade, and a star-like gleam shimmered at its tip. Carrying the momentum of a force capable of splitting heaven and earth, it slashed toward Tianci!

In a panic, Tianci summoned a golden shield to block—but it was cleaved in half by the sword.

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The sword energy remained fierce, leaving a deep gash across Tianci’s chest—his bone was visible, and blood spurted out!

Defeated.

The entire audience fell into stunned silence.

Mo Qingyun’s beautiful eyes widened, her red lips slightly parted as she stared at the scene in disbelief.

The white-robed woman and the three black-robed elders were equally horrified, instinctively stepping back.

A third-rank Sanxian Realm cultivator had crossed two entire levels to defeat Tianci?

It shattered everything they thought they knew.

“You dare harm the pride of Tianyuan Pavilion?” Elder Tong could no longer stay still. He roared, “Go to hell!”

He leapt forward, waving his arms. Dozens of golden array patterns appeared, weaving into a massive net above Kai.

Each node of the net flickered with ancient runes, exuding a powerful binding force.

The enormous formation enveloped Kai. Although Elder Tong’s cultivation wasn’t high, his mastery of formations was extraordinary.

It was precisely this skill that earned him the position of elder in Tianyuan Pavilion and the respect that came with it.

“A mere trap formation, and you dare flaunt it?”

Kai sneered. Golden light flashed in his eyes as he instantly saw through the formation’s weaknesses.

He raised a finger and sent out a stream of spiritual energy that struck the formation’s core. The massive net burst like a fragile bubble!

“What?!”

Elder Tong’s face turned pale as he stumbled back two steps. “You... you understand formations?”

“Just a little,” Kai replied with a faint smile.

Elder Tong's expression soured as though he had swallowed a hundred pounds of dung.

Moments ago, he had mocked Kai for being ignorant of formations. Now he was the one thoroughly humiliated.

“Elder Tong, let's join forces. We must kill him today!”

Tianci, wounded and furious, now looked like a cornered beast.

He had never suffered such humiliation. Even if it cost him his life, he would drag Kai down with him.

Elder Tong nodded. They had no choice now but to work together.

If both of them were defeated by Kai in front of the people from the Asura Palace, Tianyuan Pavilion would become the laughingstock of the cultivation world.

The two men gathered their remaining strength, preparing to deliver a fatal blow to Kai.

The woman in the white robe watched with interest, making no move to intervene.

She intended to take advantage of the conflict. Once both sides exhausted themselves in a life-or-death struggle, she could easily seize the coffins in Kai's possession—perhaps even claim all the resources from both Kai and Tianci's group.

Kai also noticed her intention. But with Tianci and Elder Tong bent on killing him, he had no choice but to go all out.

He worried that dealing with the white-robed woman afterward might prove even more difficult.

Just as Kai frowned and pondered how to turn the tide, his eyes caught sight of the runes on the backs of two warrior statues. The runes were flickering with light—and looked strangely familiar.

“So that’s it!”

He flew over and placed his hands on the runes. Channeling his spiritual power along a precise path, he injected it into the inscriptions.

Suddenly, the runes glowed blood-red and began writhing like living creatures.

Crack—

The sound of crumbling stone echoed as the two warrior statues abruptly opened their eyes, firing beams of blood-red light.

Their stone shells fell away piece by piece, revealing suits of black armor inscribed with ancient runes, emanating an oppressive aura.

“Kill!”

At Kai’s command, the two warriors lunged forward like lightning.

One wielded a three-meter-long black greatsword, crackling with blood-red lightning; the other held a white longsword with a blue flame flickering at its tip.

Tianci and Elder Tong responded hastily, but they were completely overmatched.

The black greatsword came crashing down—Tianci’s golden spear snapped with a clang. The white longsword slashed through Elder Tong’s protective aura as if slicing paper.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Every blow landed like a thousand-pound hammer, forcing the two men back step by step.

Tianci's left arm was slashed open, and Elder Tong's right leg was wounded—blood splattered across the ground.

