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Kai raised his hand, and chaotic power surged from his palm. Gray light flowed like mercury, covering the young woman and Xiao Die.

The light, like an invisible veil, completely concealed the demonic energy on their bodies.

After a moment, their auras had completely changed; they looked like two ordinary human cultivators, a fifth-grade Golden Immortal and a fourth-grade Golden Immortal, utterly unremarkable.

The young woman looked at her hands in surprise, the gray light slowly flowing across her skin like a flowing film of water: “This…it’s so amazing…I really can’t sense any demonic energy anymore…”

“It can only last for two hours,” Kai said. “When the time is up, it needs to be reapplied. Let’s go.”

He led the group out through the back door of the inn, quickly making their way through the alleys, trying to avoid the divine cultivators searching for demonic cultivators on the main roads.

The chaos on the streets continued, with screams and sounds of battle rising and falling, but Kai and his group moved quickly, and with the demonic energy concealed, they didn’t attract the attention of the divine cultivators for the time being.

They traversed several winding alleys, evaded two patrols, and finally left the city through the south gate of Falling Star City.

But shortly after they left the city, fierce fighting erupted again from a desolate wasteland ahead.

The sounds of clashing swords, exploding spells, and heavy breathing mingled together, the air thick with the fresh stench of blood.

Kai stopped. His divine sense extended forward, revealing a scene that made him frown.

A dozen human cultivators were besieging a dozen demonic cultivators.

The human cultivators wore robes of various colors, wielding gleaming magical artifacts, their faces filled with greedy excitement. The

besieged demonic cultivators included men and women, young and old, most already wounded.

They were desperately protecting a middle-aged man in the center, fighting to break through the encirclement. The middle-aged man was burly, with a resolute face, and his cultivation was at the seventh rank of the Golden Immortal realm.

Covered in blood, he held a broken black longsword, using his own body to shield his loved ones from the human cultivators' attacks.

A deep, bone-revealing wound ran down his leg, each step excruciatingly painful, yet he refused to retreat.

Just then, the young woman and Xiaodie witnessed the scene before them.

The young woman's face paled instantly, all color draining from her skin. Her eyes widened, her lips trembled, and she managed to utter two words: "Father..."

Xiaodie burst into tears, her voice a heart-wrenching sob: "Father! It's Father!"

The young woman gripped Kai's sleeve tightly, tears streaming down her face and dripping onto his cuff.

“Please…please save my father! I’ll do anything! Please! I’ll be your slave! Please…”

Kai looked at the despair and pleading in the young woman’s eyes, then glanced at the demonic cultivators being besieged ahead.

The demonic cultivators were nearing their breaking point; two more had fallen, and the middle-aged man had sustained several more wounds.

A cold glint flashed in his purple eyes.

“Wait here.”

His voice was calm, yet carried a reassuring power. “I’ll handle this.”

He lifted his foot and walked towards the battlefield. His

gray robe fluttered in the wind, and the Dragon-Slaying Sword silently slid out of its sheath, purple light flowing across its blade like a layer of flowing mercury.

Jiang Xuelan and Xuan Zhenzi followed behind him, one on each side, like a pair of outstretched wings.

The human cultivators quickly noticed Kai and his group.

They saw two powerful cultivators at the eighth rank of the Golden Immortal realm. When

Jiang Xuelan and Xuan Zhenzi appeared before them, the greedy expressions on their faces froze instantly, as if they had been doused with a bucket of ice water.

The leading human cultivator, at the seventh rank of the Golden Immortal realm, held a blood-red longsword in his hand, his gaze sweeping over Kai and his group with wariness and probing.

“Gentlemen, we discovered these demonic cultivators first. If you want to seize the spoils, you’d better play by the rules! We’re all in this together, so don’t be so greedy!”

Kai looked at him, his purple eyes devoid of any emotion. “I am the rule. I want all of these people, take them all.”

The human leader’s face darkened sharply. “What do you mean? These demonic cultivators can be exchanged for a lot of crystals. Why should you just take them away?

Do you know how much bounty you can get for killing a seventh-grade Golden Immortal demonic cultivator? Enough for several years of your cultivation!”

“I said, I’m taking them away.” Kai’s voice remained calm. “If you leave now, I can pretend nothing happened.”

The human leader sneered, twirling his blood-red longsword in his hand. “Who do you think you are? We painstakingly surrounded these people, and you think you can just take them away?

Who do you think you are? Even if you have two eighth-grade Golden Immortals, so what? We also have…”

He didn’t finish his sentence.

Because Kai had already moved.

The purple sword light, like a bolt of lightning tearing through the heavens and earth, drew a dazzling arc across the desolate plain.

The light was so fast it seemed to have been drawn directly from the void, as if severing the boundaries of time and space, leaving only a thin purple streak in the air.

The human leader didn’t even have time to react before the sword light had already grazed his body.

His lips were still moving, as if he hadn't finished speaking, but his body was frozen in place.

Then, he split open cleanly in the middle and fell into a pool of blood.

The blood-red longsword rolled from his released hand, the hilt sticking to the dirt with a muffled thud.

A seventh-grade Golden Immortal human cultivator, killed with a single sword strike.

The remaining human cultivators were all terrified.

They stared at their leader's corpse, then at the still-dripping purple longsword in Kai's hand, their faces ashen, their bodies trembling violently as if frozen.

Some people dropped their magical artifacts, the clanging sound particularly jarring in the silent wilderness.

"Get lost."

Kai's voice was soft, yet it exploded in everyone's ears like thunder.

The human cultivators, as if granted a pardon, turned and fled in a panic. Some even threw away their magical artifacts, scrambling away on all fours without daring to look back.

Moments later, only the demonic cultivators and Kai and his companions remained on the wasteland.

The middle-aged man slumped to the ground, his broken black longsword lying at his feet, his body covered in blood.

His chest heaved violently, each breath laced with blood.

But when he saw the human cultivators scattering in all directions, his eyes were filled with disbelief.

He looked up, his gaze piercing through the blood and sweat, and saw Kai, and then the two familiar figures behind Kai.

His lips trembled a few times, as if struck in the heart by some immense emotion.

“Xiao Rou… Xiao Die… you… how did you get here…”

The young woman was already sobbing uncontrollably. She rushed over and hugged the middle-aged man, her whole body trembling: “Father! We were being chased by the gods, and this gentleman saved us!”

Xiao Die also rushed over, clinging to the middle-aged man’s arm, crying uncontrollably, her face streaked with tears and snot, but refusing to let go.

The middle-aged man was stunned for a long time. His eyes, hardened by countless life-and-death experiences, now glistened with tears.

He raised his head, looking at Kai, his voice hoarse but filled with sincere gratitude: “Benefactor… thank you so much… for saving my daughter and Xiao Die… and for saving me… I am Yan Feng of the Demon Clan, I have no way to repay you…”

Kai looked at this man covered in blood yet still standing tall, a glint flashing in his purple eyes.

Yan Feng’s bleeding had stopped, but his face remained as pale as paper. Although Kai’s medicine had temporarily suppressed the wound in his abdomen, the excessive blood loss had left him looking extremely weak.

He sat on a blue stone in the wilderness, panting heavily. His gaze swept over his equally wounded clansmen, then back to Kai, his eyes filled with complex emotions.

“Benefactor… I know a place where demonic cultivators gather, a place neither the gods nor humans dare to easily set foot in.

If you don’t mind, we can stay there temporarily.”

Yan Feng’s voice was hoarse and weak, but every word was sincere.

Kai nodded: “Alright, lead the way.”

Yan Feng struggled to his feet, and Xiao Rou and He Yi supported him on either side.

He determined the direction and pointed to a mountain range in the southeast: “Beyond those mountains, there’s a place called ‘Black Abyss Valley.’

It’s a strategically important and easily defensible area, surrounded by natural barriers of demonic energy. Cultivators from the divine race would be severely suppressed if they entered.

We demon cultivators have been operating there for hundreds of years. Although it’s not large, it’s enough for us to temporarily avoid their attacks.”

“Let’s go then.” Kai didn’t ask any further questions and led the group behind Yan Feng.

Just as Kai and his group were heading towards Black Abyss Valley, the atmosphere was oppressive.

In front of a large black hall in the center of the valley, several demon cultivators dressed in black robes were gathered together, discussing something with solemn expressions.

A black flag hung at the entrance of the hall, embroidered with a dark gold flame emblem—the symbol of the Flame Demon lineage.

This was the demon race’s council hall.

The doors of the council hall were open, and seven or eight figures were already seated inside.

They wore robes of various colors; some were enveloped in black, malevolent energy, some had bloodshot eyes, and some had faces covered in demonic markings. Each of them possessed an aura of around the eighth rank of the Golden Immortal realm.

They were all leaders of various lineages of demonic cultivators in the twentieth heaven, usually acting independently, but now they sat together because of the divine race's declaration of war.

An old man, with a weathered face but eyes like lightning, possessed a cultivation level of the ninth rank of the Golden Immortal realm. He wore a black robe embroidered with dark gold flame patterns, clearly indicating a very high status among the demonic cultivators.

The old man scanned the crowd and slowly spoke, "The Divine Race has suddenly declared war, and the bounty has spread throughout the Twentieth Heaven. You are all leaders of your respective factions; please share your thoughts."

A moment of silence fell over the hall, then a middle-aged woman in a blood-red robe spoke, her voice trembling slightly, "The Divine Race is powerful, and their Divine Emperor, Golden Crow Hao, is a peak ninth-grade Golden Immortal, capable of breaking through to the Great Luo Golden Immortal realm at any moment.

We demonic cultivators are already weak in the Twentieth Heaven; now that the Divine Race has mobilized its entire force, we are no match for them..."

"Then what do you mean?" a sinister-looking man asked coldly.

"What I mean is..."

the woman in the blood-red robe gritted her teeth, "Could we send someone to negotiate peace with the gods? As long as they're willing to stop the war, we're willing to pay a certain price..."

"Negotiate peace?"

The sinister man slammed his hand on the armrest of his chair. “The gods want our lives! What do you have to offer for peace talks? Your head?”

“Then what do you suggest?”

the woman in the blood-red robe’s voice rose several decibels. “A direct confrontation? What do we have to offer?

The demonic cultivators of the twentieth heaven only number two or three hundred thousand, and the number of ninth-grade Golden Immortals is extremely limited. The gods alone have dozens of ninth-grade Golden Immortal elders! Not to mention that monster, Jin Wuhao!”

“We can’t surrender!”

“Not surrendering means death!”

“Have you all argued enough!”

The white-haired elder slammed his hand on the table, the dull thud echoing through the hall, silencing everyone.

His cold gaze swept over the crowd: “Will arguing solve anything?”

Silence fell once more in the hall.

At this moment, a thin man spoke, his voice tinged with hesitation: “I’ve heard… there are other demonic forces beyond the Twentieth Heaven. Could we try to escape, leave the Twentieth Heaven?”

“Escape?”

The sinister man sneered. “Where can we escape to? Aren’t there gods elsewhere? Once we leave the Twentieth Heaven, we’re like rootless duckweed, how long can we survive?”

The thin man opened his mouth, but ultimately lowered his head.

The hall fell into a stalemate once more.

Surrender was impossible, fighting was impossible, escape was impossible; it seemed all paths were blocked.

Just then, footsteps sounded outside the hall, followed by two figures entering through the main gate.

It was a young man and a woman.

The man wore a dark blue robe, his face cold and resolute, his brows displaying a composure and majesty beyond his years.

The woman wore a fiery red dress, her long hair as black as ink, her dark red eyes flashing with a burning light.

Ning Zhi and Su Yuqi.

The demonic cultivator leaders inside the hall were about to question the two strangers as they entered when the white-haired elder suddenly stood up, a flicker of shock and excitement in his aged eyes.

He strode forward and bowed deeply to Su Yuqi: “Holy Maiden! You…you’ve come!”

Su Yuqi looked at the elder, a hint of confusion flashing in her dark red eyes, but it quickly transformed into a natural air of authority: “I heard the Divine Race has declared war, so I came to see.”

The elder then looked at Ning Zhi, his gaze filled with reverence: “And this is…”

“My junior brother, Ning Zhi,”

Su Yuqi said, “a direct disciple of the Flame Demon lineage.”

A flicker of shock crossed the elder's eyes.

A direct disciple of the Flame Demon lineage?

That was a status even more prestigious than the Holy Maiden.

He immediately stepped aside, offering his seat: "Please! Please, both of you, take your seats!"

Ning Zhi did not refuse, striding to the main seat and sitting down in the place the white-haired elder had offered.

Su Yuqi stood beside him, as straight and dazzling as a flaming longsword.

The demonic cultivator leaders inside the hall exchanged bewildered glances. Some looked curious, some awe-inspiring, and others resentful.

What right did a seemingly young, seventh-grade Golden Immortal cultivator have to sit above them?

The white-haired elder seemed to sense their discontent and proclaimed loudly, "Gentlemen, this Young Master Ning Zhi is a direct disciple of the Flame Demon lineage. He cultivates the supreme demonic fire and is the most outstanding genius of our Flame Demon lineage in tens of thousands of years."

"This Miss Su Yuqi is the Holy Maiden of our Flame Demon lineage, her status is incomparably noble. The two of them are qualified to sit in this position."

The moment the words "Demon Clan's Supreme Fire" were uttered, the discontent in the hall vanished instantly.

The demon cultivator leaders looked at Ning Zhi with a newfound awe and apprehension.

The Demon Clan's Supreme Fire was the supreme inheritance of the Flame Demon lineage; legend had it that at its peak, it could incinerate all things and shatter space itself—the most powerful of all demonic cultivation techniques. The white-haired elder briefly recounted the earlier argument: "…We have differing opinions; some want to surrender, some want to flee, and there's still no consensus."

Ning Zhi listened, remaining silent for a moment.

Then he raised his head, looking at the demonic cultivator leaders, a cold smile curving his lips: "A mere Golden Crow Hao has frightened you all like this? You're all a disgrace to the demon race."

His voice wasn't loud, but it was like ice water splashed into everyone's hearts.

The demonic cultivator leaders' faces changed; some wanted to retort, but looking into Ning Zhi's calm yet chilling eyes, they swallowed their words.

"Since Golden Crow Hao can offer a bounty on the demon race," Ning Zhi's voice echoed in the hall, "why can't we offer a bounty on the gods?"

Silence fell over the hall.

The white-haired elder was the first to react, a glint of light flashing in his eyes: "Young Master means…"

"Immediately spread the word, let all the forces in the Twentieth Heaven know that killing a Divine Race cultivator and bringing their head to the Demon Clan can earn you double the Divine Race's bounty in crystals."

Ning Zhi's voice was like a boulder thrown into a calm lake, stirring up towering waves.

"Double?!"

"Where would we get so many crystals?"

“The Divine Race is incredibly wealthy, how can we compare to them?”

The hall erupted in chaos.

The white-haired elder gestured for everyone to quiet down, then looked at Ning Zhi, a hint of worry in his voice: “Young Master, your suggestion is indeed brilliant, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. But our Demon Clan’s resources in the Twentieth Heaven are limited. Competing with the Divine Race in terms of wealth, I’m afraid…” ”

You don’t need to worry about the crystals.”

Ning Zhi’s voice was calm. “I’ll figure something out. You just need to spread the word, let everyone know that killing a Divine Race cultivator can earn you double the bounty.”

The hall fell silent again.

The demonic cultivator leaders exchanged shocked and doubtful glances.

But looking into Ning Zhi’s unwavering eyes, none dared to question him.

The white-haired elder remained silent for a long time before finally nodding slowly, “Alright. I’ll take care of it now.”

He turned and left the main hall to arrange the dissemination of the news.

The news spread like wildfire throughout the Twentieth Heaven.

In less than a day, almost every force had received the demonic race’s bounty.

Killing a divine cultivator and bringing their head to the demons would earn double the divine race’s bounty in crystals.

This threw the Twentieth Heaven into complete chaos.

Those human and beast cultivators who had originally hunted demonic cultivators for divine golden cores now began to recalculate.

The crystals earned from killing a demonic cultivator versus killing a divine cultivator, and the demonic race's bounty being twice that of the divine race—anyone could do the math.

Thus, the human cultivators outside Falling Star City who were hunting down demonic cultivators began to turn their attention to the lone divine cultivators.

The hunters who had been chasing demonic cultivators became hunters of the divine race.

The divine cultivators were caught completely off guard.

They had initially thought that declaring war on the demonic cultivators would only result in a massacre, but they hadn't expected the demons to retaliate in the same way.

Those divine cultivators patrolling outside the city began to be ambushed; some had their heads severed, some had their magical artifacts stolen, and some were even killed in broad daylight.

The declaration of war by the Divine Emperor Golden Crow Hao had instead plunged the Twentieth Heaven into an unprecedented chaotic battle.

And the instigator of all this, Ning Zhi, was currently sitting in the main seat of the Black Abyss Valley council hall, listening to the white-haired elder report the news from outside, a faint smile playing on his lips.

" Kai, the waves you stirred up in the nineteenth heaven, I'll continue them in the twentieth heaven."

Ning Zhi's gaze fell on Kai, his voice audible only to the two of them, "Don't die too soon."

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The direction of Black Abyss Valley loomed ahead, its mountain shadows in the twilight resembling a colossal beast crouching on the ground, silent and majestic.

Kai and his group walked along the mountain path, their feet treading on gravel and pebbles, flanked by low shrubs and withered wild grass.

A faint smell of sulfur permeated the air, a unique aura near Black Abyss Valley; the closer they got, the denser the demonic energy became, but Kai, possessing the power of chaos, felt nothing.

Although Yan Feng's bleeding had stopped, excessive blood loss still left him weak.

Xiao Rou and Xiao Die supported him on either side, the three walking in the middle of the group.

Jiang Xuelan walked beside Kai, her icy blue eyes warily scanning their surroundings.

Xuanzhenzi walked at the very back, a withered blade of grass dangling from his mouth, his eyes half-closed, seemingly dozing off. But the occasional glint of shrewdness in his cloudy eyes proved he had never let his guard down.

The young Taoist boy followed beside Xuanzhenzi, carrying a small bundle on his back, his footsteps as light as a rabbit's.

"After crossing that hill ahead, it'll be a few hundred miles from there,"

Yan Feng pointed ahead, his voice hoarse yet carrying a hint of relieved anticipation. "The entrance to Black Abyss Valley has a natural barrier of demonic energy. Divine cultivators who enter are greatly suppressed, and ordinary cultivators dare not even approach. Once we get there, we'll be safe."

Kai nodded, about to say something, when his steps suddenly halted.

His divine sense detected an aura emanating from ahead.

Several people were approaching, and they were clearly hostile.

“Someone’s coming.”

Kai’s voice was calm, but tinged with a hint of gravity. “Many. The aura of the Divine Race.”

Yan Feng’s expression changed drastically. He instinctively gripped his broken black longsword. “How many?”

“At least fifty,”

Kai said. “The leader is an eighth-grade Golden Immortal, and most of the rest are sixth to seventh-grade Golden Immortals.”

Yan Feng’s body trembled slightly.

Fifty Divine Race cultivators, led by an eighth-grade Golden Immortal.

Their current remnants couldn’t possibly hold them off.

“Benefactor…”

Yan Feng’s voice was hoarse. “You go first, don’t worry about us. The Divine Race’s target is us demonic cultivators. You are human cultivators; they won’t bother you.”

Kai didn’t turn around, only saying calmly, “I’m not leaving.”

Yan Feng opened his mouth, wanting to persuade him further, but seeing Kai’s straight back and calm gaze, he swallowed his words.

Kai gripped the hilt of the Dragon-Slaying Sword, his purple eyes staring straight ahead.

On the distant horizon, golden light began to shimmer, like dense stars moving across the ground.

The light drew closer, growing brighter until it transformed into a procession of divine cultivators clad in golden armor, riding golden spirit beasts, appearing in the distance.

More than fifty divine cultivators stood in neat formation, their golden armor gleaming dazzlingly in the twilight.

Leading them was a burly middle-aged man with a square face and a battle-hardened, cold gaze. His cultivation was at the eighth rank of the Golden Immortal realm, and he held a golden halberd, its tip crackling with golden lightning.

They saw Kai and his group, and they also noticed those in the crowd who clearly exuded the aura of demonic cultivators. “Demonic cultivators spotted! Surround them!”

The moment the order was given, over fifty divine cultivators, like a giant golden net, swiftly spread out, flanking Kai and his group from both sides.

Golden light formed an impenetrable ring in the twilight, trapping them in the center and sealing off all escape routes.

The howls of spirit beasts, the clanging of armor against metal, and the low hum of divine runes intertwined, creating a suffocating sense of oppression.

Yan Feng’s face was deathly pale. He gripped his broken longsword tightly, even the hilt trembling.

Xiao Rou protected Xiao Die, pressing her behind her and blocking her view with her body.

The wounded demonic cultivators also gripped their weapons tightly, their eyes filled with desperate stubbornness.

Kai stood at the forefront, his purple eyes sweeping over the divine cultivators, like a silent reef, unmoved by the surging golden waves around him.

But just then, a new aura approached from afar.

This time it was even more chaotic, the footsteps even more clamorous.

A cloud of gray dust rose from the east, while heavy footsteps and the low growls of wild beasts echoed from the west.

Moments later, two more groups came into view.

A group of human cultivators, about thirty or forty in number, arrived from the east, dressed in robes of various colors, wielding gleaming magical artifacts, their faces etched with greed and excitement.

A group of beastmen cultivators, about twenty or thirty in number, arrived from the west, their physiques robust, some with beast ears, some with tails, some covered in fur, emitting deep roars.

The three forces, nearly one hundred and fifty in number, surrounded Kai and his group.

A four-way standoff ensued.

The divine cultivators rode on spirit beasts, their golden armor blazing like flames in the twilight;

human cultivators stood in a row, their magical artifacts reflecting a cold light in the darkness;

beastmen crouched on the ground, their heavy breathing reverberating like drums in the air;

and Kai and his group stood in the very center, surrounded by three forces, like lone wolves trapped in an alley.

Yan Feng's lips trembled.

He had lived for hundreds of years, seen countless storms, but never had he experienced such a desperate situation.

Three forces, over 150 people, while they only had a dozen or so, most of them wounded.

Even if Kai was strong, even if Jiang Xuelan and Xuan Zhenzi were both eighth-grade Golden Immortals, facing such an encirclement, they had almost no chance of survival.

"Benefactor..."

Yan Feng's voice was hoarse, "You should leave quickly, take your friends and leave. We demonic cultivators are destined for this..."

Kai didn't answer him.

He simply walked forward step by step, his gray robe fluttering in the twilight, blocking everyone's path.

His right hand slowly rose, grasping the hilt of the Dragon-Slaying Sword. Purple light flowed across the scabbard, as if it were ready to be drawn at any moment.

His eyes were calm and focused, without fear or hesitation, only an icy calmness.

"Old Xuan." Kai's voice was soft.

"I'm here." Xuan Zhenzi spat out the withered grass in his mouth and stood to Kai's left rear, his hands slightly open, azure light flowing in his palms.

"Xue Lan."

Jiang Xue Lan stood to Kai's right rear, icy blue cold air condensing at her fingertips, freezing the surrounding air into fine ice crystals.

"You protect those behind you." Kai's voice was as calm as a still pond. "I'll hold off those in front."

Jiang Xue Lan bit her lip and nodded.

Kai took a deep breath, a cold fighting spirit surging in his purple eyes.

Even if there were 150 people on the other side, even if today was a certain death, he would never retreat a single step.

"It's time to make our move,"

Kai said in a low voice, his fingers tightening around the hilt of his sword. "Prepare."

The golden-haired divine leader raised his halberd, golden light condensing into a dazzling sphere at its tip.

His gaze swept over the human and beastmen cultivators, and he proclaimed loudly, "Human and beastmen comrades! These demonic cultivators are right before us. Kill them and you'll obtain the divine golden core! Attack now!"

His voice echoed across the twilight wilderness, carrying an unquestionable command.

The majesty of the divine race was on full display at this moment.

He thought everything would go according to his plan.

At his command, the human and beastmen cultivators would pounce like hunting dogs, tearing the demonic cultivators to shreds.

But what happened next stunned everyone.

The leader of the human cultivators was an elderly man with gray hair, a cultivation level of the eighth rank of the Golden Immortal realm, wearing a faded blue robe, and holding an ancient longsword in his hand.

He glanced at the divine cultivators, then at the demonic cultivators behind Kai, and finally turned to the beastman leader beside him.

A burly lion-like man, his golden mane billowing in the wind, gripped a massive battle axe.

The two exchanged a glance and nodded simultaneously.

“Attack!” the human elder roared.

“Kill!” the beastman leader roared deafeningly.

Then, something completely unexpected happened.

The human and beastman cultivators didn’t rush towards the demonic cultivators behind Kai; instead, they abruptly turned and pounced on the divine cultivators.

Swords flashed, axes rained down.

The divine cultivators were caught

completely off guard. They never expected their allies, who should have been on the same side, to suddenly turn their blades against them.

Golden armor screeched under the blows of swords and axes, screams and cries of agony mingled in the twilight wilderness.

“You’re insane!”

“We’re allies!”

“Why are you attacking us?!”

The god-race leader's face instantly turned ashen, his voice filled with shock and rage: "What are you doing! Attacking the gods is to make an enemy of the entire god race! Do you know the consequences?!"

No one answered him.

The human and beast-race cultivators, as if they had planned it all along, moved with synchronized ferocity, each with a greedy and resolute glint in their eyes.

Three or four of them surrounded a god-race cultivator, unleashing a barrage of swords, axes, and hammers, cutting down the god-race cultivators who had no time to react.

Golden blood splattered across the wilderness, staining the withered grass and gray-brown rocks crimson.

The sound of armor being cleaved was like tearing cloth, and screams echoed everywhere.

Although the divine cultivators were individually powerful, they were utterly overwhelmed by the sudden attack, far exceeding their numbers, and caught completely off guard by the backstabbing.

One divine cultivator had barely raised his sword when three human cultivators simultaneously pierced his chest;

another attempted to escape by leaping into the air, only to be struck in the back by an axe from a beastman and plummet from mid-air;

the leading divine commander tried to regain his footing, his golden halberd sweeping across, repelling several human cultivators, but more enemies had surrounded him, blocking all his escape routes.

In less than a quarter of an hour, all fifty-odd divine cultivators lay dead in pools of blood.

Golden blood flowed slowly in the twilight, forming small streams.

The bodies beneath the golden armor were no longer… Human and beastman cultivators, panting heavily, stood amidst the golden corpses, holding magical artifacts and axes stained with golden blood.

Their faces bore exhaustion, but even more so, excitement and satisfaction.

Then, they began to decapitate.

The human and beastman cultivators crouched down, skillfully using daggers to sever the heads of the divine cultivators, then stuffing them into their storage bags.

Their movements were swift and practiced, clearly not their first time doing this.

Kai stood rooted to the spot, watching this scene, his grip on his sword slowly loosening.

His expression was complex.

He had been prepared for a desperate battle, his Dragon-Slaying Sword ready to be drawn at any moment, his chaotic power already at its peak, even calculating how to break through with minimal losses.

But in the end, he didn't even have a chance to act.

Jiang Xuelan was also stunned.

The icy blue aura in her hand condensed into sharp ice needles at her fingertips, but before she could even fire them, they had already lost their target.

Xuan Zhenzi's mouth gaped open in an "O" shape, his cloudy eyes filled with disbelief.

He had lived for so many years and seen countless scenes, but this was truly the first time he had ever witnessed anything like it.

He had expected a bloody battle, but instead, the enemy had been wiped out by their own “friendly forces.”

The young Taoist boy peeked out from behind Xuan Zhenzi, his eyes wide, and whispered, “Master…why are they attacking their own people?”

“Don’t ask, Master doesn’t understand either…” Xuan Zhenzi clicked his tongue.

Yan Feng was utterly dumbfounded.

He gripped his broken black longsword, the tip pointing forward, maintaining a defensive stance, but his eyes were filled with confusion and disbelief.

Those divine cultivators, just like that, killed?

Killed by their “allies” who were supposed to kill them alongside them?

He opened his mouth, wanting to say something, but his throat seemed blocked by something, and he couldn’t utter a single word.

Kai’s gaze fell on the human elder.

The old man was bending over, severing the head of a divine cultivator with practiced ease, as if he were cutting leeks.

After finishing, he put the head into his storage bag, straightened up, and his gaze met Kai’s.

Seeing Kai’s purple eyes, he grinned and walked towards him.

“Don’t be nervous, don’t be nervous,”

the old man waved his hand, indicating he meant no harm.

He stopped a few steps away from Kai, wiped the blood from his face, and revealed a sly smile. “We’re not here to kill you.”

Kai looked at him, his purple eyes showing neither trust nor hostility, and calmly asked, “Why?”

“Why kill a divine cultivator?”

the old man grinned, revealing a mouthful of yellow teeth. “Because the demon race also issued a bounty. Killing a divine cultivator and bringing their head to demon territory yields double the bounty. Didn’t you know?”

Kai raised an eyebrow slightly: “The demon race also issued a bounty?”

“Yes! The news came out last night!”

The old man’s voice was filled with excitement. “Killing a Golden Immortal Rank 8 god-race cultivator will get you 200,000 top-grade crystals from the demon race!

That’s double what the gods offer! Only a fool wouldn’t take that deal! We helped the gods kill demon cultivators before because of the crystals.

Now that the demon race is offering more, of course we’ll help them kill the gods! In business, you help whoever pays the highest price, it’s only fair!”

Several human and beast cultivators behind him nodded in agreement, some even patting their storage bags at their waists, which contained the heads of gods they had just severed.

“This is a good deal!”

“Those gods are always so arrogant, we’ve been wanting to get rid of them for a long time!”

“Killing one god cultivator is worth killing two demon cultivators, only a fool would keep killing demon cultivators!”

Kai looked at their matter-of-fact expressions, remained silent for a moment, and then a slight smile appeared on his lips: “Indeed, it’s business, whoever pays the highest bidder gets the job, it’s only natural.”

The old man chuckled: “Right? So we’re not here to kill you. We’re going to Black Abyss Valley to exchange these god heads for bounty. You’re going to Black Abyss Valley too, right? Perfect timing!”

Kai nodded: “Then let’s go together.”

The old man turned around and waved to the human and beast cultivators behind him: “Are you done cleaning up? If you’re done, let’s go! Black Abyss Valley isn’t close, it’s getting dark!”

“All done!”

“Let’s go!”

The human and beast cultivators all stood up, patted the bloodstains and dirt off their hands, some even used rags to wipe the golden bloodstains on their magic weapons, and then put them into their storage bags.

Smiles graced their faces, their steps were relaxed, and they chatted about their day’s haul as if they had just completed a routine hunt.

Carrying storage bags, they followed Kai and his group towards Black Abyss Valley.

The group was more than twice the size of their previous one, and the tense atmosphere had vanished, replaced by an eerie harmony.

After walking for a while, Yan Feng couldn’t help but approach Kai and ask in a low voice, “Benefactor… are those people really trustworthy?”

Kai glanced at the human and beast cultivators chatting and laughing, a thoughtful look flashing in his purple eyes. “They’re helping us now because the Demon Clan offers a higher bounty.

If one day the God Clan offers more, they’ll turn around and help the God Clan kill us. For them, it’s just business.”

“Then why don’t we travel with them…”

“At least it’s safe for now.”

Kai’s voice was calm. “Besides, they know the location of Black Abyss Valley and can guide us. Once we reach Black Abyss Valley, they’ll collect their reward and leave, while we stay in the valley, and we won’t interfere with each other.”

Yan Feng thought for a moment and nodded. “Benefactor makes sense.”

He didn’t ask any more questions and quickened his pace, following behind Kai.

Dusk deepened, and the clouds on the horizon were dyed dark red by the last rays of the setting sun, like a solidified sea of blood.

The group wound its way across the wilderness, heading towards Black Abyss Valley.

The human and beastman cultivators carrying the severed heads were still excitedly discussing their day’s gains and the bounty that was about to be theirs. Their voices drifted through the twilight, carrying an eerie ease and merriment.

Kai walked at the head of the group, his gray robes fluttering in the wind.

His gaze was fixed on the gradually clearing outline of the Black Abyss Valley ahead, his purple eyes swirling with complex emotions.

The demons offered a bounty on the gods.

This tactic, using their own methods against them, was indeed brilliant.

And the person who could make this decision in such a short time…

Kai's mind conjured up that cold, young face:

Ning Zhi. The entrance to Black Abyss Valley finally revealed itself fully in the twilight.

Two towering black cliffs, like two colossal stone gates, pierced the clouds, flanking the valley entrance.

The cliff surfaces were covered with dense, intricate demonic runes, which glowed a dark red in the twilight, like countless open eyes, slowly blinking, each flicker carrying an ancient rhythm.

A thick black mist hung over the valley entrance, containing a dense demonic energy that surged and churned like a living thing.

Sometimes it coalesced into a blurry outline, sometimes it dispersed into nothingness, exuding a cold and oppressive aura, as if warning every creature that tried to approach—this is not your home.

Kai stood before the valley entrance, his purple eyes gazing at the churning black mist, sensing the dense demonic energy within.

He could feel an ancient, settled quality within that demonic energy, as if it had accumulated over countless years, long since becoming one with the valley.

This place is a forbidden zone for ordinary cultivators, but a natural sanctuary for demons.

No wonder the gods dare not easily set foot here—in such an environment, the spiritual power of god cultivators is greatly suppressed, and their combat power drops by at least 30%.

"We've arrived."

Yan Feng's face finally showed a relieved expression. His voice was hoarse but filled with the joy of surviving a disaster, and even his chest straightened a bit. "This is Black Abyss Valley.

I lived here for a few years when I was young, and then I went to Falling Star City. Although I left, this place has always been the home of demon cultivators."

He took a deep breath, as if he wanted to inhale all the demonic energy at the entrance of the valley into his lungs.

That kind of energy was like the energy of his mother to him, familiar and reassuring.

The human and beast cultivators also stopped, looking at the entrance of the valley with a hint of apprehension.

Although they came for the bounty, they still instinctively felt uncomfortable with this natural barrier of demonic energy.

The white-haired elder leading the group frowned, his nostrils flaring slightly, as if trying to dispel the unsettling aura emanating from him. He said nothing, simply waving his hand to signal those behind him to wait quietly.

Kai lifted his foot and walked towards the valley entrance.

Jiang Xuelan and Xuanzhenzi followed closely behind him, the little Daoist boy huddled behind Xuanzhenzi, peering ahead with a mixture of curiosity and nervousness on his face.

There were guards at the valley entrance.

Two demonic cultivators clad in black armor stood on either side of the entrance, holding black halberds whose tips shimmered with a dark red light, echoing the demonic patterns on the cliff face.

Their gazes were like torches, two burning dark red lanterns, scanning every approaching figure in the twilight.

Their cultivation was at the seventh rank of the Golden Immortal realm, their aura steady yet sharp, clearly indicating they were elite guards of Black Abyss Valley.

Seeing Kai and his group approach, the two guards simultaneously raised their halberds, crossing them to block the entrance to the valley. Their movements were swift and decisive, without the slightest hesitation.

“Halt!”

the guard on the left shouted sharply, his voice echoing through the cliffs at the valley entrance, carrying an undeniable authority.

His gaze swept over Kai, Jiang Xuelan, and Xuan Zhenzi, his brows furrowing sharply, a hint of wariness and hostility flashing in his eyes. “Human cultivators? What are you doing in Black Abyss Valley? Don’t you know this is demonic cultivator territory, and outsiders are not allowed to enter?”

Yan Feng quickly stepped forward, cupped his hands in a respectful bow, his posture humble, and his voice tinged with pleading: “Brothers, I am Yan Feng, from Falling Star City. These human cultivators are my saviors. They saved me and my daughter, and also my people.

Now the gods are hunting down demonic cultivators everywhere, and we can no longer stay outside. We want to enter the valley to take refuge for a while, and leave after the storm has passed…”

“Yan Feng?”

The guard on the right sized him up, seemingly searching his memory for the name, then nodded, his wariness barely easing. “I remember you. You lived in the valley for a few years before going to Falling Star City.

But I can't make the decision to bring human cultivators into Black Abyss Valley. You know the rules: Black Abyss Valley is a gathering place for demonic cultivators; outsiders are not allowed to enter. This rule was established hundreds of years ago, and no one can break it."

Yan Feng's expression changed, his voice tinged with urgency: "Brother, I know the rules, but these people are truly different! They saved us in Falling Star City. Without them, my daughter and I would have died at the hands of the gods long ago! Please

make an exception and let me go in to plead with the leader. If the leader agrees, I can bring them in. Is that alright?"

"No."

