

Martial 1331

Chapter 1331, The City Lord of Heavenly Fate City

Nobody expected Yang Kai to kill Xie Quan.

The Origin Returning Realm masters had not dared to act carelessly just now for two reasons. Firstly, there was the threat of the Artifact Spirit Firebird. Secondly, Xie Quan had been subdued by Yang Kai. They acted cautiously out of fear that Yang Kai might kill Xie Quan out of anger. After all, everyone had seen how brutal Yang Kai was. If Xie Quan really died here, it would become a problem with Xie Li later on.

But now, this was no longer a concern, and ironically, Yang Kai was the one who removed the concern for them. This was not just unexpected, it was infuriating as well! Only now did they realise that they had completely underestimated this youth's madness and insolence!

Without Xie Quan as a hostage, did he really think that he was a match for so many Origin Returning Realm masters? The thought of Xie Li's anger when he learned of the deaths of Xie Quan and the Xie Family disciples further agitated the crowd. Ma Xin Yuan pointed several times at Yang Kai, seemingly too enraged to speak. After a long while, he finally spoke through clenched teeth, "You're dead, brat. You're really dead."

"Brother Ma, stop wasting your breath with him. Let's just capture him and bring him to Manager Xie," someone spoke coldly from aside.

"You think you can?" Yang Kai laughed boldly. If Chang Qi and the rest were still here, he might have some trouble, but now that he was the only one left, not even a Third-Order Origin Returning Realm would be able to stop him. Having cultivated Space Force, he could escape by tearing space anytime.

The situation this time was nothing like that time in the Corpse Cave, where he not only had to bring Yang Yan with him but also face off an opponent on the level of a Thousand-Year Corpse General.

There were only seven or eight First-Order Origin Returning Realm cultivators here. They would be dreaming if they thought that they could capture Yang Kai.

"Let me turn Heavenly Fate City upside down before I settle my grudges with you!" Yang Kai's voice suddenly grew cold, raising his hand and commanding, "Burn it!"

The Artifact Spirit Bird raised its head towards the sky and let out a long shriek when it received the command. The flames on its body blazed, and the Fire Attribute World Energy started converging onto it once again. In a flash, it had become even larger.

Seeing this, the Origin Returning Realm cultivators turned pale, hastily covering their bodies with Saint Qi and summoning their own defensive artifacts in order to protect themselves.

The Firebird opened its mouth wide, a huge ball of light forming within. After a moment, the ball turned into a beam of fire that burst out with frightening force, its temperature almost high enough to melt space itself.

The target of the attack was not any cultivator, but the largest store in the vicinity.

Yang Kai was actually planning on turning the entire Heavenly Fate City upside down. Given how badly the people of Dragon Cave Mountain had been bullied, there was no way he could back down. Doing so would only leave an impression of weakness, making them the prime choice as a target in the future.

After all, this could be considered Dragon Cave Mountain's first fight since its establishment!

Before the beam of fire reached the store, the latter had already been set ablaze by the high temperatures. Suddenly, a beam of light shot out from far away, reaching the store before the fire, causing a thin layer of energy to surround the building.

This was the defensive barrier of the store, which can be considered a kind of Spirit Array. All of the larger stores in Heavenly Fate City had this, but the strength of the barrier depended on the profits of the store in question.

The barrier of this particular store clearly wasn't weak. It was emitting a light green glow like ripples of water, obviously a work of intricate design.

Even so, when the fire came into contact with the barrier, it shook and broke apart almost immediately. The green glow dimmed quickly, and it didn't even last a few seconds before shattering into pieces.

The remaining fire roared straight down towards the shop.

Suddenly, an artifact looking like a Round Bowl appeared, growing to a size of several dozens of metres in midair and intercepting the fire right above the shop.

Unable to change its course, the fire shot right into the Bowl. Following this, a flash of blue light shone out from within the Bowl, rounding the fire into a ball and suppressing it within. A middle-aged man dressed like a scholar then appeared above the Round Bowl, his expression sombre to the extreme. He shot several bursts of Saint Qi towards the Round Bowl, and with the activation of his Divine Sense, the Bowl quickly shrank to its original size.

With a wave of his hand, the middle-aged scholar summoned the Round Bowl back to his palm, staring at the fire raging within with a disturbed expression.

"You've finally shown yourself!" Yang Kai snorted coldly. He did not make any further moves, instead choosing to stand there and glare at the middle-aged scholar.

He had sensed the scholar's presence the moment he stepped foot into Heavenly Fate City. After all, the scholar had the cultivation of Third-Order Origin Returning Realm!

Other than him, there was no one else in the entire Heavenly Fate City whom Yang Kai was apprehensive about. Otherwise, he would not have acted so fearlessly before.

The only thing he could not understand was how the scholar did not seem to have any intention of showing himself despite everything that Yang Kai was doing. However, Yang Kai had kept track of him, and now that the store was almost going to be destroyed, the scholar finally could not bear to stay hidden any longer.

Yang Kai did not yet know whether he was friend or foe, but he instinctively felt that he did not mean any harm, or else he would have come out long ago.

“Blue Jade Bowl!”

“City Lord Fei!”

The exclamations of the First-Order Origin Returning Realm cultivators gave away the identity of the scholar.

The City Lord of Heavenly Fate City, Fei Zhi Tu!

Although Yang Kai has never interacted with him before, he had heard of his name. Back when he was having a conflict with the Hai Ke and Xu Families, the two Families once went to the City Lord’s Mansion to ask for help. While they were not able to meet Fei Zhi Tu in the end, Patriarch Yi En from the Hai Ke Family bumped into Xie Hong Wen there and managed to drag him into the conflict.

Yang Kai only knew him from Wu Yi’s introductions, and even then he didn’t know that he was a Third-Order Origin Returning Realm.

Looking at him, Yang Kai finally felt a sense of apprehension. The Blue Jade Bowl, being able to contain the attack of the Firebird, was clearly of a rather high grade and he, himself, had an unbelievably deep aura comparable to that of Qian Tong’s.

Just because he had the ability to act as he wanted under the eyes of seven to eight First-Order Origin Returning Realm cultivators didn’t mean that he could do the same before a Third-Order Origin Returning Realm master. However, he also didn’t have any plans to retreat before confirming the standpoint of the scholar. There were still trump cards that he had not yet played, such as the Space Blade and the Blossoming Lotus Secret Technique.

The crowd’s expression changed slightly when they recognised Fei Zhi Tu, and immediately stepped forward to pay their respects. Ma Xin Yuan said, “City Lord, Sir, I heard that you were cultivating a Secret Technique in retreat? Does this mean that you have succeeded?”

Fei Zhi Tu took a slow look at him, replying, “Why, is Steward Ma interested in the Secret Technique of this City Lord?”

“No, no, it was just a random question,” Ma Xin Yuan flinched and decided to stop talking.

“Hmph!” Fei Zhi Tu looked at the First-Order Origin Returning Realm cultivators one by one, speaking in slight mockery, “If this City Lord had not appeared, were you planning on taking apart this entire Heavenly Fate City?”

“We apologise, City Lord!” The crowd cupped their hands and responded immediately after hearing that. One of them stepped forward to explain, “There’s a reason for all of this. It is not our fault that the stores ended up in this state, but that insolent brat’s reckless actions that caused this. We ask you to be fair in your judgements, City Lord, Sir!”

He pointed towards Yang Kai.

Fei Zhi Tu turned to look at Yang Kai. While he was somewhat surprised at the fact that Yang Kai met his gaze without fear, he did not show it, instead scolding, “What a bunch of useless garbage! You call yourselves Origin Returning Realm cultivators when you can’t even handle a single Saint King Realm brat? I can’t believe you’ve still got the face to be here. Even dogs can do better than you!”

The seven or eight Origin Returning Realm cultivators all lowered their heads without saying a single word, a feeling of indignation growing in their hearts.

After scolding them, Fei Zhi Tu finally turned to Yang Kai and laughed dryly, "And aren't you a brave little brat? Daring to wreak all this havoc in the Heavenly Fate City as if I didn't exist?"

"Please understand, Senior. I was only forced to engage in a little bit of self-defence because this group of dishonest people were bullying me," Yang Kai replied indifferently.

"A little bit of self-defence..." Fei Zhi Tu's face twitched slightly. He had seen the whole exchange while he was in hiding. It was not so much self-defence as it was Yang Kai toying with the Origin Returning Realm cultivators. [What a shameless brat], he thought, lying with a straight face. "I heard you saying that you wanted to turn Heavenly Fate City upside down?"

Yang Kai cringed, "That was merely a bad choice of words due to all the anger I was feeling just now. Surely, you are too magnanimous of a person to take it seriously. Right, Sir?"

Fei Zhi Tu took a deep breath, laughing coldly, "I don't care if it was just a bad choice of words. What's said is said. Either you actually turn Heavenly Fate City upside down today, or you accept a punishment. Otherwise, you won't be leaving this place that easily."

Hearing that, Yang Kai's expression hardened. After a moment's thought, he smiled, "If that's the case, then I shall be so bold as to ask for your instructions!"

With such a high cultivation master here, he certainly wouldn't be able to keep causing trouble. However, from the implied message within Fei Zhi Tu's words, it seemed that he wasn't exactly an enemy.

The other Origin Returning Realm cultivators weren't idiots either, and they clearly understood Fei Zhi Tu's unspoken message. The City Lord was trying to call a truce with Yang Kai. Ma Xin Yuan's heart jumped at the thought, and he was just about to speak up when Fei Zhi Tu said, "You've killed quite a few people and burned a number of shops. Even if the Shadow Moon Hall was in the wrong, this should be more than enough revenge for you. Originally, things would end here, but if word got out that I let you off just like this, people will assume that this City Lord is but a mere coward."

"I understand!" Yang Kai nodded.