“Kai! Tianyuan Pavilion will definitely avenge today's humiliation!”

Tianci roared, gritting his teeth. He crushed a golden escape talisman, and with Elder Tong, vanished in a streak of golden light.

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Kai didn't pursue them, uncertain whether he had the strength to survive in the Second Heaven.

He wasn't sure if he could handle Tianyuan Pavilion either.

With the Temple already as an enemy, Kai had no desire to make more.

“Are you also here for the two coffins?”

Kai turned to the woman in the white robe and asked.

She gave him a deep look, glanced at the two warriors with evident fear, then silently retreated with the three black-robed elders.

Only Kai and Mo Qingyun remained among the ruins.

“Kai, you're incredible!” Mo Qingyun's eyes sparkled with admiration, his small face flushed with excitement.

Kai shook his head and looked solemnly at the two warriors. “The real trouble is only beginning.”

Suddenly, one of the warriors turned and fixed blood-red eyes on Kai. It raised its weapon slightly, as if about to make a decision.

The runes on their bodies flickered, radiating a dangerous energy.

This abrupt change in the statues made Kai tense. He immediately pulled Mo Qingyun behind him.

“They don’t seem like ordinary puppets.”

Kai murmured, his hand already on his storage ring, ready to draw a weapon if needed.

At that tense moment, one of the warriors suddenly dropped to one knee, and a hoarse voice echoed from within the armor:

“We were ordered by the master to guard the inheritance.”

Kai’s pupils contracted, and a storm of thoughts surged in his mind.

These warriors were still conscious? Who was the ‘master’ they mentioned?

Could it be the mysterious old man he had absorbed?

Mo Qingyun clutched Kai’s sleeve nervously. “They can talk?”

One of the warriors slowly raised his head, staring at Kai with bloodshot eyes. “Master...”

Before the word was fully spoken, both warriors turned into streaks of black light and plunged into Kai’s body!

A flood of information surged into Kai’s mind. His vision went dark, and he nearly fainted.

“Kai!”

Mo Qingyun caught him just in time, only to see a blood-red rune flicker faintly on Kai’s forehead. When Kai opened his eyes again, a flicker of

understanding appeared in them. “So that’s why—the two warrior statues actually recognize me as their master.”

Because Kai had used the Concentration Technique to absorb the mysterious old man, he now carried that man’s aura. That’s why the warrior statues acknowledged him as their master.

Earlier, when he saw the runes behind the statues, they had seemed strangely familiar—this was the reason!

Right after the two warriors turned into black light and entered Kai’s body, the entire ruins began to shake violently.

“Oh no, the ruins are collapsing!”

Kai looked up sharply and saw the dome cracking, with fragments of stone crashing down from above.

He grabbed Mo Qingyun’s hand. “Let’s go!”

The two sprinted toward the exit at full speed. Behind them, the ruins collapsed with a deafening rumble, as though an invisible giant hand was tearing the entire space apart.

“Kai, where’s the exit?” Mo Qingyun shouted anxiously.

“Follow me!”

Kai’s eyes gleamed with golden light as he quickly locked onto a faint glow—the teleportation array they had used to enter!

But the array had already started falling apart. The runes were dimming and looked ready to fail at any moment.

“We’re running out of time!”

Clenching his teeth, Kai shoved Mo Qingyun toward the teleportation array. “You go first!”

“What about you?” Mo Qingyun cried out.

“I’ll find another way!”

Before Mo Qingyun could respond, Kai struck the array with his palm, channeling spiritual energy into it and forcefully activating the last trace of power.

Buzz—

A flash of white light, and Mo Qingyun vanished instantly.

Just as the teleportation array fully collapsed, Kai leapt and hurled himself into a closing spatial rift!

...

Cangxuan Continent, Floating Island.

The mysterious island suspended in the sky was now shaking violently, and countless cultivators looked up in alarm.

“What’s happening? Why is the floating island trembling?”

“Oh no! It’s falling!”