The guard on the left shook his head, his tone resolute, leaving no room for negotiation. "Rules are rules. You can go in, but these human cultivators cannot.

If they really want to enter the valley, they must first obtain the leader's personal permission. Otherwise, I cannot let them through. This is my duty, please understand." "

But..."

"There are no buts."

The guard on the right also spoke, his voice gentler than the one on the left, but his attitude was equally firm. "Yan Feng, you should know that under normal circumstances, if you brought a few human friends, we might be able to inform them for you.

But these are extraordinary times. The gods have just declared war on us, and bounties are flying everywhere. Countless humans and gods want to sneak in to gather information. We dare not take the risk."

Yan Feng's lips trembled, a trace of helplessness and humiliation flashing in his eyes.

Although he was a minor leader in Falling Star City, leading a dozen or so men and having the final say, in a place like Black Abyss Valley, he really had no say.

The guards didn't give him face, and there was nothing he could do.

The administrators here didn't recognize his identity; he didn't even have the right to take Kai to receive the award.

He turned around, looking at Kai with a face full of apology, even avoiding Kai's eyes: "Benefactor... I'm truly sorry... I... don't hold a high position in the valley, my words carry little weight.

Why don't you wait outside the valley for a while, I'll go in and explain the situation to the leader, see if we can..."

Kai looked at Yan Feng's embarrassed and helpless appearance, without blaming him.

He had already noticed that although Yan Feng's cultivation was not low, his status among demonic cultivators was not high; otherwise, he wouldn't be living in a small place like Falling Star City with his family, accompanied only by a dozen or so clansmen.

He nodded, his voice calm: "It's not your fault. Then..."

Before he could finish speaking, the black mist at the valley entrance suddenly surged, as if stirred by an invisible hand, emitting a low whistling sound.

Two figures emerged from the black mist His face was cold and resolute, his brows carrying a composure and majesty beyond his years. His eyes were like deep pools, unfathomable, yet possessing an invisible pressure.

His steps were steady, each one firm, as if the earth beneath his feet were bowing to him.

A faint, scorching aura surrounded him, distorting the air around him slightly, as if separated by a layer of sweltering heat.

Ning Zhi.

Behind him followed a woman in a fiery red dress, her long, ink-black hair gleaming with a dark red sheen in the twilight, like flowing flames.

Her face was aloof, her brows carrying an innate nobility and detachment, but occasionally, a barely perceptible hint of confusion would flash in her dark red eyes.

She walked half a step behind Ning Zhi, maintaining this distance as if it were a habit, her gaze sweeping over the crowd at the valley entrance, lingering on Kai for a moment before moving away.

Su Yuqi.

Kai watched the two emerge from the black mist, his purple eyes showing little surprise, only a subtle, almost imperceptible curve to his lips.

He had long anticipated seeing Ning Zhi and Su Yuqi in Black Abyss Valley; after all, both were from the Flame Demon lineage, and in the twentieth level of the Heavenly Realm, they would undoubtedly be in a gathering place of demonic cultivators. He just hadn't expected it to be under these circumstances.

The two guards' expressions changed drastically upon seeing Ning Zhi, as if winter had met with blazing sun. They immediately sheathed their halberds, knelt on one knee, and bowed respectfully, their voices in unison: "Young Master Ning!"

Ning Zhi glanced at them, then at Kai and his group at the valley entrance, his gaze lingering on Kai's face for a moment before shifting away.

His voice was calm, as if he were discussing something trivial: "Let them in. These people are my friends."

The guards hesitated, seemingly wanting to say something, but seeing Ning Zhi's calm eyes, they swallowed their words.

They stepped aside without hesitation, even their movements as they stood up carrying a sense of trepidation: "Yes! Young Master Ning!"

Yan Feng was completely stunned.

He glanced at the two guards who were bowing respectfully to Ning Zhi, then at Ning Zhi's young yet cold face, and then at Kai, his eyes filled with shock and confusion. He opened his mouth, but couldn't utter a word.

This man, who looked even younger than Kai, held such a high position in Black Abyss Valley?

Even the guards bowed to him?

And those two guards, who were considered influential figures in the valley, acted as if they were seeing their master when they saw Ning Zhi.

"My benefactor, this..."

"An old friend." Kai's voice was calm, as if he had expected this scene. "Go in."

He stepped into Black Abyss Valley.

Jiang Xuelan followed closely behind, her icy blue eyes thoughtfully glancing at Ning Zhi, then at Kai, seemingly wanting to ask something, but ultimately remaining silent. Xuan Zhenzi

followed behind, a dry blade of grass dangling from his mouth, scrutinizing Ning Zhi from head to toe with the curiosity of an old fox eyeing a young hunter.

The young Taoist trotted alongside Xuan Zhenzi, glancing back occasionally at the two guards, his face full of surprise.

Yan Feng hesitated for a moment, then quickly followed with Xiao Rou and Xiao Die.

Ning Zhi stood at the valley entrance, watching Kai walk past him without saying a word.

As the two brushed past each other, Ning Zhi's voice was very soft, so soft that only Kai could hear it, as soft as a falling leaf whispering in the wind: "You finally caught up."

"If I didn't come, how would you play by yourself?" Kai's voice was equally soft, as soft as a needle falling on a carpet.

"Yes, it's no fun playing alone?"

Ning Zhi's voice carried a faint smile, a smile hidden beneath his calm tone, like an undercurrent surging beneath a thin layer of ice.

Then he stepped aside, making way, his voice returning to its usual calm and aloofness, "Come in. Let's find a place to talk."

Kai didn't turn around, following the person in front into the depths of Black Abyss Valley.

But he could feel a gaze fixed on his back—not Jiang Xuelan's, not Xuanzhenzi's, but that dark red gaze.

Su Yuqi was looking at him.

She didn't recognize him, but the memories deep within that body seemed to still linger with some vague echo.

Behind him, the human and beastmen cultivators surged forward, shouting at the valley entrance, their voices filled with urgency and anticipation: "Hey! We're here to exchange for the bounty! Dozens of heads of divine cultivators!"

They held up storage bags stained with golden blood, the blood already somewhat congealed in the twilight, turning into a dark golden luster.

Their faces were full of excitement and eagerness; they had been swift and decisive when killing the divine cultivators, and now they were equally ruthless when exchanging for the bounty.

The guard looked at the human and beastmen cultivators, then back at Ning Zhi who had already walked away, and scratched his head somewhat awkwardly: “This… wait a moment, I’ll go ask the leader.”

…

The interior of Black Abyss Valley was much larger than Kai had imagined.

The valley was open, with numerous caves and stone chambers carved into the cliffs on both sides, layered upon each other like a honeycomb.

In the middle was a flat open space, where many simple stone houses and wooden sheds were built, arranged in a staggered manner, with cobblestone paths between them.

There were about a thousand demonic cultivators living in the valley, men, women, and children. Some were setting up stalls to trade in the open space, displaying various spiritual materials and magical artifacts in front of them;

some were meditating and cultivating in front of the stone houses, their bodies surrounded by a faint demonic aura;

some were repairing magical artifacts, sharpening the blades with rough files.

Although their lives seemed austere, they shared a tacit understanding, nodding and greeting acquaintances. Children chased and played in the alleys, their laughter infrequent yet brimming with a tenacious vitality.

Kai followed Ning Zhi through the stone-paved path in the valley. The demonic cultivators, seeing Ning Zhi, readily made way, some bowing in respect, others stepping aside, their eyes filled with awe and reverence.

It was a genuine recognition, not forced submission.

They arrived before a large black hall in the center.

The hall was entirely constructed of massive black stones, with a dark golden flame emblem carved on the lintel—the symbol of the Flame Demon lineage. The flames danced slowly within the emblem, as if truly burning.

Dark red lanterns hung on either side of the hall's entrance, their light like congealed blood.

Ning Zhi pushed open the hall's door and entered.

Kai followed behind him, followed by Jiang Xuelan and Xuan Zhenzi.

The young Daoist boy was left outside by Xuan Zhenzi . The walls were covered with ancient demonic runes, emitting a dark red glow that shrouded the entire hall in a blood-red mist.

An ancient aura permeated the air, like an open history book, each page recounting past glories and tragedies.

In the center of the hall stood a massive stone table, upon which lay a large, yellowed map, marking the terrain of the twenty heavens and the distribution of various forces.

These markings were in different colors: red for divine strongholds, black for human cities, gray for neutral zones, and a circle heavily outlined in dark red with warning symbols around its edge.

Ning Zhi walked to the stone table, turned, and looked at Kai.

The two stared at each other across the table, neither speaking first. A moment of silence filled the hall, broken only by the silent flow of the dark red light on the walls.

Then Ning Zhi spoke, his first question startling Kai: “How many crystals do you have left?”

Kai raised an eyebrow slightly, leaning against the stone table with his arms crossed, looking at Ning Zhi’s expressionless face: “Why are you asking this?” ”

Those people outside are here to collect their bounties.”

Ning Zhi’s voice was calm, as calm as asking about the weather. “I issued the bounty, but the demons don’t have enough crystals for them.”

Kai understood.

Although Ning Zhi had come up with a clever way to use their own methods against them, he had overlooked a practical problem.

The demons were indeed not as wealthy as the gods.

The gods occupied the best resources of the twentieth heaven, possessing countless crystal mines and spiritual veins, while the demons had been suppressed for many years, lacking resources. All the demon cultivators combined couldn’t even raise a third of the crystals needed for the first batch of bounties.

They simply couldn’t come up with that many crystals to pay out the bounties.

“So you want me to pay?”

Kai leaned against the stone table, arms crossed, looking at Ning Zhi with a mocking smile.

“I helped you kill Elder Shenmu, seized his storage ring, and the resources of those divine forces in the Nineteenth Heaven.”

Ning Zhi’s voice remained calm. “You should have quite a few crystals on you. I sensed the aura of abundant resources on you in the Land of Fallen Emperors.”

“I risked my life for that.”

Kai’s voice carried a hint of sarcasm, but the smile in his eyes didn’t truly reach them. “You’ve got a good plan. You came up with the idea, but I have to pay for the crystals? I could hear your scheme outside the valley.”

“It’s fine if you don’t pay.”

Ning Zhi shrugged, his actions and tone conveying an indifferent attitude, his hands spread out in front of his chest as if to say, “Whatever.”

His voice was calm with a hint of laziness, “Then I can only tell those people outside that the Demon Clan is out of money, and tell them to take back the God Clan’s heads, or directly send the Demon Cultivators to the God Clan for the reward.

If they help the God Clan then, you’ll never be able to destroy the God Clan’s main hall, and you’ll become a stray dog in the twentieth heaven, chased everywhere by that Golden Crow Hao. Think about it yourself.”

“Aren’t you the same?” Kai asked.

“The same my ass! At worst, I won’t stay in the twentieth heaven, I’ll go straight to the twenty-first heaven. In the twenty-first heaven, I’ll still be awesome in front of the Demon Cultivators,” Ning Zhi said.

“Damn, is the Heavenly Realm yours? You can go to whichever heaven you want.” Kai rolled his eyes.

Seeing Kai's reaction, Ning Zhi laughed loudly, "Although the Heavenly Realm isn't my home, as long as my master is here, I can easily go to the twenty-first heaven, or even higher heavens. Can you do that?"

Ning Zhi was deliberately trying to provoke Kai, deliberately showing off.

"That old bastard Yanmo, when I run into him one day, I'll give him a good beating!" Kai gritted his teeth.

But he could only vent his anger; with his current strength, he probably couldn't possibly give Yanmo a good beating.

Although he had Mr. Shi behind him—Mr. Shi was even more powerful than Yanmo—Mr. Shi didn't really care about him anymore.

Kai could only climb the ranks step by step on his own, unlike Ning Zhi.

"Stop talking nonsense, hand over the crystals now," Ning Zhi said with a smile.

Kai glared at Ning Zhi. This bastard! It was clearly his bad idea, yet he'd passed the buck to him.

If he didn't hand over the crystals, the hunters would become enemies of the demonic cultivators again, and the gods would control the twentieth heaven. He would be the first to be hunted down.

If he handed over the crystals, although he could get rid of this group, more and more people would come with the heads of gods for the bounty. His few crystals wouldn't last long; it was like throwing stones into a bottomless pit.

"I almost want to applaud you for your clever plan."

Kai shook his head, a helpless smile playing on his purple eyes. "Fine, I can provide the crystals. But what about afterwards? I can't keep supporting the entire demon race's bounty forever, can I? I may have some resources, but I can't afford this kind of drain."

Ning Zhi looked at Kai, remained silent for a moment, a thoughtful glint in his cold eyes, and then slowly spoke: “So we need to find a crystal mine, or find a way to obtain a large amount of resources.

I know there are many ruins and ancient battlefields in the Twentieth Heaven, but most have been thoroughly explored, leaving only scraps, not worth the risk.

However, there is one place, said to be extremely dangerous, with a nine-out-of-ten chance of death for those who enter, so very few dare to set foot there.”

His gaze fell… On the yellowed map on the stone table, he pointed to an area heavily outlined in dark red at the edge of the map, with a few small words next to it: “Extremely dangerous, enter with caution.”

He tapped the area with his fingertip: “This place is called ‘The Abyss of Annihilation.’ It is said that in ancient times, a powerful Immortal Emperor perished there while attempting to break through to the Saint realm. His Daoist essence and remnant soul scattered throughout that area, forming extremely terrifying law storms and spatial traps.

Cultivators below the ninth rank of the Golden Immortal realm who enter have almost no chance of coming out alive. But precisely because of this, the resources inside have never been touched.”

Kai looked down at the dark red area on the map, a glint of light flashing in his purple eyes, like a spark ignited: “The place where an Immortal Emperor fell? Another Land of Emperor’s Fall?”

“But why didn’t you go yourself? Why did you have to wait for me? Besides, none of us have reached the ninth rank of the Golden Immortal realm, right?”

Kai’s thoughts were valid. After all, back in the nineteenth heaven, Ning Zhi had been hiding in the Emperor’s Fall Land in seclusion. Kai only learned about it later. Entering the Emperor’s Fall Land didn’t yield any

treasures; it only used some Dao… “Damn it, are you using me as a shield?” Kai cursed.

“Nonsense, if you were worthless, would I be telling you?” Ning Zhi smirked. “The fragments of Daoist essence, insights into laws, and even remnants of inheritance and magical artifacts in the Fallen Emperor’s Land. If we can find one or two useful items, whether for our own use or to exchange for crystals at the Void Merchant Guild, it’ll be enough.”

“Just tell me if you dare to go. Let me tell you, the Fallen Emperor’s Land is far more powerful than the Nineteenth Heaven. The Fallen Emperor’s Land in the Nineteenth Heaven has been trodden upon, and its power has long been diminished. But this place is different; it has never been set foot here.”

Kai looked up at Ning Zhi, a familiar challenge in his smile: “You ask me if I dare? When have you ever seen me back down? This question sounds like you’ve just met me.”

Ning Zhi looked at Kai, a glint of light finally flashing in his cold eyes: “Then it’s settled. We’ll rest for three days, and set off in three days, with your bodyguard.”

“Old Xuan?”

Kai glanced at Xuan Zhenzi, who was standing not far away picking his ear. “If he wants to go, he can go; if he doesn’t, he can stay here and watch the little Daoist. Anyway, his old bones won’t be of much help, and he can stay here and watch the child.”

“Who are you calling an old bone?”

Xuan Zhenzi’s ears were sharp, and he immediately turned around, glaring at Kai. “I am a peak eighth-grade Golden Immortal! I’m many realms higher than you! You say I can’t help? Believe me, I’ll slap you into the ground with one palm!”

“Alright, I know you’re powerful.” Kai waved his hand, smiling as he turned away. “Then everyone go. But Old Xuan, don’t be a burden when you go.”

“A burden?”

Xuan Zhenzi puffed out his chest. “Back in the lower realms, what secret realms haven’t I explored? What dangerous places haven’t I been to? You’ve only lived a few years, and you dare to talk big in front of me?”

“Alright, alright, you’re impressive.” Kai waved his hand with a smile.

Jiang Xuelan stood to the side, remaining silent.

Her gaze lingered on Su Yuqi for a moment before returning to its original position.

She could sense a scrutinizing and probing look in Su Yuqi’s eyes.

It was a woman’s intuition; even with amnesia, her deepest instincts were still telling her something.

Su Yuqi was also looking at Jiang Xuelan.

She didn’t know why she was looking at that woman, but there was a strange feeling around her, as if something was stuck in her throat, something she couldn’t say or swallow.

The woman stood beside Kai, her posture natural, clearly indicating a close relationship. This realization stirred a bittersweet feeling in Su Yuqi’s heart, but she quickly suppressed it.

“Alright,” Ning Zhi nodded, “It’s settled then.”

The rest was much simpler.

Kai took out a large number of crystals from his storage ring and handed them to Ning Zhi.

“Old Xuan, take out all the crystals I gave you. I’ve taken everything I have on me, I’m afraid it won’t be enough,” Kai said to Xuan Zhenzi.

“Then remember to return them to me, this is my wages,” Xuan Zhenzi said.

“Don’t worry, once I destroy the main temple and seize their resources, I’ll give you back the principal with interest,” Kai said.

Xuan Zhenzi reluctantly handed over all the crystals he had.

Ning Zhi didn’t say much, only instructing the white-haired elder to take the crystals out and exchange them for bounties from the human and beast cultivators.

The white-haired elder, with a complex expression, bowed deeply to Kai: “Thank you, sir… On behalf of the demons of Black Abyss Valley, I thank you for your generosity.”

“Don’t thank me,”

Kai waved his hand, a sly smile on his face. “These all need to be repaid. Once we find something good in the Abyss of Annihilation and sell it, you’ll have to pay me back with interest.”

The white-haired elder paused, then grinned, a smile carrying a long-lost ease: “Of course! Of course! I’ll go do it right away!”

He turned and strode out of the hall.

The crystals were carried out, and soon cheers erupted from the valley entrance.

The human and beastman cultivators received their deserved bounties and left Black Abyss Valley satisfied.

As they left, someone called out into the valley, their voices carrying far in the twilight: “Next time you need this kind of business, remember to let us know! We’ll be there whenever you call!”

Kai stood at the entrance of the main hall, watching the human and beastman cultivators, carrying full storage bags, chatter and laugh as they left the valley, their figures disappearing into the twilight, their shadows stretched long by the setting sun.

A slight smile curved his lips.

“It seems the key to this war lies not with the gods, nor with the demons, but with whether we can get more people on our side.” His voice was soft.

“That depends on what we can find in the Abyss of Annihilation.”

Ning Zhi’s voice came from behind. He had also walked to the entrance of the hall, looking in the direction where the human and beast cultivators had gone. “If we find enough, all the rogue cultivators in the entire Twentieth Heaven will become our allies. If we find nothing, then we’ll have to rely on ourselves to fight it out.”

“So this time, we can only succeed, failure is not an option.” Kai turned around and looked at Ning Zhi. “Are you ready?”

“When have I ever not been ready?” Ning The Divine Palace.

Golden light, like solidified amber, enveloped the entire palace, dyeing every inch of air a dazzling gold.

Divine runes flowed slowly across the walls, emanating an ancient and heavy pressure—the accumulated aura of countless powerful gods over tens of thousands of years, like an invisible mountain pressing down upon the palace.

Jin Wuhao sat on his divine throne, his golden eyes blazing with fury.

Kneeling before him was a god elder, trembling, his forehead pressed tightly against the cold golden ground, lacking even the courage to look up.

Just moments ago, he had brought news that enraged the Divine Emperor.

The Demon Race had issued a bounty, doubling the reward for the heads of god cultivators.

Within two days, god cultivators across the Twenty Heavens had been ambushed, over a hundred killed, their heads severed and exchanged for crystals.

Those human and beast cultivators who had originally hunted demon cultivators for the golden cores of the gods had all turned against them overnight, becoming executioners of the gods.

They came for profit. If the gods gave them crystals, they would kill demonic cultivators;

if the demons gave them double the crystals, they would kill gods.

The calculation couldn't be simpler; no one would turn down their own interests.

"Demons..."

Jin Wuhao's voice was as cold as ten thousand years of ice, each word seemingly squeezed out from between his teeth, "Those rats hiding in Black Abyss Valley dare to place bounties on my gods?"

"Reporting to the Divine Emperor..."

The elder's voice trembled, not daring to look up, "According to the news that came back, the demon bounty was issued by a young man from the Flame Demon lineage, named Ning Zhi, who is said to cultivate the demonic supreme fire.

He joined forces with the demonic cultivators of Black Abyss Valley, spreading the bounty and inciting all non-god forces to hunt down god cultivators for the reward. Moreover... and I heard that Kai is also in Black Abyss Valley, with Ning Zhi..."

" Kai..."

When Jin Wuhao uttered this name, the killing intent in his eyes almost solidified.

This is the man who killed Elder Shenmu, annihilated the divine forces of the Nineteenth Heaven, and now he's come to the Twentieth Heaven to stir up trouble.

"Your Majesty,"

another elder spoke cautiously, his voice tinged with a hint of probing, "I believe the Demon Clan is resource-poor and cannot sustain double bounties indefinitely.

If we increase the bounty, surpassing the Demon Clan's, those opportunists will naturally turn to us again. With the wealth of the Divine Clan's main hall, we can completely crush the Demon Clan..."

"Increase the bounty?"

Jin Wuhao coldly interrupted him, his golden gaze piercing the elder's face like a sword. "You mean, you want my Divine Clan to compete with a bunch of rats hiding in the deep mountains in terms of wealth?"

The elder trembled violently and immediately bowed low: "I dare not! I only..."

"Useless ideas."

Jin Wuhao stood up, his golden robes billowing around him without wind, his immense pressure spreading out like a tangible force, making the kneeling elders in the hall almost unable to breathe.

“Our divine race has ruled the Twenty Heavens for tens of thousands of years, relying on strength, not crystals. Those opportunists kill members of the divine race for crystals today, and they’ll kill members of the demon race for crystals tomorrow. Competing with them for bounties will only make the divine race a laughingstock,” Jin Wuhao said.

“But Your Majesty, those human and beast cultivators have already killed hundreds of our people. If we let this go unchecked, they’ll only become more rampant…”

“I have my own way.” Jin Wuhao’s voice carried an undeniable decisiveness, and deep within his golden eyes surged a light deeper than anger.

He slowly raised his right hand, his five fingers spread, and a ball of golden light condensed in his palm.

The light was extremely dazzling, like a small star dancing in his palm, releasing a heart-palpitating pressure.

That pressure was more intense than ever before, as if it had touched upon some higher realm.

The elders in the hall felt that pressure, and their expressions changed drastically.

Some gasped, some trembled violently, and some were even forced to the ground by the pressure.

“Your Majesty, the Divine Emperor…”

“I sense that the barrier is loosening.”

Jin Wuhao’s voice carried a longing suppressed for tens of thousands of years, a longing that leaped in every word, burning like flames. “The barrier of the peak of the ninth rank of the Golden Immortal Realm has already cracked. I need an opportunity for seclusion to break through to the Great Luo Golden Immortal Realm in the shortest possible time.”

These words were like a boulder thrown into a calm lake, stirring up towering waves in the hall.

The elders looked up, their eyes filled with shock and ecstasy at the dazzling golden light in Jin Wuhao's palm.

Great Luo Golden Immortal!

That was the realm that all Golden Immortal Realm cultivators dreamed of!

Above the Golden Immortal Realm was the Great Luo Golden Immortal Realm, and above the Great Luo Golden Immortal Realm were Immortal Lords, Immortal Kings, Immortal Emperors, and even the legendary Saints.

Once Jin Wuhao broke through to the Great Luo Golden Immortal Realm, it meant that he would step into a completely new level.

At that time, what were the Demon Clan's bounty orders, what were the human and beast races' opportunists, what were Kai and Ning Zhi, all of them would be ants.

Before a Grand Luo Golden Immortal, all cultivators below the peak of the ninth rank of the Golden Immortal realm didn't even have the right to stand.

"Your Majesty the Divine Emperor!"

an elder exclaimed, his voice trembling with excitement. "What resources are needed? I'll prepare them immediately!"

"Gather all the precious resources of the Divine Race."

Jin Wuhao's voice was calm, yet carried an undeniable authority. "Heavenly Crystal Stones, Divine Source Liquid, materials for refining Grand Luo Golden Pills... all resources that can help break through to the Grand Luo Golden Immortal realm, send them all to the Divine

Emperor's Palace. I'm going into seclusion to attempt to break through to the Grand Luo Golden Immortal realm."

"Yes! I'll do it immediately!"

The elders scrambled out of the hall, their footsteps fading into the empty corridor, leaving only Jin Wuhao standing before the throne.

He gazed at the surging sea of clouds outside the palace, his golden eyes swirling with complex light.

For tens of thousands of years, he had been stuck at the peak of the ninth rank of the Golden Immortal realm.

Countless attempts to break through the barrier of the Grand Luo Golden Immortal realm had ended in failure.

But this time, he sensed something different.

That invisible barrier had truly loosened.

It was as if something had been pried open, allowing him to see the light behind the door.

Perhaps it was anger, perhaps it was pressure, perhaps it was the provocation of those clowns that awakened his long-dormant fighting spirit.

Whatever the reason, the opportunity was right in front of him.

" Kai... Ning Zhi..."

Jin Wuhao murmured these two names, a cold smile curving his lips. "You think killing Elder Shenmu will shake the foundation of the Divine Race?

You think hiding in Black Abyss Valley will keep you safe? Once I break through to the Great Luo Golden Immortal realm, you will know what true despair is."

He turned and headed towards the secluded cultivation area deep within the hall.

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...

The secluded cultivation chamber was located at the deepest part of the Divine Palace, its walls constructed of Chaos Divine Stone, capable of isolating all divine sense probes and energy fluctuations.

In the center of the chamber was a spirit-gathering array, the floor covered with densely packed runes, each slowly shimmering with golden light.

Above the chamber hung a fist-sized divine crystal, emitting a soft glow that enveloped the entire chamber in a warm golden halo.

Jin Wuhao sat cross-legged in the center of the spirit-gathering array, closing his eyes and clearing his mind of all distractions.

Various rare and precious materials were continuously fed into the chamber. Heavenly

crystals piled up like a small mountain, divine source liquid filled jade bottles, and materials for refining the Great Luo Golden Pill were poured into the array like flowing water.

These resources, if left outside, would be enough for a medium-sized power to use for thousands of years, but now they were all concentrated here, solely for achieving a breakthrough.

Jin Wuhao took a deep breath and began to circulate his cultivation technique.

Golden light surged around him, like countless golden dragons undulating across his body, emitting deep roars.

Terrifying divine power surged through his meridians, its intensity reaching its peak, threatening to tear his body apart.

The barrier remained—an invisible, indestructible barrier, a chasm between the Golden Immortal realm and the Great Luo Golden Immortal realm.

He attacked once, twice, three times…

Each attack created a crack in the barrier, but each shattering momentarily healed itself.

The barrier seemed to possess life, constantly healing and resisting his invading power.

Jin Wuhao did not give up .

His will was as hard as steel, all the accumulation of tens of thousands of years erupting at this moment.

He mobilized all available resources, refining the Heavenly Crystal Stones, Divine Source Liquid, and Great Luo Golden Pill materials, transforming them into pure divine power that flowed into his meridians, attacking the barrier again and again.

Time flowed silently in the secret chamber.

One day and one night passed.

Two days and two nights passed.

Boom—!

In the dead of night on the second day, the invisible barrier finally shattered.

Golden light erupted from Jin Wuhao's body, sweeping through the entire secret chamber like a volcanic eruption.

The walls built of chaotic divine stones trembled violently under the impact of the golden light, as if they were about to collapse at any moment.

The divine crystal above the secret chamber suddenly exploded, turning into countless golden fragments that scattered in all directions.

At the same time, the entire sky of the twentieth heaven changed.

The originally pale golden sky suddenly lit up, as if it had been ignited, turning into a dazzling gold.

That gold was so intense that it dyed the clouds in the sky gold, like a golden ocean rolling.

The earth trembled, the mountains roared, and the rivers howled, as if the whole world was trembling for the birth of a Great Luo Golden Immortal.

Every corner of the twentieth heaven felt this strange phenomenon.

In a human city, countless cultivators looked up at the sky, their faces ashen, staring at the golden sky.

Some people dropped their magical artifacts to the ground with a crisp sound;

some collapsed to their knees, muttering, "It's over, it's over";

others exchanged glances, seeing the same fear in each other's eyes.

"The heavens…the heavens have changed…"

“That’s…the aura of a Grand Luo Golden Immortal!”

“The God Emperor has broken through! Jin Wuhao has broken through to the Grand Luo Golden Immortal realm!”

The news, like a boulder thrown into water, stirred up a monstrous wave in the twentieth heaven.

All the forces that received the news, whether human, beast, or rogue cultivator, made the same decision at the same time.

They immediately ceased hunting down the divine cultivators, destroyed all the divine heads they hadn’t yet claimed, and pretended nothing had happened.

A Grand Luo Golden Immortal.

Before a God Emperor at the peak of the ninth rank of the Golden Immortal realm, people could still rely on numbers and tactics;

but a Grand Luo Golden Immortal was on a completely different level.

Before a Grand Luo Golden Immortal, even a large number of Golden Immortals were merely ants.

The gap between the peak of the ninth rank of the Golden Immortal realm and a Grand Luo Golden Immortal was even greater than the gap between a True Immortal and a Golden Immortal.

Those human and beastmen cultivators who had originally hunted down divine cultivators for bounties were now gripped by fear.

Some fled to remote mountains overnight, some buried the divine heads they had already obtained, and some hid in caves

, too afraid to emerge. Even the demons in the once glorious Black Abyss Valley felt that terrifying aura.

An old man with white hair stood at the valley entrance, gazing up at the golden sky, his aged face filled with solemnity and fear, his long beard trembling slightly in the wind.

“A Great Luo Golden Immortal…”

his voice was hoarse, “Jin Wuhao… has broken through.”

The surrounding demon cultivators turned pale; some instinctively took a step back, others gripped their weapons but didn’t know where to point them.

The golden light illuminated the entire Twentieth Heaven, like a sword hanging over everyone’s heads, ready to fall at any moment.

The valley was deathly silent.

At that moment, in the secret chamber of the Divine Emperor Palace, Jin Wuhao slowly opened his eyes.

His eyes were no longer golden, but had become a deeper, more majestic light.

That was the unique Daoist radiance of a Grand Luo Golden Immortal, as if containing the laws of the entire world flowing within it.

A faint golden halo surrounded him, containing an extremely terrifying pressure that caused the surrounding air to distort slightly.

He slowly stood up, feeling the surging power within his body, a satisfied smile curving his lips.

“Grand Luo Golden Immortal… so this is what it feels like to be a Grand Luo Golden Immortal.”

He raised his hand, a ball of golden light condensing in his palm. That light was purer and more refined than before, as if a casual wave could tear through space and crush mountains and rivers.

He threw a punch. He

didn't use any magic power, just the purest, most basic straight punch.

But wherever the fist's wind passed, the chaotic divine stone walls in the secret chamber instantly developed dense cracks, spreading like a spider web, before shattering into countless fragments.

The entire Divine Palace trembled violently, like an earthquake.

The divine cultivators outside the hall were terrified by the sudden tremor, falling to their knees and bowing towards the secret chamber, shouting, "Congratulations, Divine Emperor! Congratulations, Divine Emperor!"

Jin Wuhao stepped out of the secret chamber, passing through the shattered walls and scattered fragments of chaotic divine stones. His golden robes fluttered without wind, radiating the unique majesty of a Great Luo Golden Immortal.

He walked to the platform outside the hall, gazing at the surging sea of clouds below, a cold killing intent flashing in his golden eyes.

"Black Abyss Valley."

His voice was soft, yet it resounded like thunder in the sky, shaking the sea of clouds below.

" Kai, Ning Zhi, and those arrogant demons... I'm coming to see you now. Didn't you want to fight me? I'm here. Are you ready?"

He lifted his foot and took a step forward.

Golden light shone beneath his feet, and his figure transformed into a golden streak, rushing towards Black Abyss Valley in the far west, like a golden... The atmosphere in Black Abyss Valley had never been so heavy.

The golden sky still churned overhead, and the golden pillar of light shot towards the heavens from the direction of the Divine Palace, like the eye of heaven and earth watching over this land.

Although Jin Wuhao's figure had not yet appeared at the valley entrance, the pressure of a Great Luo Golden Immortal had already enveloped them as if it were a tangible force, causing every demonic cultivator's heart to tremble even from hundreds of miles away.

In the council hall, Kai, Ning Zhi, Su Yuqi, Jiang Xuelan, Xuan Zhenzi, and the leaders of Black Abyss Valley sat around a stone table, each with an extremely grim expression.

The white-haired elder sat in the main seat, his aged fingers gripping the armrests tightly, his knuckles white as bone.

His lips moved, but he could not utter a single word.

The woman in the blood-red robe was deathly pale, and her once composed eyes now churned with undisguised fear.

"The news is confirmed."

A young demonic cultivator rushed in from outside, forgetting even to announce his arrival. His voice was several octaves higher with tension. "Jin Wuhao has left the Divine Emperor Palace and is heading this way!

He's incredibly fast; with his cultivation level, he'll arrive in half an hour at most!"

The hall fell into a deathly silence, the air seeming to solidify.

"Half an hour…"

The sinister man's voice was hoarse, his Adam's apple bobbing. "What…what do we do?"

"What's the panic!"

A burly demonic cultivator leader slammed his fist on the table, trying to sound confident. “Black Abyss Valley has a natural barrier of demonic energy, and a defensive array laid down by our ancestors!

Even if Jin Wuhao reaches the Great Luo Golden Immortal level, breaking through the array will take him considerable effort! If we stay here, he might not be able to…”

Before he could finish, a muffled rumble came from the direction of the valley entrance.

The sound was like a giant hammer striking a stone wall, or thunder exploding overhead, carrying a heart-pounding, resonant force.

Everyone froze, their gazes turning in unison towards the valley entrance.

Immediately afterward, a second boom resounded.

This time it was louder and deeper than the first, even the ground beneath their feet trembled slightly.

Then came the third, the fourth, the fifth… each boom closer than the last, each one making the faces of everyone in the hall paler.

“Report—!”

Another demonic cultivator stumbled in, his legs weak, almost collapsing on the threshold.

His voice was choked with sobs: “The… the demonic energy barrier at the valley entrance… was shattered by Jin Wuhao with a single punch!”

“What?!”

The burly demonic cultivator leader jumped to his feet, his chair overturning with a jarring crash. “The demonic energy barrier is shattered?! What about the protective array?!”

“The core of the first layer of the array… has cracked!”

The demonic cultivator’s voice trembled completely. “Jin Wuhao… he only threw one punch!”

No one else in the hall spoke.

Silence weighed heavily on everyone’s chests, making even breathing difficult.

The demonic energy barrier and the protective array were the foundation of Black Abyss Valley’s existence. They had operated here for hundreds of years, relying on these innate advantages.

But now, Jin Wuhao, who had just advanced to the Great Luo Golden Immortal realm, was about to shatter them all with just a few punches.

A Great Luo Golden Immortal was actually this powerful.

Boom—!

When the sixth boom resounded, the entire Black Abyss Valley trembled.

Rock fragments fell from the cliffs, and the light of the demonic runes flickered wildly like candles in the wind, then went out one after another.

The demonic cultivators who had been observing in the valley began to flee in panic. Some huddled in corners with their heads in their hands, some tried to crawl back into their stone chambers, and some even began to secretly run towards the other side of the valley.

“The array… is broken.”

The white-haired old man’s voice was hoarse and weak, as if he had aged a thousand years in an instant.

“Go! Go out and see!”

Kai stood up, his purple eyes surging with calm light.

He didn't run, nor did he panic. He simply took the lead and walked out of the hall.

Jiang Xuelan followed closely behind him, her icy blue eyes filled with solemnity, yet showing no sign of retreat.

Xuan Zhenzi sighed and followed as well.

Ning Zhi glanced at Kai's retreating figure, said nothing, and followed behind with Su Yuqi.

When Kai walked out of the main hall and arrived at the central open space of Black Abyss Valley, he saw Jin Wuhao.

The golden light at the valley entrance gradually dissipated, like the receding tide.

A figure emerged from the light, his steps steady, like a moving mountain. His

golden divine robe fluttered in the wind, but when the wind reached him, it automatically veered away, as if even the wind dared not touch the hem of his robe.

Jin Wuhao.

His face was majestic and cold, his golden eyes carrying an indifferent gaze that looked down upon all living beings.

That gaze was like that of a god, devoid of any emotion, but because the disparity was so great, he looked at everyone as if they were ants at his feet.