Chapter 1332, One Move

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Seeing how collaborative Yang Kai was being, Fei Zhi Tu showed a look of approval. When observing the little brat earlier, he had thought Yang Kai was an utterly lawless rebel, but as it turned out, he was quite the perceptive fellow, so his efforts did not go to waste.

Even though many stores in the city were indeed burned down, those were ultimately replaceable and could be easily reconstructed afterwards. As for the people who died, most were disciples of the Xie Family, who didn't have much to do with Fei Zhi Tu. In fact, even if everybody here died, it didn't really matter much to him.

After a moment of thought, Fei Zhi Tu said, "I shall give you two choices. You pick one."

Yang Kai immediately started acting as if he were listening attentively.

"One, use the Saint Crystals you obtained just now as reimbursement. I can't simply let you go after all that destruction, but those Saint Crystals should be enough as a fine. What do you say?"

Upon hearing this, the expressions of the goateed old man and the rest immediately changed. Their worry was real, and City Lord Fei was indeed intending to let Yang Kai off lightly! Remembering the rumours that were going around the Hall, they seemed to understand something, and nobody dared to speak.

Yang Kai looked stunned for a moment, then tilted his head in thought for a while before replying with a confident smile, "That is a great suggestion, Senior, but I'm afraid I would like to reject it."

"Hm?" Fei Zhi Tu narrowed his eyes, staring at Yang Kai in surprise. Honestly speaking, the only reason he would make such a suggestion was that he was the strongest of everyone here, and the City Lord on top of that, which meant that Ma Xin Yuan and the rest were unlikely to raise any objections. However, he didn't expect the little brat to reject his goodwill entirely, making him slightly annoyed. While silently berating Yang Kai for not understanding the severity of the situation, he snorted coldly, "You dare reject it even before hearing the other option?"

Yang Kai replied seriously, "The reason why I came here today was to take back the Saint Crystals which were stolen. Now that I have them, there's no way I will give them back. Please tell me what the second choice is, Senior."

Fei Zhi Tu stared at him for a long while before saying, "Alright then. Since you're set on it, this City Lord will not attempt to persuade you any further. The second choice is much simpler. Withstand a single move of mine without dodging. As long as you don't die, I shall allow you to leave!"

"Withstand a single move without dodging!" Yang Kai's eyes narrowed. Contrarily, Ma Xin Yuan and the rest were overjoyed to hear that.

Fei Zhi Tu was already at the peak of Third Order Origin Returning Realm, his strength almost comparable to Qian Tong's. If he personally attacked, even if it's just a single move, the arrogant brat would most certainly be gravely injured, if not outright dead.

As they rejoiced, Ma Xin Yuan and the rest even thought that they had misinterpreted Fei Zhi Tu's intentions. So he didn't plan on letting the little brat leave unharmed. It was only because of the difference in status and cultivation that made it difficult for him to act directly, but now that Yang Kai chose this himself, there was no more contention to be had. They looked towards Yang Kai in glee, waiting for the show to start.

"Chicken?" Fei Zhi Tu looked towards Yang Kai in mockery.

"Why would I be?" Yang Kai's eyes were shining with anticipation. A Third Order Origin Returning Realm was too great an opponent for him right now, but a single move shouldn't be too much to withstand. Even if he were to be hurt, it wouldn't take long for him to recover with his current restorative abilities.

This was the perfect chance to test the difference between himself and a cultivator of that level.

On the Shadowed Star, the peak of Third Order Origin Returning Realm was the highest cultivation. If he could leave unscathed after a clash against Fei Zhi Tu, then he could re-evaluate his own strength.

“Little brat, you’ve got balls!” Fei Zhi Tu’s previously amiable expression suddenly grew fierce. He exclaimed, “I hope you don’t regret your choice!”

Yang Kai remained silent, a look of focus on his face. With a wave of his hand, the Firebird hovering above his head let out a shriek and morphed into a ball of flames, shrouding his body completely in what looked like flowing magma, causing the space around him to bend.

Yang Kai then summoned his Purple Shield and poured his Saint Qi into it. The sandstorm formed around him immediately, concealing his figure within.

The next moment, a shield formed of pitch-black flames appeared before Yang Kai. This was the Grand Heavenly Shield formed from his own Saint Qi!

No sooner were the three layers of defence put up before a frightening pulse of Saint Qi radiated out from Fei Zhi Tu’s direction. He took a step forward and, without anyone being able to see what happened clearly, appeared directly around thirty metres away from Yang Kai.

The roar of a tiger rang out from within his body, and a gigantic tiger head began to form right above his body. At first, it looked to be a mere illusion, but as Fei Zhi Tu started injecting his Saint Qi into it, it became more and more solid.

At the same time, an unparalleled aura of savagery spread out from the tiger head.

The onlookers turned pale and backed away hurriedly. Although Fei Zhi Tu was not directing the attack towards them, the waves of murderous intent spreading out from the tiger head felt like wind blades cutting into their skin, chilling them to the bone.

The City Lord was serious! Everyone watched on in joy.

“Be careful, little brat!” Fei Zhi Tu exclaimed as the tiger head floating above his own suddenly opened its mouth and pounced towards Yang Kai with immense force, much like a real tiger pouncing on its prey.

Yang Kai’s expression was grave as he mobilised his Saint Qi with all his might.

In the next moment, the tiger head came into contact with the Grand Heavenly Shield set up in the outermost layer. A series of loud cracking sounds rang out as the tiger head tore through several dozen layers of the Grand Heavenly Shield like they were paper mache as it headed unimpeded towards the second layer of sandstorm.

The enormous power of the sandstorm was generated by the force hidden within the Purple Shield. As the tiger head plunged into it, it slowed all of a sudden, and even seemed to show signs of stopping.

However, Yang Kai was shocked rather than elated at this, and his expression grew even graver.

Fei Zhi Tu laughed coldly. Activating his Divine Sense, the tiger head suddenly shot out a beam of dark light from its mouth, which exploded as soon as it appeared, tearing a gap in the sandstorm. Taking this opportunity, the tiger head pushed forward, and the sandstorm could do nothing to stop it.

In the blink of an eye, the gigantic tiger head had advanced all the way to Yang Kai, opening its mouth and biting downwards at Yang Kai.

Yang Kai didn't dare be careless, and he immediately willed the defensive barrier which the Artifact Spirit Firebird had morphed into to start rotating, causing it to appear as if his whole body was being set ablaze, radiating an intense heat outwards.

The roars of the tiger and shrieks of the bird were unceasing.

Ma Xin Yuan and the rest craned their necks in hopes of seeing if Yang Kai was already gravely injured or dead, but their sights were completely obstructed by the sandstorm, and they could only wait anxiously for the result.

Nonetheless, a few people were able to infer from Fei Zhi Tu's expression that Yang Kai wasn't suffering any immediate dangers.

With a fwoosh, the sandstorm suddenly dispersed, converging once again into a shining Purple Shield as it flew aside. At the same time, Yang Kai's figure backed away from within, his face pale. The Artifact Spirit Firebird which had been shrouding him had already disengaged and was now hovering once again above his head. While the colour of the tiger head had dimmed significantly, it was still chasing after Yang Kai, looking like it was still going for the kill.

Midair, Yang Kai's expression grew fierce, and with a wave of both of his hands, several pitch-black Space Blades slashed out, heading towards the tiger head.

Seeing this, Fei Zhi Tu furrowed his brows, then shouted as realisation dawned on him, "Stop!"

As he spoke, he had already repositioned himself in front of the tiger head, absorbing it back into his body with a wave of one hand while the other summoned out the Blue Jade Bowl. A beam of blinding blue light shot out and headed towards the Space Blades.

Chi chi chi...

The blue light instantly dimmed, causing Fei Zhi Tu to show a pained expression.

The Blue Jade Bowl was a long-time artifact of his, and one of which he relied upon most. The blue light stored in it harboured some strange qualities, and had been able to save him many times in fights against enemies. However, just now, he clearly felt that some of that light had disappeared, and he couldn't even tell exactly where to.

Possibly because of those mysterious blades giving out the pulse of Space Force, he realised as his pained expression grew.

The blue light that he had lost would take years for him to replenish, and he would even have to sacrifice some precious treasures for that purpose.

At this point in time, he was having serious thoughts about killing Yang Kai. He had not suffered such a loss even against opponents of the same cultivation, not to mention a mere Saint King Realm.

By the time Fei Zhi Tu summoned the Blue Jade Bowl, Yang Kai had already stopped his attacks, retreating to his shield and reclaiming it. He took a few deep breaths, finally restoring some colour to his pale face. Only after all this did he look towards Fei Zhi Tu with a slightly strange expression on his face.

“You...” Fei Zhi Tu looked at his Blue Jade Bowl, then at Yang Kai, his expression twisted to the extreme.

Yang Kai merely chuckled, “Senior, that’s the second move.”

Fei Zhi Tu froze, laughed bitterly, took a long look at Yang Kai, then finally waved his hand in exasperation, “Go on, get out. Don’t ever step foot within Heavenly Fate City ever again, or I will make you regret it.”

“Thank you for showing mercy, Senior. Um, if possible, I would like to ask Senior to return the ball of fire you absorbed earlier!” Yang Kai stared at the Blue Jade Bowl in his hands.

Fei Zhi Tu’s face twitched. He then sent a strand of Saint Qi into the Blue Jade Bowl, and a ball of fire flew out at once. The Artifact Spirit Firebird opened its mouth and sucked the fire in, hovering one last round before disappearing into Yang Kai’s body.

It wasn’t that Fei Zhi Tu was being extremely nice, just that he felt that something was off with the ball of fire that had been absorbed. It wasn’t something he could refine and, if sealed within the Blue Jade Bowl for too long, could not only affect the artifact’s power but also cause damage to it. Compared to that, he was more willing to do Yang Kai a favour.