A faint golden halo surrounded him, containing the unique Daoist essence of a Great Luo Golden Immortal, imbuing every movement with the oppressive force of law.

He was alone.

Yet, his mere presence silenced tens of thousands of demonic cultivators, preventing them from even daring to breathe.

The demonic cultivators of Black Abyss Valley were forced to the central open space, huddled together in small groups, weapons in hand, yet none dared to advance.

Some collapsed to their knees, their legs giving way; others' hands trembled violently as they gripped their magical artifacts; still others' eyes flickered, seemingly calculating something.

"Demon cultivators,"

Jin Wuhao's voice echoed through the valley, not loud, yet clearly reaching everyone's ears, as if pressed against their eardrums, "I, the Emperor, will give you a chance."

He stood with his hands behind his back, his golden gaze sweeping over the crowd as if sweeping over a pile of insignificant dust: "Now submit to me, and all past transgressions will be forgiven.

You can still live in the Twentieth Heaven, and I will no longer pursue the matter of your bounties on the Divine Race. But if you remain obstinate…"

He didn't finish his sentence.

There was no need to say it.

Everyone automatically filled in the blank in their minds; no one wanted to verify it themselves.

A moment of silence fell over the valley.

The surging golden light behind Jin Wuhao was like a silent banner, reminding everyone that a Great Luo Golden Immortal stood before them.

That light shone on the faces of every demonic cultivator, reflecting the fear, hesitation, struggle, and wavering in their expressions.

The woman in the blood-red robe stood in the crowd, her hands trembling slightly.

She knew this was her last chance to choose.

She had once advocated for peace talks with the gods in the main hall, but at that time… She thought of her fallen kin, of those who had perished in the pursuit of the gods, but she also thought of her men, the brothers who had fought and died alongside her.

If they continued fighting, they would all die here; if they surrendered, at least they could live.

Her gaze swept across the crowd to Kai and Ning Zhi.

The two young men stood ramrod straight, like two swords that refused to bend.

But what good was being straight?

Before a Great Luo Golden Immortal, what difference was there between a straight sword and a bent blade of grass?

She closed her eyes and took a deep breath.

When she opened her eyes again, there was no more hesitation.

The woman in the blood-red robe stepped out from the crowd.

Her steps were slow, each one like walking on a knife’s edge.

She walked step by step to the open space in front of Jin Wuhao, paused, then bent her knees and knelt down.

“Your subordinate…is willing to submit.”

Her voice was hoarse and trembling, each word seemingly squeezed out from between her teeth. “From beginning to end, your subordinate has advocated for peace with the gods…Please, Your Majesty, have mercy and spare your subordinate and your people…”

Jin Wuhao looked down at her, his golden eyes devoid of any emotion.

He neither nodded nor shook his head, nor uttered a single word, simply letting her kneel there.

That indifferent attitude was more chilling than any threat.

The blood-robed woman’s submission was like a boulder thrown into a calm lake, stirring up countless ripples in the crowd.

The second to step forward was a thin man, the very one who had advocated for escape in the main hall earlier.

He lowered his head, quickly walked to the blood-robed woman’s side, and knelt down as well.

No one could see his expression, but as he knelt, his shoulders trembled slightly, whether from fear or humiliation, it was unclear.

The third, the fourth, the fifth…

more and more people emerged from the crowd.

Each time someone took a step forward, whispers would circulate around them, and glances would flicker.

Those who were still hesitant watched their companions surrender one by one, and the scales in their hearts tipped.

Some clenched their fists, then slowly relaxed them.

Some gritted their teeth, finally letting out a sigh.

Some looked up at the golden light surrounding Jin Wuhao, then at the magical artifact in their hands that seemed insignificant under the divine light, and silently stepped out of the ranks.

More and more people knelt on the open ground. At first, there were only a few scattered individuals, then a small group, and later a large group.

Some of those who knelt kept their heads down, not daring to look at anyone; some secretly breathed a sigh of relief after kneeling; some even kowtowed directly to Jin Wuhao, their movements extremely humble.

No one condemned them, no one stopped them, because everyone understood that in the face of such a huge disparity, survival was already a luxury.

Fewer and fewer people remained standing, watching their companions leave one by one, their faces growing paler and their eyes more and more complicated.

The sinister man stood in the crowd, his fists clenching and unclenching repeatedly.

His lips trembled, as if he wanted to say something, but ultimately no words came out.

He looked at his comrades kneeling on the ground, his eyes churning with anger and resentment, yet also with a hint of envy—at least they no longer had to endure this torment of standing on the edge of a knife.

He hesitated.

A voice echoed in his heart: If you die, you lose everything.

Your people, your heritage, everything you've protected in your life, will vanish with your death.

But to live, even if it's a humiliating life, at least you can see tomorrow's sun.

His fingers trembled, his knees bent slightly, then straightened abruptly.

Then they bent again, then straightened again.

This repeated until those around him cast strange glances, at which point he gritted his teeth and took that step.

"I'm sorry,"

he whispered, not knowing to whom he was speaking.

Then he quickly walked to the open space and knelt down.

With him leading the way, more people who were still hesitating finally made up their minds.

One by one, they stepped out from the crowd, their steps quickening, as if afraid that if they slowed down even a step, they would regret it.

The number of people kneeling on the open ground grew from hundreds to thousands, then to tens of thousands.

In the short span of an incense stick's time, all those comrades who had once entrusted their lives to each other, those brothers who had fought side by side, were kneeling on the ground.

Ning Zhi stood on the steps at the entrance of the main hall, watching the people continuously emerge from the crowd and kneel on the open ground, his face as gloomy as the sky before a storm.

His hands clenched slightly, every vein clearly visible beneath his skin.

He gritted his teeth, an indescribable emotion surging in his chest.

Anger, disappointment, resentment, and a stinging pain of betrayal—these people had just been calling him “Young Master Ning,” discussing countermeasures around him, and vowing to fight the gods to the death.

But with Jin Wuhao’s arrival, they were like sheep seeing a wolf, all bowing their heads.

An elder from the Flame Demon lineage stood beside Ning Zhi, his aged eyes filled with complex emotions.

He looked at those who had surrendered, then at Ning Zhi and Su Yuqi, his lips moving several times before he finally managed to speak with difficulty: “Young Master Ning, Holy Maiden… I too… I too…”

“What did you say?”

Ning Zhi turned his head sharply, his gaze like a knife falling on the old man’s face, his voice filled with undisguised coldness.

Cold sweat beaded on the old man’s forehead, but the words had already been spoken, and there was no way to take them back.

His voice was hoarse and trembling: “I cannot, for… for the sake of the two of you, sacrifice all the members of the Flame Demon lineage in the twentieth heaven… They still have wives, children, and elderly parents, they still have their own lives… As the clan leader, I must be responsible for the lives and deaths of my people…”

“Enough.”

Ning Zhi interrupted him, his voice cold, as cold as ice water poured on flames, “If you want to surrender, then surrender, you don’t need to explain to me. Traitors never need explanations.”

The old man’s body trembled violently, he opened his mouth, wanting to say something in his defense.

But seeing Ning Zhi's icy eyes, all the words stuck in his throat, and he couldn't utter a single word.

He lowered his head and walked towards Jin Wuhao.

Behind him, the disciples of the Flame Demon lineage exchanged glances. Some looked ashamed, some relieved, and others lowered their heads and hurried to catch up, afraid of regretting it if they were a step too late.

After the last batch of demonic cultivators knelt down, only six people remained standing in the open space:

Kai, Jiang Xuelan, Xuanzhenzi, the young Daoist boy, Ning Zhi, and Su Yuqi.

These six people faced tens of thousands of kneeling demonic cultivators, faced a lofty Great Luo Golden Immortal, and faced the vast expanse of light behind Jin Wuhao. Jin Wuhao's gaze swept over the six people standing there, a playful smile curving his lips. "Oh? A few of you have backbone. Good, I admire people with backbone. But—are you sure you want to stand here?"

Ning Zhi ignored him.

He simply turned his head to look at Kai, his voice soft: " Kai, what do you think?"

"I would rather die than surrender."

Kai's voice was calm. "If you want to surrender, I won't stop you."

Ning Zhi suddenly smiled.

That smile carried an emotion completely different from his usual one, like relief, or like making some kind of decision.

"Do you think I'm a coward? I won't surrender to the God Clan either."

After saying that, he gave Kai a deep look, his cold eyes surging with complex light, then he turned to Su Yuqi: “Senior Sister, let’s go.”

As soon as he finished speaking, he suddenly raised his hand, and dark blue flames condensed in his palm, transforming into a sharp blade that directly tore through the space beside him.

Deep void turbulence surged from the crack, emitting a low whistling sound.

Ning Zhi grabbed Su Yuqi and, before anyone could react, stepped into the rift.

The rift closed behind them, and the two figures vanished completely.

The speed was so fast it was as if they had never existed.

Kai stared at the closing rift, stunned for a moment.

After a brief silence, he cursed, his voice filled with undisguised anger and… a hint of loss he himself didn’t realize.

“Damn it!”

Only his curse echoed in the air, along with the lingering void fluctuations after the rift closed, like a faint sigh in the golden light.

Kai never expected Ning Zhi to run away in the end. He had thought Ning Zhi had backbone and would fight alongside him.

Now it seemed he had been wrong.

Jin Wuhao narrowed his eyes slightly.

He didn’t chase after them, because in his view, those two escaped ants were worthless.

The truly valuable one was the one standing before him— Kai, a Daoist cultivator who cultivated the power of chaos, killed Elder Shenmu, and annihilated all the divine forces of the Nineteen Heavens.

Once he's dead, those wavering opportunists will completely lose their leader.

Kai took a deep breath, forcibly suppressing his emotions.

He turned around and looked at Xuan Zhenzi.

Xuan Zhenzi was standing a few steps behind him, a withered blade of grass dangling from his mouth, but his usually nonchalant eyes had lost their usual cynicism, replaced by an indescribable complexity.

"Old Xuan, take the little Daoist boy and go."

Kai's voice was calm, as if he were arranging something perfectly ordinary. "You're not their target; there's no need for you to stay and die."

Xuan Zhenzi was silent for a moment, the withered grass trembling slightly at his lips.

He looked at Kai, then at Jiang Xuelan, then at the kneeling demonic cultivators in the distance and the still surging golden light behind Jin Wuhao.

Within that golden light, countless elite figures of the divine race were slowly emerging; tens of thousands of cultivators clad in golden armor surged forth like a tide, neatly arranged behind Jin Wuhao, like a golden steel wall.

He slowly spat out the dry grass from his mouth, his expression more conflicted than ever before.

"Mr. Chen..."

Xuanzhenzi's voice was hoarse, his eyes flickering. "This old man of mine... to be honest, although our time together hasn't been long, we've developed a certain rapport.

In my life, I've seen too many people die, too many people escape, and I myself have escaped quite a few times..."

He paused for a moment, as if struggling to organize his thoughts.

Then he coughed twice, forcing an awkward smile, a smile tinged with barely concealed guilt: "Don't blame me for being cowardly... it's just that I still have this little Daoist boy to raise.

He's so young; if I die, he won't survive more than three days in this chaotic world."

Kai's gaze fell on the little Daoist boy.

The little fellow was huddled behind Xuanzhenzi, tightly clutching the hem of his clothes, his face filled with terror, yet he tried his best to widen his eyes to keep from crying.

Golden light shone in those clear black eyes, reflecting the kneeling crowd and Kai's calm face.

"I know,"

Kai's voice remained calm, without blame or anger, only a serene acceptance. "Let's go."

Xuan Zhenzi nodded slowly, a nod carrying a heavy weight.

He bent down, took the young Taoist's hand, and turned to walk out of the valley.

The young Taoist stumbled a few steps as he was pulled along.

He couldn’t help but turn back to look at Kai, his face filled with complex emotions.

He opened his mouth, wanting to say something, but didn’t know what to say.

“Let’s go!”

Xuan Zhenzi pulled him back, quickening his pace, without looking back.

The figures of the old man and the young boy grew smaller and smaller, finally disappearing into the shadows at the valley entrance.

“Master, are we really leaving like this?” the young Taoist asked.

“What if we don’t leave? Stay and wait to die?” Xuan Zhenzi said.

“Will Mr. Chen and the others die?” the young Taoist asked.

“Die my foot! He has powerful backers; he’s just here for training. Even if he really dies, he can be resurrected, so there’s nothing to fear.”

“Neither of us has that; we can’t compare to him. If we die, we’re truly dead.”

Xuanzhenzi left quickly.

He had already seen through it all. At this moment, only Kai and Jiang Xuelan remained standing in Black Abyss Valley.

The grand hall behind them was empty, like a shell of a body with its internal organs ripped out.

Before them stood tens of thousands of kneeling demonic cultivators, a golden army of gods, and the Great Luo Golden Immortal who looked down upon everything from above.

Even the wind had stopped; the entire valley was deathly silent, like a tomb, and even breathing was exceptionally clear.

Kai stood there, his gray robe hanging motionless on the windless ground. The

Dragon-Slaying Sword hung at his waist, its purple scabbard appearing particularly cold and solitary in the golden light.

His face was calm, so calm that it revealed no emotion, as if the betrayals, the escapes, the helplessness were all irrelevant to him.

He turned his head to look at Jiang Xuelan beside him.

Her profile was faintly glowed by the golden light, her icy blue eyes staring straight ahead, not at him, nor at the golden army of gods, but at a certain place in the distance.

Her eyelashes were long, casting dappled shadows in the golden light.

“Why aren’t you leaving?” Kai asked.

His voice was soft, as if afraid of startling something.

Jiang Xuelan didn’t turn to look at him, her gaze still fixed straight ahead, but the corners of her mouth curved slightly—a faint smile, almost imperceptible.

She didn’t look at him, as if looking into the distance: “If I leave, what will you do alone?”

These words seemed to be squeezed from the depths of her chest, without hesitation, without thought, as if they had been repeated countless times in her heart.

Her voice was soft, yet as clear as the wind on an icy plain.

Kai looked at her, for a long time.

So long that the wind in the valley began to flow again, so long that the distant divine cultivators stirred with a low murmur.

Then he smiled, a faint smile, yet carrying a sincerity that only appears in the face of death, like the last ray of light seen before sinking into the abyss.

“Thank you,” he said.

Two words, without any embellishment.

“What are you thanking me for?”

Jiang Xuelan still didn’t look at him, her tone as indifferent as if discussing what to eat tomorrow.

But her voice trembled slightly, almost imperceptibly. “If you die, who will cultivate with me?”

“Don’t worry, if we don’t die today, I’ll cultivate with you for ten days and ten nights, letting you have your fill,”

Kai laughed.

“Do you want me to have my fill, or do you want me to die? Ten days and ten nights? One day and one night? You could torment me to death,”

Jiang Xuelan said with a laugh.

Jin Wuhao stared at Kai and Jiang Xuelan, listening to their conversation, completely dumbfounded.

What time is it?

Life and death?

They still have the mood to talk about cultivation?

Do they want to have one last good time before they die?

“You two, that’s enough. After you die, go to the underworld for cultivation,” Jin Wuhao stopped them, then looked at Jiang Xuelan: “As a member of the God Clan, of the Ice God lineage, you actually colluded with others to attack the God Clan. You traitor!”

“Shut up! You know how you treated our Ice God lineage. I’m not a traitor. I just want to kill you to avenge my people,” Jiang Xuelan gritted her teeth, glaring fiercely at Jin Wuhao.

“Hahaha, kill me? The two of you can’t possibly kill me!”

Jin Wuhao laughed maniacally.

“Is that so?”

Kai slowly raised his right hand and grasped the hilt of the Dragon-Slaying Sword.

A deep hum came from the scabbard, like the growl of a beast awakened.

The sound was exceptionally clear in the silent valley, startling the kneeling demonic cultivators, the divine cultivators, and Jin Wuhao.

“Then come on.” Kai’s voice was soft, but in the silent valley, every word was clearly audible, like nails driven into a wooden board. “Whether you’re alone, or ten thousand, or even a Great Luo Golden Immortal, let’s see if I can kill you.”

Jin Wuhao looked at Kai, a hint of surprise flashing in his golden eyes.

A moment later, the light transformed into a higher level of indifference, a mockery of the last stubbornness of the strong towards the weak: “You have backbone. But can backbone feed you?”

He raised his hand, golden light condensing in his palm, the oppressive force within causing the entire valley to tremble violently.

Many of the tens of thousands of kneeling demonic cultivators were forced to the ground, unable to lift their heads, as if the entire sky were about to collapse and crush them.

“Since you want to die, I, the Emperor, will grant your wish.” Jin Wuhao finished speaking and was about to attack.

“Wait…” Kai suddenly sheathed his Dragon-Slaying Sword.

“What? You’re chickening out?” Jin Wuhao sneered.

“How could I possibly chicken out? But I must warn you, I’ve reached this point because I have a powerful backer. If you kill me today, I guarantee you won’t survive, and even the entire Divine Race will vanish.”

Kai decided to intimidate Jin Wuhao.

In a real fight, he was definitely no match.

Being able to intimidate him was the best outcome.

“Hahaha, you have a powerful backer?” Jin Wuhao laughed loudly, “You have a chicken behind you…”

Before he could finish speaking, the heavens and earth suddenly trembled.

A purple light, as if

descending from the sky, landed before Kai and slowly dissolved… Kai stared at the woman’s back as she suddenly appeared. She looked familiar, but he couldn’t quite place her.

Jiang Xuelan looked at the woman and asked Kai, “Who is this woman?”

Kai shook his head. “I don’t know, she looks familiar…”

“Young Master Chen, how have you been?” The woman turned around and smiled at Kai.

Kai was startled, then suddenly remembered something. “Miss Zi’er?”

“Yes, it’s me!” Zi’er smiled.

Kai hadn’t expected this to be Zi’er, the one whose remnant soul had attached itself to a tree on the deserted island in the Celestial Realm.

One of the Seven Fairies of the Celestial Realm, whom Kai had saved.

He never expected to see her here.

“You know her?” Jiang Xuelan asked.

“Yes, very well…” Kai nodded frantically.

“Young Master Chen, you rest. Watch me deal with them for you.” Zi’er finished speaking and slowly looked at Jin Wuhao and the others.

“Are you coming at me one by one, or all at once?” Zi’er’s expression was cold.

Jin Wuhao frowned slightly as he looked at Zi’er, because he couldn’t sense her cultivation level at all. In other words, he had no idea what level Zi’er was at.

“Who will fight and kill this woman?”

Jin Wuhao asked.

He didn’t want to intervene without knowing the other party’s background.

“I will…”

The woman in the blood-red robe rose from the kneeling crowd.

Her movements were deliberately flamboyant, as if she wanted to show her loyalty to her new master.

She straightened her dusty, blood-red robe, drew a dark red short blade from her waist, and strode to the open space in front of Jin Wuhao, facing the suddenly appearing purple figure.

“This subordinate is willing to share the burden for His Majesty the Divine Emperor!”

Her voice was loud, deliberately made so everyone present could hear, her tone filled with a fawning eagerness to prove herself.

She forgot her earlier humiliation of kneeling and begging for mercy, forgot the humility of her “always advocating peace with the gods.” Now, standing on Jin Wuhao’s side, she felt she had found a way out, perhaps even a path to great success.

She looked up at Zi’er, sizing her up.

The woman in purple looked to be no more than twenty years old, with a cold face and an ethereal air. She held a purple longsword in her hand, its blade shimmering with a soft light.

The light wasn’t dazzling, but it carried a profound and unsettling quality.

“A little girl like you dares to block my way?” The

woman in the blood-red robe sneered, her dark red dagger twirling in her hand, drawing a blood-red arc. “Today, I will kill you, you ignorant fool, on behalf of the God Emperor…”

She didn’t finish her sentence.

Because Zi’er moved.

Her movements were so fast that no one present saw how she made her move.

Only a streak of purple light flashed through the air, like a shooting star streaking across the night sky, or lightning tearing through the clouds—brief and dazzling, so bright it was blinding.

Then the blood-robed woman's head flew off.

The head tumbled several times in the air, its expression frozen in the moment of its cold smile, its lips slightly parted as if it wanted to utter a few last words, but it had lost the chance to speak forever.

Dark red blood gushed from the severed neck, like a dark red fountain, strikingly bright against the golden light.

The corpse stood frozen for a moment, then slowly fell to the ground with a dull thud.

That sword strike was incredibly fast.

So fast that everyone only realized what had happened after seeing the result.

The already oppressive atmosphere in the valley froze completely in that instant.

Many of the tens of thousands of kneeling demonic cultivators gasped, some recoiling violently, others turning deathly pale.

Those who had been secretly congratulating themselves on their choice to submit now felt an indescribable fear rising in their hearts as they looked at the blood-robed woman's head rolling on the ground.

If that purple-clad woman's sword had been aimed at them, could they have dodged it?

The answer was obvious.

No.

Jin Wuhao's smile vanished.

His golden eyes narrowed slightly, landing on Zi'er, and for the first time, a serious expression appeared on his face.

He still couldn't sense the purple-clad woman's exact cultivation level, but the speed and cleanliness of that sword strike forced him to reassess his opponent.

"Interesting."

Jin Wuhao's voice remained calm, but the indifference of before was gone. "I didn't expect Kai to have such a master behind him. Who are you?"

Zi'er didn't answer him.

She simply stood there, her purple dress swaying gently in the wind, her purple sword pointing diagonally at the ground, a drop of dark red blood dripping from its tip, making a very slight patter as it fell to the ground.

Her expression was indifferent and calm, as if she had merely brushed away a speck of dust.

Jin Wuhao's expression darkened.

As a God-Emperor with the cultivation of a Great Luo Golden Immortal, he had never been so disregarded before.

His gaze swept over the equally shocked elders behind him, a hint of coldness creeping into his voice: "Who will come?"

An old man in a golden robe stepped out from the God Clan's ranks.

His face was aged, but his eyes burned like two golden flames. His cultivation was at the ninth rank of the Golden Immortal realm, and he

was surrounded by dense divine light, his aura even more profound than Elder Shenmu's.

He was one of the Supreme Elders of the God Clan's main hall, named Jin Yan, who had followed Jin Wuhao in battle for many years, achieving great feats.

"Your Majesty, I request to fight."

Jin Yan's voice was aged yet steady, carrying the composure of someone who had experienced countless battles.

In his hand, he held a golden spear, its shaft covered with ancient divine runes. These runes seemed to flow slowly, radiating a scorching aura.

Jin Wuhao nodded: "Go. Be careful of her sword."

"Yes."

Jin Yan stepped forward, twirling his golden spear in his hand, the tip pointing directly at Zi'er, his voice steady: "State your name. I do not kill nameless nobodies."

Zi'er looked at him as if he were an inanimate object: "You are not worthy to know my name."

Jin Yan's expression changed slightly.

He had lived for tens of thousands of years, and no one had ever dared to speak to him like that.

He sneered, refusing further words, and thrust his golden spear forward.

The spear's momentum was like a roaring golden dragon, carrying a terrifying power capable of tearing through space, aiming straight for Zi'er's heart.

Golden light condensed at the spear tip into a dazzling sphere of light, containing the full force of a ninth-grade Golden Immortal's attack, the air in its path… But Zi'er merely shifted her body slightly.

The seemingly certain strike grazed the hem of her garment, without even touching it.

The golden sphere of light exploded behind her, blasting a massive crater into the cliff face dozens of feet away, sending debris raining down like a storm.

Jin Yan's pupils contracted sharply.

He had meticulously calculated the trajectory of his spear; it was impossible for it to be dodged so effortlessly.

Yet Zi'er had dodged it, and with such ease, as if she had known exactly where the spear would strike.

Then Zi'er moved.

It was still that same purple light, moving with a speed that seemed to transcend the boundaries of time.

Jin Yan didn't even have time to react; he only felt a blur before his eyes, followed by a sudden chill in his chest.

He looked down and saw a purple longsword piercing his heart.

The tip of the sword emerged from his back, spotless, as clean as if it had just been wiped.

"How could this be…"

Jin Yan's voice was hoarse and strained, his eyes wide with disbelief.

He had clearly activated all his divine light to protect himself; his ninth-grade Golden Immortal realm defensive barrier could barely withstand

even a blow from a Grand Luo Golden Immortal. Yet, this purple sword pierced through his defenses as if through a thin mist.

Zi'er drew her sword, sidestepping the gushing golden blood.

Her movements remained calm, as if she had simply performed an ordinary task.

Jin Yan's body slowly collapsed, golden blood spreading beneath him, staining the scorched ground red.

The ninth-grade Golden Immortal realm elder, Jin Yan, was killed with a single sword strike.

The valley fell silent once more.

This time, it was more complete, more devastating.

Some of the kneeling demonic cultivators began to tremble; some dared not even look in Zi'er's direction, burying their heads even lower.

The divine cultivators also paled.

They knew Elder Jin Yan's strength all too well; a ninth-grade Golden Immortal realm cultivator was among the top-ranked experts in the divine clan's main hall.

Yet, such a figure couldn't even withstand a single sword strike from that woman in purple.

Just what realm was this woman in purple?

No one dared to imagine.

Jin Wuhao's expression finally changed completely.

His golden eyes surged with a mixture of anger and shock. He stared at Zi'er, his voice carrying a genuine chill for the first time: "Who exactly are you?"

Zi'er still didn't answer him. She simply raised her longsword slowly, the tip pointing at Jin Wuhao, her voice as clear and cold as an icy mountain stream: "You just wanted to kill Young Master Chen?"

Her tone was as calm as asking, "Have you eaten?" But it was precisely this calmness that made Jin Wuhao feel an unprecedented pressure.

He was a Great Luo Golden Immortal, a God Emperor of the twentieth heaven, a powerful figure who had ruled for tens of thousands of years.

Yet, facing this woman in purple, he felt a sense of powerlessness, unable to fathom her depths.

But he wasn't one to easily admit defeat.

"Attack!"

Jin Wuhao waved his hand sharply, his voice filled with suppressed rage. "Three elders, attack together! I want to see just how capable she really is!"

Three golden figures simultaneously emerged from the divine race's formation.

All three were Supreme Elders of the ninth rank of the Golden Immortal Realm, each with a distinct aura. One wielded a giant golden axe

, another formed hand seals to condense a golden sphere of light, and the third held a golden longsword.

Their coordination was extremely tacit. The three formed a triangular formation, attacking Zi'er from three directions simultaneously, sealing off all her possible escape routes. "Heavenly Divine Formation!" The elder wielding the golden longsword roared, and golden sword light

poured out like a torrential rain, completely covering Zi'er's top and front. "Seal!" The elder with hand seals thrust forward, and the golden sphere of light transformed into a massive golden net, enveloping Zi'er from the left. "Break!" roared the elder wielding the giant axe. The golden axe, carrying the force of splitting the heavens and earth, cleaved horizontally from the right, its blade crackling with golden lightning. The three attacks arrived simultaneously, without any time difference. This coordination was the tacit understanding they had practiced tens of thousands of times. Even a fellow Grand Luo Golden Immortal would be thrown into disarray by their combined attack. But Zi'er merely leaped lightly. Her figure, like a weightless feather, silently rose into the air the instant the three sides surrounded her. The three attacks converged beneath her feet—golden sword light, golden net, and golden axe light clashed, unleashing a deafening roar that blasted a huge crater in the ground, sending dust billowing into the sky. Zi'er had already appeared above the three. Her purple longsword swung downwards, unleashing a purple sword beam that cascaded down like a waterfall. That sword beam contained an extremely profound power of law, not ordinary spiritual energy, but a higher level of Daoist power. The three looked up simultaneously, their faces filled with terror. They tried to dodge, but it was too late. The purple sword light enveloped them all. "Pfft—!" The three figures froze at the same time. Golden blood gushed from their mouths, noses, and ears. Their bodies seemed to be fixed in place by an invisible force, their eyes surging with extreme fear and resentment. Then, the three of them fell to the ground simultaneously, raising a cloud of dust. Three Grand Elders of the ninth rank of the Golden Immortal Realm, all killed in one move. The valley fell into a deathly silence. Not even a breath could be heard. Among the tens of thousands of kneeling demonic cultivators, some even collapsed to the ground, unable to kneel any longer. The divine cultivators seemed to have had their spines removed, their magical weapons falling to the ground with clanging sounds. In the golden light behind Jin Wuhao, the newly emerged elites of the divine race were also frozen in place, motionless. Zi'er descended slowly from mid-air, her long purple dress unfurling in the air like a blooming purple lotus. She landed almost silently, golden drops of blood slowly dripping from the tip of her sword, landing with a soft thud on the scorched earth covered in rubble. Kai stood on the steps before the hall, watching Zi'er's retreating figure, his purple eyes swirling with complex emotions.

” Kai…” Jiang Xuelan’s voice was soft, her gaze fixed on Zi’er, her eyes filled with an indescribable mix of emotions. “What…what realm is she in?”

Kai shook his head: “I don’t know. When I met her in the Celestial Realm, she was just a wisp of a soul, without even a physical form…but now…” He

didn’t finish.

Because he too couldn’t fathom Zi’er’s true strength.

Jin Wuhao stood rooted to the spot, his golden eyes fixed on Zi’er.

His hands trembled slightly, not from fear, but from a complex mix of anger and shock. “Who exactly are you!”

Jin Wuhao’s voice carried an almost hoarse rage for the first time. “There has never been anyone like you in the Twentieth Heaven! You are not from the Twentieth Heaven!”

Zi’er looked at him, her cold gaze as unfathomable as an abyss: “When did I ever say I was from the Twentieth Heaven?”

Jin Wuhao’s body trembled violently.

These words were like a bucket of ice water poured over his head, chilling his blood in that instant.

Not from the Twentieth Heaven?

Then she is…

Above the Twentieth Heaven, there are the Twenty-First Heaven, the Twenty-Second Heaven, and even higher heavens.

Every person there is far beyond the Golden Immortal realm.

If this woman in purple came from a higher heaven, then her strength…

Jin Wuhao dared not think any further.

Jin Wuhao stood before tens of thousands of divine soldiers, his golden eyes swirling with a cold light.

He stared at Zi'er for a long time, then slowly turned his head, his gaze falling on the demonic cultivators still kneeling on the ground.

Those demonic cultivators who had knelt and begged for mercy, choosing to submit, now huddled in the open space, not daring to raise their heads.

They felt Jin Wuhao's gaze, a gaze as cold as a venomous snake, sending chills down their spines.

"Since you've chosen to submit to me, then you must show your sincerity,"

Jin Wuhao's voice echoed through the valley, carrying an undeniable authority. "Now, it's time for you to prove yourselves."

He raised his hand, pointing at Zi'er: "Kill her."

The kneeling demonic cultivators shuddered violently, as if struck by lightning.

Kill her? Kill the purple-clad woman who had killed the woman in the blood-red robe with a single sword strike, Elder Jin Yan with another, and three Supreme Elders with a single move?

What difference was there between this and suicide?

"Your Majesty the Divine Emperor…"

the sinister man's voice trembled, "We…we…"

“What?”

Jin Wuhao’s voice was as cold as ice water, “I gave you a chance to live, and now you must repay me with your actions. Or—”

He paused, his golden gaze piercing the faces of every demonic cultivator like sharp swords, “Do you want me to kill you first?”

The demonic cultivators were completely caught in a dilemma.

Ahead lay the unfathomable woman in purple, certain death;

behind lay Jin Wuhao and tens of thousands of divine soldiers, also certain death. They had chosen to submit just now to survive.

But now, they found themselves still standing on the edge of a cliff, each step leading to an abyss.

Some trembled, some sobbed, some closed their eyes in despair.

The sinister man’s lips moved a few times, as if he wanted to say something, but in the end, nothing came out.

He gazed at Zi’er’s purple figure, then at the impenetrable divine army behind him, and finally, as if all his strength had been drained, he slowly rose to his feet.

“Kill…”

His voice was hoarse and hollow, as if squeezed from the depths of his throat, “Fight her to the death…”

The kneeling demonic cultivators, driven by an invisible force, rose one after another.

They held magical artifacts in their hands, but those once-familiar weapons now felt like a thousand-pound burden.

Their legs trembled, their faces were filled with fear, but they had no choice.

Tens of thousands of demonic cultivators, led by a few leaders, surged towards Zi'er.

Their steps were slow and heavy, each step like a struggle in quagmire.

There were no shouts of battle, no fighting spirit, only a numbness and despair born of being driven to the brink.

Zi'er stood still, watching the demonic cultivators surge towards her like a tide, her cold face still devoid of emotion.

Her gaze was calm, like watching a swarm of moths drawn to a flame.

Kai stood on the steps before the main hall, watching this scene, his brow furrowing slightly.

He reached out and grabbed Jiang Xuelan's wrist, leading her back a few steps until they reached the threshold of the hall.

"Aren't you going to do anything about them?" Jiang Xuelan's voice was soft.

"They chose their own path."

Kai's voice was calm, but tinged with coldness. "They just chose to submit to Jin Wuhao, and now they must bear the consequences of their choice. I can't save every traitor."

He was telling the truth.

When those demonic cultivators knelt and begged Jin Wuhao for mercy, did they ever think about Kai's feelings?

Did they ever think about those who were still holding on?

Now they had to pay the price for their choices.

Jiang Xuelan remained silent for a moment, then said nothing more.

She simply stood beside Kai, watching the battlefield outside through the crack in the hall's door.

The demonic cultivators finally reached Zi'er.

The sinister-looking man at the forefront raised his black longsword and slashed it towards Zi'er's head.

The strike carried a desperate, do-or-die attitude, as if he had already disregarded his own life and death.

But Zi'er merely raised her hand slightly.

A flash of purple sword light.

The sinister man froze on the spot, his black longsword still in mid-air, but his hand had lost all strength.

A thin line of blood, as fine as a hair, stretched from his forehead to his chest, then his body slowly split open from the middle, falling to both sides, blood and internal organs splattering everywhere.

One sword, one kill.

Zi'er's sword did not pause for a moment.

Her figure was like a purple whirlwind, rapidly weaving through the crowd of demonic cultivators.

The purple longsword in her hand twirled, slashed, swept, and thrust, each movement bringing with it a spray of blood and screams.

A purple sword beam swept across, severing dozens of demonic cultivators at the waist, their upper and lower bodies separated, struggling on the ground for a moment before finally dying.

Another purple sword beam slashed down, engulfing the hundreds of demonic cultivators charging at the forefront.

Wherever the sword's light passed, the demonic energy protecting those demonic cultivators shattered like paper, their bodies sliced into countless fragments, turning into a rain of blood that fell from the sky.

"Ah—!"

Screams, wails, pleas for mercy, and cries mingled together, echoing beneath the golden sky.

The demonic cultivators finally collapsed; they dropped their magical weapons and turned to flee, but Zi'er's sword was faster than their feet.

One sword strike after another.

With each strike, hundreds of lives vanished.

From the first demonic cultivator falling to the last fleeing, less than the time it takes for an incense stick to burn.

Tens of thousands of demonic cultivators were dead or wounded, their corpses lying haphazardly across the empty space. The surviving demonic cultivators were utterly terrified.

They scrambled backward, some collapsing to the ground, some trembling behind the corpses of their companions, and some even kneeling and begging for mercy.

But this time, their plea wasn't to Jin Wuhao, but to Zi'er.

"Spare us! Spare us!"

“We were forced! We didn’t want to fight!”

“Please, spare us!”

Zi’er stopped her sword, her gaze sweeping over the still trembling demonic cultivators, her voice still cold and calm: “Get lost.”

The demonic cultivators felt as if they had been granted a pardon, scrambling to the sides, hiding behind huge rocks, or simply behind the divine army, never daring to show their faces again.

Jin Wuhao’s face was ashen.

He had watched helplessly as Zi’er slaughtered the tens of thousands of demonic cultivators he had just subdued, watching those who could have been used as cannon fodder fall one after another.

Although those who died weren’t members of the divine race, the feeling of being humiliated so openly made his anger almost burst out of his chest.

“Useless.”

He gritted his teeth, his voice filled with suppressed rage. “A bunch of useless trash.”

His gaze fell on Zi’er again, his golden eyes surging with a frenzied killing intent.

That woman in purple was powerful, but she had already killed tens of thousands of people. Didn’t she get tired?

Didn’t she have any weaknesses?

As long as he used sheer numbers to wear down her spiritual power, he would eventually break her.

“All gods, heed my command!”

Jin Wuhao suddenly raised his right hand, golden light condensing into a command arrow in his palm, shooting straight into the sky. “All troops, attack! Kill that woman!”

The moment the order was given, countless figures moved simultaneously from the surging golden light behind Jin Wuhao.

Over ten thousand elite gods clad in golden armor surged out of the light, like a golden tide, rushing towards Zi’er. They held gleaming magical artifacts, golden divine light burning on their bodies, emitting a blinding glow.

Their steps were synchronized, their momentum overwhelming, a stark contrast to the routed demonic cultivators from before.

Several elders at the ninth rank of the Golden Immortal realm charged ahead, their bodies enveloped in dense divine light, their magical artifacts radiating a chilling pressure.

Behind them, countless divine cultivators surged forth like a golden torrent, transforming the entire valley into a golden ocean.

Zi’er stood rooted to the spot, watching the golden tide, her purple eyes remaining utterly calm.

She simply raised her purple longsword, its blade pointing diagonally to the sky, and then—

swung it downwards.

A purple sword beam erupted from the tip, like a massive purple curtain of light, sweeping across the golden tide.

Wherever the sword beam passed, space was torn open with black rifts, the air was sliced with sharp whistling sounds, and the golden light melted away like snowflakes in the sunlight before the purple sword beam.

The few ninth-rank Golden Immortal elders at the forefront bore the brunt of the attack.

Before they could even react, their bodies were pierced by the purple sword light, golden blood gushing through the air. Their bodies flew backward like kites with broken strings, crashing into the ranks of the divine cultivators behind them, sending dozens staggering.

Then, the purple sword light, like an invisible giant blade, sliced into the formation of the divine army.

Golden armor shattered like paper, flesh and blood flew everywhere, and screams echoed.

The divine cultivators fell in rows like harvested wheat; some were cut in half at the waist, some were cleaved in two, and some were pulverized by the power of the laws contained within the sword light.

Zi'er's figure moved like a purple lightning bolt, weaving through the golden waves.

Her speed increased, her sword light grew denser, like a giant purple sword net, shredding the divine cultivators one by one.

One sword strike, hundreds of elite divine warriors fell.

Two sword strikes, thousands of elite divine warriors turned into a rain of blood.

With three swords, the golden army of over ten thousand divine cultivators completely collapsed.

The divine cultivators began to retreat, to flee, to abandon their magical artifacts and run for their lives.

Their once proud golden armor was now stained with the golden blood of their kin, and their once resounding slogans were replaced by cries of terror.

Zi'er stood amidst the mountain of corpses and sea of blood, her long purple dress stained a mottled dark purple by the golden blood, yet she still stood ramrod straight, her longsword still steady.

Her breathing remained steady, her eyes calm, as if everything that had just happened was merely a casual brush away a fallen leaf.

Tens of thousands of elite divine warriors were nothing more than a harvested crop before her.

Jin Wuhao stood rooted to the spot, looking at the golden corpses strewn across the ground, at the fleeing divine cultivators, at the purple figure standing unmoved amidst the mountain of corpses and sea of blood. His hands trembled violently, his teeth grinding together.

He couldn't understand.

What realm was this purple-clad woman at?

Regardless of her cultivation level, this battle today has destroyed half of the divine race's foundation built over tens of thousands of years.

The elite troops he brought, the subordinates who had fought alongside him for countless years, now lay scattered on the ground like discarded rags.

And all of this was because of one person— Kai.

Jin Wuhao suddenly raised his head, his golden gaze passing over Zi'er and landing on the gray figure at the entrance of the hall.

Kai stood there, his purple eyes calmly observing everything, like a silent statue. "Jin Wuhao, you'd better kneel down and surrender, and perhaps I can spare your life. This Zi'er girl isn't the master behind me."

"She's just a friend, and I have countless friends of her strength in the Heavenly Realm."

“If my true master were to appear, you wouldn’t be standing here talking to me now.”

Kai was incredibly confident.

Master Shi hadn’t come; if he had, none of these people would have survived. A single glance from Master Shi would have obliterated them.

“Hahaha, you’re too arrogant! You think you can make me kneel and surrender? Dream on!”

After saying this, Jin Wuhao transformed into a golden streak of light and shot towards Zi’er.

His speed was extreme, exceeding the limits of what the naked eye could perceive. The golden light left a long trail behind him, like a comet streaking across the night sky, or golden lightning tearing through heaven and earth.

A scorching golden trajectory remained in the air for a long time, as if even space itself had been scorched by his speed.

A golden divine sword had appeared in his hand, its blade crisscrossed with countless divine runes, each one flashing with blinding light and releasing terrifying waves of divine power.

It was the Divine Emperor’s Authority, a supreme artifact passed down through tens of thousands of years in the Divine Clan’s main hall, a supreme weapon forged by successive Divine Emperors with their blood and divine power.

Now fully activated by Jin Wuhao, the sword’s edge tore black rifts in space, emitting sharp whistles, like the void itself weeping.

Zi’er stood rooted to the spot, her purple eyes utterly undisturbed.

Her long hair billowed in the golden storm, her purple dress fluttering in the gale, yet her figure remained as unyielding as an ancient mountain, unshaken by the raging wind.

She simply raised her purple sword, holding it horizontally before her, assuming a simple defensive stance.

Those purple eyes were calm as still water, reflecting the golden light and Jin Wuhao's ferocious face, yet they were like bottomless abysses, revealing no emotion.

Her breathing was steady, her wrists were steady, and her aura was like a calm lake, so still it was unsettling.

Boom—!

The golden divine sword clashed with the purple longsword.

At that moment, it seemed as if the heavens and earth trembled.

The entire Black Abyss Valley groaned violently, and rubble fell from the two cliffs like raindrops, crashing to the ground with a dense thud.

The shockwave exploded outwards from the center of the collision, sweeping through the entire valley like a tsunami.

All the broken stones on the ground were blown away, tumbling through the air and crashing against the cliffs with dull thuds.

The demonic cultivators and divine cultivators kneeling on the ground were thrown about by the shockwave. Some were hurled several times, while others were struck by flying debris, screaming in pain.

Golden and purple light intertwined, like a two-colored sun exploding in the valley, illuminating the entire valley as if it were daytime. Even the darkest corners were filled with light, and everyone's shadows were instantly swallowed up.

Jin Wuhao's body was blasted back several steps, leaving deep footprints in the ground beneath his feet. The edges of the footprints were covered with fine cracks that spread outward like a spider web.

His hands were numb from the shock, and his entire right arm was trembling slightly. The golden divine sword in his hand emitted a low hum, as if it were bearing immense pressure. The divine runes on the sword flashed wildly, as if desperately absorbing the recoil from the sword strike.

But Zi'er remained motionless.

Her purple boots remained firmly planted on the ground, without even a crack in her feet.

Her figure was like an unchanging mountain, the power of the sword strike seemingly having no effect on her whatsoever.

Her purple longsword lay horizontally before her, its blade spotless, as clean as if it had just been drawn from its sheath, not even a ripple of purple luster from the impact.

Her effortless demeanor sent a collective gasp through everyone present.

"The strength of a Great Luo Golden Immortal..."

Zi'er's voice remained cold, like melting ice, carrying a hint of disdain. This disdain flowed from her tone without any artifice, as if simply stating a stark fact, "Is that all?"

Jin Wuhao's face was ashen. He stared intently at Zi'er, his golden eyes surging with rage and killing intent.

As a God-Emperor, a supreme being of the twentieth heaven, unmatched for tens of thousands of years, he had been rendered powerless by his full-force attack, unable to even move her half a step.

His pride, so cherished, was shattered in that instant.

He suddenly unleashed all his divine power, golden light surging around him like a golden flame enveloping his entire being.

The golden flames leaped and burned, distorting the surrounding air.

His aura was even stronger than before, the state of a Great Luo Golden Immortal unleashing their full power, carrying an almost frenzied resolve, as if he were to pour all his life force and dignity into this single strike.

“Kill!”

He charged forward again, his golden sword drawing countless golden trajectories in the air, each trajectory carrying the power to destroy a mountain, cascading down towards Zi’er like a waterfall.

The sword light was dense as rain, crisscrossing like a net, sealing off all of Zi’er’s escape routes, leaving her no room to dodge.

Zi’er moved.

Her figure was like a purple phantom, weaving through Jin Wuhao’s dense, torrential sword light.

Her movements were extremely fluid; every sidestep was perfectly timed, every step precise to the millimeter, every sword swing as if practiced a thousand times.

Her purple longsword twirled in her hand, each swing precisely blocking the weak points of Jin Wuhao’s swordplay, deflecting his attacks one by one.

The two swords clashed repeatedly in the void, emitting a series of dense, rain-like metallic clangs.

The sounds merged into one, like a storm pounding against a mountainside, or countless iron birds crashing in the air, making the eardrums of the surrounding spectators ache.

Some even had to cover their ears, while others were dizzy from the intense impact.

Kai's gaze was fixed on the two figures on the battlefield.

His purple eyes reflected the golden and purple sword light, and with each clash, his heart pounded faster.

He could see Zi'er's effortless posture, and...?

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Jiang Xuelan stood beside him, her icy blue eyes equally grave.

Her hands gripped Kai's sleeve tightly, her fingertips turning slightly white from the force.

Her gaze shifted back and forth between Jin Wuhao and Zi'er; each time Jin Wuhao's sword light approached Zi'er's vitals, her breath caught in her throat;

each time Zi'er effortlessly deflected the attack, she would quietly breathe a sigh of relief.

"Miss Zi'er..."

Jiang Xuelan's voice was soft, as if afraid of disrupting the balance of the battlefield, "Just how strong is she?"

"I don't know," Kai's voice was equally soft, his gaze never leaving the battlefield, "but Jin Wuhao is no match for her."

"Then why doesn't she just kill him?" Jiang Xuelan asked.

"She's waiting,"

Kai's voice held a deep meaning, "She's waiting for Jin Wuhao to reveal his true weakness. And..."

He paused, "She's also testing Jin Wuhao's trump cards. A Great Luo Golden Immortal's opponent can't be limited to this."

Indeed, although Jin Wuhao's attacks were fierce, they couldn't break through Zi'er's defenses.

Every sword strike he wielded was precisely blocked, every thrust effortlessly neutralized.

Zi'er's figure darted through the sword light, like an elusive wind; no matter how hard Jin Wuhao tried, he couldn't track her true trajectory.

Three moves, five moves, ten moves...

Jin Wuhao's attacks grew increasingly fierce, each sword strike carrying ever greater force. The golden divine sword in his hand was like a roaring dragon, relentlessly clashing against Zi'er's purple longsword.

But Zi'er's defense was like an impenetrable wall, impossible to breach.

Her footsteps moved across the battlefield like a rhythmic dance, each step perfectly timed to fit within the gaps in Jin Wuhao's attacks, never once touched by the hem of her garment.

On the fifth move, Jin Wuhao's sword slashed down from above with immense force. Zi'er dodged to the side; the blade grazed her hair and struck the ground, carving a deep, bottomless trench, sending shards of stone flying.

The seventh move: Jin Wuhao's sword slashed horizontally from the left, the golden sword light drawing a crescent-shaped arc. Zi'er leaped lightly, the sword light passing beneath her feet, cleaving a huge rock dozens of feet behind her in two, the cut surface as smooth as a mirror.

The tenth move: Jin Wuhao's sword thrust straight at her from the front, golden light condensing into a dazzling ball of light at the tip. Zi'er deflected the force of the attack with her longsword, redirecting it to her side. The ball of light exploded on a distant cliff, blasting a huge hole and filling the sky with dust.

The twelfth move: Jin Wuhao's sword suddenly changed direction, slashing upwards at an extremely tricky angle, attempting to pierce Zi'er's heart from under her armpit.

This strike was fast and ruthless, with an extremely tricky angle, clearly one of Jin Wuhao's most powerful and secret techniques.

But Zi'er merely flicked her wrist slightly, and her purple longsword, like a serpent, clung to Jin Wuhao's blade. With a forceful pull, she deflected Jin Wuhao's sword strike, causing him to miss. His body, strained from the force, leaned forward slightly, revealing a momentary opening.

The thirteenth round.

Zi'er suddenly switched from defense to offense.

Her purple longsword pierced through Jin Wuhao's dense sword net with a lightning-fast, incredibly precise angle, aimed directly at his throat.

That strike was several times faster than any of her previous moves, its angle razor-sharp, its timing impeccable, as if she had calculated his only weakness the instant he attacked. Jin Wuhao

's pupils constricted to pinpoints.

He tried to defend, but it was too late.

The sword's speed, angle, and timing were too perfect, seemingly transcending the boundaries of time, reaching his throat before he even realized the danger.

The purple tip of the sword pierced his throat. The

sword pierced his throat from the front and exited from the back, leaving a trail of golden blood.

The Daoist power contained within the sword tip surged into his body like a tidal wave, destroying the meridians and blood vessels in his throat, instantly extinguishing all life force.

Golden blood gushed from the wound, splattering onto Zi'er's clothes, leaving a dark golden stain on the purple fabric.

Jin Wuhao's body stiffened abruptly, the golden divine sword slipping from his hand and crashing to the ground with a crisp clang. The divine runes on the sword vanished instantly, as if it had lost its master.

His eyes widened, disbelief surging within them. His lips moved as if he wanted to say something, but with his throat pierced, he couldn't utter a sound; only golden blood continued to gush from the corner of his mouth.

He tried to raise his hand to grasp the sword that had pierced his throat, but his hand lost strength halfway up and fell limply to the ground.

His body slowly fell backward, crashing to the ground and raising a cloud of dust.

Golden blood gushed from his wounds and mouth, spreading across the scorched earth to form a pool of dark gold.

The Great Luo Golden Immortal, the God-Emperor of the twentieth heaven, Jin Wuhao, had died by Zi'er's sword.

The valley was deathly silent.

The silence was more profound than ever before; even the wind seemed to have stopped, and everyone's breath was abruptly halted.

The kneeling demonic cultivators, the surviving divine cultivators, the elders standing in the distance—all their gazes were fixed on the golden corpse lying on the ground, their faces filled with shock and fear.

Their god, the invincible God-Emperor, the Great Luo Golden Immortal, had actually been killed with a single sword strike?

The being who had ruled the twentieth heaven for tens of thousands of years, was dead just like that?

No one dared to believe it, but the facts were undeniable.

The corpse lying on the ground did not lie, the spreading golden blood did not lie, and the golden divine sword lying on the ground, its light extinguished, did not lie.

Jin Wuhao was truly dead.

Kai stood behind the threshold of the main hall, a complex light swirling in his purple eyes.

He saw Jin Wuhao fall, saw the golden divine sword roll to the side, saw golden blood spread across the scorched ground.

But he felt no joy, only a sudden surge of urgency.

He took a step forward, his voice urgent: “Zi’er! Leave him a breath!”

But by the time he spoke, it was too late.

Zi’er’s sword had already pierced Jin Wuhao’s throat, the Daoist power coiled around the blade having destroyed all life force within him.

The body of a Great Luo Golden Immortal, after losing its soul… Kai clenched his fists, a hint of frustration flashing in his eyes.

He had intended to have Jin Wuhao release the Myriad Swords Star before his death.

But Jin Wuhao was dead, and it was too late.

Zi'er sheathed her sword, turned to look at Kai, a hint of doubt in her eyes: "Young Master Chen, what's wrong?"

Kai shook his head and sighed: "Never mind... it's too late."

Zi'er didn't ask any further, simply sheathing her sword and turning to look at the still-dazed divine and demonic cultivators.

Her gaze swept over them like a blade, her voice cold: "Jin Wuhao is dead. Does anyone else want to fight?"

No one answered.

The divine cultivators stood rooted to the spot, as if they had lost their souls, their magical weapons falling to the ground, clanging loudly in the silent valley.

The demonic cultivators didn't even dare to raise their heads, cowering on the ground, trembling. Some even collapsed to the ground, unable to even kneel.

Even a Grand Luo Golden Immortal was no match for this woman in purple. What difference was there between them going up there and committing suicide?

Jiang Xuelan quietly grasped Kai's hand. Her palm was icy cold and trembled slightly. "Is it over?"

Kai was about to nod when suddenly, a strange change occurred.

A golden light descended from the sky, like divine light shooting from the depths of the void beyond the nine heavens, piercing through the twenty layers of the sky and landing directly on Jin Wuhao's corpse.

The light was extremely dazzling, like a real sun descending to the ground, illuminating the entire valley as if it were daytime.

The golden light contained an extremely terrifying pressure, a pressure far exceeding Jin Wuhao's Grand Luo Golden Immortal aura, as if it came from a higher dimension, making people tremble from the depths of their souls.

Everyone was blinded by the sudden light.

Kai subconsciously raised his hand to shield his eyes, and Jiang Xuelan also turned her head, her icy blue eyes stinging with tears from the golden light.

Zi'er's brows furrowed slightly. Her gaze pierced through the golden light, landing on Jin Wuhao's corpse. For the first time, a hint of solemnity appeared in her usually cold eyes.

Jin Wuhao's body slowly rose in the golden light, as if lifted by an invisible hand.

The fine cracks healed rapidly within the golden light, restored to their original state as if time had been reversed.

His pierced throat regenerated at a visible speed within the golden light; muscles, blood vessels, and skin regrown layer by layer, leaving not a single scar.

His golden eyes, which had lost their luster, rekindled their flames, like two lamps relit.

His body rolled once within the golden light, then landed firmly on the ground.

He had come back to life.

Jin Wuhao stood there, looking down at his hands, feeling the divine power that had returned to his body. His expression changed from bewilderment to shock, then from shock to ecstasy.

He touched his neck; it was smooth as ever, without a single wound.

He clenched his fist, golden divine light re-condensing in his palm, his power as abundant as if he had never fought.

Then he laughed.

That laughter gradually transformed from a low, suppressed tone into a high-pitched, unrestrained roar, growing louder and louder, echoing through the valley like deafening thunder.

His laughter carried the indulgence and triumph of someone resurrected, the ecstasy of finally understanding his own status, and a hint of mockery and pity for everyone before him.

“Hahaha—!”

He laughed loudly, golden light reigniting around him, illuminating his figure as if a god had descended: “So that’s how it is! So that’s how it is!

I am the chosen one of the Upper Realm Gods! I am the Gods’ representative in the Twentieth Heaven! They will not let me die! As long as there are Gods below the Twentieth Heaven who need to be led, I will not die!”

He suddenly turned his head to look at Zi’er, his golden eyes flashing with a mad light: “You cannot kill me! You will never kill me!”

Zi’er looked at Jin Wuhao, her usually cold gaze revealing a solemn expression for the first time.

She could sense that Jin Wuhao’s aura, far from weakening after his resurrection, had returned to its peak.

All his injuries had completely healed, and his spiritual energy was as abundant as if he had never fought, even more so than before, as if the moment of death had somehow cleansed him.

“The Upper Realm Gods…” Zi’er repeated the word softly, her voice carrying a complex emotion.

Kai stared at the resurrected Jin Wuhao, his purple eyes filled with shock.

He had heard the legends of the Upper Realm Gods.

They were a divine power existing in higher heavens, and even the divine realms beyond the celestial realm were their territory.

Jin Wuhao's selection meant that his life no longer belonged to him alone, but was protected by a higher level of power.

That power far exceeded the comprehension of everyone before them.

"Zi'er!" Kai's voice was urgent. "Can you still fight?"

Zi'er didn't turn around; her gaze remained fixed on Jin Wuhao. Her voice was calm: "I can fight. But I can't kill him. His resurrection comes from the power of the Upper Realm Gods, a power far beyond my current reach.

Every time I kill him, he's resurrected by the Upper Realm Gods, and the spiritual energy I expend each time needs time to recover." "

You have to fight even if you can't kill him!"

Kai gritted his teeth. "Every time he resurrects, you expend more energy. As long as you can suppress him, keeping him preoccupied during his resurrection intervals, I can find a way to deal with him!"

Zi'er was silent for a moment, then nodded slightly: "Okay."

She drew her purple longsword again, the tip pointing at Jin Wuhao: "Again."

Jin Wuhao sneered, the golden divine sword flying from the ground and landing back in his palm.

His body transformed into a golden streak of light, charging towards Zi'er once more.

The battle erupted again.

This time, Jin Wuhao's fighting style became even more aggressive and frenzied.

He no longer sought a fatal blow, but instead focused on exhausting Zi'er's spiritual energy.

His attacks surged like waves, one after another. Each time Zi'er slew him, he would revive in golden light, then return to the battle with even greater ferocity.

He was like a tireless war machine, rising again after each fall, each rise bringing new attacks.

And Zi'er, each time she managed to kill him, needed to expend a vast amount of spiritual energy.

The first time she killed Jin Wuhao, she used a single sword strike.

The second strike took two sword strikes. The third strike took three sword strikes.

Jin Wuhao didn't become stronger, did he? Three kills, five kills, seven kills...

The valley echoed with the clang of metal clashing, one brutal collision after another.

Golden blood flowed and dried, dried and flowed again, staining the entire clearing a dark gold, reflecting an eerie luster under the light.

The demonic cultivators and divine cultivators watching the battle went from initial shock to numbness, from numbness to fear, and from fear to a near-collapse of bewilderment.

Some began to sob softly, some clutched their heads, and some collapsed to the ground, unconscious.

Those once proud elites of the divine race and those once stubborn demonic cultivators were now like soulless puppets, watching the Golden Crow Hao who died and resurrected repeatedly.

Watching the increasingly exhausted yet still fighting purple-clad woman, their hearts were filled with emptiness.

Zi'er's life force was rapidly dwindling. Her movements slowed, each swing of her sword more hesitant than the last;

her breathing became rapid, her chest heaving faster and faster;

the light in her purple eyes gradually dimmed, that deep purple being replaced by a hazy weariness.

Each time she slew Jin Wuhao, she needed to use more power, and after each kill, her spiritual energy would decline, while each time Jin Wuhao was resurrected, he was as vigorous as in his prime.

The twelfth kill.

When Zi'er pulled the purple longsword from Jin Wuhao's chest, her arm trembled slightly.

Fine beads of sweat appeared on her forehead, shimmering against her long purple hair.

Her breathing became heavy and rapid, each breath carrying a wisp of white mist; her spiritual energy had been consumed by more than eighty percent, and the Daoist power within her body was like a spring about to dry up, almost gone.

And Jin Wuhao, resurrected by the golden light, once again stood unharmed before her.

His aura was full, his power abundant, and his face bore a near-manic, triumphant smile.

“How about it?”

Jin Wuhao’s voice carried a provocative smugness, a smugness that seeped from every word like venom. “Can you still fight? How many more times can your spiritual power last? Three? Five? Or ten?

I have plenty of time to play with you! I can play with you until the end of time!”

Zi’er gritted her teeth, remaining silent.

Her purple longsword was once again held before her, but the light on its blade was noticeably dimmer than before; the soft, deep purple was fading, replaced by an almost transparent paleness.

She knew she was truly about to collapse.

Her spiritual power had reached its limit; if she could kill Jin Wuhao two or three more times, she would completely lose her fighting ability.

Jin Wuhao seemed to have seen this too, and his smile became even more arrogant: “It seems you really are nearing your end. Then I’ll play with you a little longer. Once you’re completely exhausted, I’ll slowly deal with you and that Kai!”

He raised his golden divine sword again, golden light re-condensing on the blade, like a rising sun in his hand.

His laughter echoed through the valley, carrying a triumphant air of complete control: “Today, none of you will escape!”

Kai looked at Zi’er’s trembling back, at Jin Wuhao’s triumphant smile like an inextinguishable flame, at those who had collapsed to the ground, devoid of all fighting spirit. His fists clenched and unclenched, unclenched and unclenched again.

An unprecedented anxiety and helplessness surged within him.

Zi'er had already given her all, dozens of kills, dozens of restarts; she had poured all her strength into this battle.

And his own Golden Immortal Realm, second rank, was completely ineffective in a battle of this level. He couldn't even get close to the battlefield, let alone help Zi'er.

Jin Wuhao's immortality stemmed from the protection of the upper realm's gods; as long as that protection remained, he was invincible.

Zi'er's power, however, would eventually be exhausted. Once she fell, no one in the entire Black Abyss Valley could withstand Jin Wuhao's onslaught.

Was he truly going to perish here today?

He gritted his teeth, his purple eyes swirling with complex emotions.

His gaze swept over the demonic cultivators huddled on the ground, over the soul-stirring god-like cultivators, over the battlefield splattered with a mixture of golden and dark red blood, finally settling on Jin Wuhao's smug face.

Then his gaze fell upon the golden divine sword in Jin Wuhao's hand.

That sword was the divine emperor's regalia, a supreme artifact passed down for tens of thousands of years in the main hall of the gods, and a symbol of Jin Wuhao's power.

If he could destroy that sword, or seize it, would Jin Wuhao's combat strength be affected?

But the sword was imbued with the power of a Great Luo Golden Immortal, making it completely untouchable.

He turned to look at Jiang Xuelan beside him, his voice soft: “Xuelan, can your Ice God power freeze that sword? Even for a moment.”

Jiang Xuelan paused, glancing at the divine sword burning with golden light in the distance. The moment Kai’s deep voice fell, his figure burst forth from the air.

The dormant chaotic power around him suddenly revived, and the previously restrained gray light broke through the shackles of his meridians, surging outwards from his pores and enveloping his wide gray robe.

The gale tore at the fabric, the hem of the robe ripping and whistling, the fierce wind carrying a heavy and vast primal pressure, causing the surrounding gale to suddenly stop. *

Whoosh—*

The Dragon-Slaying Sword automatically unsheathed, its clear and domineering dragon roar resounding throughout the valley, the sword’s cry vibrating the void, stirring up visible ripples in the air.

On the jet-black sword core, layers of extremely refined purple sword dao spiritual light rose, carrying wisps of gray chaotic light.

Two extremely contradictory forces merged seamlessly, weaving together into a thick, heavy arc of gray-purple sword light, exuding a bone-chilling aura of destruction.

As the sword light flashed, the void collapsed inch by inch, and fine spatial cracks spread outwards along the sword’s spine, each line engraved with the chaotic Daoist principles of the return of all laws to nothingness.

Jiang Xuelan followed closely beside Kai, her slender white hands moving swiftly, her fingertips forming intricate and ancient ice divine seals.

These were the primordial seals passed down for a hundred thousand years by the Ice God lineage. With each rise and fall of the seals, the extremely cold water vapor drifting between heaven and earth frantically converged.

Invisible icy energy surged from the underground rock layers, the high-altitude gales, and the cracks in the void, coiling around her fair forearms.

Crack, crack—

the extreme cold crushed the surrounding air, the water vapor instantly condensed into frost, and countless tiny hexagonal ice crystals sprang up out of thin air, hovering and fluttering down.

Ice crystals refracted the sunlight, transforming into long, lustrous, icy-blue ribbons that wrapped around her wrists and arms. Intricate ice-god patterns flowed across the surface of the ice.

Each pattern was imbued with the extreme cold laws of heaven and earth; the chill seeped into her very bones, even freezing the raging winds instantly into suspended icicles.

Not far away, Zi'er, standing gracefully in purple robes, suddenly noticed a flicker of surprise in her clear, translucent purple eyes.

Before this, she had already prepared herself to exhaust her life's cultivation and withstand Jin Wuhao's thirteenth divine soul strike. She had already mobilized her primordial immortal energy, her purple light receding, hoping only to trade her life for injury and hold off this Great Luo Golden Immortal.

But Kai and Jiang Xuelan suddenly launched their attack, two completely different yet equally pure forces breaking through the battle, drastically disrupting her desperate plan.

In an instant, Zi'er suppressed the turbulent immortal energy within her, her waist swaying lightly as she retreated sideways, her purple robes fluttering.

She completely relinquished the main offensive position facing Jin Wuhao, her slender hand gripping the hilt of the Purple Abyss Immortal Sword, its blade angled towards the ground, quietly gathering momentum.

She deliberately left an opening, creating a gap for the two to attack, her cold eyes filled with vigilance, ready to fill in and strike at any moment.

"Two mere Golden Immortal ants, with low cultivation and shallow foundations, dare to interfere in the supreme battle of the gods, courting their own destruction?"

Jin Wuhao looked down from above, his gilded robes fluttering without wind, his body radiating boundless golden light, the unique divine pressure of a Great Luo Golden Immortal crushing the entire valley like a collapsing mountain and a crashing sea.

He gripped the Divine Emperor's scepter tightly, the Supreme Divine Sword, inheriting the ancient Golden Crow's divinity, spinning in mid-air.

Countless golden divine runes lit up one after another on the sword's body, the intense and dazzling sword light condensing and compressing into a horizontal slashing sword wave as thin as a cicada's wing and as fast as thunder.

This sword strike contained no fancy moves whatsoever; it was purely the crushing power of the primordial divine force at the Great Luo Golden Immortal level. The sword light tore through the sky, tearing the air and producing a sharp, ear-piercing explosion.

Under the shockwave, rocks fell from the cliffs on both sides of the valley, cracks spreading rapidly, and all the scattered rocks were crushed into dust by the divine sword light.

Before the sword light even arrived, the scorching pressure of melting gold and iron had already enveloped Kai and Jiang Xuelan. Their hair was blown about by the heat wave, and their skin felt like it was being pricked by needles.

“Get out of the way!”

Zi’er’s clear and cold shout rang out, her voice carrying the essence of immortality and piercing through the roaring wind.

Immortal light burst forth beneath her feet, and her figure transformed into a fleeting purple mist, instantly teleporting in front of the two, and the Purple Abyss Immortal Sword slashed down from the sky!

Bang!

The two beams of purple and gold collided violently, unleashing an intensely blinding light that made all the cultivators in the valley unable to open their eyes.

The powerful shockwave swept outwards, peeling away layers of thick rock and raising clouds of scorched dust.

The condensed and domineering purple immortal aura forcefully severed the divine sword light, and the shattered golden spiritual light scattered in all directions like fragments of broken glass, melting and burning hot upon impact, leaving countless tiny scorched holes.

Kai did not pause for a moment, seizing the brief opening when Zi’er blocked the attack. The seed of spatial law within his body spun at full speed, and the spiritual energy within his meridians surged and trembled in reverse. He pushed his void teleportation technique to its limit.

His figure flashed three times in succession, each teleportation tearing apart an inch of void and leaving fleeting gray spatial ripples. With three strides, he instantly closed the distance by a hundred feet, closing the gap to within three feet of Jin Wuhao.

This distance was the death line locked by the divine sense of a Great Luo Golden Immortal, and also the perfect killing distance for the power of chaos to unleash.

The spine of the Dragon-Slaying Sword trembled violently as Kai squeezed out the last of his chaotic essence from his dantian.

Gray chaotic fire rose along the blade, swirling with purple sword spiritual light. The gray and purple flames burned quietly, without scorching heat, but exuding a chilling aura of annihilation.

This flame did not burn flesh or grass, but specifically gnawed at the foundation of the Great Dao, dissolved the patterns of laws, and obliterated the essence of divine artifacts. It was the beginning of all laws, and also the end of all laws.

“Slash!”

Kai’s lips parted slightly, and the sword light slashed down. The sword’s momentum did not attack the chest or abdomen, nor pierce the soul, but precisely locked onto Jin Wuhao’s right arm holding the sword, pointing directly at the divine emperor’s scepter that carried the inheritance of the divine race for tens of thousands of years!

At the same moment, Jiang Xuelan launched her attack.

She thrust her arms forward with a sudden burst, the icy blue light bands surrounding her exploded, and the Ice God’s essence within her poured forth without reservation.

Vast, extreme cold power coalesced into a giant, faceted ice cone, about ten feet long.

Inside the ice cone flowed intricate ancient Ice God patterns, the chilling aura of eternal freeze carrying a sharp edge capable of tearing through everything, hurtling through the air, grazing the side of the Dragon-Slaying Sword’s light, aiming straight for Jin Wuhao’s vital heart.

As the cold air passed, the air instantly condensed and solidified, winding white ice streaks swirling in the air, freezing floating dust and scattered pebbles, even freezing the scattered fluctuations of spiritual energy.

Frost spread across the ground, the frost flowers rapidly spreading along the cracks in the rock layers, causing the hard rocks to crack with a brittle sound.

For the first time, a subtle crack appeared on Jin Wuhao's previously nonchalant expression.

In his eyes, Kai and Jiang Xuelan were nothing more than two insignificant Golden Immortal cultivators; no matter how flashy their moves, they couldn't break through the divine protection of a Grand Luo Golden Immortal.

But just as the gray-purple sword light pressed...

A faint, mournful sword hum traveled along the hilt into Jin Wuhao's soul. It wasn't the resonance of a magical artifact, but the lament of a divine weapon's very essence being suppressed. The

ancient divine runes etched deep within the sword's core instinctively trembled with fear, frantically trying to evade.

That wisp of gray chaotic power seemed to be the natural nemesis of all divinity and all laws.

"What?!"

Jin Wuhao's dark golden pupils suddenly contracted, his heart churning with shock.

He had wielded the power of the Divine Emperor for millennia, conquered countless lower realms, and fought against extraterrestrial demons; never before had any power made this supreme divine weapon feel fear. In

this critical moment, he forcibly suppressed his astonishment, flicked his wrist, and swiftly returned the sword to block. Golden divine light filled the sword, and layer upon layer of divine barriers instantly formed.

But Kai's eyes were clear. From the moment he made his move, his goal was not to kill Jin Wuhao's physical body, but to cripple this weapon that relied on divine artifacts and sever the medium through which the opponent resonated with the divine realm!

Clang—!!

The deafening sound of metal clashing shattered the valley, clear and long, making everyone's eardrums ache and their souls go numb.

The two primal forces collided violently, and a circular shockwave swept in all directions, dust rising into the sky and obscuring half the heavens.

Gray chaotic power, along the contact surface of the sword, was like countless tiny, writhing black snakes, ignoring the divine barrier, and forcefully drilling into the interior of the Divine Emperor's authority, frantically gnawing at the surface gilded divine patterns.

The golden divine patterns, which were originally shining brightly and flowing with holy light, dimmed abruptly the moment they came into contact with the chaotic power, the patterns twisted and deformed, flickering like starlight, like a candle swaying in a storm, ready to be extinguished at any moment.

A series of cracking sounds emanated from within the divine artifact, subtle yet deadly. Jin Wuhao could clearly sense that the divine soul link between himself and the Divine Emperor's authority was being forcibly severed.

In a flash, Jiang Xuelan's Ice Seal Killing Move arrived before him.

A massive, crystalline ice cone slammed heavily into Jin Wuhao's chest. Forced to multitask, he hastily mobilized his divine power to condense a perfectly round, thick golden divine light shield.

The ice cone shattered with a deafening roar, scattering countless icy blue ice crystals that instantly froze the ground upon impact. However, the extreme cold contained deep within the ice layer spread backward along the gaps in the divine light shield, rapidly climbing up the meridians of his right arm, where he gripped the sword.

In an instant, a thin layer of frost covered Jin Wuhao's strong, powerful right hand, which was brimming with divine power. The cold froze the flow of his blood, hindering the circulation of divine power. His sword-wielding fingertips suddenly stiffened, and his strength diminished by a third.

"Now!"

Kai's breath came in short gasps, his chest throbbing with pain. He forcefully suppressed the backlash from his depleted spiritual energy and roared fiercely.

Zi'er, who had been gathering her strength for so long, suddenly burst through the air.

Her body blazed with purple light, shedding all defenses, transforming into a purple meteor streaking across the sky. She precisely seized the fleeting opening when Jin Wuhao parried, his right arm froze, and he lost his balance.

The Purple Abyss Immortal Sword concealed all its sword light and phenomena, becoming extremely refined, and thrust out silently, so fast that it stripped away light and shadow, concealing its sword cry, like a thunderclap of destiny, piercing Jin Wuhao's throat in an instant!

Warm, viscous golden divine blood gushed out, spraying onto the scorched rocky ground, burning and emitting sizzling white smoke upon landing.

Jin Wuhao's tall and imposing body stiffened abruptly, his dark golden eyes widening suddenly, filled with disbelief, astonishment, and fury.

He was arrogant, wielding the power of the Divine Emperor and looking down upon all living beings in the lower realms. He should have crushed the three low-level cultivators, but he was careless for a moment, his rhythm disrupted by two Golden Immortal cultivators. He completely overlooked the purple-clad woman whose immortal foundation was unfathomable .

The two who seemed to be the weakest actually possessed the Origin Treasure, a supreme treasure that could restrain divinity, and broke through his seemingly foolproof divine defense.

But in the instant that excruciating pain swept over his soul, a cold and eerie smile slowly curled at the corners of his stiff lips.

Golden divine blood continued to flow from the wound in his throat, staining his gilded collar. His voice was hoarse and broken, each word slurred with the pain of flesh and blood: “The seventeenth time… You… thought you could kill me like this? Too naive.”

As his words fell, his heavy body tilted backward and crashed to the ground with a thud, kicking up a cloud of dust and causing the valley floor to tremble slightly.

The remaining divine light slowly left his body, and the surface vitality rapidly dissipated, making him look no different from a fallen Grand Luo Golden Immortal.