“Goodbye!” Yang Kai cupped his fists. He took one last long look at Ma Xin Yuan and the rest, as if trying to commit their faces to memory, and let out a cold laugh before summoning his Star Shuttle and heading off towards the direction of Dragon Cave Mountain.

Chapter 1333, Late Night Meeting

Among the ruins of Heavenly Fate City, Ma Xin Yuan and others stood silently, their faces sombre and the atmosphere dignified.

They had not expected Yang Kai to really be able to resist one move from Fei Zhi Tu and then retreat safely.

All of them had witnessed the power behind that move and understood that Fei Zhi Tu had not just been putting on a show. None of the Origin Realm masters present were confident they could have successfully blocked that move, yet a mere Third-Order Saint King Realm youth had.

While Ma Xin Yuan and the others felt shocked, a fear of Yang Kai swept over them. This boy was just a Third-Order Saint King yet already possessed such strength, so what would happen if he were to break through to the Origin Returning Realm?

Everyone on the scene was an old fox, so naturally they understood the truth of strangling danger in its cradle, and after witnessing Yang Kai’s cold gaze before he left, none of them doubted he would seek revenge for this when he rose up in the future.

After hesitating for a moment, Ma Xin Yuan cupped his fists and haltingly asked, “Sir City Lord, are you really going to just let him go?”

"If I don't let him go, what do you want me to do?" Fei Zhi Tu had a stomach full of grievances but nowhere to vent, so he glared coldly the moment Ma Xin Yuan spoke up.

"But that little brat killed a member of the Xie Family..."

"Xie Family!" Fei Zhi Tu coldly snorted, "So what? Are you also a member of the Xie Family? What do the lives of the Xie Family have to do with me?"

Ma Xin Yuan lowered his head and did not dare say anything more.

"Hmph, if you don't want to let him go, you can chase after him now, as long as you have the confidence to make him remain!"

"Sir City Lord surely jests," The group of people all looked extremely embarrassed, none of them daring to mention Yang Kai again.

"Since you have no confidence in your own strength, just shut up and stay put! If anyone dares question this City Lord's conduct again, do not blame this City Lord for not giving any face. In addition, do you really think that old fart Qian Tong really will not come back? Heh, you'd all best pray you've made the right choice today, otherwise, there may be no place for you in Shadow Moon Hall in the future."

The group of people all glanced around at each other in dismay and were about to try to inquire more about the current situation when they saw Fei Zhi Tu flick his sleeve and fly off.

"Brother Ma, what should we do? Listening to what City Lord Fei said just now, there seems to be some twists and turns in the battle inside the Sect. Perhaps the rumours about Elder Qian aren't..." Someone looked at Ma Xin Yuan and asked.

"That's right! Brother Ma, didn't you say this time's matter was foolproof and wouldn't have any repercussions? Why else would we all cooperate with the Xie Family against a Saint King Realm Junior if that wasn't the case?" Someone else chimed in.

Ma Xin Yuan's expression became ugly and impatient as he shouted, "If you ask this old master, who is this old master supposed to ask? This old master just listened to the people above and followed their instructions, how am I supposed to understand the specific situation? If you really want to know, go try asking Manager Xie and see what answer he can give you."

"Manager Xie..." Listening to Ma Xin Yuan's excuses, how could everyone here not know that this time they had been used as pawns? Feeling deeply regretful and remembering Qian Tong's power and ability, all of them went pale, cupped their fists, and left quickly.

Back at Dragon Cave Mountain, Yang Kai returned with a pale face.

As soon as he entered the mountain, he saw Wu Yi, Yang Yan, Qian Yue, and the others standing there waiting for him. When the three women saw him appear, they all greeted him joyfully.

"Are you hurt?" Wu Yi saw Yang Kai's complexion and could not help calling out in alarm.

"I'm fine. How are Yu Feng and the others doing?" Yang Kai waved his hand and asked.

“They’re busy healing, but it shouldn’t take long before they recover. If you had not returned just now, Foreign Elder Chang and Foreign Elder Hao would have rushed back to Heavenly Fate City.”

“En,” Yang Kai gently nodded, “Tell them there’s no need for that, this time’s matter will end here. Shadow Moon Hall shouldn’t engage in any kind of harassment anymore, but you should try not to go out during this time and be especially careful of the Xie Family. They might try to make a move.”

“Understood, I’ll make sure no one leaves unless absolutely necessary,” Wu Yi responded quickly before immediately saying with concern, “You also need to heal your wounds.”

Yang Kai nodded and walked towards his cave mansion.

Fei Zhi Tu deserved his reputation as a peak Third-Order Origin Returning Realm master. Although the move he made did not outwardly seem fancy or profound, only Yang Kai, who had taken it head-on, understood how fierce it was. Unfortunately, whether his opponent had used his full strength or not was something Yang Kai could not tell.

Needing only a single move to wound him, even without using full strength, it seemed the gap between Yang Kai and the Third-Order Origin Returning Realm was still too big.

Taking a few bottles of pills out from his ring, Yang Kai poured them out and began stuffing them into his mouth before closing his eyes and adjusting his breathing.

Fortunately, his injuries were not serious and only his aura was a bit unstable, so after half a day of meditation, Yang Kai had basically completely recovered. His Golden Blood’s restorative abilities were as astonishing as ever, so this minor injury was really nothing to Yang Kai.

Releasing his Divine Sense and realizing that it was already late at night, Yang Kai’s expression became solemn as he quietly got up, opened the cave mansion’s barrier, and stealthily left Dragon Cave Mountain before flying straight to Heavenly Fate City.

Soon after, Yang Kai arrived at the city and, following the route in his memory, rushed towards the City Lord’s Mansion.

After another cup of tea worth of time, Yang Kai landed outside the City Lord’s Mansion, and although this was his first time here, under the investigation of his Divine Sense, he was quickly able to grasp the situation here.

Tonight, the City Lord’s Mansion seemed a little weird. There were no people around, not even the cultivators who would normally be responsible for patrolling and guarding the perimeter.

The City Lord’s Mansion’s staff did not know what was happening, only that tonight the City Lord himself had ordered that everyone was forbidden to move about the compound. Anyone found disobeying this decree would be killed without mercy!

Facing this kind of strict order, no one dared to violate the City Lord’s command.

Seemingly having anticipated this, Yang Kai simply walked right through the front entrance of the City Lord’s Mansion. After taking a few turns, he soon arrived at a certain side building inside the City Lord’s Mansion and, just as he stood firm, Fei Zhi Tu’s voice called out, “Since you’ve arrived, come in and sit down.”

Hearing this, Yang Kai smiled slightly and pushed the door openly.

Inside this building, Fei Zhi Tu sat on a chair and looked towards the door with a smile. After Yang Kai walked in, he waved his hand lightly, using his Saint Qi to close the door again.

Yang Kai's expression remained unchanged as he walked directly to another chair across from Fei Zhi Tu and sat down calmly.

"Today I saw you were quite bold, but it seems I still underestimated your courage. Aren't you afraid that after entering the tiger's cave you won't be able to easily leave?" Fei Zhi Tu sneered meaningfully.

"Senior need not joke, if you really wanted to deal with this Junior, there would be no need to go through all this trouble. Taking action directly would have sufficed," Yang Kai replied lightly.

Fei Zhi Tu's eyes flashed brightly, and he nodded, "Good, it seems that old fart Qian Tong didn't misread you, a truly impressive youth!"

"May I ask why Senior Fei silently sent this Junior a message earlier today, asking me to come here at this time?" Yang Kai asked in a solemn tone.

During the day, when he fought with Fei Zhi Tu, the other party had suddenly sent him a Divine Sense Message asking him to come to the City Lord's Mansion at night, a development that puzzled Yang Kai greatly. Although he did not know the reason, he could guess that it was related somehow to the recent changes in Shadow Moon Hall.

"If I said I want to ask you for your help, would you believe me?"

"My help?" Yang Kai frowned, "What kind of help?"

"Let's set that aside for the moment. Let me first ask you, what do you think of Shadow Moon Hall's current situation?" Fei Zhi Tu lowered his voice and asked solemnly.

Yang Kai slowly shook his head, "Junior has recently been in retreat on Dragon Cave Mountain, so he isn't aware of what has been happening outside. I hope Senior can enlighten me."

"So, that's how it is!" Fei Zhi Tu gently nodded, "In that case, this City Lord won't beat around the bush. The reason your Dragon Cave Mountain was targeted this time is actually because of the infighting going on inside Shadow Moon Hall. Regarding this, my Shadow Moon Hall has utterly wronged you; after all, you have been happily cooperating with us over the past few years and our relationship has brought great benefits to both parties. However, your Dragon Cave Mountain still being able to remain safe and steady is mainly because of that old fart Qian Tong sheltering you. Now though, Qian Tong has encountered a little trouble and some people want to take this opportunity to deal with him. They used your grievance with the Xie Family as an excuse to act against your Dragon Cave Mountain so they could test Qian Tong's reaction."

Having said this much, Fei Zhi Tu stared at Yang Kai for a moment but to his surprise he did not see any change in expression on this youth's face, prompting him to ask, "You already knew?"

Yang Kai simply chuckled, "I had my speculations."

“Fierce!” Fei Zhi Tu’s eyes flashed with approval, “Since you’ve already guessed that much, the rest is easier to explain. In short, Shadow Moon Hall is currently divided into two camps, one headed by Qian Tong, the other by an Elder named Feng Zhen. These two have different ideas and employ different methods, causing conflict between them inside the Sect. Moreover, these two respectively oversee the Sect’s Artifact Refining and Alchemy divisions with the other Elders and Deacons fairly evenly distributed among them. These two factions have been struggling with one another for many years, but no major incidents had taken place until recently a big event broke the balance between them.”

“Grandmaster Ge Lin’s death?” Yang Kai narrowed his eyes as he recalled this matter. Qian Tong and Grandmaster Ge Lin had a particularly good personal relationship, so when Grandmaster Ge Lin passed away, it was equivalent to Qian Tong losing one of his greatest supporters, inevitably causing the other faction to have some ideas.