“Quick! Xue Lan, freeze the corpse immediately! Isolate it from the spiritual energy of heaven and earth, and seal away the leakage of the divine soul!”

Kai turned his head sharply, his eyes filled with urgency. In the instant of their exchange, he had detected an extremely subtle fluctuation of divine domain attraction through his chaotic perception.

Jiang Xue Lan dared not hesitate for a moment. She endured the dizziness from the exhaustion of her spiritual power, her ten fingers

rapidly forming hand seals, activating all the remaining 60% of her Ice God Origin in her dantian.

Extremely cold air, like an ancient icefall, cascaded down, enveloping Jin Wu Hao's corpse.

Bone-chilling frost spread from top to bottom, sealing the skin, flesh, veins, and bones, freezing the flow of blood and flesh in an instant.

Layer upon layer of frost piled up, inch by inch, foot by foot, three feet, finally condensing into a thick, flawless, and translucent ice coffin.

The ice layer locked away all life force and all fluctuations of divine thought, completely sealing Jin Wu Hao within, completely isolating even the slightest movement of a hair or the residual warmth of his blood.

The ice coffin was crystal clear, reflecting the sinister smile on the corpse's face, frozen in time, exuding a chilling aura.

The battle had temporarily ended, the tense killing intent dissipated abruptly, and all three relaxed, exhaling a breath of stale air in unison.

Jiang Xuelan's back was slightly hunched, her shoulders trembling, her rapid, heavy breathing echoing around her. The overdrawn power of the Ice God was constantly backfiring on her meridians, causing a piercing, numb ache throughout her body.

A layer of gray-white weariness covered her icy blue eyes, her long eyelashes drooping limply, and sweat soaked her temples, sliding down her pale chin. Yet,

the moment she looked at the ice coffin, a faint smile involuntarily appeared on her lips, the heavy pressure of days of fierce fighting dissipating in the slightest.

Kai sheathed his sword, his knuckles wiping away a layer of fine, cold sweat from his burning forehead.

A narrow, glaring gash ran down the side of his grey robe, a mark left by the divine sword light emanating from Jin Wuhao. Beneath the fabric, flesh was torn open, and dark red blood slowly seeped out. Fortunately, his dantian and Dao foundation were unharmed, so the injury wasn't fatal.

The continuous activation of spatial laws and chaotic power had caused his meridians to throb with pain, and his dantian's spiritual energy was nearly depleted.

Zi'er stood leaning on the Purple Abyss Immortal Sword, its tip diagonally against the rock, stabilizing her swaying figure.

Her breathing calmed slightly, and the restless immortal energy around her slowly subsided, but the gravity between her brows remained unchanged. Her slender fingers tightened slightly, her grip on the sword hilt unwavering.

Seventeen strikes, each costing her primordial immortal energy, seemingly giving her the upper hand, but in reality, she was already exhausted.

"This way... completely severing his life force should prevent his resurrection, right? Even with divine intervention, he shouldn't be able to penetrate the eternal ice seal,"

Jiang Xuelan said softly.

Kai didn't respond, but stared intently at the crystal ice coffin. Deep within his purple eyes, his chaotic divine sense spread out with full force, strands of gray divine consciousness penetrating the ice layer to probe the corpse's origin.

The next second, his pupils constricted sharply, his brow twitched violently, and a bone-chilling cold shot up his spine to the top of his head.

His chaotic power was extremely sensitive; he clearly detected that within the seemingly lifeless corpse inside the ice coffin, hidden deep within a faint, continuous fluctuation of life force.

That fluctuation was subtle and ethereal, concealed deep within the divine essence, deceiving ordinary divine sense probes, yet unable to escape the chaotic perception of tracing the origins of all laws.

A Great Luo Golden Immortal's fall, their divine soul dissipated, their life force severed, should have instantly returned to nothingness. But this corpse's life force had never ceased; it had merely deliberately lay dormant!

"Something's not right..."

Kai lowered his voice, his tone heavy and cautious, "His primordial aura is still there, not a trace of it has dissipated, lurking deep within his bones. Ice cannot stop the divine realm's guidance."

Zi'er's immortal light suddenly dimmed, her heart sinking. She used her remaining immortal divine sense to investigate, and after a moment, her eyes were filled with deep weariness.

For the first time, a look of helplessness appeared in Zi'er's usually cold eyes: "The resurrection authority of the orthodox divine race of the upper realm is rooted in the divine realm dimension, transcending the laws of this world. Ordinary ice, severing, and sealing can all penetrate it... even my immortal isolation runes cannot stop it." As

soon as she finished speaking, the void at the top of the sky suddenly exploded!

A blinding golden light, spanning thousands of miles, descended from the upper heavens, sharp as a supreme divine blade, tearing through layers of spatial barriers, directly piercing through the three-foot-thick ancient ice coffin.

Crack—!

A sharp, piercing cracking sound echoed through the valley. A thin crack appeared in the center of the ice coffin, and golden light seeped inwards, instantly multiplying into a dense web of cracks that covered the entire coffin.

Ice crystals shattered, frost dissipated; the heavy, sturdy ice coffin, before the supreme divine light, was as fragile as thin ice, crumbling into countless shimmering white ice shards that drifted away with the wind.

Golden holy light slowly enveloped Jin Wuhao's body, instantly restoring his shattered bones, stagnant blood vessels, and damaged organs.

His previously stiff and cold body hovered in the air, his closed eyelids trembling slightly. The next instant, his dark golden eyes snapped open, their divine light dazzling and more intense, more frenzied than before, his divine pressure surging by thirty percent.

The eighteenth resurrection.

"Hahaha!!"

Jin Wuhao threw his head back and roared with laughter, the sound echoing through the valley, carrying a violent divine aura that shook everyone's souls and caused their blood to churn. A raging golden divine fire erupted around him, and the ice shards that fell to the ground evaporated instantly upon contact with the fire.

"You think mere ice can imprison me? You ants from the lower realm, your vision is utterly shallow!"

He pointed to the sky, his tone arrogant and maniacal. "My power of resurrection is rooted in the very essence of the Divine Realm, blessed by a higher-dimensional god!

Ice won't work, burning won't work, shattering my physical body won't work! As long as the Divine Realm doesn't perish, I will be immortal forever, endlessly reborn!"

In his rage, he gripped the restored Divine Emperor's scepter, a ten-thousand-foot-long golden sword beam sweeping across the land, a destructive wave of divine power crashing down.

Zi'er immediately stepped forward to shield him, using her remaining immortal energy to create a purple immortal shield, taking the brunt of this domineering attack.

Boom!

The immense force of the impact sent Zi'er staggering back seven steps, each step leaving a deep imprint on the rock.

A sweet taste rose in her throat, and a trickle of crimson blood slid down her lips, staining her white chin. Her primordial immortal aura surged violently, and the purple light around her dimmed considerably.

Kai and Jiang Xuelan, caught in the aftershocks, were thrown back

by the force of the impact. Kai hastily plunged his Dragon-Slaying Sword into the hard rock, using the force to stabilize himself. The violent impact traveled through the hilt, causing his hands to split open and his blood to surge.

Jiang Xuelan's back slammed heavily against the blue stone pillar of the main hall. A dull thud echoed as she groaned, her internal organs trembling violently, a chill running through her body, and a tearing pain shooting through her meridians.

After his resurrection, Jin Wuhao's aura not only didn't diminish but actually increased. His eighteenth death not only didn't damage his essence but instead transformed into nourishment bestowed by the divine realm, tempering his divine foundation and strengthening his damaged Dao Fruit.

He lowered his gaze to the three weakened and wounded individuals, scrutinizing them like caged beasts, his eyes blazing with murderous

intent: “Your spiritual energy is exhausted, your Dao aura depleted. How many more times can you sustain this?

Once? Half a time? No matter how powerful your methods are, can you withstand the endless cycle of resurrection?”

Kai gritted his teeth, using his arms to slowly prop himself up.

A deep, bone-revealing wound on his left shoulder bled continuously, torn clothing clinging to charred flesh, his meridians riddled with fine cracks, his spiritual energy flow sluggish.

Yet, he raised his eyes, his purple gaze still sharp as a drawn sword, showing no sign of retreat.

“Xue Lan, using ice to block dimensional divine power won’t work.”

Kai wiped the blood from the corner of his lips, the pain stimulating his nearly exhausted mind. His tone was calm and resolute. “Then let’s use the method of destruction. My Chaos Flame will burn the origin of all laws, severing the dimensional link between his physical body and the Divine Realm, cutting off the resurrection pathway.”

Jiang Xue Lan rubbed her aching, numb shoulders, her icy blue eyes filled with worry. She knew the domineering nature of the Chaos Flame and the price of activating the primordial flame: “Your Chaos Flame touches the extreme of the laws of this realm, but the opponent is a Great Luo Golden Immortal, rooted in the Divine Realm dimension… Can your power really burn through the dimensional barrier? Once the primordial energy is overdrawn, your Dao foundation will be damaged, and your cultivation will regress.”

“If we don’t try, we will all perish here today.”

Kai raised his eyes, his purple eyes surging with a do-or-die determination. He was willing to damage his Dao foundation and overdraw his primordial energy to break through this deadly situation.

The third joint killing spree was thus formed.

Zi'er directly confronted Jin Wuhao, recklessly channeling her immortal essence with powerful, sweeping attacks, abandoning all defense to hold Jin Wuhao's attention.

Jiang Xuelan flanked him, her icy laws sealing off the surrounding airspace and blocking any escape routes. Kai concealed his killing intent, launching a flanking attack, squeezing the deepest chaotic essence from his dantian to ignite his natal divine fire.

On the Dragon-Slaying Sword, a greyish-purple flame slowly rose.

This flame was unlike any other spiritual fire, divine fire, or demonic fire in the world; it required no oxygen to burn, consumed no fuel, burned only the void dimension, circulated the Dao's rhythm, and dissolved the very essence of laws.

As the flame flickered, the surrounding space collapsed layer by layer, and all the world's spiritual energy was completely consumed.Sword light flared once more, sword fire accompanies it, and the Dragon-Slaying Sword once more clashed with the Divine Emperor's authority.

This time, the gray flames no longer slowly gnawed, but transformed into a ravenous, ancient beast, instantly engulfing the entire golden divine sword.

The sizzling, ear-piercing burning sound was incessant; the golden divine runes, passed down for tens of thousands of years, rapidly blackened, twisted, and shattered, the divine essence emitting a mournful cry.

The divine domain's accumulated blessings within the artifact, accumulated over millennia, were stripped away layer by layer, burned away, and dissolved.

Jin Wuhao's unchanging composure shattered completely for the first time, a terror from the depths of his soul welling up in his eyes.

He clearly sensed that, along with the shattering of the divine runes, his connection to the divine domain was being forcibly severed, the foundation of his natal artifact was destroyed, and his Dao Fruit was shaking and trembling.

“Stop!! Get out of my way!”

he roared furiously, channeling all his divine power to vibrate the sword, trying to repel Kai and sever the flames’ erosion.

Just as his divine power leaked out, Zi’er seized the opening. The Purple Abyss Immortal Sword pierced through layers of divine defense, its tip entering from his back and exiting through his chest.

This sword strike, imbued with all of Zi’er’s remaining immortal cultivation, tore apart the protective divine light of a Great Luo Golden Immortal, severed the source of his physical body, and severely damaged his divine power meridians.

At the same moment, Jiang Xuelan raised her hand to form a seal, freezing Jin Wuhao’s knees with extreme cold. The ice climbed up his shinbones, sealing off the blood vessels in his lower limbs, locking down teleportation space, and cutting off his last escape route.

The three-sided encirclement was complete, and the fatal blow was in place.

Kai suppressed the excruciating pain that felt like his meridians were exploding, urging all the remaining chaotic essence to push the flames on the sword. The gray-purple fire flowed along the hilt, instantly engulfing Jin Wuhao’s entire right arm.

Silently, without a violent explosion, without a scorching heatwave.

Jin Wuhao’s powerful arms, tendons, blood vessels, and divine power were all dissolved in the chaotic flames. His flesh, meridians, bones, and the divine Dao patterns attached to them instantly turned to ashes.

His right hand, which tightly gripped the Divine Emperor's authority, was completely annihilated.

Without the divine power of its wielder, the damaged and broken Supreme Divine Sword's light suddenly dimmed, and it fell from mid-air, shattering in two upon impact.

The excruciating pain pierced his soul, Jin Wuhao's body convulsed violently, his divine power reversed, and his body slowly collapsed.

The chaotic flames gathered, enveloping his entire body, and slowly incinerated him from top to bottom.

Flesh and blood melted, meridians returned to nothingness, bones turned to ash—the last trace of life, the last trace of divinity, the last trace of Dao essence were all burned away.

A moment later, only a handful of fine black ash remained on the ground, which was scattered by a gentle breeze, merging into the scorched soil without leaving a trace.

As the killing blows ended, their taut spirits and energy suddenly collapsed. The three could no longer hold on and collapsed to the ground one after another.

Kai knelt on one knee, his Dragon-Slaying Sword embedded in the ground to support his swaying body. He gasped for breath, his throat dry and burning, as if stuffed with coarse sandpaper.

His face was ashen, his lips bloodless, his dantian empty and numb, his chaotic essence more than half depleted, and his meridians riddled with irreversible micro-cracks. Every movement brought excruciating pain.

Jiang Xuelan slid down against a stone pillar in the main hall and collapsed onto the cold ground. Her fingers trembled uncontrollably, her arms aching and numb. Her Ice God essence was completely exhausted, and the chill around her was weak and ethereal, unable even to maintain the thin frost on the ground.

Her lips were pale, her breathing shallow, and with each inhale, tiny ice crystals condensed on her nostrils. The cold poison backfired on her meridians, and a bone-chilling pain swept through her entire body.

Zi'er knelt on both knees, her immortal sword diagonally sheathed at her side. Her long, black hair was soaked with sweat, clinging to her pale cheeks.

Her chest heaved violently, her breathing heavy and hoarse. Having exhausted her life force to kill nineteen times, her immortal Dao essence was depleted by seventy percent, her cultivation foundation unstable. The purple light around her flickered like a candle in the wind, ready to be extinguished at any moment.

The valley was deathly silent, save for the three people's exhausted breathing, drifting on the wind.

Kai took a long time to recover, barely suppressing his dizziness. His voice was hoarse and weak: "This time... it should be completely over... The Chaos Fire burned away the physical body, dissolved the divine essence, leaving not even bone fragments. The guiding power has nowhere to attach..."

Before he finished speaking, the void in the sky suddenly exploded with dazzling golden light!

That light was even more brilliant and magnificent than the previous eighteen resurrections, like a rising sun, suspended in the air, illuminating the entire valley.

The scattered ashes, as if drawn by an invisible force, froze in mid-air, swirled back in reverse, and coalesced as if time had reversed.

First, bones were gathered, then flesh and blood regenerated, meridians were restored, the outer shell of the divine soul was reshaped, and the source of divinity flowed.

In an instant, Jin Wuhao stood unharmed in place, his robes spotless, all his injuries vanished, the broken divine emperor's authority restored to its original state, and his divine light even more holy and domineering than before.

The nineteenth resurrection.

A maniacal laugh echoed through the heavens and earth, carrying dimensional pressure that crushed everyone's minds: "Hahaha! The nineteenth time! Even the Chaos Divine Fire, which burns the very source, cannot sever the divine domain's dimensional blessing! What other trump cards do you have? What other killing moves do you have?"

He pointed to the void, each word piercing to the bone: "I'll tell you frankly! Unless you obliterate my natal soul rooted in the divine domain's origin, sever the divine lord's dimensional imprint, and make the upper realm saints completely lose my soul's coordinates, otherwise, no one in the myriad realms can kill me even a fraction!"

Divine soul! Dimensional imprint!

These four short words struck Kai's mind like thunder, piercing through all the chaotic mists.

He shuddered, his purple eyes suddenly brightening, then overwhelmed by boundless powerlessness.

He finally understood the crux of the matter.

The Great Luo Golden Immortal's physical body, laws, and divine artifacts were all external things; the natal soul rooted in the divine domain's dimension was the fundamental foundation.

All the killing methods of the lower realm can only destroy the physical body, unable to reach the divine soul sealed across dimensions.

As long as the divine soul is not destroyed, the divine realm can lock the coordinates and infinitely guide resurrection.

However, his cultivation is only at the second level of the Golden Immortal realm. Even if the power of chaos restrains all laws, he still cannot break free from the shackles of this realm and cannot touch the divine soul origin of a higher dimension.

Zi'er also instantly understood all the cause and effect. She slowly stood up, supporting herself with her immortal sword. The sword tip trembled slightly, and her eyes were filled with desolation and helplessness: "The divine realm protects and locks the original divine soul… The physical body may be destroyed a thousand times, but the divine soul will live forever… From the beginning, we have been fighting a dead end that we cannot win."

"We cannot break through the dimensional barrier, we cannot touch the sealed divine soul, so we can never win."

Kai let his arms fall, his fingertips were cold, and an unprecedented sense of powerlessness swept over his body, crushing his last bit of fighting spirit.

Jiang Xuelan raised her eyes, her clear, icy blue pupils reflecting the golden light that filled the sky, illuminating Jin Wuhao's rampant figure, and also the three of them, their bodies covered in wounds and their strength waning.

She gripped the small, condensed ice spike in her hand, its chill faint and ethereal, her fingertips trembling. The path ahead was pitch black; she could no longer find a direction to strike. Kai hastily parried, the sword light colliding with the Dragon-Slaying Sword. A burst of violent power exploded instantly, tearing open the flesh of his shoulder and neck, leaving a deep, gruesome wound that exposed bone.

Scalding divine blood slid down his shoulder and neck, soaking his gray robe and scorching his skin.

Kai swayed, nearly falling to the ground. The remaining chaotic fire was completely extinguished, his dantian empty, unable even to condense a wisp of sword light.

Jiang Xuelan couldn't dodge in time; several fine divine rays grazed her limbs, cutting open numerous wounds. Divine fire burned her skin, causing excruciating pain.

Her life force was exhausted, her icy protective barrier crumbled on its own, and she could no longer maintain even the slightest barrier.

Zi'er's aura was weak, her immortal essence depleted; even holding her immortal sword was extremely difficult, her immortal light dimming to almost nothing.

A desperate situation, a complete and utter dead end.

Jin Wuhao slowly stepped forward, his body enveloped in divine light. He looked down at the three wounded men who had exhausted their trump cards, his smile cruel and arrogant: "Three pathetic dogs, have you struggled enough? Now, I will send you all to your doom, your souls imprisoned in the Divine Realm, to suffer the torment of burning gods for eternity!"

He slowly raised his restored Divine Emperor's Authority, ten thousand feet of golden light gathering at the sword tip, a fatal blow poised to strike. The heavens and earth changed color, and the gale abruptly ceased.

Just as the sword light was about to fall, in a corner of the void, ripples silently appeared.

A figure completely shrouded in black robes, like a ghost from the abyss, appeared out of nowhere, stepping out of a void rift.

The newcomer was wrapped from head to toe in a heavy black robe, the hood concealing his face, not an inch of skin exposed. He exuded an aura of extreme yin, extreme cold, and extreme deathly stillness.

This power belonged neither to demonic energy, nor divine light, nor immortal spiritual energy; it transcended the five elements and the six

paths, originating from the Nine Netherworlds, pointing directly to the very source of the souls of all things.

He gripped a jet-black short blade tightly in his right hand, its blade wreathed in eerie blue flames. The ghostly fire danced silently, scorching the surrounding void, extinguishing any stray spiritual light, and causing a piercing pain to the soul of anything that touched it. The Ghost

Clan!

Specializing in the laws of the soul, wielding the Netherworld Fire, the only race in all the heavens and realms capable of directly attacking the very essence of the soul!

Kai's pupils suddenly contracted, and the next second, extreme ecstasy swept over him; the hope on the verge of extinction was instantly rekindled.

He recognized this aura—the aura of the Ghost Clan, the same as Ming Li's.

The black-robed ghost cultivator slowly walked to Kai, bowed slightly, and spoke with utmost respect. His hoarse, deep voice, like the echoing winds of the deepest abyss, emanated from beneath his hood: "Mr. Chen, I am Ghost Seven, wielding the Nine Netherworld Blade. In the past, you aided the Ghost Clan, rescuing our Venerable from the clutches of the Gods. My entire clan is deeply grateful. Hearing that you are trapped in a perilous situation in the Divine Realm, I have come from the Upper Realm specifically to lend you a hand."

Kai suppressed the shock in his heart, his voice dry and urgent. Urging, he stared intently at his opponent: "You can attack the primordial soul?"

Gui Qi slowly raised his head, revealing a pair of deep blue vertical pupils beneath his hood. Unquenchable Netherfire flickered in his eyes, and the pressure of his divine soul subtly leaked out: "Yes. When the gods are resurrected, their divine souls briefly leave their bodies at the moment of

their physical demise, passing through the dimensional vortex of the void and returning to the origin of the divine realm.

As long as we intercept and kill the divine soul before it enters the vortex, burning its origin, we can completely sever the connection, preventing it from ever being reborn again."

A sliver of hope, firmly grasped!

Kai's eyes rekindled their burning edge. Suppressing his injuries, he issued his orders word by word, his tone resolute: "Form ranks on all four sides, the final battle!

Zi'er, launch a frontal assault, restrain the divine power of his physical body, and disrupt his mind;

Xue Lan, freeze the void, lock the space around the dimensional vortex, and block his retreat;

Gui Qi, conceal your aura and lie in wait in the void, waiting for the moment of your death to intercept and kill the departing divine soul!"

"Yes, sir!"

The four moved simultaneously, and the final killing formation was formed in an instant.

Zi'er swallowed the metallic taste in her throat, squeezing out the last trace of her original immortal essence from her dantian, burning a small amount of her lifespan to strengthen her combat power. Purple immortal light soared into the sky, her figure transforming into a blazing purple rainbow, charging straight at Jin Wuhao.

This time, she left no way out, her sword moves resolute and ruthless, each strike a life-or-death struggle, willing to sacrifice her foundation to entangle her opponent.

Jin Wuhao was forced to turn around to meet the attack. He swung his divine sword, golden light shining brightly, the purple and gold rays colliding wildly, creating a deafening roar that caused large sections of the valley walls to collapse, sending rocks tumbling down.

Jiang Xuelan moved to the side, raising her hand to form the Ice Seal of Myriad Domains, unleashing all the remaining power of the Ice God. Countless ice shards and needles sprang up out of thin air, transforming into a torrential rain of ice, densely shooting towards Jin Wuhao's limbs, meridians, and divine apertures.

The ice needles, though weak in direct damage, could obstruct the flow of divine power and disrupt the rhythm of attacks. Every inch of extreme cold delayed his movements, creating fleeting openings.

Kai gripped the Dragon-Slaying Sword, concealing all his aura, lying in wait in a blind spot on the battlefield. The lingering chaos of the battlefield enveloped the sword, gathering strength for a fatal blow. Gui

Qi vanished into the shadows of the void, his Netherfire subsiding, his divine soul spreading out, locking onto Jin Wuhao's divine soul fluctuations, waiting for the perfect moment.

The four surrounded him, layer upon layer of restraint, leaving Jin Wuhao attacked from all sides, unable to defend himself effectively.

Zi'er launched a desperate attack from the front, while ice blocked his divine power from the flanks, and deadly intent lurked in the shadows. The connection

to the divine realm showed subtle fluctuations. "Get out of my way, all of you!"

Jin Wuhao roared in fury, his divine light exploding suddenly, a circular shockwave of divine power sweeping in all directions, forcibly pushing back Zi'er and Jiang Xuelan.

The burst of divine power caused him to lose his balance, and the opening vanished in an instant.

This was the moment!

The void beneath Kai's feet shattered, and he instantly lunged forward, channeling the last wisp of chaotic power he had accumulated over time into his sword.

The grey-purple sword light concealed its sharpness, like a venomous snake burrowing into a crevice, precisely piercing Jin Wuhao's vital ribs, penetrating his chest cavity, shattering his divine heart. Chaotic fire burned inwards along the wound, dissolving the very essence of his meridians.

Immediately following, Zi'er teleported in, her immortal sword piercing his throat. The remaining immortal Daoist essence locked away his life force, severing all compensatory life force from his physical body.

Jin Wuhao's body stiffened abruptly, his eyes filled with overwhelming resentment and rage. His divine power dissipated inch by inch, and his massive body crashed to the ground.

The twentieth time, he had fallen.

In an instant, a strange change occurred.

Above his corpse, a dark golden vortex automatically split open in the void. The vortex rotated slowly, flowing with the primordial light of the divine realm. A dimensional passage slowly formed, guiding the divine soul back to its rightful place.

A hazy golden phantom rose from the corpse, its outline clear, its features strikingly similar to Jin Wuhao's—it was his natal soul, sealed across dimensions.

The phantom soul floated lightly into the air, drawn back to the Upper Realm by the vortex's pull.

“Attack! Intercept the soul!”

Kai shouted sharply.

Gui Qi, hidden in the void, suddenly appeared, a black afterimage slicing through the sky. His Nether Blade was raised high, and the azure Netherworld Flame surged ten thousand feet, carrying the power to annihilate souls, slashing towards the golden phantom soul!

“Insolence! A mere ghost dares to desecrate the soul of the Divine Realm! A highly condensed golden beam of light erupted from the vortex, blocking the Nether Blade and attempting to intercept the Soul-Destroying Strike.

However, the Netherworld Fire was inherently capable of neutralizing the souls of all gods.

The Nether Blade sliced through the golden light, and the ghostly blue flames instantly ensnared the golden soul.

A heart-wrenching, piercing wail of agony echoed throughout heaven and earth. Unlike physical pain, this agony struck at the very core, eroding the very soul.

Jin Wuhao’s illusory soul twisted, struggled, and disintegrated violently, its golden primordial light extinguishing rapidly, like snow melting under the blazing sun.

In a mere three breaths, the wail ceased, the golden light vanished, and the natal soul, rooted in the divine realm for tens of thousands of years, was utterly incinerated into nothingness.

Without its anchor, the dark golden vortex that had been swirling in the air slowly contracted and closed, finally smoothing the void without leaving a trace.

The golden light of resurrection descended from the heavens as expected, landing on Jin Wuhao's corpse, but this time, the divine light was ineffective, unable to revive even a sliver of life.

His body was cold, his meridians lifeless, his soul utterly gone—he had utterly perished, dust to dust, ashes to ashes.

The Great Luo Golden Immortal, the representative of the Divine Race, Jin Wuhao, was dead and his Dao vanished.

The long-strained battle finally ended, and all four collapsed, exhausted.

Kai knelt, leaning on his sword, blood still flowing from his shoulder wound. His whole body ached and was numb, his meridians were shattered, but his tense heartstrings finally relaxed, and a relieved smile appeared on his lips.

Jiang Xuelan moved to his side, leaning gently against him, her strength exhausted, her expression serene. Zi'er lay on the dust, her immortal light dissipated, breathing peacefully. Gui Qi stood beside the corpse, his Netherfire receding, his back lonely and cold.

The valley returned to silence, but this tranquility lasted only ten breaths.

Suddenly, the closing void at the top erupted with a golden light a hundred times brighter than before, divine light covering the sky, dyeing the entire firmament red, and an unparalleled pressure, carrying the wrath of a saint, crashed down.

Like mountains, like seas, like the heavens pressing down!

The remaining demonic cultivators and captured gods in the valley were all pressed to the ground by the oppressive force, their bones creaking, unable even to lift their heads or open their eyes.

Zi'er endured the excruciating pain to prop herself up, but the protective aura of her immortal cultivation was shattered by the oppressive force the moment it rose.

In the center of the void, golden light slowly split, and a figure descended from the upper realm, walking on light.

The old man wore an elaborate and luxurious gilded divine robe, the patterns of the heavens and stars engraved on the fabric, each thread woven from spiritual gold.

His face was majestic and stern, his deeply furrowed brows filled with ancient chill, and he was surrounded by billions of layers of divine light membranes, within which flowed the complete laws of the stars, every movement causing dimensional tremors. His

dark golden vertical pupils looked down upon the lower realm, his eyes holding the birth and death of stars, the flourishing and withering of the Great Dao, his realm unfathomable, crushing all living beings present.

Kai couldn't fathom the old man's divine might, but it was definitely more powerful than Zi'er and Gui Qi's!

The old man hovered in mid-air, his gaze sweeping over the bloodstains, broken immortal swords, and shattered divine blades, finally settling on Jin Wuhao's cold corpse. The temperature around him plummeted, and his killing intent froze the void.

"Insignificant ants from the lower realm, you dare to kill the divine representative appointed by the Divine Realm."

He spoke calmly and softly, yet his voice carried the power of primordial laws, directly bombarding everyone's souls. Dizziness and excruciating pain swept over each of them. "You all deserve to have your souls annihilated, enter the Burning God Hell, and never be reborn." As

his voice fell, he lightly pressed down with his right hand.

The formless and intangible pressure of an immortal lord transformed into a tangible mountain, crashing down with a deafening roar.

Kai's joints cracked violently as his body was pressed firmly into the earth, blood gushing from his mouth and nose, his breath suffocating.

Jiang Xuelan's icy barrier shattered instantly, and she was on the verge of suffocation.

Ghost Seven's body flickered with ghostly flames, unable to withstand the supreme divine might.

Life and death hung in the balance, and despair loomed once more.

A resolute glint flashed in Zi'er's eyes. Exhausting her last vestige of life force, she reached into her robes and retrieved an ancient, warm purple jade pendant.

The pendant shimmered with a pale purple ethereal aura, engraved with the seven stars intertwined, the natal celestial pendant of the seven sisters.

"Sisters, Seventh Sister is in trouble! Quickly descend to the mortal realm!"

She exerted force with her jade fingers, and with a crack, shattered the natal celestial pendant.

Fine purple jade fragments scattered in the air, transforming into a towering purple light that tore through the golden sky, shooting straight towards the upper celestial river.

The purple light bloomed, blossoming into a seven-colored lotus platform spanning heaven and earth. The petals unfolded one by one, tearing through the golden curtain of light suppressed by the immortal lord.

Red, orange, yellow, green, cyan, blue, and purple—seven primordial celestial lights surged from the lotus heart, weaving into a seven-colored rainbow bridge spanning the celestial river.

The rainbow bridge flowed with ancient, primordial immortal energy, gentle yet supreme, instantly countering the overwhelming pressure of the celestial lords, causing the sinking divine mountain's pressure to abruptly cease.

Six women of unparalleled beauty and grace stepped slowly out from the seven-colored rainbow bridge.

The eldest, dressed in fiery crimson, with sharp eyes and brows, wielded the Heavenly Flame Dao;

the second, in shimmering orange, gentle and dignified, wielded the power of creation and life;

the third, in elegant yellow, serene and composed, wielded the power of stars and time;

the fourth, in graceful green, gentle as the wind, wielded the power of plants and trees;

the fifth, in cool blue, aloof and detached, wielded the power of the void; and

the sixth, in ethereal blue, proud and awe-inspiring, wielded the power of the Nine Heavens Sword Dao.

Each of the six possessed a distinct temperament, some fierce, some gentle, some serene, some sharp, yet the immortal essence flowing around them was vast and boundless, and each of their cultivation surpassed even the Golden Immortal realm.

Six celestial figures gracefully landed, surrounding the exhausted and swaying Zi'er.

The eldest woman in the red dress bent down, gently supporting the wounded Zi'er, her eyes filled with tenderness, her voice carrying supreme celestial power: "Seventh sister, who injured you to the point of your essence crumbling and your foundation shaking?"

Zi'er leaned against her eldest sister, a long-lost smile of relief appearing on her pale face, weakly whispering: "Eldest sister... you've finally come."

The eldest woman slowly raised her eyes, her crimson eyes igniting with celestial flames, her gaze piercing through the golden light, staring directly at the golden-robed elder in mid-air, each word deliberate, her voice shaking the galaxy: "Old thief of the divine race, you dare to injure my sisters, how arrogant you are!"

The supreme divine venerable's expression changed drastically at this moment, his dark golden pupils contracting violently, a boundless fear rising in his heart.

He could clearly sense that these women were no weaker than himself, and that they too had come from the upper realm.

Kai lay prone in the scorched earth, blood streaming from his wounded shoulder, his spiritual energy depleted. Gazing at the seven-colored light flowing above the Rainbow Bridge, and at the seven peerless immortal figures, the anxiety that had gripped him for dozens of days finally subsided.

His tense mind suddenly relaxed, his soul drained of energy... "You old thief, prepare to die!"

The moment the red-skirted elder woman's furious shout landed, the blazing celestial fire around her suddenly surged, and the crimson light that had been swirling around her robes roared into the sky. Simultaneously, the seven-colored lotus platform

's primordial patterns exploded beneath the feet of the six immortal figures. Six primordial immortal lights—red, orange, yellow, green, cyan,

and blue —broke free from the lotus platform's restraints, erupting from the crowns of the six figures

. The six beams of light intertwined and resonated, converging into a colorful celestial waterfall spanning a thousand miles of sky. The waterfall flowed with primordial magical patterns, its light clear and transparent, devoid of any murderous intent, yet carrying the supreme immortal foundation capable of severing divine authority and overthrowing the divine race. As

the celestial light poured down, layers of ripples spread through the void along its path. The golden fragments of divine essence, broken divine patterns, and dissipated divine power remnants from the previous battle

vanished like dust upon contact with the celestial light, silently dissolving without even a trace of annihilation.

In mid-air, the countless layers of divine light membrane that the golden-robed elder relied on for protection emitted a mournful cry for the first time, teetering on the brink of collapse.

This divine light barrier enveloping his entire body was a star-divine armor he had painstakingly refined over a hundred thousand years, incorporating three hundred and sixty-five star domain laws, making it indestructible. Previously, it had withstood Zi'er's full-force sword

strike without a scratch. But now, under the onslaught of the six-colored primordial waterfall, the surface of the light membrane began to cave in, emitting a piercing, metallic cracking sound. A buzzing vibration reverberated throughout the Black Abyss Valley, causing the rocks to shed dust.

The golden-robed elder's aged and dignified face instantly lost all color, his eyes filled with utter horror.

He dared not hold back, his ten fingers flying to form ancient divine seals, his arms suddenly thrusting horizontally, dark golden primordial

divine power flowing into his palms, and a hundred-foot-tall star-divine shield materialized out of thin air.

The shield's surface was crisscrossed with grooves, engraved with the orbits of the heavens and the rotation of the sun and moon. Billions of golden starlight lit up one after another, compressing and sealing the entire shattered sea of stars within the shield.

Star waves surged, starlight overflowed—this was his trump card, the Star Control Divine Technique, powerful enough to withstand three fatal blows from a Grand Luo Golden Immortal of the same level.

Boom—!

The six-colored immortal waterfall crashed into the Star Shield.

There was no earth-shattering initial explosion, only a muffled, bone-chilling cracking sound.

A thin crack first appeared in the very center of the seemingly indestructible Star Shield.

The crack spread at a visible speed, instantly weaving into a spiderweb of cracks. The flowing starlight on the shield's surface dimmed instantly, and countless tiny stardust fragments scattered in the air.

The next instant, the ten-thousand-foot-tall shield shattered, countless golden shield fragments exploding and turning into scattered starlight.

The violent shockwave of the immortal path rebounded from the broken part of the divine shield, slamming into the chest of the golden-robed elder.

His burly body was like a kite with a broken string, forced back more than seventy feet. Each step he took shattered a spatial barrier, leaving behind endless golden spatial cracks.

A strand of dark golden primordial divine blood broke through his throat, dripping down his aged jaw. The divine blood fell into the air, scorching sparks in the void.

He raised his hand to cover his aching chest, his divine light trembling violently. The majesty he had maintained for ten thousand years shattered completely. His dark golden pupils trembled uncontrollably as he stared intently at the six ethereal women below. His voice was hoarse and broken: “Impossible… Primordial Origin Common Origin Patterns… What is your origin?”

The eldest woman in the red dress ignored him, her cold gaze devoid of any emotion, only a chilling killing intent to annihilate the divine race.

She slowly raised her slender right hand, and above her palm, a tiny, crimson flame, no bigger than a grain of rice, rose gently.

The flame appeared weak, yet it contained the primordial fiery power to ignite the heavens and scorch the world. With each gentle flicker of the flame, the air within a thousand miles distorted violently, heat waves piercing through her protective aura and scorching the souls of all things.

The scorched earth beneath her feet carbonized inch by inch, the suspended void collapsed continuously, and countless dark spatial rifts spread around the flame. Even the very order of time seemed to stagnate slightly beneath this celestial fire.