Yang Kai thought his guess was correct, but Fei Zhi Tu sneered and shook his head, “Grandmaster Ge Lin’s death was indeed part of the reason, but the real cause of this falling out was something else.”

“Something else?” Yang Kai asked curiously.

“Speaking of this matter, you were also involved in it,” Fei Zhi Tu whispered, “The Red Candle Fruit piece!”

“That?!” Yang Kai suddenly realized.

“In Shadow Moon Hall, the Sect Master isn’t actually the strongest. The most powerful ones are that old fart Qian Tong and Feng Zhen. Both of them have the highest chance to break through to the Origin King Realm, but there is only a small piece of the Red Candle Fruit and everyone wants it. Surely you can imagine how the situation developed from there, right? “

“If that’s the case, it certainly could explain the current situation,” Yang Kai’s expression flashed a look of understanding.

Two years ago, when the Flowing Flame Sand Field opened, a Red Candle Fruit had appeared in the third layer, and although it had ultimately been cut into several pieces by Leng Qing of Star Emperor Mountain, Wei Gu Chang and Dong Xuan’er managed to snatch one of those pieces and successfully bring it back to Shadow Moon Hall. This treasure was rumoured to be able to allow an Origin Returning Realm master to break through to the Origin King Realm. This kind of temptation was far too great, so it was not surprising that the original balance between Shadow Moon Hall’s factions was broken by its appearance.

Chapter 1334, Qian Tong Is Stranded

& Dhael Ligerkeys

“Heh, in truth, that old fart Qian Tong isn’t the type of person who likes fighting with others, but the significance of that Red Candle Fruit piece is just too great. If it could really promote him to the Origin King Realm, then my Shadow Moon Hall would become the first Sect on Shadowed Star. Not even Star Emperor Mountain would be a match for my Shadow Moon Hall, so although this hope is slim, in the end, it is still hope. Old Qian knows this and Feng Zhen naturally knows it as well, so the hostility that

had been just below the surface finally broke out. The internal workings of Shadow Moon Hall can now only be described as a chaotic mess,” Fei Zhi Tu said with some sadness, “If this matter isn’t handled well, at best my Shadow Moon Hall will suffer a sharp decline, and at worst it will completely collapse!”

“Are things really so serious?” Yang Kai’s face changed slightly.

“The grievances between the Elders and Deacons of the two factions that Qian Tong and Feng Zhen lead have been piling up for many years. Until now, they had been suppressed by the Sect Master so no big trouble ever erupted, but this time, the Sect Master is truly helpless. In fact, if not for Sect Master being so old, this Red Candle Fruit piece would have been taken by him and that would have been the end of it, but Sect Master couldn’t bear to waste such a Heaven defying treasure, so he refused to use it. If this dispute inside the Shadow Moon Hall really turns into an all-out conflict, heh, little brat, you understand what it means to be an egg in a quarrelling nest?”

Yang Kai’s eyes twitched; how could he not understand what Fei Zhi Tu wanted to say? If Shadow Moon Hall really fell apart, then Dragon Cave Mountain would also suffer disaster; after all, Dragon Cave Mountain was still within the core territory of Shadow Moon Hall, so what would happen to them if a war broke out was impossible to say.

But soon, Yang Kai’s expression became flat as he stared at Fei Zhi Tu and asked, “Senior need not spin such a terrifying tale, this Junior just wants to know now, which faction do you belong to?”

“Me?” Fei Zhi Tu raised his brow, laughing wryly a moment later as he slowly said, “This City Lord had grown tired of those people’s infighting, so I asked the Sect Master to assign me the duty of overseeing Heavenly Fate City. As the master of this city, which faction do you believe I belong to?”

Yang Kai gently nodded and said with a smile, “From Senior’s words just now and the concern you showed about Elder Qian, I thought for sure you were a member of Elder Qian’s faction.”

“Bullshit! Qian Tong that old fart...” Fei Zhi Tu coldly snorted, seemingly wanting to continue cursing, but halfway through he swallowed his words and waved his hand in annoyance, “Forget it. Long story short, I owe Qian Tong a big favour, so this time I plan on paying it back in full!”

“What does this matter have to do with me?” Yang Kai frowned, “For what reason did Senior call Junior out here so late at night?”

Fei Zhi Tu stared at Yang Kai with a solemn look and said, “Qian Tong ran into some trouble!”

Yang Kai’s eyes narrowed.

“You don’t seem like an ungrateful person. Your Dragon Cave Mountain being able to develop steadily these past few years has much to do with Qian Tong’s care. Do not think he hasn’t looked after you. If not for him taking a commanding position here in Heavenly Fate City, your little home might have already been swallowed whole. A trivial few youngsters who don’t know the immensity of Heaven and Earth actually occupying other people’s territory and lording over it? Hmph.”

“For the time being, let us not mention Dragon Cave Mountain. City Lord Fei, tell me about Elder Qian’s situation. If there is any place I can help with, I will certainly not refuse,” Yang Kai said lightly. There was no need to mention out loud things that Yang Kai was already well aware of. He knew that Dragon Cave Mountain remaining so calm and steady these past few years was indeed mainly thanks to Qian Tong’s

shelter, but Fei Zhi Tu blatantly pointing out this fact was still uncomfortable to hear, causing his tone to become somewhat cold.

Fei Zhi Tu didn't seem to mind either way and continued, "What I want to tell you next is something only a few people know. This matter is of great importance, so absolutely do not let it leak out."

After receiving this urge, Yang Kai nodded in understanding.

Listening to Fei Zhi Tu's explanation, Yang Kai realized that Qian Tong had been missing for nearly half a year. Calculating the time, Qian Tong had already been gone when Yang Kai and Yang Yan set out for Coloured Glass Sect.

As for where he went, there were many differing opinions. Some people said that he had entered a secluded retreat to comprehend some kind of profound Secret Technique. Others said he went out in search of some opportunity and encountered an unexpected accident. Others still said he did not wish to be the cause of Shadow Moon Hall's collapse and had decided to go into exile.

However, no matter which hypothesis, no one was able to confirm anything.

At this moment, when Shadow Moon Hall was falling apart and fierce disputes were happening throughout the Sect, Qian Tong's sudden disappearance was truly quite puzzling. It was precisely because he had disappeared at such a critical juncture that Feng Zhen was becoming more and more daring. Now, in Shadow Moon Hall, although there were still several influential Elders who could join forces to suppress Feng Zhen, without a key person like Qian Tong to lead them, they had fallen into a disadvantage.

If Qian Tong failed to return soon, the consequences would definitely be unimaginable.

This time, Ma Xin Yuan and several others joining forces with the Xie Family to deal with Dragon Cave Mountain was a final probe from Feng Zhen towards Qian Tong. Feng Zhen wanted to see if, when he took this opportunity to deal with Dragon Cave Mountain it would force Qian Tong to appear. Although the result of this probe was the death of an Origin Returning Realm master from the Xie Family, it should still be able to satisfy Feng Zhen's faction.

Qian Tong not showing up from beginning to end was enough to prove that something had gone wrong.

As soon as the outcome of this probe was passed back to the Sect, it was almost certain that Feng Zhen's faction would begin making a big move.

"Where is Elder Qian now?" Yang Kai asked with a frown.

"An Ancient Ruin!" Fei Zhi Tu replied in a low voice.

"An Ancient Ruin?" Yang Kai's eyes lit up.

"Yes, but whether he's alive or dead, I don't know," Fei Zhi Tu sighed, "The last time I received news from him was half a month ago. At that time, he used this thing to pass me a message."

Saying this, Fei Zhi Tu flicked his wrist and a small white light suddenly appeared at his fingertips and flew directly to Yang Kai.

Yang Kai reached out and directly grabbed the white light, holding it in his palm as he observed it. To his surprise though, this white light turned out to be a kind of insect similar to a snow-white silkworm. It was only a couple centimetres long and through its pure white exterior one could make out some tiny blood vessels.

However, when Yang Kai swept this strange insect with his Divine Sense, a message suddenly sounded in his mind.

Yang Kai was startled but quickly calmed down and listened quietly.

The message this insect relayed was indeed left by Qian Tong, and by listening to it, Yang Kai immediately understood the other party's situation.

It was just as Fei Zhi Tu had said, Qian Tong was stranded in an Ancient Ruin and could not get out of it. He had been forced to let this insect come to Heavenly Fate City with his distress message to ask Fei Zhi Tu for help.

"This insect is called a Messenger Insect. It is an Exotic Ancient Insect whose only use is delivering messages. However, because it can ignore all forms of barriers and arrays, it is quite convenient to use. Don't be fooled by its bloated appearance either, it's quite fast," Fei Zhi Tu explained after Yang Kai finished his investigation.

Yang Kai gently nodded, and a dignified look flashed across his face as he returned the Messenger Insect to Fei Zhi Tu.

Judging from what he heard just now, Qian Tong's situation was not optimistic. The message left in this Messenger Insect seemed to have been recorded after Qian Tong had suffered injury, so after so long it was impossible to know what state he was in.

"City Lord Fei, might I ask why Elder Qian would choose such a critical moment to go explore an Ancient Ruin?" Yang Kai asked in confusion.

Fei Zhi Tu coldly snorted, "How should I know what he's thinking?"

After a pause though, he continued, "If I had to guess, he didn't want Shadow Moon Hall's conflict to erupt into a full blown civil war, so he was looking for a way to balance the two factions' power again in order to stabilize the current situation. You should know that he had a close personal relationship with Grandmaster Ge Lin before. En, with the prestige and contacts of Grandmaster Ge Lin, it was previously possible to completely suppress Feng Zhen's faction, but now that Grandmaster Ge Lin has passed away, while the other side still has an Origin Grade Alchemist supporting them, the delicate balance has naturally disappeared. The Ancient Ruin Old Qian went to explore was something Grandmaster Ge Lin had discovered, and the reason Grandmaster Ge Lin was able to become an Origin Grade Artifact Refiner was also thanks to that ruin. Qian Tong going to search this Ancient Ruin this time was his desperate attempt to allow another person to break through their bottleneck and reach the level of Origin Grade Artifact Refiner. Once another Origin Grade Artifact Refiner emerges, the initiative for this situation would fall back into Qian Tong's hands. Right, I forget to tell you, Qian Tong did not go out alone, he brought with him another person, a Saint King Grade Artifact Refiner who can be regarded as Grandmaster Ge Lin's successor."

“Then Elder Qian’s actions were well thought out,” Yang Kai could not help saying with a hint of admiration.

“Well thought out?” Fei Zhi Tu sneered disdainfully, “I think he was just trying to avoid the issue. Originally, with his means and connections, as long as he could harden his heart, even without Grandmaster Ge Lin’s presence he could definitely make Feng Zhen beg for death, but instead, that old fart chose to go around the sun to reach the moon. Why bother with those damned Ancient Ruins? Why not just solve the problem once and for all?”

Yang Kai grinned meaningfully, “It seems City Lord Fei and Elder Qian have a very good relationship.”

“The relationship between this City Lord and that old fart has no need for your comments!” Fei Zhi Tu’s face went cold, “I called you this time because I want your help fishing Qian Tong out from those Ancient Ruins, lest he really dies inside.”

“How this Junior can assist in this matter, I hope City Lord Fei can make clear. If those Ancient Ruins can trap Qian Tong, with my negligible cultivation, if I were to run over and explore them, what difference with seeking death would there be?”

“You’re certainly cautious enough, but this City Lord will make his point clear, lest you not be able to feel at ease. What I am interested in is not your personal strength. You are indeed extraordinary, a Third-Order Saint King being able to socialize with so many Origin Returning Realm masters, and even receive a move from me is quite extraordinary. Even if you relied on external forces like that shield artifact and your Artifact Spirit, your skills cannot be discounted. But if you were to enter that Ancient Ruin with only this kind of strength, you would only be a burden... however, your Artifact Spirit is a different matter. I want to borrow its power.”

Yang Kai curled his lips, realizing that Fei Zhi Tu’s purpose in calling him out here late at night was because he had his eyes on the Artifact Spirit.

“There is an ice road inside that Ancient Ruin which is extremely dangerous. Your Artifact Spirit’s flames are also not ordinary; even my Blue Jade Bowl was unable to refine and disperse them. If this City Lord can have your Artifact Spirit’s assistance, it will be much easier to pass through that ice road.”

Chapter 1335, You Actually Want Benefits?

& Dhael Ligerkeys

“Is that all?” Yang Kai asked in surprise after he finished listening.

“That’s all!” Fei Zhi Tu nodded slowly, “After crossing that ice road, whether breaking any kind barriers or rescuing Qian Tong, you don’t need to worry about it, this City Lord will make appropriate arrangements. If not for being unable to find an appropriate Fire Attribute artifact to restrain the chill of that ice road, I wouldn’t have delayed for so long. “

Yang Kai stroked his chin silently.

Fei Zhi Tu did not urge him further, allowing Yang Kai time to think things over. This was a matter of great importance, and although Fei Zhi Tu said he only wanted to use the power of Yang Kai’s Artifact

Spirit to safely cross the ice road, it would still require entering an Ancient Ruin, so saying that there would be no risks was impossible. Even a master like Qian Tong had become trapped in that place, so Fei Zhi Tu could not make any guarantees.

This was a life or death risk, so of course, Yang Kai would need to think about it.

However, Fei Zhi Tu was confident Yang Kai would agree. As Heavenly Fate City's City Lord, Fei Zhi Tu knew much about the nearby Dragon Cave Mountain and had heard enough rumours about Yang Kai to know he wasn't an ungrateful villain.

Sure enough, after a while, Yang Kai raised his head and a steady look flashed across his eyes, obviously having made a decision. Noticing this, Fei Zhi Tu immediately stared at him.

"City Lord Fei, my Dragon Cave Mountain truly owes Elder Qian a great graciousness, so now that he has encountered trouble this Junior will naturally try his best to help!"

Hearing this, Fei Zhi Tu gently nodded, a trace of satisfaction appearing on his face as he secretly thought this youth had a praiseworthy sense of character.

But in the next instant, Yang Kai grinned and asked, "But what benefits are there in this for me?"

"Benefits?" Fei Zhi Tu was dumbfounded as he gawked towards Yang Kai and asked, "You actually want benefits?"

Yang Kai smiled as he said, "Isn't City Lord Fei underestimating Junior too much? Junior has already passed the age where he acts hot-blooded and reckless with no regard for the future. City Lord Fei doesn't think I will agree to help after only hearing a few words, right? Since I must take on risks, naturally I want to obtain some benefits!"

Fei Zhi Tu frowned as a trace of disappointment flashed across his face, coldly saying, "But this is about rescuing Qian Tong, not some random stranger!"

"And so? If Elder Qian had sent me a message personally, of course, Junior would have done his utmost without asking for compensation, but the one asking for my help now is Senior Fei. Junior is not familiar with you, so naturally, I should be asking you for benefits; after all, if we successfully rescue Elder Qian, the one Elder Qian will owe a favour to is you. It will have little to do with this Junior."

"What kind of sophistry is that!?" Fei Zhi Tu's face went blue as he shouted. Never had he imagined that Yang Kai would bluntly ask him for benefits. This was completely different from what he had envisioned. In Fei Zhi Tu's opinion, his inviting Yang Kai was already giving this youth a great amount of face. If the other party didn't possess that Fire Attribute Artifact Spirit, with his Third-Order Saint King Realm cultivation, he would simply not be eligible to participate in this action, and when the time really came, how could Qian Tong not show this kid any gratitude?

[This little brat is too shameless!] Fei Zhi Tu snorted angrily.

"Whether or not my words are sophistry, City Lord Fei should be able to judge himself," Yang Kai replied calmly, not showing any signs of impatience.

Fei Zhi Tu glared at him for a long time, but suddenly remembering something, he wore a cunning grin and said, "If you want benefits, then I will give you benefits! Boy, you killed Xie Hong Wen of the Xie Family, right?"

Yang Kai's face changed slightly but he quickly said, "City Lord Fei, food can be eaten freely, but words may not be spoken randomly. What evidence do you have to prove that I killed Xie Hong Wen?"

"Don't try to play dumb with me!" Fei Zhi Tu coldly snorted, "Do you think other people don't know about what you've done?"

Yang Kai frowned, feeling that the other party really was not just making baseless accusations. Quickly wearing a humble appearance, he asked, "Please enlighten me, Senior."

Fei Zhi Tu smiled deviously and said, "Your grievances with Xie Hong Wen were known by many people, and when the Flowing Flame Sand Field opened, Xie Hong Wen deliberately brought two Xie Family Saint King Realm disciples with him just to seek revenge on you. However, when the Flowing Flame Sand field closed, none of them appeared again, so clearly they had died in the Flowing Flame Sand Field!"

"The Flowing Flame Sand Field is filled with danger. Even if he did die inside, what does that have to do with me?" Yang Kai's expression remained indifferent as he continued to deny the charge.

"Shadow Moon Hall has a rather special Secret Technique which can be applied to a Junior by their Elders. When a Junior falls, this Secret Technique will transfer itself to the one who killed them automatically. Not only does Xie Hong Wen have this Secret Technique placed on him, Wei Gu Chang, Dong Xuan'er and all the other elite disciples of the Sect do as well. I assume this City Lord doesn't need to explain any further, yes?"

Yang Kai's flashed an amazed expression. If Fei Zhi Tu was not lying to him, he must have been marked by that Secret Technique, and if that was the case, his killing Xie Hong Wen was probably not a secret.

"The Xie Family hadn't taken action against you for two reasons, firstly because they feared Qian Tong and secondly because you rarely appeared after returning from the Flowing Flame Sand Field. The barriers and arrays protecting Dragon Cave Mountain are extremely powerful, so the Xie Family masters were unable to detect whether that Secret Technique had been transferred to you, but you leaving Dragon Cave Mountain just once was enough to confirm you killed Xie Hong Wen," Fei Zhi Tu grinned meaningfully, "As long as you can accompany this City Lord on this trip, not only can I help you to disperse that stubborn Secret Technique, I can also promise you that in the future the Xie Family will never trouble your Dragon Cave Mountain again. I can even restore your previous trade relationship with Shadow Moon Hall, so are these benefits enough?"

While he was talking, Yang Kai had already used his Divine Sense to carefully examine his body, a moment later his expression turned extremely ugly.

In his body, Yang Kai discovered an extremely well concealed foreign energy mark. This mark's energy fluctuations were very weak and if not for him meticulously scanning every inch of his body, Yang Kai would not have noticed it. Even with Fei Zhi Tu revealing this, Yang Kai had to check himself three times before he was able to discover the existence of this mark.

It seemed that this Shadow Moon Hall Secret Technique was truly covert.

“You found it?” Fei Zhi Tu looked at him in surprise. Although Yang Kai did not say anything, from the change in his expression, this point was fairly easy to determine.

This Secret Technique was extremely stealthy, and as far as Fei Zhi Tu knew, the mark which was applied to Xie Hong Wen was planted by Xie Li. Xie Li was a Second-Order Origin Returning Realm cultivator, but even a master with equivalent strength may not have been able to find a trace of it, so how had this Third-Order Saint King youth done so?

Fei Zhi Tu could not help admiring Yang Kai while secretly wondering if he had used some kind of powerful artifact to help him find this mark.