A long wind billowed her crimson dress, its fluttering like a raging wildfire. She took a step forward, each stride covering thirty feet, her immortal might overwhelming mountains and rivers: “Junior sisters, make your move! Today, let the high and mighty God Clan Venerable truly understand the ways of the immortals in the lower realms. Integrity is unyielding; sects cannot be humiliated, and fellow cultivators cannot be harmed.”

As her words fell, the remaining five immortal figures moved simultaneously. The six great origins opened and closed in unison, and the six great laws swept across the battlefield, sealing off all escape routes for the golden-robed elder.

The gentle eyes of the orange-clad second daughter instantly turned frosty. Her ten fingers intertwined to form the Creation Divine Seal. Pale orange life-giving immortal essence surged through her meridians, condensing into a palm-sized jade talisman in her palm. The talisman

was entwined with vines and embedded with flower stamens, flowing with the creative power of the revival of all things. However, this inexhaustible power, once reversed, would lead to decay and annihilation. Touching it would cause the divine foundation to crumble and the root of the Dao to dissolve, specifically targeting the golden body origin of the God Clan.

The three women in yellow robes moved with light, slow steps, surrounded by a ring of shimmering, golden star trails. A flowing light of time coiled around their limbs, halting the sandstorms, suspending falling rocks, and freezing divine light around them. Time around them sometimes slowed down a hundredfold, sometimes accelerated in an instant.

Under the flow of the laws of time, every movement of the golden-robed elder's divine power, every muscle twitch, was magnified infinitely, every action falling within their predictions.

The four women in green dresses lowered their eyes and flicked their sleeves. From the ground, in the void, and in the crevices of rock strata, countless emerald-green primordial vines sprouted from the earth and broke through the walls, their surfaces covered with ancient wood-immortal patterns.

Their roots pierced through spatial barriers, transforming into thousands of supple whip-like shadows, precisely wrapping around the golden-robed elder's neck, limbs, waist, and abdomen, locking the flow of divine power through his meridians.

The five women in green robes suddenly became ethereal, transforming into wisps of green. Their spatial teleportation techniques were pushed to their limits, leaving twenty-seven afterimages in the air in an instant.

With each disappearing afterimage, a long, narrow, black spatial rift blade was unleashed. These blades were silent and deadly, specifically designed to sever the soul and cleave the divine body, ignoring any divine protection.

The six women in blue robes reached for their longswords. A clear, resonant sword cry pierced the heavens, and a river of azure sword light surged forth from the blade.

The surging water reflected the starry sky, carrying the ancient sword's essence. Its sharpness pierced through all phenomena, aiming directly at the golden-robed elder's throat, its sword aura ethereal yet domineering, leaving no room for parrying.

Six beams of immortal light, six fundamental Daos, six deadly paths, complemented each other, linked by a common origin, perfectly filling all gaps in offense and defense, transforming into an unparalleled immortal net that enveloped the golden-robed elder.

The old man in the golden robe turned ashen-faced, no longer daring to hold back. His dark golden divine light surged threefold, causing his gilded robe to shatter without wind, revealing a divine body covered in star-patterned runes.

He unleashed seventeen consecutive Immortal Lord Palm strikes, the palm winds condensing star domain divine power, rolling with golden light that crushed the air, attempting to tear apart the six immortal lights.

However, the inherent nature of the Immortal Dao naturally balanced the acquired divine authority of the divine race, and the six-colored...

Chapter 6731 - 6740

Boom!

Boom!

Boom!

A series of deafening roars echoed through Black Abyss Valley, causing the entire valley's ley lines to tremble violently. Magma surged and churned beneath the surface, and the patterns on the towering black cliffs on either side cracked. Huge chunks of rock, weighing tens of thousands of tons, crashed down, raining down on the ground and raising clouds of charred dust.

The remaining captured gods and traitorous demonic cultivators were all blasted away by the violent shockwaves. Countless people slammed against the rock walls, their bones shattered, spitting out mouthfuls of blood, their cries of agony echoing throughout the valley.

The overwhelming force of the battle was clearly visible.

The next instant, crimson incinerating immortal fire pierced through layers of divine light, precisely scorching the old man's left shoulder.

His indestructible golden body instantly carbonized, his magnificent divine robes charred and curled, the pungent smell of burning divine energy spreading everywhere, and dark golden primordial divine blood gushed from the wound, dripping into the air.

Immediately following, the Nine Heavens Blue Sword slashed down, cleaving a deep, long wound across his chest, exposing bone and damaging his divine palace.

The Void Rift Blade followed in quick succession, its fine, dark blades cutting across his right arm, severing the surface divine runes and hindering the flow of divine power.

The power of creation and annihilation seeped into the wound through the air, continuously corrupting the source of his divine body's repair. The laws of time disrupted his breathing rhythm, and wooden vines tightly bound his limbs, locking away his teleportation abilities.

"Pfft—"

The golden-robed elder could no longer suppress the backlash of divine power, spitting out a mouthful of thick, dark golden divine blood. His figure staggered, his imposing body teetering on the verge of collapse.

His eyes were a mixture of extreme fear and boundless rage. Having ruled the divine race for ten thousand years and toured the mortal realm countless times, he had never been driven to such a desperate situation by the immortals of the lower realms.

In a corner of the valley, the surviving cultivators were caught in a turmoil of emotions, experiencing both extreme heat and cold.

The demonic cultivators who had previously defected to the gods, believing they could escape death by clinging to their coattails, now watched as their lofty immortal lord was brutally beaten by six celestial maidens. Cold sweat soaked their black robes, their hands and feet turned icy, and a chill ran through them.

They lay prostrate among the rubble, barely daring to breathe, their backs numb, filled with despair: even a god-level venerable was no match for them; today, they would surely be annihilated.

The remaining divine cultivators, stubbornly resisting, were also deathly pale, their divine light flickering, their fighting spirit shattered, their hands trembling as they gripped their divine blades. With

their gods defeated, their path forward was utterly cut off. Just as the immortal path was about to completely crush the battle and decide the outcome—

the heavens suddenly trembled violently, the order of heaven and earth shifted, the sun and moon were reversed, the gale abruptly stopped, and the falling rubble froze in mid-air. The entire world seemed to be gripped by an invisible giant hand, and all things were thrown into chaos.

The golden rift in the sky, previously torn apart by the seven-colored lotus platform, suddenly expanded infinitely outward, with boundless supreme golden light surging from its depths.

The light was intensely bright, scorching the eyes of all beings, a hundred times more powerful than the combined divine power of Jin Wuhao and the golden-robed elder.

Like a celestial river bursting its banks, the golden light instantly filled the entire sky, obscuring all the clear, celestial colors, dyeing everything in heaven and earth a blinding gold.

The seven-colored lotus platform, suspended in mid-air, trembled violently under the pressure of the vast golden light. The patterns on its petals dimmed layer by layer, and its primordial radiance flickered and faded, like a candle in a storm, on the verge of being extinguished at any moment.

*Buzz—!

* Seven towering golden pillars of light, piercing the heavens and earth, descended from the rift in the sky, precisely landing in seven locations in the Black Abyss Valley, locking down the entire valley's airspace, forming the Seven Star Locking Heaven Array.

The moment the pillars of light struck, the earth sank violently, hard black rocks shattered into sand, and scorched soil turned entirely gold. Golden divine mist surged from the ground, spreading in all directions.

Within each pillar of light, an ancient and silent terrifying pressure was concentrated, the lowest level of which was at the Great Luo Golden Immortal realm, their divinity condensed to the point of being tangible, causing the earth's veins to rupture and the void to groan.

Within the pillars of light, light and shadow flowed, and seven tall figures slowly coalesced, stepping into the world.

The seven had different divine appearances, all with indifferent and aloof expressions, looking down upon the beings of the lower realm.

The two on the left wore gilded divine armor with face coverings, the armor engraved with patterns of annihilation, and held twelve-foot-long

halberds of annihilation, their bodies bound by chains that rattled loudly;

the three on the right wore plain white sacrificial robes, their hair gilded, their eyes like stars, and their palms holding jade tablets for praying to gods;

the remaining two wore dark robes with lightning patterns, their bodies surrounded by thunderous energy, their aura wild and fierce.

Seven powerful figures from the divine race, their auras increasing in layers, the last six being Grand Luo Golden Immortals, while the figure at the very center emanated no divine light, formless and shapeless, his realm unfathomable. A

boundless divine pressure descended, forcing the prostrate cultivators to bow their heads, losing even the courage to look up.

All eyes involuntarily converged on the white-robed man in the center.

He wore a pristine white robe, its fabric as light as a cloud, fluttering even without wind. He possessed none of the fiery golden light characteristic of the divine race, no aura of a Celestial Lord, not even the slightest fluctuation of divine power; he was as pure as a mere scholar from the mortal realm.

Yet, the more understated he appeared, the more his soul trembled. The surrounding void automatically yielded, the laws of nature submitted, and the spiritual energy, divinity, and immortal essence of heaven and earth all flowed around him.

The man possessed a handsome yet aloof face, his brows and eyes etched with an innate divine nobility. His brow bones were sharp and clear, his lips pale, and his eyes held neither joy nor sorrow, oblivious to all living beings, to the clash of victory and defeat, only an eternal, silent indifference.

His right hand hung limply, gripping an ancient, snow-white longsword. The scabbard was plain and unadorned, the blade concealing its sharpness, its depths like an ancient, frigid abyss, seemingly gentle yet capable of devouring all laws and annihilating all great paths.

He stood silently at the center of the seven divine lights, uttering not a word, yet suppressing the six-colored immortal light, instantly quelling the flames of war.

The wounded, disheveled old man in mid-air, upon seeing the white-clad figure, his tense mind suddenly relaxed, his pent-up fear, grievance, and ecstatic joy erupting all at once.

Completely disregarding his dignity and the bleeding wounds around him, he staggered, shattering the void, and knelt heavily on the ground, bowing his head in worship, his voice trembling and choked with sobs.

“Young Master! You have finally descended to the mortal realm to aid us! These six immortal women have killed Jin Wuhao, the representative of the Divine Race, and burned his original divine soul. They have also severely injured their subordinates, trampling on the dignity of the Divine Race. We beg you, Young Master, to unleash divine punishment and avenge our subordinates!”

The white-robed man lowered his eyes, his cold gaze sweeping over the kneeling old man. His eyes were indifferent and detached, as if looking down at withered grass and fallen leaves on the roadside, showing no empathy for his subordinates.

He slowly raised his eyes, his gaze traversing the battlefield, passing over Zi’er and the six immortal women, pausing for a moment before landing on Gui Qi, who had disappeared into the shadows, and finally settling on the cold, stiff corpse of Jin Wuhao, whose soul and spirit had been annihilated.

“Jin Wuhao, is he dead?”

The man's voice was clear and gentle, like the wind rustling bamboo leaves or water flowing over bluestone. The volume was not loud, but it penetrated through layers of space, resounding throughout the entire valley, each word striking the hearts of everyone present.

"Yes!"

The golden-robed old man...

The man in white silently lowered his eyes, remaining silent for three breaths. The surrounding air froze completely, all things fell silent, even the falling pebbles hovered in mid-air.

The next instant, he slowly raised his right hand, which was holding a sword. The plain white longsword was held level, its tip lowered, precisely pointing at the body of Jin Wuhao on the ground.

The previously restrained light on the snow-white sword suddenly burst forth, and a bright, cold moon phantom rose from the sword, its clear light spreading across the valley for thousands of miles, gentle yet transcending the laws of nature.

A faint, almost transparent ripple spread outward from the sword tip, and ripples of time and space slowly spread over rocks, dust, bloodstains, and figures.

At this moment, the supreme law, beyond the comprehension of immortals and gods, appeared with a thunderous roar.

It was not a divine life-extending resurrection technique, nor a physical restoration ability, but the most supreme, most domineering, and primordial Dao sealed by the Heavenly Dao: the reversal of time and space.

Wherever the ripples passed, all things in the world flowed backward.

The charred dust drifting in mid-air reversed its trajectory, swirling back to the cracks in the rock layers on the ground;

the golden divine blood, icy blue immortal blood, and dark red essence blood splattered in battle flowed backward in mid-air, precisely drilling back into the wounds of the injured, instantly healing dried scars;

the previously collapsed cliffs, with broken rocks rising in reverse, slowly closed their cracks, the rubble returned to its original position, and the cliffs were restored to their original state before the great battle;

the scattered divine light, broken divine patterns, and extinguished divine soul light points flowed backward from all parts of the void, converging and returning to their origin.

Heaven and earth reversed, time reversed, all things went backward, and the order of time was altered.

Kai, lying on the charred mud, was originally in a state of scattered consciousness, his soul on the verge of collapse, his meridians shattered, and his dantian spiritual power depleted.

But the moment the ripples of space and time swept over his body, a warm and vast power, soothing the wounds of all things, invaded his limbs and bones.

Within the depleted and lifeless dantian, the scattered chaotic power reversed its flow, gathering again strand by strand, slowly circulating along the damaged meridians;

torn and exposed flesh healed in reverse, broken fascia automatically reconnected, and bleeding wounds scabbed over, healed, and disappeared.

His unfocused pupils suddenly contracted, his purple eyes exploding with extreme astonishment, his whole body trembling uncontrollably, and an incredulous whisper escaped his throat: “This… how is this possible… reversing time, altering the order of time, this has already touched the very origin of the Heavenly Dao…”

He stiffly turned his head, staring intently at the corpse of Jin Wuhao on the ground.

The originally cold, stiff, soulless, and charred corpse slowly rose into the air in the reverse flow of time.

Bones and limbs reduced to ashes by the chaotic flames were reshaped;

flesh and blood, almost completely melted away, began to grow anew;

the broken and shattered divine emperor's authority was mended, its divine light restored;

the natal soul, utterly consumed by the Nine Netherworld Fire and scattered into the void, flowed backward along the river of time, its fragmented golden light gathering and solidifying to reassemble into a complete illusory soul, returning to the body's divine palace.

The previous twenty kills, the destruction of the soul, the annihilation of the origin—all irreversible injuries, all traces of annihilation—were erased by the power of time and space, everything flowing back half an hour.

The moment when Jin Wuhao was not yet dead, when his soul was still intact.

A few breaths later, the eyelashes of the suspended body trembled slightly, and those familiar dark golden eyes suddenly opened.

Jin Wuhao raised his hand blankly, examining his intact hands, which were full of divine power. He felt the surging, profound divinity, explored the perfect foundation of his divine palace, and looked around at the crowd of people who were full of shock and had different expressions. The memories that had been recalled instantly flooded into his mind.

He recognized the figure in white, his body jolted, and an intense joy flashed in his eyes. Suppressing the lingering fear of death, he strode forward, kneeling heavily on one knee, his voice trembling with emotion:

“Your subordinate thanks you, young master, for defying the heavens and extending my life! I will never forget your great kindness!”

“Rise,” the

white-robed man said, sheathing his sword gently and calmly. “You were chosen by the gods to be their representative in the mortal realm, wielding divine authority over the twentieth heaven. Your death would have tarnished the face of the gods and disrupted the divine order. You should not have died here.”

“Understood!”

Jin Wuhao responded, rising to his feet. After his resurrection, the blessings of the gods and the power of the spacetime source had settled upon his body, making his aura even more refined and profound than before his death. All traces of his former wretchedness had vanished from his eyes, replaced by a renewed, murderous intent and arrogant laughter.

He turned and scanned his surroundings, his gaze sweeping over the heavily injured and exhausted Jiang Xuelan, the spiritually depleted Zi’er, and the exhausted Kai, finally settling on Kai. A cold, cruel smile curled at the corner of his lips: “Rest assured, young master, none of these rebellious immortals and traitors will escape today.”

A strange, suffocating silence filled the air. In

a corner of the valley, the demonic cultivators who had previously been filled with despair and thought they were doomed were the first to sense the reversal of fortune.

They stared intently at the resurrected Jin Wuhao, at the seven powerful deities in the heavens, and at the unfathomable power of the white-robed deity. Their taut nerves suddenly relaxed, the fear that had been weighing on their hearts vanished, and a burning joy swept over them.

Some of them, whose bodies had been tense for so long, went limp and slumped into the pile of rubble, exhaling a long breath of stale air. Cold sweat soaked through their robes, and the relief of surviving a calamity welled up in their eyes.

“We bet right…we bet right! The gods have a hidden trump card, wielding the Great Dao of Time and Space. No matter how strong the Immortal Path is, it cannot withstand the divine power to alter time!”

The remaining divine cultivators, whose fighting spirit had previously crumbled, now straightened their bodies, their dim divine light rekindled, and pride rekindled in their eyes. They all bowed in worship, their divine cries echoing through the valleys: “Welcome to the Divine Lord! The gods will surely prevail!”

Those neutral observers who had not taken sides completely abandoned their will to resist.

Even such heaven-defying methods as reversing time had appeared in the world. Their meager cultivation was no match for the power of throwing eggs against rocks. Only by surrendering could they survive.

Despair swept through the Immortal Path camp, while hope gathered entirely on the side of the gods. The hearts of the people were overturned in an instant.

On the seven-colored lotus platform, the eldest woman in the red dress frowned deeply, the immortal markings between her brows throbbing violently, her crimson eyes filled with solemnity, and a storm raged in her heart.

She had lived through the primordial chaos, traversed the myriad realms, and witnessed those who controlled life and death, the five elements, and the stars, yet she had never seen such a pure, domineering, and complete source of time and space.

She slowly stepped off the lotus platform, staring directly at the white-robed man, her voice icy and chilling: “Time and space reversed, the

order of the heavens altered; you actually refined the lost, ancient source of time. Which lineage of the divine race do you belong to? The ancient God of Time has long since perished; who are you?”

The white-robed man remained indifferent, ignoring her questions, not uttering a single word.

He merely lazily raised his hand, his fingertips flicking lightly, and the seven divine beings standing within the pillars of light moved simultaneously.

Seven ten-thousand-foot-long golden divine suns… “Stop them.”

The white-robed man’s voice was calm and even, his expression unwavering. “No need for a quick battle, just trap them. Don’t disturb my peace of mind.”

The next second, an earth-shattering battle erupted once more.

The seven divine races’ immortal lords attacked simultaneously. The God-Slaying Halberd tore through the sky, the Prayer Jade Scepter suppressed the immortal path, and countless thunder patterns cleaved down with divine lightning, chains binding the void.

The six-colored primordial immortal light rose again, with blazing flames, the vitality of creation, the celestial orbits of time, and void-splitting blades crisscrossing.

The ghostly blue Netherfire surged from around Gui Qi, and the chilling power of annihilating divine souls swept in all directions.

The torrents of golden, multicolored, and ghostly blue laws collided violently, exploding into a blinding light that shattered thousands of miles of airspace.

The shockwaves of the explosion repeatedly swept across Black Abyss Valley, blasting dozens of bottomless craters into the ground. Rock layers were overturned, earth veins fractured, and the remaining vegetation

was instantly carbonized. Dust filled the sky, obscuring the sunlight, plunging the world into darkness.

The deafening roars of clashing swords and spears, the clash of immortals and gods, and the burning of spirits echoed through the twenty heavens.

At the edge of the battlefield, a white-robed man stood with his hands behind his back, silently observing the carnage, his eyes as still as a stagnant pool.

The shattered space, the bleeding immortals and gods, and the destroyed rocks were nothing more than a harmless shadow play to him.

He occasionally glanced at the battlefield to confirm that his seven subordinates had not fallen, then quickly withdrew his gaze, devoid of any murderous intent.

Outside the flames of war, Jin Wuhao had no interest in the chaotic battle. All his killing intent was fixed on the weakened Kai, his eyes churning with the resentment accumulated twenty times over.

He withdrew his divine light, his steps unhurried, treading over the rubble and stepping over the bloodstains, slowly walking towards Kai.

With each step, the earth trembled slightly, and layers of divine pressure piled up, like a cat playing with a mouse, slowly wearing down his opponent's last bit of strength.

" Kai."

Jin Wuhao lowered his voice, each word carrying a deep-seated hatred, "You killed me twenty times, burned my soul, shattered my authority, and crushed me into dust.

Now, time has turned back, the Heavenly Dao has returned to its place, and it is my turn to settle scores. I will make you suffer a hundred times, a thousand times the pain, to repay every wound you inflicted on me."

Kai bit his bleeding lips, relying on the slight healing from the time reversal to prop up his swaying body.

His dantian's chaotic power was still depleted, his meridians were riddled with cracks, and his Dao foundation was damaged. He had barely escaped death, but was still severely injured, and even raising his hand to grip the sword required all his strength.

Yet, his fingertips still gripped the hilt of the Dragon-Slaying Sword tightly: "Xue Lan, step back, stay away."

Jiang Xue Lan shook her head, ignoring the aching and broken wounds all over her body, enduring the excruciating pain of the backlash from her meridians, and moved to block Kai.

Her icy blue eyes were filled with stubbornness and determination. Her slender hands moved swiftly, forming hand seals, gathering the last wisp of Ice God essence within her body to condense a thin, semi-transparent ice wall.

The ice wall was thin and fragile, with sparse frost patterns on its surface and flickering spiritual energy. It seemed as if a gust of wind could shatter it, but it was the last barrier she could erect with all her might.

"You think you can stop me with this weak wisp of icy power?"

Jin Wuhao sneered, his eyes filled with cruel mockery, and casually raised his hand.

A condensed and heavy golden divine palm struck out, its power steady and domineering, crashing heavily into the ice wall.

With a crisp crack, the ice wall shattered instantly, turning into countless shimmering white ice shards that scattered in the wind. The remaining force of the palm strike was undiminished, slamming hard into Jiang Xuelan's chest and abdomen.

Jiang Xuelan’s slender body, like a jade butterfly with a broken string, flew backward more than ten feet through

the air before crashing heavily onto a pile of jagged boulders. Her chest caved in violently, and a mouthful of crimson blood gushed out, staining her white robes. Completely exhausted, she slid down the pile of rocks, her limbs weak and numb. A chilling energy surged back, attacking her meridians. No matter how hard she tried, she could no longer support herself and could only collapse helplessly.

“Xuelan!”

Kai’s eyes flashed crimson, a heart-wrenching pain overwhelming him. Ignoring the excruciating pain of his ruptured meridians, he lifted his foot to rush to Jiang Xuelan’s side.

The next instant, a golden figure suddenly shifted to the side, firmly blocking his path, sealing off all escape routes.

The restored Divine Emperor’s Authority cleaved down from the sky, a ten-thousand-foot-long golden sword beam pressing down, imbued with the pure divine power of a Great Luo Golden Immortal, sealing off all of Kai’s angles of evasion.

Helpless, Kai forcefully activated the last wisp of chaotic energy remaining in his depleted dantian, parrying with his sword .

Clang—!

A piercing metallic clang exploded, violent force surging through the sword and into his arm.

Kai’s legs gave way, his knees slamming heavily onto the hard, scorched earth,

dust flying everywhere. The excruciating pain of fractured bones spread throughout his body, his tendons and bones numbing, his blood and qi churning violently.

“Is that all the strength you have?”

Jin Wuhao looked down at him, his eyes full of mockery. “Where did your edge, the edge that killed me twenty times, go? The chaotic flames that destroyed my divine authority and burned my soul, how did they extinguish?”

He suddenly exerted force with his wrist, pressing the divine sword down an inch.

Crack—!

Kai’s shoulder bone shattered under the strain, the excruciating pain piercing his soul. His arms trembled violently, cracks spreading rapidly through his meridians, blood continuously spilling from the corners of his mouth, dripping onto the ground, leaving dark red streaks.

Jin Wuhao raised his foot, channeling all his strength into his toes, and stomped hard on Kai’s back.

Crack!

Several ribs snapped in succession, and the excruciating pain instantly overwhelmed all of Kai’s senses. He felt a sweet taste in his throat, let out a muffled groan, and his body went limp. His fingers loosened, and the Dragon Slayer Sword slid to the ground with a crisp sound.

“You’ll kill me twenty times.”

Jin Wuhao slowly bent down, his toes pressing harder as he looked at Kai, who was suffering terribly beneath him, his smile growing increasingly manic. “I’ll torture you for twenty days.

Every day, I’ll cripple one of your cultivation meridians, seal your primordial chaos, and make you watch helplessly as your cultivation dissipates, your foundation collapses, and you become a cripple.

After twenty days, I'll extract your primordial soul and lock it in the Divine Race's Burning God Prison, tormenting you day and night, never to be reborn."

He stretched out his fingertips, still warm with divine energy, and gripped Kai's chin tightly, forcibly lifting his head and forcing himself to look directly at that smug and arrogant face: "Where is the mastermind you've relied on so many times? Why doesn't he show himself to save you? The tide has turned, do you still have any trump cards left?"

The excruciating pain pounded his body, his blood surging, but in Kai's purple eyes, there was no fear, no despair, no submission. Instead, a faint, knowing, and expectant smile spread across his face.

His smile was faint, yet it pierced through the crimson blood on his body, making it exceptionally clear.

His breath was weak and hoarse as he spoke, each word deliberate: "Jin Wuhao... do you really think you've won?"

Jin Wuhao frowned, impatience flashing in his eyes: "Even on the verge of death, you're still stubborn."

"I told you, I have a powerful backer, he will definitely come to save me!" Kai said.

"Where? Where is your powerful backer?" Jin Wuhao grabbed Kai, asking with a smug look on his face.

"Jin Wuhao, you can curse me, but you absolutely cannot curse the master behind me!" Kai glared and shouted sharply.

Jin Wuhao was stunned. He hadn't cursed anyone, had he?

But since Kai had said that, Jin Wuhao felt he should curse back.

"I'll curse you then! Your master behind you is bullshit, dog shit! In front of our young master, he's nothing..."

Jin Wuhao was cursing with great gusto, but before he could finish, he sensed something was wrong. The more he cursed, the happier Kai laughed.

Suddenly, Jin Wuhao had a bad feeling.

But before he could react, he found that the hand he was holding in Kai's hand had suddenly disappeared. "Mr. Shi, Mr. Shi..."

Kai, seeing Mr. Shi suddenly appear, burst into tears of joy and hugged him tightly.

Jiang Xuelan, lying on the pile of rocks, stared wide-eyed at Mr. Shi. She had often heard Kai mention Mr. Shi, but had never seen him before.

Today, when she discovered Mr. Shi's presence, she hadn't noticed at all, as if he had always been there.

"How old are you? Still crying like that? Your woman is still here; people will laugh at you,"

Mr. Shi said, pushing Kai away.

Kai wiped away his tears and grinned. Only in front of Mr. Shi would he show such weakness.

"Xuelan, this is the Mr. Shi I've often mentioned to you..."

Kai stepped forward and helped Jiang Xuelan up.

Jiang Xuelan walked up to Mr. Shi and bowed slightly. "Jiang Xuelan greets Mr. Shi..."

"No need to be polite. Kai has good taste; the women he chooses are all beautiful and have delicate features."

"However, I've reminded you countless times to focus more on cultivation and not always chasing after women."

“How many women have you had? You’re not going to take these few in this time, are you?”

Mr. Shi finished speaking, glancing at Zi’er and then at the six fairies who were still fighting with the powerful gods.

“No, no, no, they are just my friends. I’ll try not to take them in anymore, but sometimes women chase after me, and I can’t help it,”

Kai said.

“Narcissistic!” Mr. Shi rolled his eyes at Kai.

At this moment, the white-robed man looked at Mr. Shi, his brows furrowing slightly, his face showing unprecedented solemnity.

He discovered that Mr. Shi had no aura whatsoever, appearing like an ordinary mortal.

But how could an ordinary mortal appear in the twentieth heaven?

“Mr. Shi, could you help the seven fairies? They fought against the gods to help me,”

Kai asked.

Mr. Shi glanced at the people still fighting in the void.

Each figure was ethereal and indistinct; a battle between Grand Luo Golden Immortals was enough to shake the heavens and earth.

Let alone a dozen Grand Luo Golden Immortals fighting together.

“Who are you? How dare you interfere with the Divine Race…”

Jin Wuhao, seeing Mr. Shi appear and ignore him, coldly asked.

This guy, doesn’t he even realize why his hand is gone?

“Are you talking to me?”

Mr. Shi withdrew his gaze from the void and looked at Jin Wuhao before him.

With just that one look, Jin Wuhao’s body trembled.

He opened his mouth, spitting out green bile, and then collapsed heavily to the ground.

This guy was terrified by just one look from Mr. Shi!

Seeing Jin Wuhao suddenly fall, all the Divine Race cultivators in the Divine Emperor’s Palace widened their eyes. An elder shouted, “What did you do to our Divine Emperor?”

Mr. Shi smiled faintly, then formed two fingers into a sword and gently waved it!

With a whoosh

, in an instant, all the divine and demonic cultivators in the arena, regardless of whether they were at the seventh, eighth, or ninth rank of Golden Immortal, had their heads blown off.

Blood splattered instantly, staining the entire sky red!

Only a few demonic cultivator leaders remained, trembling in fear.

The white-robed man frowned, his expression changing.

Even the divine powerhouses who had fought alongside the Seven Fairies seemed to sense something and returned from the void, landing behind the white-robed man.

When they saw the headless corpses scattered on the ground, they were dumbfounded.

Although they were Great Luo Golden Immortals, and considered the Golden Immortal cultivators before them as mere ants, they couldn't possibly kill tens of thousands of cultivators in an instant.

The Seven Fairies also returned, looking at Mr. Shi with disbelief.

Jiang Xuelan, in particular, had a look of utter disbelief in her eyes.

Only Kai wore a smile, as if he had known everything all along. The

white-robed man slowly raised his right hand, which was holding a sword, and the plain white sword was once again held horizontally in front of his chest, its tip pointing diagonally at the ground.

On the snow-white sword, the illusory image of the bright, cold moon rose again, its clear light cascading down, covering the entire valley.

Rings of almost transparent water ripples spread outward from the sword tip, layer upon layer of temporal ripples washing over rocks, dust, bloodstains, and figures; wherever they passed, the order of time reversed once more.

The severed heads began to swirl backward, gushing blood flowing back to the necks, broken necks rejoining, shattered bones automatically healing.

Jin Wuhao's corpse slowly rose in the reversal of time, his terrified soul re-condensing from the void, his shattered meridians reconnecting.

The white-robed man frowned slightly.

He discovered that the wounds that should have healed burst open again just as they were about to close.

The souls that should have re-condensed dissipated again just as they were about to take shape.

Those divine cultivators who should have been resurrected trembled violently in mid-air, as if torn apart by two forces simultaneously: the suction of reversed time and space, and a more powerful, irresistible repulsive force.

“Hmm?”

The white-robed man frowned, thrusting his longsword forward, the cold moonlight on its snow-white blade suddenly tripling in intensity.

The ripples in spacetime became denser and more rapid, like spreading waves desperately washing over the severed bodies.

But the result remained unchanged.

Jin Wuhao’s body floated in mid-air, his severed neck repeatedly healing and then bursting open again, repeating this seven or eight times. Each healing was forcibly torn apart by some invisible force just before completion.

Golden blood condensed into beads in the air, spinning endlessly in the reversed time, yet unable to return to its original position.

Those divine and demonic cultivators whose heads had been severed were similarly torn apart by the forces of reversal and repulsion.

Some heads had already returned to their necks, only to fly off again the next second;

some blood had already flowed back into their bodies, only to spurt out again the next second.

The entire valley was filled with this eerie tearing sensation, like a painting that was constantly being painted over and erased, repeatedly painted over dozens of times but never able to take shape.

The white-clad man’s ever-indifferent face finally showed a real crack.

His lips tightened slightly, a faint bluish tinge appearing on his knuckles gripping the sword. He channeled the power of primal temporal forces three times in quick succession, causing fine spatial cracks to appear on the blade.

These were the marks of his forcefully squeezing out the essence of temporal power.

The spatial ripples in the valley changed from transparent to silver, then from silver to a dazzling silver-white, the light so intense it illuminated the entire valley as if countless stars were shining upon it simultaneously.

Yet the corpses remained motionless on the ground.

No, not motionless.

They were moving, but their movements were irreversible. Each time healing approached… The few remaining demonic cultivator leaders, witnessing this scene, gradually froze their initial elation, then turned to confusion, and finally to a new kind of fear.

They had clearly seen the Divine Race Venerable reverse time, clearly seen Jin Wuhao resurrected once, so why didn't it work this time?

Why did the same method suddenly fail?

The powerful Divine Race members also widened their eyes; their young master had never failed in reversing time and space.

But now…

The white-robed man sheathed his sword.

The cold moonlight on the sword quickly dimmed, and the silvery-white ripples of time and space slowly dissipated like the receding tide.

He remained silent for a moment, then slowly turned around, his gaze passing through the corpses and congealed blood on the ground, landing on the middle-aged man who hadn't moved an inch since he appeared.

Mr. Shi was still standing in the same spot.

From the moment he appeared until now, he hadn't moved an inch.

His hands hung naturally at his sides, without any posture of preparation, without any defensive stance, without even the vigilance expected of a cultivator.

He was like an ordinary, middle-aged man passing by, appearing at the most inopportune time and in the most inopportune place.

Yet, he was enveloped by an aura that was completely indescribable.

This aura was not oppressive, not murderous intent, not any perceptible or describable power.

It did not exist within any law, not within any Daoist principles, not even within this world.

It seemed to come from a higher, entirely different dimension, like the power that wipes away ink from a painting.

Not covering, not modifying, but making something that originally existed cease to exist.

The man in white remained silent for a long time.

His gaze lingered on Mr. Shi for a full ten breaths.

In those ten breaths, his expression changed from indifference to solemnity, from solemnity to apprehension, and from apprehension to an emotion he had never experienced in tens of thousands of years.

That emotion was like a chill rising from the depths of his instincts, which he could not completely eliminate no matter how hard he tried to suppress it.

“Who are you?” the man in white finally spoke.

His voice remained calm, but the aloofness of his superiority was gone, replaced by a cautiousness that was being restrained.

Mr. Shi glanced at him but remained silent.

His gaze was as calm as a still, deep pool, unfathomable and devoid of any emotional fluctuation.

The white-robed man’s fingers tightened slightly, gripping the hilt of the snow-white longsword.

The cold moonlight on the blade flickered subtly, as if sensing the faint unease in its master’s heart.

“I am a disciple of the God of Time, wielding the Origin of Time, and belonging to the orthodox lineage of the Twenty-First Heaven God Clan. You have interfered in the affairs of my God Clan and killed my representative; do you know the consequences?”

His voice carried a deliberate chill, as if using his status and background to compensate for the rising unease.

He revealed his origins, his affiliation, and his backing.

Orthodox lineage of the God Clan, disciple of the God of Time—these titles combined were enough to make any force or powerful figure in the lower realm retreat.

But he stopped before he could finish speaking.

Because Mr. Shi glanced at him.

That glance was so brief, almost unnoticed.

It was devoid of emotion, power, or even deliberate targeting.

His gaze simply shifted from a certain direction and happened to fall upon the white-robed man.

Like someone casually glancing at a leaf on the roadside.

But in that single glance, the white-robed man's body froze.

His pupils contracted to pinpoints, and for the first time, a look of near-fear appeared on his usually indifferent face.

His lips parted slightly, as if to speak, but his throat seemed blocked, unable to utter a single word.

His body trembled violently, fine cracks appearing beneath his skin, golden light seeping from them like the gleam of shattered porcelain.

Then—

bang.

A muffled explosion resounded.

The white-robed man's body exploded from the middle, golden divine blood scattering and splashing onto the scorched ground, emitting a series of sizzling sounds.

The snow-white longsword fell from his released hand, landing on the ground with a clang. The cold moonlight on its blade flickered like a candle in the wind for a few moments before extinguishing completely.

The white-robed man had exploded and died.

The entire valley fell into a deathly silence.

The seven powerful divine beings standing behind the white-robed man, all Great Luo Golden Immortals, were frozen in place as if in a trance.

Their gazes were fixed on the pool of golden blood slowly seeping into the soil, on the snow-white longsword that had lost its luster, then slowly rose again, landing on the middle-aged man who hadn't moved an inch from beginning to end.

Their pupils contracted violently, their breaths stopped abruptly, and their souls screamed madly.

One of the divine beings was the first to react.

He abruptly raised his hand, golden divine light condensing into a crack in his palm, attempting to tear apart the space before him and return to the Twenty-First Heaven.

If he could return to a higher heaven, return to the home ground of the divine race, perhaps there would still be a glimmer of hope.

But just as his hand rose, his fingertips barely touching the edge of the spatial rift—

bang!

A muffled explosion rang out.

The body of that powerful god exploded from within, golden divine blood spurting out like a fountain, without even a scream.

The remaining six powerful gods were terrified.

Some tried to tear through space, some tried to activate divine light to protect themselves, some tried to use some kind of teleportation technique, and some even tried to kneel and beg for mercy.

But no matter what they did, no matter what methods they tried to use, as long as their bodies made the slightest movement, as long as their power fluctuated even slightly—

bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang!

A series of muffled explosions rang out in the valley, like firecrackers exploding in the air.

The six bodies exploded one after another, golden divine blood weaving into a blinding blood mist in the air, making it impossible to distinguish one from another when they fell to the ground.

From the first person's attempt to escape to the last person's complete explosion, only three breaths passed.

All seven powerful members of the Divine Race, along with the one who surpassed the Immortal Lord level, perished in the explosion.

Not a single intact corpse remained, only golden bloodstains and scattered fragments of magical artifacts.

Mr. Shi stood motionless the entire time,

his posture exactly the same as when he first appeared. A deathly silence fell over the valley.

The few remaining demonic cultivator leaders collapsed to the ground.

Some trembled violently, some fainted with their eyes rolling back, some foamed at the mouth and convulsed, and some couldn't even cry.

Only one thought remained in their minds: the side they had just surrendered to had been wiped out with a single glance and a single "humph."

The Seven Fairies were equally stunned.

The eldest woman in the red dress stood at the forefront, her crimson eyes wide open, reflecting the golden bloodstains and scattered fragments of magical artifacts on the ground.

Her fingers trembled slightly, a reaction she had never experienced in her hundreds of thousands of years of cultivation.

She had seen too many powerful figures, too many battles, but never had anyone resolved a battle in this way.

Without lifting a finger, without speaking, without even deliberately releasing any power, simply standing there, she had slaughtered all the divine beings who had descended.

The longswords in the hands of the six women in blue still trembled slightly, but their tips had already drooped.

She stared at the powerful prodigies who had exploded and died without even a chance to resist, remaining silent for a long time before finally managing to utter a single sentence: “Elder sister… what exactly is that senior’s realm?”

The eldest woman in the red dress slowly shook her head, her voice filled with a bewilderment she hadn’t felt in tens of thousands of years: “I can’t see through him… I can’t see through him at all… his realm is beyond my comprehension.”

Zi’er leaned against her eldest sister, looking at Mr. Shi’s profile, then at Kai’s face, which had finally completely relaxed. A slight smile curved her lips: “Young Master Chen, your senior… arrived just in time.”

Kai smiled but remained silent.

Jiang Xuelan’s icy blue eyes were filled with curiosity and awe.

She finally understood why Kai was always so confident, why he could remain calm even in dire straits.

Because behind him truly stood such an existence.

In the distance, at the edge of the valley, two figures cautiously peeked out.

Xuan Zhenzi, holding the young Daoist boy's hand, peeked halfway out from behind a huge rock.

He first glanced at the golden bloodstains on the ground, then at the seven corpses completely blown to pieces, and finally at the middle-aged man standing beside Kai.

Xuan Zhenzi's body trembled. He recognized Mr. Shi; he had met him back in the Celestial Realm.

"Master..."

The little Taoist boy gripped Xuan Zhenzi's robe tightly, his voice tinged with nervousness, "Is Young Master Chen... done fighting?"

Xuan Zhenzi didn't answer.

He simply pulled the little Taoist boy's hand and strode quickly toward Kai.

His steps were rapid, deliberately hurried and eager, as if afraid of missing something.

He reached Kai, nodded to him, and then immediately turned to look at Mr. Shi.

His face instantly plastered with a fawning smile, a smile brimming with obsequiousness and ingratiation, even the wrinkles at the corners of his eyes crinkling into a deep knot: "Oh! Mr. Shi! You've arrived! I knew you would come!

I kept telling Mr. Chen that you would never stand idly by! You're a great man, how could you let these small fry bully Mr. Chen?"

His voice was exaggeratedly loud, as if afraid no one would hear him.

As he spoke, he took a step forward, then, feeling it inappropriate, took a half-step back, finally bowing low with his hands hanging limply in front of him, his posture as humble as could be.

“Mr. Shi, do you remember me? I am Xuanzhenzi! Back in the Celestial Realm, I witnessed your heroic figure firsthand!

So majestic! So domineering! That look in your eyes, I remember it for a lifetime!”

The young Taoist boy stumbled a couple of steps after being pulled by Xuanzhenzi, looked up, and stared in bewilderment at his master’s obsequious manner, his little face full of confusion.

He asked in a low voice, “Master…didn’t you say you were going to get reinforcements? Where are the reinforcements we got?”

Xuanzhenzi’s smile froze for a moment, then immediately returned to normal, his voice carrying a hint of exaggerated exclamation, “Reinforcements? This is our reinforcement! Mr. Shi is our reinforcement! With Mr. Shi here, all the gods and demons are just chickens and dogs!”

The little Taoist boy blinked, then looked at Mr. Shi’s calm and unwavering face, nodding as if he understood.

Kai, seeing Xuanzhenzi’s fawning manner, finally couldn’t help but laugh.

He tugged at the wound on his shoulder, a hint of pain etched on his smile, but the smile in his eyes was genuine: “Old Xuan, didn’t you just run away? Why are you back?”

Xuan Zhenzi’s expression remained unchanged, and he said matter-of-factly, “Run? Was I running away? I went to get reinforcements! Look, didn’t I bring Mr. Shi here?”

Kai glanced at him, then at Mr. Shi, his smile widening: “Oh? So, you invited Mr. Shi?”

Xuan Zhenzi’s expression stiffened for a moment, then he immediately waved his hand: “Of course… not entirely… mainly because I knew Mr. Shi was incredibly powerful and would definitely come… I just went to greet him…”

Mr. Shi then turned his head slightly and glanced at Xuan Zhenzi, a glance devoid of emotion, but Xuan Zhenzi shuddered violently and immediately bowed even lower: “Mr. Shi, please be busy! Please be busy! I won’t bother you!”

“Mr. Shi, now that Jin Wuhao is dead, I still want him to release someone,”

Kai said somewhat dejectedly.

Mr. Shi turned his head and looked at him calmly: “Who is it?”

“Wan Jianxing,”

Kai said, “a hall master of the Heavenly Dragon Palace.”

Following Mr. Shi, Kai had no reason to hide anything, after all, Mr. Shi certainly knew of the Heavenly Dragon Palace’s existence.

Mr. Shi said nothing.

He simply raised his right hand casually and waved it lightly.

The movement was so casual, as if he were shooing away a flying insect that had landed on his shoulder.

There were no fluctuations of spiritual power, no ripples of laws, no trace of supernatural abilities.

No unusual light or shadow appeared in the air, no perceptible fluctuations of power were generated.

But Jin Wuhao's corpse moved.

The dark golden blood that had already drained flowed back from the pool of blood on the ground back into the wound.

The severed neck, the broken muscles, blood vessels, and bones rejoined in an instant.

That rolling... Jin Wuhao opened his eyes.

He blinked blankly, propped himself up, and looked down at his hands.

His hands were intact, divine power flowing freely through his meridians, and the divine essence within his dantian surging.

He touched his neck; it was smooth as ever, without a single wound.

He looked up again, surveying his surroundings. He saw golden bloodstains and scattered fragments of magical artifacts, the seven corpses blown to pieces, and thousands of headless bodies lying haphazardly in the valley.

Then, he saw the white-robed man.

The fragments of the body of the disciple of the Time God, the powerful god who reversed time, lay scattered in a pool of dark golden blood, their original shapes unrecognizable.

Jin Wuhao's body jolted violently, his pupils contracting sharply.

His memory was stuck at that last moment; he was preparing to torture Kai when a middle-aged man appeared out of thin air, and then he lost consciousness.

He only remembered saying something, and then... and then nothing more.

He didn't remember how he died, only that he was now alive.

He looked at the middle-aged man standing beside Kai, the one who hadn't moved an inch since appearing.

Then he looked at the corpses scattered on the ground and the powerful prodigies who had exploded, and a feeling more terrifying than death itself surged from the depths of his soul.

Thump.

Jin Wuhao's knees slammed heavily onto the ground.

He knelt, his forehead pressed against the scorched earth, his whole body trembling violently, not even having the courage to look up.

His voice was filled with unprecedented fear and humility: "Don't...don't kill me...please...don't kill me...I'll tell you anything...I'll agree to anything..."

Kai watched this scene, remained silent for a moment, then stepped forward, stood in front of Jin Wuhao, looked down at him, and said calmly: "I won't kill you. As long as you release Wan Jianxing."

Jin Wuhao raised his head, his face full of confusion and bewilderment, his dark golden eyes swirling with confusion: "Wan...Wan Jianxing? Who is Wan Jianxing?"

Kai frowned: "The first Temple Master. He was imprisoned in a void passage by the God Clan Chief, supposedly by you personally."

"The first Temple Master?"

Jin Wuhao's brows furrowed even more, his face full of an expression of trying hard to recall, "The Temple…the first…I…I've never heard of this name!

After I became a God of the Twentieth Heaven, the Temple had already existed for tens of thousands of years, and I have never imprisoned any Wan Jianxing!"

Kai looked at him, his gaze icy: "Are you lying?"

"I'm not lying! I really didn't!"

Jin Wuhao's voice was filled with a near-collapsed urgency. "I am the representative of the God Clan in the twentieth heaven, the chosen God Emperor, but I am not the patriarch of the God Clan. I only oversee the affairs of the God Clan in the lower realms; I have no authority over the entire God Clan!"

Kai remained silent for a moment, the coldness in his eyes not fading in the slightest, but he knew Jin Wuhao was telling the truth.

This once invincible Grand Luo Golden Immortal was now kneeling before him, trembling, having lost even the courage to lie.

But was Wan Jianxing worth the personal imprisonment of the God Clan patriarch?

If so, wouldn't Wan Jianxing's strength be unattainable?

Now, Kai recalled that he seemed to have no idea what Wan Jianxing's strength level was.

"So that means,"

Kai's voice carried a hint of disappointment and coldness, "that you know nothing, can do nothing, and are of no value to me?"

Jin Wuhao's face instantly turned deathly pale. He nodded and shook his head frantically: "I know some! I know several void nodes where the God Clan imprisons important figures!"

But Wan Jianxing... I've never heard of that name before! I swear! I swear on my very soul! If I'm lying, may I never be reincarnated!"

Kai looked at him, silent for a long time.

Then he looked away, his voice very soft: "Since you're useless, there's no need for you to live."

His hand gripped the hilt of the Dragon-Slaying Sword. Purple light shone from the blade, like a sleeping dragon opening its eyes. Jin

Wuhao's pupils contracted sharply. He wanted to say something, to beg for mercy, to explain, but the sword light had already fallen.

The purple sword light drew an arc, precisely slicing through Jin Wuhao's neck.

His head flew up, tumbling several times in the air, the expression on his face frozen in that final moment of terror and despair.

Golden blood gushed from the severed neck, staining the scorched ground a new dark gold.

The headless body stiffened for a moment, then slowly fell, raising a cloud of dust.

Kai sheathed his sword, looking down at Jin Wuhao's corpse, his purple eyes devoid of any emotion.

Then he turned to Mr. Shi, his voice tinged with pleading: "Mr. Shi, Wan Jianxing is my man. I cannot watch him remain imprisoned in the void passage forever." "Could you..."

Mr. Shi looked at him, his gaze still calm, like a bottomless pool, “You want me to save him?”

Kai nodded, “Please.”

Mr. Shi didn’t speak.

He simply raised his right hand, palm facing forward, and gently pushed.

The movement was still casual, still without any fluctuation of power.

But the void slowly cracked open in front of his palm.

The crack wasn’t large, only about ten feet wide, like a portal to an unknown world.

Profound void power surged from the crack, cold and silent, carrying an ancient, unchanging aura of slumber.

Kai held his breath, his gaze fixed on the crack.

In the crack, he saw a gray void.

There were no stars, no light, only endless… The grayness stretched in all directions.

And in the center of that gray void, he saw a blurry figure.

The figure was extremely ethereal, almost transparent, like a reflection in water that might vanish at any moment.

His outline was still discernible; it was the figure of a middle-aged man, sitting cross-legged, eyes closed, his face serene yet revealing profound weariness.

Crimson fireballs swirled around him, like burning chains binding his limbs and torso, each strike causing his illusory form to dim further.

Wan Jianxing.

Kai's heart clenched sharply.

He recognized the silhouette. Although Wan Jianxing was now just a remnant soul, the faint face and figure were indeed his.

The one who had once guided him—if Wan Jianxing hadn't risked his life to save him, he wouldn't be reduced to a mere remnant soul now.

But the gap only… Mr. Shi lowered his hand, looked at Kai, and said calmly, "His remnant soul is too weak, on the verge of dissipation. Even if you rescue him now, his remnant soul won't be able to maintain its form, and it will completely dissipate within an hour at most."

Kai's body stiffened slightly: "Then… what should we do?"

"You need to reach the Immortal Lord realm to truly touch the origin of the void dimension. At the same time, you also need to find an ancient treasure of heaven and earth to nourish the soul and reshape the physical body. You'll

need at least a Nine-Turn Soul-Nourishing Lotus and a section of Chaos Divine Wood to stabilize his remnant soul and reshape his physical body."

Mr. Shi's voice remained calm. "You can't do it now."

Kai remained silent for a long time.

His fist clenched and unclenched repeatedly.

He looked into Mr. Shi's calm eyes, his voice slightly hoarse: "Mr. Shi, what is Wan Jianxing's cultivation level? Why would the patriarch of the Divine Clan personally imprison him?"

Mr. Shi glanced at him, a profound light flashing in his eyes, as if piercing through countless heavens in an instant: “When you have the ability to rescue him, ask him yourself.”

After saying this, Mr. Shi’s figure began to fade, starting from the edges, gradually merging into the air, like ink slowly dissolving in water, leaving no trace.

In less than two breaths, the spot where he stood was empty, as if he had never been there.

Kai stared at the empty space, silent for a long time, finally letting out a soft sigh.

Zi’er stepped forward from beside the eldest woman in the red dress, looking at Kai with a hint of concern in her purple eyes: “Young Master Chen, we should go too. The matters of the Twenty-First Heaven are not yet finished, and we sisters need to return to report.”

Kai turned around, looked at Zi’er and the six sisters behind her, and nodded slightly: “Alright. Thank you all for today.”

Zi’er smiled, her smile carrying a sense of relief and ease: “What are you thanking me for? You saved me, it’s only right that I help you. Besides…”

She glanced at the direction where Mr. Shi had disappeared, her tone tinged with emotion: “Even if we hadn’t helped, your senior wouldn’t have let anything happen to you. We were just adding icing on the cake.”

Kai didn’t deny it, only smiled.

Zi’er turned and walked to the side of her six sisters.

The eldest woman in the red dress glanced at Kai, nodded slightly, and then the seven figures simultaneously soared into the air, seven-colored immortal light weaving into a magnificent rainbow above the valley, like a bridge spanning heaven and earth, extending into the depths of the sky.

Seven figures faded into the distance within the rainbow, eventually transforming into seven shining stars and disappearing above the clouds.

Ghost Seven also materialized from the void, his eerie blue eyes beneath his black robes looking at Kai. He bowed slightly, saying, “Mr. Chen, it’s time for me to go.

Although the Twenty-First Heaven is dangerous, the Ghost Clan still has some foundations there. If needed, you can always find me.”

Kai nodded, “Take care.”

Ghost Seven’s figure transformed into a wisp of black smoke, silently merging into the shadows, as if he had never been there.

In the valley, only Kai, Jiang Xuelan, Xuanzhenzi, and the young Daoist boy remained, along with corpses and scattered fragments of magical artifacts.

Kai stood amidst the mountain of corpses and sea of blood, his purple eyes swirling with complex light.

He remained silent for a moment, then spoke, “Clean up the battlefield. Collect all usable resources, magical artifacts, and storage rings. These are all valuable items; we can’t waste them.”

Jiang Xuelan, supporting her injured body, began cleaning up the battlefield with Kai.

Xuanzhenzi bent down and nimbly began searching the storage rings and magical artifacts of the divine cultivators.

The young Daoist followed behind, helping to collect the scattered pill bottles and fragments of spiritual materials.

Just then, Kai’s gaze fell upon the several demonic cultivator leaders who were still kneeling on the ground, trembling.

Their faces were ashen, their bodies shaking violently, their foreheads pressed tightly against the cold ground, lacking even the courage to lift their heads.

They had seen Jin Wuhao killed, seen the white-robed men and the seven divine cultivators explode, seen thousands of headless corpses, and seen Kai's calm yet cold gaze.

They knew they had made a mistake. They thought the divine race would win; they chose to submit to the divine race, betraying the demonic cultivators who were still holding on.

And now, the divine race had lost, and their fate had reached its reckoning.

Kai's gaze swept over them, his voice calm, a calmness that sent chills down one's spine: "Dispose of these people. Traitors don't deserve pity."

Xuan Zhenzi raised his head, glanced at the demonic cultivator leaders, then at Kai, and asked no further questions.

He threw down the storage bag in his hand and walked step by step towards the demonic cultivator leaders, a blue light slowly gathering in his palm.

"Don't...don't kill us!"

One of the demonic cultivator leaders raised his head, his face covered in tears and snot. "We were forced! Jin Wuhao forced us! If we hadn't surrendered, he would have killed us all! We just wanted to live..."

"You wanted to live, so you chose to betray."

Kai's voice remained calm. "Those who died fighting to uphold their beliefs, didn't they also want to live? When you surrendered, did you think of them?"

The demonic cultivator leader opened his mouth, wanting to say something, but ultimately couldn't utter a single word.

Xuan Zhenzi didn't give him any more chances.

A cyan palm print landed, and the demonic cultivator leader's body shuddered violently before collapsing limply, motionless.

Then came the second, the third, the fourth… In less than ten breaths, all the surrendered demonic cultivator leaders lay dead in pools of blood.

Xuanzhenzi flicked the blood from his palm, turned back to Kai's side, and resumed looting the spoils as if he had merely swatted a few flies.

The sun gradually sank in the west, golden sunlight spilling across the ravaged valley, casting a warm glow on the scorched ground and dark red bloodstains.

On the distant horizon, the clouds were dyed a brilliant orange-red by the setting sun, like burning flames spreading across the entire sky.

Kai stood on a black rock, gazing into the distance, his purple eyes reflecting the sunset's glow.

He was still wounded, his spiritual power not fully recovered, but his hand had already gripped the hilt of the Dragon-Slaying Sword tightly once more.

The matter of the Twentieth Heaven was over.

The Divine Race's main hall was destroyed, the Divine Emperor Jinwuhao was dead, and those powerful Divine Race figures who descended from the higher heavens were also dead.

But the true enemy still lay in the Twenty-First Heaven, in that higher, more distant sky.

The Twenty-First Heaven was just ahead.

Those powerful Divine Race figures, the people behind that white-robed man, were still waiting for him there.

Kai didn't know how much further the road ahead would be, or how many more enemies he would encounter, but having come this far, he would never stop.

" Kai," Jiang Xuelan walked to his side, her icy blue eyes gazing into the distance, her voice soft, "Where do we go next?"

Kai was silent for a moment, then a slight smile curved his lips, a smile tinged with weariness, yet still revealing sharpness and resilience: "To the Twenty-First Heaven. There are still people waiting." On the ruins of Black Abyss Valley, the corpses had been cleared away, and the scattered fragments of magical artifacts and storage rings had all been gathered.

Kai, Jiang Xuelan, Xuanzhenzi, and the young Daoist spent an entire day collecting all the valuable items from the battlefield.

The supplies were piled up like a small mountain. There were storage rings, storage bags, magical artifacts, pills, and spiritual materials from tens of thousands of corpses.

In addition, there were fragments of broken divine artifacts left behind by the powerful gods who had exploded, as well as Jin Wuhao's Divine Emperor's Authority, which had been broken and then repaired by time and space.

These resources, piled together, resembled a miniature treasure trove, reflecting colorful light under the setting sun.

Xuanzhenzi squatted beside the pile of supplies, his eyes wide like copper bells, drool almost dripping from the corner of his mouth: "Good heavens... so much stuff... I've lived for so many years, and this is the first time I've seen such a rich haul of spoils..."

The little Taoist boy squatted beside him, clutching half a broken jade tablet in his hand, tilting his head and asking, “Master, how much are these things worth?”

“How much are they worth?” Xuanzhenzi grinned, “Enough for you to eat spiritual fruits for a hundred lifetimes!”

Kai walked to the pile of supplies, his purple eyes sweeping over the dazzling array of magical artifacts, jade slips, pills, and crystals.

His gaze lingered for a moment on several storage rings gleaming with golden divine light.

These were the relics of the powerful gods brought by those white-robed men. Although most of them were damaged when they exploded, some precious items had survived.

“These resources are enough to give us a significant boost,”

Kai said calmly. “Old Xuan, separate the cultivation technique jade slips and magic artifacts, and leave the rest of the spirit crystals and pills. We’re going to the Demon Suppression Tower to cultivate.” Xuan

Zhenzi’s eyes lit up at the mention of the “Demon Suppression Tower”: “Mr. Chen, can I also go in and benefit from it?

If I can break through another level, I can help you withstand a few more attacks when I reach the twenty-first level!”

Kai glanced at him: “What about your little Daoist boy?”

“Take him! Take him with you! The little guy has good cultivation talent, he just doesn’t have a good master to teach him.” Xuan Zhenzi

patted the little Daoist boy’s head.

The little Daoist boy looked up, blinking his eyes: “Master, didn’t you say I’m dull-witted?”

“That’s because I was afraid you’d become arrogant!” Xuan Zhenzi said matter-of-factly.

Kai’s lips curled into a slight smile: “Then let’s go in together. Time is short; we must reach a level where we can stand firm in the twenty-first level as quickly as possible.”

The four of them entered the Land of Fallen Emperors and found a relatively stable area of void.

Kai summoned the Demon-Suppressing Tower. Its black body floated in the void, silver runes flowing across its surface like living things, releasing profound spatial and temporal power.

“Go in.”

Inside the Demon-Suppressing Tower, time flowed a hundred times faster than outside.

One hundred days inside the tower equaled one day outside.

Kai divided the mountain of cultivation resources into several portions, giving 70% to Xuan Zhenzi and 30% to the young Daoist.

There was no other way; resources were limited, and every penny counted.

Xuan Zhenzi, looking at the pile of spirit crystals and pills before him, was so moved he almost kowtowed to Kai: “Mr. Chen, you… I’m so lucky to have you by following me!”

“Enough talk, cultivate.”

Kai sat down cross-legged. “Remember, we only have two days. After two days, no matter what realm you reach, we must depart.”

Jiang Xuelan sat down opposite him, her icy blue eyes reflecting the silver light flowing from the tower’s top.

She took a deep breath, and the power of the Ice God began to circulate. A thin layer of icy blue frost condensed around her, instantly lowering the surrounding temperature.

Kai also closed his eyes, and chaotic power surged from his dantian, enveloping his entire body in gray light as he began to absorb the mountain of spirit crystals and pills.

Time flew by in the tranquility and focus within the Demon Suppression Tower.

...

Several months passed inside the tower, while only two days had passed outside.

When Kai emerged from the Demon Suppression Tower, his aura had undergone a dramatic transformation.

His purple eyes surged with a more refined chaotic divine light, and the gray aura flowing around him was as substantial as a physical substance, each breath carrying a rhythm that shook the void. He had reached

the fourth rank of the Golden Immortal Realm.

Although he had only advanced two ranks, his chaotic power was far purer than that of ordinary cultivators; these two breakthroughs had multiplied his strength several times over.

The seed of the Law of Space had already transformed into a silver vortex in his dantian, and the seed of the Law of Time had begun to show clear patterns.

Jiang Xuelan stood behind him, her ice-white dress fluttering in the void without wind, the chill around her intense, almost tangible ice mist enveloping her.

Her cultivation had stabilized at the ninth rank of the Golden Immortal Realm, her Ice God bloodline fully awakened, and the phantom of a ten-thousand-year-old glacier was reflected in her ice-blue eyes.

Xuan Zhenzi had also broken through, finally stepping from the peak of the eighth rank of the Golden Immortal Realm to the ninth rank.

Although he had only advanced by one small realm, the thrill of breaking through the barrier that had held him for tens of thousands of years kept the old man grinning for three days straight.

The little Daoist boy had also improved considerably, from the fourth rank of the Golden Immortal Realm to the sixth rank.

Although the little fellow was young, his talent for cultivation was indeed quite good; it was just that he had wasted too much time following his unreliable master, Xuan Zhenzi.

“Ninth Rank of Golden Immortal…”

Jiang Xuelan looked down at the icy blue light flowing in her palm, her voice tinged with emotion, “I’ve been cultivating in the Demon Suppression Tower for months, but only two days have passed in the outside world. This feeling always feels unreal.”

“You’ll get used to it.”

Kai smiled, “With the Demon Suppression Tower, time is the cheapest thing for us.”

He turned around and looked at the remaining resources.

Top-tier magic artifacts, high-level cultivation technique jade slips, and some unused spiritual materials and pills.

These wouldn’t be of much help to their current cultivation, but if converted into spirit crystals, they could provide ample funds for their journey to the Twenty-First or even Twenty-Second Heaven.

“Old Xuan, come with me to the Void Merchant Guild. Let’s sell these things.”

Xuan Zhenzi grinned, “Alright! I’m a master at bargaining!”

…

The Void Merchant Guild has branches all over the Heavenly Realm, and naturally, there’s one in the Twentieth Heaven as well.

Although the Void Merchant Guild in the Twentieth Heaven is slightly smaller than that in the Eighteenth Heaven, it’s still an excellent place for cultivators of all races to trade.

As Kai led Xuan Zhenzi through the gates of the Void Merchant Guild, a steward in a silver robe immediately greeted them with a professional smile: “Gentlemen, what can I do for you?”

The steward narrowed his eyes slightly, picked up a jade slip, and probed it with his divine sense. The smile on his face froze instantly.

The jade slip contained a divine race cultivation technique at the ninth rank of the Golden Immortal realm, extremely valuable.

He picked up a second, a third, a fourth… each jade slip contained a high-level cultivation technique, each magic weapon was of superior or even top-grade quality.

“This… these…”

the steward’s voice trembled slightly, “Sir, are you sure you want to sell all these cultivation techniques?”

“What, you don’t accept them?” Kai’s voice was calm.

“Yes! Yes! Of course I will!”

The steward nodded repeatedly, “However, the amount is too large, I can’t make the decision myself. Please wait a moment, I will go and fetch the manager.”

A moment later, a slightly plump middle-aged man came out from the back room, wearing a dark blue robe embroidered with silver patterns, with the shrewd smile typical of a merchant.

He walked to the counter, his gaze sweeping over the magical artifacts and jade slips, a glint of shrewdness flashing in his eyes. “Esteemed guests, I am the manager of the 20th Heaven branch of the Void Merchant Guild, my surname is Qian. These goods… are all top-grade.”

“Name your price,” Kai said.

Manager Qian pondered for a moment, then picked up a golden longsword magical artifact to examine it closely, and then picked up a jade slip containing a divine race cultivation technique to check its contents, his expression becoming increasingly complex.

He put down the jade slip and held up five fingers: “Five million high-grade spirit crystals. That’s the highest price I can offer.”

Upon hearing this, Xuanzhenzi immediately jumped up: “Five million? Are you trying to fob us off? This longsword is worth at least three million, and that eighth-grade Golden Immortal cultivation jade slip is worth at least two million.

There are over a dozen magic weapons and more than twenty cultivation jade slips here, and you’re only offering five million? Do you think we’re new to this business?”

Shopkeeper Qian’s smile froze for a moment: “Sir, you’re right, each item is indeed worth that price. But since you’re selling so many at once, you have to leave us some profit margin, right? How about… six million?”

“Eight million.”

Xuan Zhenzi plopped down in a chair, crossing his legs. “Take it or leave it. If not, we’ll go to another one. The Void Merchant Guild isn’t just this one.”

Manager Qian looked at Xuan Zhenzi’s unyielding expression, then at Kai’s calm, unfathomable purple eyes, and finally sighed: “Seven million. That’s the bottom line. Any more and I’ll lose money.”

Xuan Zhenzi glanced at Kai, who nodded slightly.

“Deal.”

With seven million high-grade spirit crystals in hand, plus the resources they’d kept from their spoils, they could live comfortably in the Twenty-First Heaven for a long time.

More importantly, the Void Merchant Guild had a rule that customers making large transactions could obtain a “VIP Token,” which granted them priority access to intelligence and special services at any branch.

Manager Qian handed over a silver token: “Sir, this is our VIP Token. If you need intelligence or other assistance in the future, you can use this token to receive preferential treatment at any Void Merchant Guild branch.”

Kai took the token and stored it in his storage ring.

The two left the Void Merchant Guild, walking in the last rays of the twentieth Heaven.

Night had fallen, and the pale golden twilight bathed the streets, casting a gentle glow on the city that had endured days of turmoil.

“Mr. Chen,” Xuan Zhenzi, unusually serious, composed himself, “when shall we depart?”

“Tomorrow morning,”

Kai replied, gazing into the distance, “to the twenty-first Heaven.”

…

Meanwhile, in the twenty-second Heaven.

Tian Shu Continent, Divine Council.

The Golden Crow Clan’s ancestral lands stood at the highest point of the Tian Shu Continent, a majestic golden palace floating like the sun above the clouds.

Golden flames surrounded the palace—the innate divine fire of the Golden Crow Clan’s bloodline, burning eternally day and night, illuminating the entire sky.

Jin Wuyai sat in the main seat of the palace, his face dignified and cold, surrounded by blazing golden light, like an eternally burning sun.

His cultivation was unfathomable; the aura of a peak third-grade Grand Luo Golden Immortal enveloped the entire hall as if it were a tangible force, making everyone present feel an oppressive, mountain-like pressure.

Before him knelt several Golden Crow Clan deacons responsible for liaison with the lower realms, each with a deathly pale face and cold sweat pouring down their foreheads.

“Say it again,”

Jin Wuyai’s voice was low and steady, like a divine sword being slowly drawn. “What happened to that disciple under the Time God?”

One of the deacons trembled as he raised his head, his voice hoarse: “Reporting to the Clan Chief… the eldest son… he has perished.

Along with the seven Grand Luo Golden Immortal elders he brought, all perished in the Twentieth Heaven, their souls annihilated, beyond even the power of time reversal to repair."

The hall fell into a deathly silence.

Jin Wuyai remained silent.

He simply stared at the kneeling deacon, his golden eyes surging with a palpable killing intent.

The temperature in the entire hall suddenly rose, and the golden crow divine fire surrounding Jin Wuyai surged several feet high, scorching and slightly distorting the surrounding space.

"The twentieth level of the Heavenly Realm?"

Jin Wuyai's voice remained calm, but a chilling coldness permeated his being. "In a place like the twentieth level of the Heavenly Realm, who could possibly kill him?"

"According to the news that came back... it was a Daoist cultivator named Kai. Beside him was... a middle-aged man whose cultivation level was impossible to determine.

That middle-aged man only used... a single glance..." The steward's voice trailed off, the last few words almost inaudible.

"A single glance?"

Jin Wuyai stood up. He wasn't particularly tall, but the moment he stood, the entire hall trembled slightly under his oppressive aura.

Golden divine fire surged around him, like an ancient beast awakened from its trance, slowly opening its eyes.

“Send word to summon the heads of the Silver Moon Family and the Morning Star Family to the Divine Council. Tell them the Golden Crow Family has important matters to discuss.”

…

The Divine Council is a massive circular building suspended in the center of the Heavenly Pivot Continent, like a silver ring stretching across the heavens and earth.

At the center of the ring is a huge circular council hall, capable of accommodating hundreds of people simultaneously.

Normally, this is where the three families adjudicate matters of the Twenty-First Heaven, but at this moment, the three family heads are gathered together.

Jin Wuyai sits in the main seat, golden divine fire slowly burning around him, casting flickering light on his face. Opposite him, Yue Wuhen, the patriarch of the Silver Moon Family, holds a cup of spirit wine brewed with moonlight, his posture elegant and composed, as if this meeting were just an ordinary…

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Xing Wuji, the patriarch of the Chenxing family, sat at the very edge, surrounded by a faint silver starlight. He resembled a dark star enveloped by a galaxy, his face almost indistinguishable.

He remained silent most of the time, and no one knew what he was thinking.

“Brother Jinwu, why did you summon us so urgently? What happened?” Yue Wuhen put down his wine cup, his voice gentle and refined.

Jin Wuyai looked at the two, his voice low and somber: “My eldest son perished in the twentieth heaven. His soul and spirit were annihilated.”

Yue Wuhen’s smile faltered slightly.

Xing Wuji’s starlight flickered gently before returning to its steady state.

“The twentieth heaven?”

Yue Wuhen’s brows furrowed slightly. “Could someone in such a place have killed your eldest son?”

“A Daoist cultivator named Kai,”

Jin Wuyai said. “He had someone with an unidentifiable cultivation level by his side who killed my son and the seven Grand Luo Golden Immortal elders he brought with him with just a glance.”

A moment of silence fell over the hall.

Yue Wuhen tapped his fingers lightly on the table twice. “One glance, and seven Grand Luo Golden Immortals were killed? Brother Jinwu, are you sure the news is true?”

“My steward wouldn’t dare lie to me,”

Jin Wuyai’s voice was cold. “Moreover, the divine forces of the twentieth heaven have been completely wiped out. Jinwu Hao is also dead.” Yue

Wuhen’s brows furrowed even more.

Although Jinwu Hao was only a collateral descendant sent to the lower realm by the Jinwu family, he still represented the face of the divine race. He was the one they jointly decided to lead the divine race below the twentieth heaven.

Only those who reached the Grand Luo Golden Immortal realm could glimpse a corner of the divine race.

As for the divine cultivators below the twentieth heaven, they were all frogs in a well. In their eyes, the God Emperor of the twentieth heaven was their supreme being.

They had no way of knowing that the so-called God Emperor, in the eyes of the true divine race, was just a collateral descendant, someone who could be replaced at any time.

Although the death of a collateral descendant could be considered an accident, the death of the eldest son was a completely different matter.

“What do you intend to do?” Yue Wuhen asked.

“Send people to the twentieth heaven,”

Jin Wuyai said. “Find out who this Kai really is, and what the background of the middle-aged man beside him is. If he dares to set foot in the twenty-first heaven, let him stay here forever.”

Yue Wuhen and Xing Wuji exchanged a glance. Yue Wuhen nodded slightly: “The Silver Moon Family is willing to cooperate. After all, the twenty-first heaven is under our jurisdiction. If someone is causing trouble down there, it is indeed necessary to investigate.”

Xing Wuji was silent for a moment, then said: “The Chenxing Family can provide some intelligence support. But we will not participate in matters that are public.”

Jin Wuyai glanced at him and said nothing more.

The Chenxing Family has always been like this, never participating in direct operations, but their intelligence network is the most powerful in the entire twenty-first heaven.

As long as they are willing to provide information, that is enough.

“Then it’s settled.”

Jin Wuyai stood up, and golden divine fire suddenly ignited around him. “Send people to the twentieth heaven to find out the details of this Kai. If he dares to come, let him not return.”

“Who should we send?” Yue Wuhen asked.

At this moment, no one spoke. After all, the eldest son of the Golden Crow family, a disciple of the Time God, had been instantly killed while leading several Great Luo Golden Immortals. Who would dare to

go? “Old Xing, if you don’t send someone, your intelligence is the best…”

“Stop, I won’t send anyone.” After Xing Wuji finished speaking, his figure slowly disappeared into the starlight.

Jin Wuyai looked at Yue Wuhen, about to speak, but Yue Wuhen said, “I won’t send anyone either. You figure it out yourself…”

After speaking, Yue Wuhen’s figure also disappeared.

The Divine Council returned to emptiness and silence.

Jin Wuyai stood alone at the edge of the circular hall, looking at the surging sea of clouds below, his golden eyes churning with anger.

“Two cowards who fear death, I…”

Jin Wuyai cursed angrily, but he really didn’t know who to send.

Sending one would result in another death, which would be a loss.

It seemed that he could only wait and deal with Kai when he arrived at the Twenty-First Heaven.

Kai.

A Daoist cultivator.

A man who killed his eldest son with a single glance.

He didn't care about Jin Wuhao; he was just a useless member of a collateral branch.

But the death of his eldest son was an unprecedented disgrace for the Jinwu family. This disgrace had to be washed away with blood.

"No matter who stands behind you..."

Jin Wuyai's voice was low and cold, "As long as you dare to come to the Twenty-First Heaven, you'll never leave alive."

...

The Twentieth Heaven.

As dawn broke, pale golden sunlight pierced through the clouds and shone on the ruins of Black Abyss Valley, casting a warm glow on the charred rocks and dark red bloodstains.