Yang Kai did not answer his question and instead tried to wrap this weak energy mark with his Demonic Flames to dissolve it. However, he soon found that although this mark’s energy fluctuations were extremely weak, they were also extremely difficult to refine. From the looks of it, it would take at least a few days to eliminate this mark.

Now that he had found it though, Yang Kai wasn’t in a hurry to remove it and pondered for a moment before turning to Fei Zhi Tu with a solemn expression, “I can agree with half of Senior’s proposal!”

“Half?”

“En, after this matter is completed, Dragon Cave Mountain’s trade relationship with Shadow Moon Hall can be restored, but the price of goods will need to be discussed again. As for Xie Family... heh, this Junior only has one request.”

“Let’s hear it!” Fei Zhi Tu narrowed his eyes at him.

“Shadow Moon Hall must not interfere with my and the Xie Family’s grievances!” Yang Kai declared.

Fei Zhi Tu raised his brow in astonishment. He had thought that Yang Kai was going to ask Shadow Moon Hall to suppress the Xie Family and not allow them to seek trouble with Dragon Cave Mountain in the future, how could he have known that this little brat’s courage would be so great. From the request Yang Kai made, it was obvious he wanted to personally and permanently settle things with Xie Family!

After understanding this point, Fei Zhi Tu suddenly became interested.

Although the Xie Family wasn’t a top-level family, it still had many Origin Returning Realm masters with its Patriarch being a genuine Second-Order Origin Realm master. With the strength of Dragon Cave Mountain today, could it really compete with a force like this? Was this boy simply sleep-talking?

Fei Zhi Tu didn’t want to interfere in the grievances between Yang Kai and Xie Family in the first place, and he was completely disinterested in what kind of bear hearts and leopard galls this boy had eaten to dare run his mouth like this, so he immediately nodded, “Sounds reasonable. As long as Qian Tong can return, I can guarantee that even if you destroy the Xie Family completely, Shadow Moon Hall will not raise any objections; of course, that will depend on if you have this ability.”

He was not very confident about Yang Kai’s chances.

Yang Kai did not bother arguing with him and instead began discussing the details of the operation. After agreeing on a date and place to meet, he got up and left the City Lord’s Mansion alone.

After Yang Kai left, Fei Zhi Tu frowned and muttered, "Wait, why didn't that boy ask me to help him get rid of that Secret Technique mark? Does he have a way to remove it himself?"

Thinking about it for a while, Fei Zhi Tu slowly shook his head, too lazy to bother with it any further. The Xie Family already knew that Xie Hong Wen had died at Yang Kai's hands, so it didn't really matter if this mark was removed or not.

Yang Kai returned to Dragon Cave Mountain without alerting anyone.

The date he agreed on with Fei Zhi Tu was in three days' time. Fei Zhi Tu apparently still had to make some preparations and he had to make sure to conceal his activities, otherwise, he might draw unwanted attention.

Taking advantage of these three days, Yang Kai planned to purge the weak mark from his body. Although from what Fei Zhi Tu had explained, this Secret Technique was only used to determine the killer of an elite disciple, who knows what other kinds of effects it could have?

Such a thing lingering inside his body made it impossible for Yang Kai to rest easy.

Fortunately, Yang Kai's Demonic Flames were quite extraordinary, incomparable to the Saint Qi of ordinary cultivators.

With the Artifact Spirit Firebird's help, only two days later, Yang Kai managed to destroy the energy mark and, upon re-examining himself, he breathed a sigh of relief.

Next, Yang Kai summoned Chang Qi, Hao An, Yang Yan, Wu Yi, and Qian Yue, carefully telling them not to go out during this time, so as not to be targeted by the Xie Family's people. After seeing everyone nod, Yang Kai returned to his cave mansion to make a few preparations.

In fact, there were no special preparations to make. Saint Crystals would ordinarily be a must, but in addition to what Yang Kai always carried with him, Yang Yan had given him many of the crystal spheres the Stone Puppet had compressed and refined. Whether it was in terms of quantity or total internal energy, these spheres were far superior to High-Rank Saint Crystals whether they were used for healing, restoring, or combat.

Yang Yan called these Saint Crystals spheres made by the Stone Puppet Saint Crystal Sources!

Chapter 1336, Gathering

& Dhael Ligerkeys

Just before the sun rose, at the darkest time before dawn, a figure quietly snuck out from Dragon Cave Mountain and quickly disappeared.

Half an hour later, several thousand kilometres north of Heavenly Fate City, this figure appeared again. It was Yang Kai. Glancing around for a moment, Yang Kai spotted the meeting place and immediately flew towards the small, nearby hill.

At this moment, two other people who had arrived earlier were sitting in meditation atop this hill. Both were male and they didn't appear very old. Most surprising, however, was that both of them were just Third-Order Saint Kings.

Yang Kai did not conceal his approach and after landing atop the hill, the two young men opened their eyes and glanced over at him lightly. One of these two did not show any intention to speak and simply closed his eyes indifferently again.

The other observed Yang Kai with interest for a moment before nodding slightly.

Yang Kai nodded back, but neither side made any attempt to speak. This hill was not small, so with a few doubts in his heart, Yang Kai found an empty spot and sat down cross-legged.

He heard from Fei Zhi Tu that this operation would be very dangerous, so Yang Kai had naturally assumed there would be many Origin Returning Realm masters taking part; after all, Fei Zhi Tu had made it clear that if not for the existence of the Firebird Artifact Spirit, even Yang Kai would not be qualified to participate in this action.

Yet, as soon as he arrived at the rendezvous point, Yang Kai was greeted by two young men with cultivations equal to his own.

Although he was quite curious about this, Yang Kai also understood that, since Fei Zhi Tu had invited these two, he must have a good reason. Either these two had some kind of special ability Fei Zhi Tu needed to borrow, or they were elites among the elite.

Judging from their appearances, the former was more likely.

Atop this hill, the three young men did not make a sound, and for some time only silence could be heard. Half an incense stick worth of time later, Yang Kai suddenly opened his eyes and looked towards the distance where he saw an azure streak of light rapidly approaching. Obviously, it was another cultivator.

Because Fei Zhi Tu's action this time required the utmost confidentiality, everyone had arrived here separately, something Yang Kai had anticipated.

After the azure streak arrived, it flew down and landed on the hill, revealing a beautiful figure. The one who had come was a young woman with an enchanting body, beautiful face, and long raven black hair. She was an eye-catching beauty.

However, this woman's cultivation was also just Third-Order Saint King, puzzling Yang Kai even further.

Counting himself, there were now four Third-Order Saint Kings gathered here, but where was Fei Zhi Tu? Surely, he couldn't be expecting these four Saint Kings to rescue Qian Tong, could he?

Thinking of this possibility, Yang Kai's face sank.

After this young woman landed, she quickly discovered that the three best spots on top of the hill had already been occupied, causing her brow to furrow.

Upon seeing this young woman, the man who had nodded politely to Yang Kai earlier stood up hastily and cupped his fists, "So it is Sister Si Si, it has been many years since we last met! I trust Sister Si Si has been well since then."

From the tone of his voice, it was apparent that he knew this young woman and from the look on his face, it was also obvious he was interested in her.

The woman named Si Si glanced over at this young man indifferently and said, "Cai He? So you're here too. It seems City Lord Fei's vision is not very good, even inviting an Array Master like you on this trip. It makes me worry deeply about the future."

Despite being belittled by this young woman, the man named Cai He didn't show any trace of annoyance and continued, "Actually, City Lord Fei invited my father first, but unfortunately he is currently in retreat, making it inconvenient to come out. As such, I was sent in his place. During this trip it seems Sister Si Si and I will need to cooperate; I hope Sister Si Si will grant me your instruction."

"Hmph!" The woman named Si Si coldly snorted, her pretty face filling with arrogance as she declared, "I wouldn't dare grant you instruction. Although your Cai Family's understanding of Spirit Arrays is not as profound as my Du Family's, it has its own unique insights. Just don't become a burden this time and everything will be fine."

"Naturally, naturally!" Cai He nodded while still smiling, as if he had no backbone at all, making the other young man present flash a look of contempt.

After listening to their conversation, Yang Kai realized why Fei Zhi Tu had invited these two Third-Order Saint Kings along. It turns out that they were both experts in the field of Spirit Arrays and came from famous families which were similarly professionals in this regard. Evidently, Fei Zhi Tu wanted to be prepared for any situation.

Du Si Si next glanced over at the indifferent man then Yang Kai before asking proudly, "Who are these two? Were they also invited here by City Lord Fei? How could they only have the same cultivation as us?"

This young woman looking down on all other Saint Kings made Yang Kai frown and realized she was a spoiled, arrogant young lady from a big family.

Cai He smiled helplessly, "I'm not clear about these two brothers' origins. If they do not mind, why don't we all introduce ourselves? In any case, all of us will be travelling and working together, so getting to know one another will benefit our future cooperation."

Compared with Du Si Si, this Cai He's demeanor should be very temperate, almost the opposite of Du Si Si. When he asked Yang Kai and the other young man about their backgrounds, he did it with a smile on his face with not even a trace of arrogance.

"Lian Guang!" The indifferent man apparently cherished his words like gold and only reported his name before falling silent again.

"Surnamed Lian..." When Du Si Si and Cai He heard this name, both of their expressions changed dramatically. Both of them now looked at this Lian Guang with a hint of fear, as if the other's surname by itself was a powerful deterrent.

Even Yang Kai could not help giving this Lian Guang a curious look.

This was because, in the local region, the Lian Family was quite famous. Even if one were to take all of Shadowed Star into account, the Lian Family's reputation wasn't lower than general second-class Sects, allowing even someone as ignorant and uninformed as Yang Kai to have heard of them. It could easily be imagined what kind of reputation this family had.

The Lian Family itself did not have very powerful masters, nor did it have many members. All in all, there were only about a hundred or so Lian Family members with the strongest being just a First-Order Origin Returning Realm master. On Shadowed Star, even if there were not a thousand such families, there would be at least eight hundred, but only the Lian Family name was widely known.

The reason for this was simple: The Lian Family were Puppet Masters.

It was well known that the Lian Family specialized in refining and operating puppets, so while their personal cultivations weren't too high, their combat effectiveness was far superior to others in the same realm because they could use countless puppets to assist them in battle. When a Lian Family cultivator fought, it would always become a spectacular scene where up to dozens of puppets would appear.

Moreover, the Lian Family had several supreme puppets which were comparable to Third-Order Origin Returning Realm masters in strength. The existence of these puppets alone was enough to deter many other forces.

There was once a family force which far exceeded the Lian Family in strength that coveted the latter's puppet techniques. This family attempted to destroy the Lian Family and claim its Secret Techniques for themselves, but at the end of that conflict, it was the Lian Family that emerged victorious and wiped out the other family.

It was this war that caused the Lian Family's reputation to soar and highlighted their Third-Order Origin Returning Realm puppets' incredible strength. These supreme puppets killed countless enemies during that battle, causing many to covet and fear them all at once.

The Lian Family weren't fools though, and understood that an ordinary man is innocent, but treasures made him guilty. After that war, the Lian Family attached themselves to Shadow Moon Hall and agreed to refine some puppets for them free of charge in exchange for protection.

So, after hearing this Lian Guang's self introduction, Du Si Si and Cai He were both taken aback. The families the two of them came from weren't small or unknown and could even be considered quite famous due to their proficiency in Spirit Arrays, but compared to the Lian Family they were still dwarfed.

Yang Kai also wore a thoughtful look. Fei Zhi Tu bringing Du Si Si and Cai He along must be in anticipation of needing to break through some barriers and Spirit Arrays in the Ancient Ruins, which was justifiable, but what point was there in inviting someone from the Lian Family?

After Lian Guang reported his name, he fell silent. Obviously, he was a naturally reticent individual.

After Du Si Si and Cai He recovered from their shock, they turned to look at Yang Kai. After Yang Kai, too, reported his name, their expressions became strange.

Cai He looked Yang Kai up and down for a moment before venturing a guess, "Brother Yang, you wouldn't happen to be the one who caused a scene in Heavenly Fate City a few days ago, would you?"

Yang Kai chuckled and said, "If there was no other person who went and caused a fuss that day in Heavenly Fate City, it should be me!"

Cai He was immediately startled by Yang Kai's admission, and even Du Si Si withdrew much of the arrogance on her face. Even Lian Guang opened his eyes again to take a second look at Yang Kai.

Although the families of these three were not weak, none of them had the courage to go to Heavenly Fate City, kill people, and burn down shops. What was even more bizarre was that after this guy ran amok and even committed murder, he emerged essentially unscathed and was even invited by Fei Zhi Tu to participate in this operation.

This surprised all three of them and made them wonder what kind of agreement Yang Kai and Fei Zhi Tu had reached that allowed him to get off scot free.

However, the three of them knew that there were some secrets best left unknown, so they didn't try to get to the bottom of the situation. However, after learning Yang Kai's identity, Cai He became much friendlier towards him, no longer remaining silent and even engaging him in a lively discussion.

After chatting for a while, Yang Kai realized why this Cai He's attitude had changed so dramatically. It turned out that there were many disputes between the Cai Family and Xie Family, and Cai He himself had suffered a few big losses at the hands of Xie Family disciples. Last time Yang Kai went to Heavenly Fate City though, he had killed a Xie Family Origin Returning Realm master. The details of the incident had spread, and many families and cultivators who had grudges against the Xie Family cheered; the Cai Family was, naturally, among them.

Yang Kai cutting down Xie Quan was equivalent to helping them get revenge, so how could they not be happy?

As a Cai Family member, Cai He naturally found Yang Kai pleasing to the eye.

Du Si Si on the other hand found a place to sit down, and closed her eyes.

After waiting for about half an hour or so, several figures suddenly and mysteriously appeared atop the hill, surprising the Saint Kings here apart from Yang Kai. Only Yang Kai's Divine Sense was powerful enough that he had noticed this group's arrival ahead of time, allowing him to remain calm and indifferent.

After seeing that the one who led this group of newcomers was Fei Zhi Tu, Cai He and the other young cultivators breathed a sigh of relief and quickly cupped their fists in greeting.

Chapter 1337, Fallen Emperor Mountain

& Dhael Ligerkeys

Taking advantage of this opportunity, Yang Kai looked at the cultivators who had accompanied Fei Zhi Tu here. There were three Origin Returning Realm masters, one of whom was a middle-aged man who

appeared to be about the same age as Fei Zhi Tu and had reached the Second-Order. The other two were an old man and an old woman who were both First-Order Origin Returning Realm cultivators.

However, although these two were just First-Order Origin Realm masters, their auras were deep and steady, very different from those who had only recently broken through to the Origin Realm. These two should have been immersed in the Origin Realm for many years and possess great strength.

The appearance of these Origin Returning Realm masters made Yang Kai feel a little relieved. It seemed that Fei Zhi Tu was not unprepared. Moreover, with the current unstable situation, secretly gathering these Origin Realm helpers must have been quite difficult.

After all, this operation was to rescue Qian Tong, so it would definitely have been inconvenient to requisition helpers from Shadow Moon Hall. At the same time, it was also necessary to ensure no one realized this rescue mission was taking place. It actually came as a surprise to Yang Kai that so many Origin Returning Realm masters had been recruited. With this many masters and a Third-Order Origin Returning Realm powerhouse leading this operation, security shouldn't be a problem. The only concern now was whether there were any hidden dangers inside the Ancient Ruin.

Fei Zhi Tu exchanged a few words with the Origin Realm masters he brought with him before addressing Yang Kai and the other youths, "It looks like you kids have already gotten acquainted. En, very good, during this trip there will be a place for each of you to contribute, so forming a mutual understanding will be of great benefit. As long as this trip is successful, this City Lord will certainly write down this favour. After we return, you may tell your respective Patriarchs that if they have need of my help in the future, they need only ask."

Cai He, Du Si Si, and Lian Guang all heard this and showed joyful looks as they quickly thanked Fei Zhi Tu.

"Good! Now that everyone is here, let's set out!" Fei Zhi Tu waved his hand, summoned an Origin Grade Low-Rank Star Shuttle, boarded it, and led the way.

Yang Kai thought he would introduce the three other Origin Returning Realm masters to him and the other youths, but apparently Fei Zhi Tu had no such intentions, so after snapping out of his daze, Yang Kai quickly summoned his own Star Shuttle and followed.

From the chat he had with Cai He just now, Yang Kai had learned from him that the only objective of this trip was the rescue Qian Tong from the Ancient Ruins, but where these Ancient Ruins were, Fei Zhi Tu had not disclosed.

Even now that everyone had gathered together and were currently on their way, Fei Zhi Tu apparently still had no intention to explain. This caused Yang Kai to feel a bit annoyed, but he didn't try to ask anything and simply followed along for now.

The three Origin Returning Realm masters who came with Fei Zhi Tu seemed to be very interested in Yang Kai and would use their Divine Sense or eyes to examine him from time to time, especially the old man. When Yang Kai looked back once, the other party actually nodded to him with a smile, showing a kind and amiable look, causing Yang Kai a great deal of confusion, he really wanted to know what kind of snake oil this old man was trying to pedal.

Although the Second-Order Origin Returning Realm cultivator and the old woman didn't show such obvious favour, they were clearly displaying goodwill towards Yang Kai as well.

Yang Kai understood that these three people shouldn't have any ill intentions towards him, but receiving such obvious favour for no apparent reason caused him to become tense and he immediately decided to keep his mouth shut and focus entirely on hurrying along. To Yang Kai, the fewer incidents he got caught up in the better because he had so many things to do. If not for the need to rescue Qian Tong this time, Yang Kai had planned to hole up in Dragon Cave Mountain for a long retreat to study various Secret Techniques.

Also, since the Firebird Artifact Spirit woke up, the efficiency of refining the Dragon Bone and Dragon Bead had greatly increased, decreasing the amount of time it would take to finish this process from several years to just a few months. Yang Kai wanted to immediately enter retreat and use the power of the Artifact Refining Furnace and the Artifact Spirit to fully refine these two treasures.

The people in this group of eight all seemed quite reticent. At the beginning, Cai He laughed and tried to interact with Du Si Si, but after being rebuffed several times, he gave up trying to court favour with this arrogant young lady.

After flying for four days straight, Fei Zhi Tu arrived at a large rolling mountain range and came to a stop, landing a moment later.

The remaining seven naturally followed behind him.

A moment later, the crowd stood outside this mountain range and Fei Zhi Tu took out a yellowed map from his Space Ring before studying it carefully.

"Isn't this Fallen Emperor Mountain?" Cai He wondered, asking in surprise, "Is the Ancient Ruin we're entering inside Fallen Emperor Mountain?"

"That can't be, can it? How many people come to Fallen Emperor Mountain every year? Even you and I have come here a few times, but I've never heard anything about an Ancient Ruin. If there really is an Ancient Ruin here, why hasn't word of it leaked out?" Du Si Si shook her head slowly.

While these two were talking amongst themselves, Yang Kai was busy observing this so-called Fallen Emperor Mountain. It was his first time hearing about this mountain range and naturally the first time he had come here so, of course, he knew nothing about it. Looking around, all Yang Kai could tell was that this mountain range was expansive, stretching out beyond the horizon. It was hard to tell just how vast this lush and verdant mountain range was, but the weirdest part about it was that it was completely quiet, without even the song of birds or insects in the air.

Yang Kai also couldn't see any traces of beasts wandering about, confusing him greatly.

"Hoho, is this little friend's first time coming to Fallen Emperor Mountain?" Just when Yang Kai was feeling puzzled, the old man came up to him suddenly, stroking his white beard and asking with a smile.