Kai stood at the valley entrance, his gray robe swaying gently in the morning breeze, his purple eyes gazing at the distant horizon, his gaze deep and calm.

Jiang Xuelan stood beside him, her ice-white dress fluttering slightly in the morning breeze. The chill around her had been completely contained, but the unique cool aura of the Ice God bloodline still lingered around her.

Her cultivation had stabilized at the ninth rank of the Golden Immortal Realm, and she appeared more reserved and composed than before.

Xuanzhenzi approached carrying a small bundle, followed by a young Taoist disciple.

The old man, a fresh blade of grass dangling from his mouth, wore a smug smile that etched deep wrinkles onto his aged face. “Mr. Chen, everything’s packed! Shall we go?”

Kai nodded. “Let’s go.”

The four arrived at the edge of the void of the Fallen Emperor’s Land. Kai took a deep breath, and chaotic power surged from his dantian. Gray light condensed in his palm, and he thrust it forcefully towards the void rift.

The chaotic power struck the void with a dull thud.

Ripples spread across the void like stones thrown into water, then quickly returned to calm.

Kai frowned slightly.

He tried again, this time channeling seventy percent of his chaotic power.

The gray light exploded in the void, leaving only a shallow crack that healed itself moments later.

“It won’t open.”

Kai’s voice held a hint of surprise, “The spatial barrier of the Twenty-First Heaven is much thicker than I imagined. My chaotic power isn’t enough to forcibly tear it apart.”

Xuan Zhenzi leaned closer to look, “Then what do we do? Are we going to be trapped in the Twentieth Heaven?”

Kai shook his head, “With the Demon-Suppressing Tower here, I can travel back to any place I’ve been at any time. But places I haven’t been to…” A thoughtful glint flashed in Jiang Xuelan’s icy blue eyes: “What about the Void Merchant Guild? They’re the largest merchant guild in

the Celestial Realm; they should control the channels to the various heavens."

Kai's eyes brightened slightly: "You're right. The Void Merchant Guild can do business across heavens; they must have a way to cross spatial barriers."

He didn't linger, leading the three straight to the Void Merchant Guild branch in the twentieth heaven.

Manager Qian was behind the counter tallying accounts. Seeing Kai and his group return, his face immediately broke into a professional smile: "Mr. Chen! You're here again! Is there anything you need this time? Or are you going to sell something?"

"No, I'm not selling anything."

Kai walked to the counter. "I want to ask something. Can the Void Merchant Guild help us get to the twenty-first heaven?"

Manager Qian's smile faltered slightly, and the ledger in his hand slowly closed.

He was silent for a moment, his gaze sweeping over Kai as if he were thinking about something. After a while, he spoke, "Mr. Chen, going to the Twenty-First Heaven... are you sure?"

"Yes, I'm sure."

Manager Qian lowered his voice, "The Void Merchant Guild does have a way to go to the Twenty-First Heaven. However, this involves an inter-heaven teleportation channel, and the cost is not low."

"How much?"

Manager Qian held up five fingers, "Five million high-grade spirit crystals per person, that's the lowest price."

Xuan Zhenzi almost jumped up, “Five million? You might as well rob us!”

Manager Qian waved his hand with a wry smile, “My sir, this is not an exorbitant price.

The maintenance cost of the inter-heaven teleportation array is extremely high, requiring a large amount of Heavenly Crystal Stones, and each use requires specialized personnel to activate the array. The

spatial barrier of the Twenty-First Heaven is much thicker than that of the Eighteenth, Nineteenth, and Twentieth Heavens, and ordinary spatial teleportation cannot penetrate it at all.

The Void Merchant Guild invests astronomical amounts of resources every year to maintain this channel.”

Kai looked at Manager Qian, his purple eyes showing no ripples, “Isn’t there any other way?”

Five million per person, Kai really couldn’t afford that price.

Shopkeeper Qian pondered for a moment, then said, “There is a way. I also know of a passage to the Twenty-First Heaven.

However, that passage hasn’t been used for many years because the gods of the Twenty-First Heaven strictly control interdimensional passages. Anyone caught crossing without permission faces severe consequences.

Moreover, that passage is in disrepair, and you’ll need to find a way to activate it yourselves. If you’re lucky enough to activate it, you can go to the Twenty-First Heaven.”

“Where is it?” Kai’s voice was calm.

Shopkeeper Qian took out a yellowed sheepskin map from behind the counter and spread it out on the counter.

The map marked the terrain of the Twenty-First Heaven, with a red circle drawn on a wasteland at the northernmost point, next to which was a line of small print—"Ancient Teleportation Ruins: Heavenly Jade Array."

"This place is called the Tianxuan Array Ruins, an ancient inter-heaven teleportation array. It's said to have been built by the Daoist sect, but after their decline, the array was abandoned.

The Void Merchant Guild controlled its use in its early years, maintaining it regularly. Later, the gods of the 21st Heaven tightened their spatial control, and the channel gradually fell into disuse."

Kai looked at the red circle on the map, a glint of light flashing in his purple eyes: "This Tianxuan Array... can it still be used?"

"Theoretically, it can be used,"

Manager Qian said. "The main structure of the array base is still there, but many rune nodes are damaged and need to be reactivated. The method of activation... to be honest, I don't know either.

The cultivators who were responsible for maintaining this teleportation array passed away thousands of years ago."

Kai was silent for a moment: "Where are the blueprints?"

"Blueprints?" Manager Qian was taken aback. "The array diagram of the teleportation array?"

"Yes. If you have the diagram, I'll figure it out myself," Kai said.

Shopkeeper Qian hesitated for a moment, then turned and rummaged through a cabinet behind him, pulling out a wooden box. Inside was a similarly yellowed scroll.

He carefully took it out and unfurled it on the counter: “This is the diagram of the Heavenly Jade Array, which the Void Merchant Guild collected when they took it over.

I’ve studied it several times, but many of the runes are marked in ancient Taoist script, which I don’t quite understand.”

The diagram was densely covered with complex array patterns, like countless interwoven rivers meandering across the parchment.

The edges of the diagram were marked with tiny characters, their strokes archaic and indeed resembling ancient Taoist script.

Kai looked at the diagram, his gaze slowly sweeping over the ancient Taoist characters.

He recognized some of them—the characters were somewhat similar to the annotations in the Great Luo Golden Scripture he cultivated, though not exactly the same, but sharing the same origin.

“Could I borrow this diagram?” Kai asked.

Shopkeeper Qian shook his head: “Mr. Chen, it’s not that I don’t want to give it to you, it’s the rule of the Void Merchant Guild. Array diagrams and maps can be sold to customers, but not lent out.”

“Then sell it to me,”

Kai said. “Including the map from before, how much is it in total?”

Shopkeeper Qian looked at Kai, then at the array diagram, hesitated for a long time, and finally held up three fingers: “Three million high-grade spirit crystals.

The array diagram and map are packaged together, plus three Heavenly Crystals needed to activate the teleportation array. This is the biggest concession I can make.”

Xuan Zhenzi wanted to speak again, but Kai raised his hand to stop him: “Deal.”

He took out three million high-grade spirit crystals from his storage ring.

These spirit crystals were piled on the counter, emitting a rich spiritual light, which made Shopkeeper Qian’s face glow.

Shopkeeper Qian carefully collected the spirit crystals and took out three fist-sized cyan crystals from under the counter, placing them in front of Kai: “These are the Heavenly Crystals needed to activate the teleportation array.

Originally, the teleportation array’s energy source was the earth’s spiritual energy, but it has been neglected for too long, and the earth’s spiritual energy has dried up. Using Heavenly Crystals instead should be enough to support one teleportation.”

Kai took the Heavenly Crystals, feeling the profound spatial power contained within them, a hint of satisfaction flashing in his purple eyes: “Thank you.”

He put away the map and array diagram, turned around, and walked out of the Void Merchant Guild’s gate.

Xuan Zhenzi followed behind, lowering his voice to ask: “Mr. Chen, you really spare no expense… Three million high-grade spirit crystals, gone just like that?”

“Being able to go to the Twenty-First Heaven, these three million are well spent.”

Kai’s voice was calm, “Moreover, there are still four million spirit crystals left, enough for us to gain a foothold in the Twenty-First Heaven.”

Jiang Xuelan looked at the array diagram in Kai’s hand, a hint of curiosity in her icy blue eyes: “Can you understand the Daoist characters on it?”

“I can understand part of it,” Kai said. “The rest… I’ll have to go to the Heavenly Xuan Formation Remains.” …

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“Repair?”

Xuanzhenzi scratched his head, looking at the runes that were almost invisible due to the erosion of time and frost. “How do you repair them? I don’t understand these ancient runes…”

“I do.”

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

His fingers were steady and precise, each stroke carefully following the markings on the array diagram.

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

Jiang Xuelan also stepped forward, imitating Kai, carving the runes according to the markings on the array diagram.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Opposite the portal was a hazy light; the specific scene was unclear, but a completely different aura could be felt. A

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

The Twenty-First Heaven.

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

“Let’s go.”

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

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

Jiang Xuelan followed closely behind, her ice-white dress shimmering with a silvery-white halo in the light before vanishing as well.

Xuan Zhenzi, holding the young Taoist's hand, took a deep breath, gritted his teeth, and rushed in as well.

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

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

Silence returned to the icy plain, broken only by the mournful sound of the wind echoing through the wilderness.

Kai and the others stood in a void, with no earth beneath their feet and no clouds above. Only endless pale golden light surged from all directions, enveloping them in a warm halo.

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

His feet touched solid ground.

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

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

The Starry Sky Belt.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Floating on the sea were tens of thousands of islands, some as large as continents, others only a few feet square, like stars scattered across the water.

That was the Void Sea, the second level of the Twenty-First Heaven.

Further up, seven enormous floating continents arranged in the shape of the Big Dipper, slowly rotating.

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

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

That was the Seven Star Continent, the third level of the Twenty-First Heaven.

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

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

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

This was the Celestial Pivot Continent, the core of rule for the three great divine families. Kai stared silently for a long time before slowly speaking, "No wonder it's called the Twenty-First Heaven."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Mr. Chen, you've arrived."

Kai nodded. "Gui Qi, thank you for coming to meet me."

"It's nothing."

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

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

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

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

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

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

“That’s right.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The young Taoist boy’s eyes widened: “Splitting an entire continent in one sword strike? How powerful must that be…”

“That Immortal Emperor later perished,”

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

A moment of silence fell over the group. Kai’s gaze pierced through the layers of void, looking down into the dark abyss below, a profound light flashing in his purple eyes.

He didn’t press further, simply nodding: “The Netherworld Abyss is Ghost Clan territory?”

“Yes,”

Gui Qi nodded. “The Netherworld Abyss has nine levels, with the concentration of Yin energy increasing from the first to the ninth.

The Ghost Clan’s core territory is on the seventh level.

If Mr. Chen isn’t in a hurry to go to other levels, you can rest in the Netherworld Abyss first. The Ghost Clan can provide you with a place to stay.”

Kai glanced at Jiang Xuelan and Xuan Zhenzi, both of whom nodded.

“Alright, let’s go to the Netherworld Abyss first.”

Gui Qi turned, his black robe billowing, and a black void rift opened before him: “Follow me.”

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

The scene before them shifted instantly, transforming from the bright, empty expanse of the starry sky into a dark and profound space.

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

This was the entrance to the Netherworld Abyss—the first of the nine layers of Yin energy barriers.

Gui Qi’s voice echoed in the darkness: “The Netherworld Abyss has nine layers of Yin energy barriers, each requiring specific techniques to pass safely.

Ordinary cultivators will be frozen to death by the third layer.

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

The group followed Gui Qi, stepping into the darkness.

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

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

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

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

The first layer, the second layer, the third layer…

the deeper they went, the denser and more bone-chilling the Yin energy became.

By the fifth layer, Kai could feel the Yin energy beginning to resonate subtly with his Chaos Power—powers of the same origin but different natures, probing and colliding with each other.

"You can sense the Dao Pattern Aura?" Gui Qi's voice came from ahead, tinged with surprise.

"Yes,"

Kai replied, "Chaos Power, all laws return to their source. Yin energy is also a kind of law, so I can naturally sense it."

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

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

An upside-down city appeared before them.

Dense caves and passages were carved into the steep black cliffs, layer upon layer, like a giant honeycomb.

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

Numerous black-robed demon cultivators moved silently across the cliff face, blending into the darkness like shadows.

Countless slender black rope bridges spanned the cliffs, connecting different caves and platforms, which the demon cultivators traversed with effortless ease.

Eerie blue ghostly flames flickered on either side of the bridges, their cold flames illuminating the black-robed figures beneath them.”This is the Ghost Clan’s territory.”

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

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

Ghost Seven led the group up a winding stone staircase.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Those eyes brightened slightly the moment they saw Kai.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Kai and the others sat down.

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

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

I can tell you the most important thing first. The

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

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

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

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

Kai listened without interrupting.

The Old Man of the Netherworld continued, "The Golden Crow Clan holds the power of the Sun God, the Silver Moon Clan holds the power of the Moon God, and the Star Clan holds the power of the Star God.

On the surface, the three clans rule together, but in reality, each harbors its own ulterior motives. The Golden Crow Clan is powerful and domineering, the Silver Moon Clan operates covertly,

and the Star Clan remains unassuming. The white-robed man you killed in the twentieth heaven was the eldest son of the Golden Crow Clan."

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

"That's right,"

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

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

Stay in the Netherworld Abyss first, and wait until you understand the situation before taking action."

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

"It's safe,"

said the old man of the Netherworld. "The Yin energy barrier of the Netherworld Abyss is impenetrable to any cultivator of the Divine Race. Even a Grand Luo Golden Immortal of the third rank would have their soul eroded by the Yin energy if they forced their way in .

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

Kai nodded, but a complex light flashed in his purple eyes.

Safe, but not safe. He couldn't stay in the Netherworld Abyss forever.

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

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

But the old man of the Netherworld was right; now was not the time to act rashly.

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

“This junior understands,”

said Kai. “Thank you for your guidance, senior.”

Kai settled down in the Netherworld Abyss.

The Ghost Race had arranged a separate cave for them on the cliff face. Although it wasn’t large, it was enough for four people to live in.

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

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

For the first few days, Kai didn’t stray too far from the cave.

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

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

Xuan Zhenzi couldn’t sit still for more than two days, muttering, “This place is too stuffy,” and spending all his time dragging the young Taoist boy back and forth on the suspension bridges along the cliff face.

The ghost cultivators were tolerant of these two lively outsiders, occasionally even giving them directions, telling them which suspension bridge led to which place.

Jiang Xuelan meditated and cultivated in the cave.

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

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

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

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

It was during this exploration that he discovered the crack.

Was it located at the boundary between the seventh and eighth levels? No light shone through the crack; it was as black as solidified ink. Standing before it, one could sense a faint current emanating from within, carrying an indescribable aura.

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

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

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

He began to observe the crack

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

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

“Could it be a teleportation array?” Kai murmured to himself.

But he doubted it.

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

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

He decided to find an opportunity to ask Gui Qi.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“Quiet.”

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

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

Sacrifice.

Kai’s body tensed slightly.

That word was like a needle piercing his eardrums.

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

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

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

“I don’t want to—”

The young cultivator didn’t finish his sentence.

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

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

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

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

Kai stood on the suspension bridge, watching the departing figures of the cultivators, his purple eyes swirling with complex light amidst the dark red glow.

Sacrifice.

The crack.

The vanished man.

After returning to the cave, he found Gui Qi.

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

Kai sat down opposite him and went straight to the point: "What was that crack?"

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

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

"I saw a sacrifice,"

Kai said. "A young cultivator was pushed in and never came out."

Gui Qi didn't speak.

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

“Gui Qi,”

Kai’s voice was calm yet carried an undeniable force, “What exactly happened to that rift? Where did those who went in go?”

Gui Qi raised his head, his dark blue eyes swirling with complex light.

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

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

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

Gui Qi was silent for a long time.

His gaze flickered several times, avoiding Kai’s eyes, and finally he only said two words: “I don’t know.”

“You don’t know?”

“Nobody knows.”

Gui Qi’s voice was even lower, “Those who went in never came out. Never.”

Kai didn’t press further.

He looked into Gui Qi’s deep blue eyes, which churned with a complex mix of emotions—helplessness, pain, and a heaviness he couldn’t decipher.

He didn’t press further, simply nodding, “Alright, I won’t ask anymore.”

Gui Qi seemed relieved, yet also felt even heavier.

He closed his eyes again, the deep blue Netherfire circulating around him once more, and resumed his meditative posture.

But Kai noticed that his clasped fingers were trembling slightly.

Kai stood up and turned to leave.

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

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

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

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

The old man of the underworld remained seated in his dark cave, his hunched figure frozen in the crimson light like a sculpture.

Seeing Kai enter, he showed no surprise, as if he had expected Kai's arrival.

"Young friend Chen, sit down and let's talk,"

the old man said, gesturing to the stone bench before him, his voice hoarse and deep.

Kai didn't beat around the bush: "Senior, I want to know about that crack."

The old man of the underworld remained silent for a moment, his thin figure motionless in the shadows. The old man nodded, tapping his fingers lightly on his knee a few times, producing a soft sound.

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

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

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

“And then?”

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

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

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

Kai frowned: “Has no one gone in to investigate?”

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

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

“So you have never stopped offering sacrifices?”

“We stopped,”

the old man’s voice held a bitter tinge. “We tried. Three thousand years ago, a newly appointed lord of this Netherworld Abyss disbelieved in the

evil and forbade sacrifices, wanting to find another way to suppress the rift.

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

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

A long silence fell over the cave.

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

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

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

"Senior,"

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

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

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

Those energy do not belong to any known cultivation method, any known law, or any known power system."

Kai's pupils contracted slightly: "Does not belong to any known one?"

"That's right."

The Netherworld Elder said, "That's why I told you that rift is not something you should touch.

Even the Ghost Clan has not been able to figure out its secrets for ten thousand years. If you, an outsider, rashly interfere, you will only get yourself killed."

Kai was silent for a long time, then slowly nodded: "This junior understands."

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

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

As long as you don't interfere with the matter of that rift, you can stay as long as you want."

"Thank you, senior."

Kai stood up, cupped his hands in greeting, and turned to leave the cave.

A dark red curtain fell behind him, once again isolating the cave from the dim light.

Kai walked on the narrow stone steps, his purple eyes swirling with a deep light in the shadows.

He had indeed agreed to the old man's request, and he truly understood the old man's good intentions and warning.

But understanding was one thing, agreeing was another; the uneasy premonition in his heart had not dissipated.

That rift, those vanished cultivators, that "unrecognizable" aura.

All of these things connected together, making him feel a vague, inexplicable unease.

The rift that appeared ten thousand years ago required human sacrifice to maintain its stability; no one knew where the rift led, and no one knew what the sacrifice was.

The Ghost Clan continued this sacrifice for ten thousand years, generation after generation disappearing into the darkness, yet never questioning its legitimacy.

Kai stopped, standing at the corner of the stone steps, gazing down into the unfathomable Abyss of the Underworld.

A dark red light danced across his face, casting flickering shadows on his expression. Stepping out of the Netherworld Elder's cave, the dark red glow of the mineral shone through the cracks in the stone steps, casting dappled light and shadow beneath Kai's feet.

A chilling, eerie aura, carrying a faint whimper, slowly surged from the abyss below, brushing against his clothes, but unable to dispel the churning doubts in his heart.

He had promised the Netherworld Elder he would no longer concern himself with the rift, but that pitch-black rift, which had devoured countless ghost cultivators, was like a grotesque brand, etched firmly into his mind.

The ghost race's sacrifices over ten thousand years, the fall of nearly a thousand cultivators, that "unrecognizable" mysterious aura, and the

weariness and bitterness that the Netherworld Elder couldn't hide in his eyes—everything about it was eerie.

Kai didn't believe in the so-called "rules of the ages," nor did he believe that the rift appeared out of thin air and could only be suppressed by human sacrifice.

Any balance that required the sacrifice of lives to maintain must conceal unknown conspiracies and forces, and Kai was least afraid to uncover these truths hidden in the darkness.

Back at their lodgings, Jiang Xuelan was sitting cross-legged in the center of the cave, meditating. Ice-blue spiritual energy flowed around her, resonating strangely with the yin energy within the cave, making her aura increasingly refined.

Hearing footsteps, she slowly opened her eyes, a hint of concern in her ice-blue pupils: "You went to see the Old Man of the Underworld? What did he tell you?"

Kai sat down opposite her, not hiding anything, and told her everything the Old Man of the Underworld had said about the rift, as well as the sacrificial scene he had witnessed.

Jiang Xuelan's brows furrowed, a hint of anger flashing in her icy blue eyes: "Using the lives of our clansmen to suppress the rift—this rule is too cruel. Has the Ghost Clan really had no other way after all these years?" "

The Netherworld Elder said that three thousand years ago, a Lord of the Abyss tried to stop the sacrifices, which resulted in a violent surge of Yin energy, causing heavy casualties."

Kai lightly tapped his knee, a cold glint in his purple eyes. "But I always feel something's wrong. There must be something hidden behind this rift; it's not just a simple surge of Yin energy. I plan to investigate secretly."

“Investigate secretly?”

Jiang Xuelan was slightly startled. “The Netherworld Elder and Ghost Seven both warned you that the rift is dangerous, and this is an internal matter of the Ghost Clan. Won’t your rash intervention cause trouble?”

“Trouble will naturally arise, but I can’t stand idly by.”

Kai looked at her, his tone firm. “That crack is devouring countless lives, and I have a feeling that what lies behind it is not simple. I must find out.”

Jiang Xuelan said, “The Netherworld Elder will definitely send someone to watch you secretly; he won’t let you interfere.”

“Don’t worry.”

Kai nodded slightly, condensing a wisp of chaotic power at his fingertips and merging it into his divine soul. “Chaotic power can perceive the laws of all things. As long as someone is following me, I can detect them immediately.”

“I won’t act so quickly. I’ll first secretly investigate and see if I can get some information from other ghost cultivators.”

For the next two days, Kai behaved extremely well. He

meditated and cultivated in the cave during the day, occasionally taking walks along the suspension bridge, automatically detouring when he saw the direction of the crack in the distance.

The ghost cultivator sent by the Netherworld Elder to secretly observe him returned and reported that Mr. Chen seemed to have given up his curiosity and was no longer approaching the crack. The Netherworld Elder breathed a slight sigh of relief.

But Kai didn’t give up.

He simply changed his approach.

On the third day, he began to “stroll” through the ghost clan’s settlement, chatting with ordinary ghost cultivators living in the caves on the edge of the seventh level.

Most of the ghost cultivators were taciturn, but they were relatively friendly towards Kai, the guest who had saved Ghost Seven and gained the approval of the Netherworld Elder.

He subtly inquired about the rift; at first, no one was willing to speak, but gradually, he heard fragmented information.

“That rift has been there for a long time… older than all of us combined…”

“Those who went in never came out, and no one knows what’s inside…”

“During the last Yin energy upheaval… my father died in that upheaval…”

“Don’t ask, this isn’t our concern…”

All the information was fragmented, but Kai gleaned a crucial, unique piece of information from it.

An old man sitting on the edge of the cliff, smoking a black pipe, narrowed his cloudy eyes when Kai inquired about the crevice. He uttered a sentence that made Kai’s heart tighten: “The crevice you mentioned… I’ve heard a strange story about it. Many years ago, someone went in and came out.”

Kai’s body tensed abruptly: ” Came out? Who?”

The old man exhaled a puff of black smoke and shook his head: “I don’t know. I heard it from the older generation; it happened a very, very long time ago.

After that person came out, he went mad, talking nonsense, and died not long after. But the nonsense he left behind before he died… some people say that the thing in that crevice can talk."

"Can talk?"

"Yes."

The old man tapped his pipe, knocking out a few specks of blackened ash. "The madman kept repeating the same sentence before he died—'It's awake, it's hungry, it saw me'—and then he breathed his last."

Kai fell silent, his palm pressed against the cold rock wall, feeling the subtle tremors from his fingertips. He remained motionless for a long time, as if something deep within the rock wall was resonating with him through the millions of years of sedimentation.

Then he continued to ask, "Where is that person buried?"

The old man's expression grew even more solemn, his chapped lips pursing several times before he managed to squeeze out a sentence: "The old cemetery on the west side of the seventh level. There's no tombstone, just a mound of earth. His descendants, afraid of being tainted by bad luck, didn't even carve his name."

Kai thanked him and turned to walk down the stone steps.

He found the cemetery.

On a secluded recessed wall on the west side of the seventh level, dozens of low mounds of earth were scattered about, most of them almost fused with the rock wall by the erosion of yin energy.

He found the mound of earth without a tombstone in the corner, squatted down, and ran his fingers over the cold soil.

There were no clues left there, but Kai didn't need any. He only needed to confirm one thing: there was indeed something alive in this crevice, and that thing could talk.

That night, Kai made a decision.

He would go in.

But entering the crevice wasn't a blind suicide mission.

He needed to prepare—to prepare sufficient strength, to prepare contingency plans for the unknown, and, more importantly, he needed an opportunity to enter without being discovered by the Ghost Clan.

Kai began searching the Ghost Clan's records for more information about the crevice.

There was an ancient library cave in the Netherworld Abyss, located in a wide cavern at the junction of the seventh and sixth levels… Kai spent three whole days immersed in the Library Cave, searching through mountains of bamboo slips and animal hide scrolls for any trace of the rift.

Most of the records matched what he had heard from the Old Man of the Underworld:

the rift appeared ten thousand years ago, required sacrifice, and the investigation team never returned.

But on a tattered animal hide scroll, mostly eaten away by worms, he found a passage that stood out from the others.

It was written in an extremely ancient ghost script, the characters hasty and hurried, as if carved by the writer in a state of extreme fear:

"The twelfth group of explorers, seven entered the rift, six were forever trapped within, one returned from the rift three days later, his soul shattered, his mind gone… The returning one's entire body was filled

with reversed Yin energy, his meridians severed, only he kept repeating one word…”

That word was traced over a dozen times, the strokes overlapping to the point of being almost illegible.

Kai leaned closer and made out two characters among the overlapping strokes—

“Seven Nights”.

“Seven Nights?”

Kai frowned.

He had never heard of this name before.

It wasn’t a name of any ghost race member, nor a known cultivation technique or deity.

He repeated the words several times, feeling a rhythm that seemed ancient and out of place in this era.

He copied the entire scroll of animal hide, folding it up along with the blurred text.

Back in the cave, he sat under the dim red light, repeatedly examining the inscription on the hide.

He considered various possibilities: “Seven Nights” could be a name, a code name, or perhaps—the self-designation of the thing within the rift.

“Seventh level, rift, seven nights…”

Kai murmured, tapping his fingers on the stone table. “The number seven represents reincarnation and death in ghost race culture. Seven nights… seven nights? Or does it signify some kind of cycle related to seven?”

He had no answer yet, but at least he had a direction.

Over the next few days, he secretly observed the selection process for the ghost race cultivators to be sacrificed.

He discovered that this wasn't a random selection. Every month, the Old Man of the Underworld would choose one person from his clan, and these people all shared the common trait of being "nearing the end of their lifespan, or suffering from incurable injuries."

In other words, those sacrificed were clan members who "wouldn't live much longer anyway."

The Old Man of the Underworld used this method to try to find a balance between necessary sacrifices and the pain of his clan.

But this discovery made Kai even more uneasy.

If the thing in the rift really needed living people as sacrifices, why choose those who were about to die?

What could it gain from them?

Or... did it have some specific criteria for selecting sacrifices?

He had no answers, but the thoughts of speculation, like a venomous snake coiled in his heart, constantly gnawed at his attention.

What truly made him make up his mind was the discovery that the descendant of that mad ghost cultivator was still alive.

A young ghost woman named "Youying" was actually the seventh-generation great-granddaughter of that mad ghost cultivator. She had a cold face, was taciturn, and lived in a secluded cave on the edge of the seventh level.

Kai took the initiative to approach her, initially just to strike up a conversation under the pretext of “wanting to learn about the history of the ghost clan.”

Youying’s personality was more aloof than that of ordinary ghosts, but every time Kai mentioned the rift, her slender fingers would tighten slightly, as if pulled by some invisible force.

During their seventh meeting, Youying spoke without warning, her voice as cold as a knife submerged in ice water, her eyes piercing Kai: “You’re investigating that rift.”

Kai didn’t deny it: “Yes.”

A complex emotion flashed in Youying’s eyes: “Do you know how my ancestor went mad?”

Kai looked at her face, which flickered in the dark red light: “I heard he went mad after coming out of the rift.”

“He only lived for seven days after he came out,”

Youying’s voice was soft, “For seven days, he repeated the same words every day—’It silences everyone, it doesn’t need sound, it only needs silence. I heard the sound of water, a very dark sound of water, and below were all open eyes.’ After saying these words, he died.”

“Open eyes?” Kai pressed, “What kind of eyes?”

“Nobody knows.”

Youying looked at him, her abyssal blue eyes, similar to Gui Qi’s, swirling with an unfathomable light. “But when that madman died, his eyes were open. They were never closed.”

That night, when Kai returned to his cave, Jiang Xuelan was sitting under a dim red light, flipping through an ancient book borrowed from the Library Cave.

She looked up, her icy blue eyes reflecting Kai's face: "You went to inquire about that rift again?"

Kai didn't hide anything: "I plan to go in and take a look."

Jiang Xuelan was silent for a moment, then closed the ancient book and placed it on her lap, looking up at Kai intently: "I'll go with you."

"No." Kai said, "I have absolutely no idea what's inside."

"That's why you need someone with you." Jiang Xuelan's voice was calm and firm, "In case you can't get out, at least someone will know what happened to you in there."

Kai looked at her for a long time, and finally didn't refuse.

He needed more help.

He found Xuanzhenzi and briefly explained the situation.

Upon hearing this, Xuanzhenzi dropped the dry grass from his mouth three times, slapping his thigh and saying, "Mr. Chen, are you going to your death?! Even the Ghost Clan themselves don't understand that rift. For a human cultivator like you to rush in is like throwing good money after bad!"

"So you're coming with me."

Xuanzhenzi opened his mouth, wanting to say something, but looking into Kai's calm purple eyes, he ultimately said nothing: "This old man's bones... alright, alright, consider it as me collecting your corpse."

Kai smiled and patted his shoulder: "I won't let you collect my corpse."

Kai told Xuanzhenzi and Jiang Xuelan to wait for his news; he was going to investigate the rift before taking action.

That night, the “night” of the Netherworld Abyss was even darker than the daytime.

The dark red light of the ore dimmed, and the ghostly blue flames danced on both sides of the suspension bridge, casting the ghost cultivators’ shadows long and thin, like phantoms.

Kai changed into a black robe, concealing his presence to the extreme, and silently emerged from the cave like a shadow blending into the darkness.

He didn’t head directly to the location of the crevice, but instead followed the stone steps on the cliff face to a hidden platform near the crevice.

This platform, nestled in a recess of the cliff face and covered in dense, gloomy grass, is connected to the outside world only by a narrow stone path. The crack remained as black as ink, its edges smooth as a mirror, emitting no light or fluctuation of energy, as quiet as an ordinary rock fissure.

Yet, this seemingly ordinary crack had devoured the lives of countless ghost cultivators.

He held his breath, circulating his chaotic power and spreading his divine sense.

Chaotic power, inherently the source of all laws, could perceive all the laws and auras of the world, but the moment his divine sense touched the crack, it was like a mud ox entering the sea, instantly swallowed up, without transmitting any information.

Kai’s heart tightened; this crack was indeed extraordinary, capable of blocking divine sense probing.

Just then, a soft sound of footsteps came from afar.

Kai immediately withdrew his divine sense, lying motionless within the Yin Spirit Grass.

He saw three ghost cultivators dressed in black robes, escorting a young ghost woman, walking towards the crack.

The girl looked no more than sixteen or seventeen years old, her face pale, her eyes filled with despair and fear. She cried out repeatedly, “I don’t want to go! I don’t want to be sacrificed! Please, let me go!”

A middle-aged ghost cultivator holding her down spoke in a cold, hard voice, “Shut up! This is the clan rule. When it’s your turn, it’s your fate. Struggling is useless; it will only make you suffer more.”

“Clan rule? Why should I have to use my life to uphold the clan rule!”

The girl struggled, her nails digging deeply into the middle-aged cultivator’s arm. “My parents are waiting for me! I don’t want to die! What right do you have to decide my life or death!”

“What right? Because you are a member of the ghost clan, because this Netherworld Abyss needs someone to sacrifice to maintain peace.”

Another elderly cultivator spoke, his voice numb. “Three thousand years ago, the Abyss Lord stopped the sacrifices, triggering a turmoil of Yin energy that killed nearly a thousand people. Do you think we wanted to do this? It was a last resort.”

“A desperate measure? Then why don’t you sacrifice yourselves!”

the woman cried, tears streaming down her pale cheeks. “I’m still young, I have so much to do, I don’t want to just disappear into the darkness like this!”

The elderly cultivator didn’t speak further, only waved his hand. The middle-aged cultivator and another young cultivator grabbed the woman and forcibly dragged her to the crevice.

The woman desperately tried to pull back, her feet leaving white marks on the rock face, but her strength was no match for the two adult cultivators, and she was ultimately shoved hard into the crevice.

“Ah—!”

A shrill scream rang out from the crevice, but it only lasted for a moment before disappearing completely, as if swallowed up by the darkness.

The crevice remained silent, without any movement, as if nothing had happened.

The three escorting cultivators stood before the crevice, silent for a moment, then turned and left.

Their backs appeared somewhat hunched, their faces expressionless, only a barely perceptible heaviness hidden deep in their eyes.

Only after the three had gone far away did Kai slowly rise from the Yin Spirit Grass.

He walked to the crevice, gazing down into the pitch-black abyss, his purple eyes churning with anger and confusion.

The woman’s scream had clearly reached his ears. Yet,

no struggle echoed from within the crevice, nor did any energy leak out, as if it were a bottomless black hole, capable of devouring all life and sound.

Kai reached out, his fingertips lightly touching the edge of the crevice.

The icy touch, like touching millennia-old ice, made his fingertips tingle slightly.

At the same time, an extremely faint, almost imperceptible, eerie aura flowed into his body through his fingertips.

This aura was neither yin energy, nor divine power, nor immortal spiritual energy; it carried a decaying, violent, and devouring power, resonating subtly with the power of chaos.

“This aura…” Kai’s heart stirred, and he immediately circulated his chaotic power, enveloping the eerie aura and examining it carefully.

The aura was too weak and extremely cunning; it vanished instantly upon being enveloped by the power of chaos, leaving only a faint trace.

Kai frowned. This aura was indeed as the Old Man of the Underworld had described—unidentifiable, yet carrying a familiar feeling, as if he had seen it somewhere before.

Kai returned and explained the situation to Jiang Xuelan and Xuan Zhenzi.

Then, the three of them silently left the cave, following the most secluded suspension bridge and stone steps along the cliff face, heading towards the crack.

The night wind howled in the abyss, and the suspension bridge swayed gently beneath their feet.

Kai walked in front, his steps extremely light, each step landing precisely on the bridge’s support points, making almost no sound.

Jiang Xuelan followed behind him, her icy blue aura compressed to its limit, leaving only a faint frost flowing from her fingertips.

Xuan Zhenzi brought up the rear, clutching a glowing night-shining pearl in his hand and a withered blade of grass in his mouth, but his expression was more solemn than ever before.

The fissure stood silently at the boundary between the seventh and eighth floors, as black as solidified ink, its edges smooth as a mirror.

The light from the luminous pearl shone towards the fissure’s entrance, but the light seemed to be swallowed up, unable to illuminate its interior.

Kai stood before the fissure, his purple eyes reflecting the dark chasm.

“Let’s go,” he whispered.

He stepped into the fissure. Jiang Xuelan followed closely behind, and Xuan Zhenzi took a deep breath and stepped in third.

Darkness instantly engulfed everything.

The moment he entered the fissure, Kai felt an extremely strong sense of descent, as if falling into an abyss.

The surrounding darkness was so thick it was almost tangible, compressing his limbs and chest, making it almost impossible for him to breathe.

The power of chaos circulated automatically within his body, and gray light created a small space, barely resisting the devouring force.

The descent lasted for about a dozen breaths, then his feet suddenly touched solid ground.

He steadied himself and looked around.

Before them lay a gloomy space, devoid of sky and earth, only a hazy gray mist swirling around them.

Beneath their feet lay a dark, black ground, its surface finely gravelly, like a dried-up riverbed.

An ancient, stale aura permeated the air, like stagnant water that hadn’t flowed for millennia.

“Here…”

Jiang Xuelan’s voice came from behind, “I can’t sense the outside world anymore. The laws of spacetime are distorted here.”