"Yes, this is indeed Junior's first time here," Yang Kai's brow furrowed, not understanding why this old man had suddenly taken the initiative to talk to him.

“No wonder. En, this old man is Ning Xiang Chen!” The old man actually turned his head and introduced himself with a smile. Although this only caused Yang Kai to feel even more suspicious, he still returned the greeting politely; after all, this old man was clearly his senior.

But this wasn't the end to this strange situation. The old man named Ning Xiang Chen next pointed to the old lady and the middle-aged Second-Order Origin Returning Realm man and introduced them to Yang Kai, both of them showing him a smile and offering some casual praise to him.

Several Origin Returning Realm masters suddenly taking the initiative to show goodwill towards Yang Kai naturally shocked Cai He and the other youths. None of them could understand what it was about Yang Kai that warranted such favourable treatment. Du Si Si was particularly incensed, seemingly feeling that Yang Kai had robbed her of the limelight.

“Several Seniors, may I ask what is so special about this Fallen Emperor Mountain?” Yang Kai took advantage of a pause in their words to quickly change the subject. By now, Yang Kai could tell that these three Origin Realm masters probably had something they wanted to ask of him, otherwise, they would never have bothered showing him goodwill.

But no matter what kind of help they sought from him, it would certainly be troublesome, so Yang Kai had to make sure the conversation wasn't dominated by them.

Hearing this question from him, Ning Xiang Chen's expression suddenly became solemn and started by asking a question of his own, “Do you know why this place is called Fallen Emperor Mountain?”

Yang Kai frowned and pondered for a while before hesitantly asking, “Does it have something to do with the legendary Starry Sky Great Emperor?”

Ning Xiang Chen nodded in approval, but before he could speak, the old lady next to him said with a smile, “Yes, this place is indeed related to the Starry Sky Great Emperor, because there are rumours that this is the place where he fell!”

Yang Kai's face changed as he asked in shock, “Is that true?”

Ning Xiang Chen chuckled, “Whether this is true or not, no one can confirm, but the fact that there is a trace of Emperor Pressure permeating this Fallen Emperor Mountain is well known across Shadowed Star.”

“Emperor Pressure?” Yang Kai frowned.

“You should have noticed by now that this Fallen Emperor Mountain is devoid of all birds and beasts. The reason for this is not because this place is unsuitable for them to live; in fact, with this place's rich aura and beautiful scenery, it is superior to the headquarters of many Sects. However, there is no Sect in this place, and not even any Monster Beasts because of the omnipresent Emperor Pressure! This invisible Emperor Pressure envelopes all Fallen Emperor Mountain and the closer one gets to its centre, the more powerful it becomes. No birds or beasts can survive for long under this Emperor Pressure which is why you can't see any here.”

“En, a long time ago, Fallen Emperor Mountain was also favoured by a powerful Sect who wanted to set up their headquarters here, but even their Third-Order Origin Returning Realm masters couldn't stay inside Fallen Emperor Mountain for long. No matter how high one's strength is, prolonged exposure to

the Emperor Pressure in this place will only lead to one being driven insane!” The old lady followed up and explained.

“Is that Emperor Pressure so powerful?” Yang Kai was amazed.

“Don’t underestimate this Emperor Pressure. I also came here to cultivate many years ago, but if I hadn’t withdrawn quickly at that time, I would have certainly been driven mad,” The Second-Order Origin Returning Realm master sternly warned.

“It’s possible to cultivate inside this place?” Yang Kai’s eyes lit up.

“Hoho, this was actually what this old man wanted to tell little friend. The Emperor Pressure in Fallen Emperor Mountain makes it impossible for any living creature to remain here for long, and the closer one gets to the centre of this mountain range, the more intense the Emperor Pressure will become. However, this Emperor Pressure is actually quite suitable for tempering one’s Soul and Spiritual Energy, so every year, there are many cultivators who come to Fallen Emperor Mountain to take advantage of the Emperor Pressure to cultivate their Souls. Not only that, but this Emperor Pressure also has the effect of enhancing one’s ability to comprehend Shi. This old man can see that little friend’s aptitude is extraordinary and one day you will certainly break through to the Origin Realm. When that time comes, little friend might as well come to Fallen Emperor Mountain to try to enhance your understanding of Shi. You should find that cultivating in this place will allow you to achieve twice the results with half the effort.”

“Exactly. Out of all of Shadowed Star’s Origin Returning Realm masters, probably sixty percent or so come to Fallen Emperor Mountain to comprehend and condense their own Shi. Although no one has verified it, it appears the Shi condensed here in Fallen Emperor Mountain is better than Shi condensed in the outside world, and one’s comprehension of Shi will also be higher if they comprehend it here. Little friend must not miss this once in a lifetime opportunity in the future!”

“There’s actually such a good opportunity here!” Yang Kai was amazed and quickly cupped his fists, “Many thanks to three Seniors for enlightening me. If the day comes when this Junior breaks through to the Origin Realm, he will definitely come to this Fallen Emperor Mountain to condense his Shi.”

Although there was no need for these three to tell him about this, as Yang Kai would definitely have heard about it from other sources, in the end, they were still showing him goodwill, so Yang Kai needed to express his thanks.

“A minor matter,” Ning Xiang Chen smiled, “If at the time little friend needs someone to escort him here, just let this old man know and he will certainly do his best to help.”

Not only did Ning Xiang Chen say so, the old lady and the middle-aged Second-Order Origin Realm masters also made similar pledges, causing Yang Kai heart to clench even tighter. He felt that these three clearly wanted something from him, so he quickly waved his hands and declared he wouldn’t dare inconvenience them so.

Chapter 1338, Underground River

As the four of them were talking, Fei Zhi Tu's brow slowly rose as he seemed to have gotten his bearings. After putting away the animal skin map, he beckoned to the rest of the group before setting out towards Fallen Emperor Mountain.

"Hoho, little friend, please go on ahead, this old man will bring up the rear. Right, you should try to not resist the Emperor Pressure in this Fallen Emperor Mountain right away and instead feel it silently," Ning Xiang Chen once again kindly advised.

"Many thanks for your guidance, Senior!" Yang Kai gently nodded and, together with Cai He, Du Si Si and Lian Guang, rushed into Fallen Emperor Mountain.

After the four Saint King Realm Juniors entered, Ning Xiang Chen and the three Origin Returning Realm masters followed after them.

Inside Fallen Emperor Mountain, there was no such thing as dangerous beasts, but there were some mad cultivators that would suddenly launch indiscriminate attacks.

These cultivators all came to Fallen Emperor Mountain to cultivate, but for various reasons had stayed too long inside and been driven insane by the Emperor Pressure.

Every year, countless cultivators came here and accidents happened quite frequently. In addition, there were some wicked cultivators who regarded this place as a good hunting ground to kill others and steal their possessions.

However, with four Origin Realm cultivators accompanying them, Yang Kai and the other Juniors weren't worried, especially with a master like Fei Zhi Tu leading the way.

As soon as they stepped into Fallen Emperor Mountain, Yang Kai felt an invisible force envelop his body. Under the influence of this invisible force, Yang Kai found Saint Qi circulation hindered slightly and when he released his Divine Sense, he could only detect the situation within a few thousand meters of himself.

Unexpectedly, under the influence of this Emperor Pressure, his Divine Sense had been suppressed to this extent.

Yang Kai couldn't help feeling a bit frightened. This omnipresent Emperor Pressure felt like there was a pair of eyes constantly staring at him, observing his every movement and giving him the impression that he was under constant surveillance.

And this was just a small leftover portion of Emperor Pressure! If the real Starry Sky Great Emperor were here, just how terrifying would he be?

Now, Yang Kai no longer doubted whether this person really existed. The two Star Emperor Tokens were relics left behind by the Starry Sky Great Emperor while Star Emperor Mountain was rumoured to have some kind of relationship with this legendary figure. The same was true of Fallen Emperor Mountain.

All of these things couldn't have simply appeared out of nowhere. It was more than likely that the Starry Sky Great Emperor really existed.

Facing this Emperor Pressure. Yang Kai instinctually wanted to resist it, but remembering the kind advice of Ning Xiang Chen and noticing that Cai He and the others weren't pushing their strength to protect themselves, Yang Kai also calmed down and began sensing this mysterious force.

This place was still considered the outer periphery of Fallen Emperor Mountain, so the Emperor Pressure wasn't too strong and no harm would be done from not resisting it for a time.

Following Fei Zhi Tu, the group of eight didn't encounter any other cultivators on the road. Fei Zhi Tu was able to perfectly lead everyone around any cultivators who had come here to cultivate.

Secrecy was vital to this expedition, so Fei Zhi Tu wanted to have as little contact with others as possible.

In a flash, two days passed by.

As the group proceeded deeper and deeper into Fallen Emperor Mountain, the power of the ambient Emperor Pressure also grew far stronger; however, Yang Kai wasn't worried about this and instead felt quite happy about it because, after just two trivial days, he felt that his Spiritual Energy had become slightly stronger and, under the influence of this Emperor Pressure, his Knowledge Sea had become slightly purer.

This was really a good place for cultivating one's Soul. Yang Kai didn't need to do anything at all. Just by standing here he could continuously obtain benefits. If one were to really cultivate their Soul or Soul Skills here, they would certainly obtain twice the result with half the effort.

It was a pity that the Emperor Pressure of Fallen Emperor Mountain was only suitable for Soul cultivation though. Besides also helping one condense their own Shi, it had no other effects on one's strength, otherwise this place would have become a cultivation paradise. The great forces on Shadowed Star would likely have even fought over the distribution of land in this place.

After proceeding another three days, Yang Kai began having some slight difficulty. The reason was simple; although the Emperor Pressure here could purify one's Knowledge Sea and improve the strength of their Spiritual Energy, this constant pressure would also put a burden on a cultivator's Soul. This kind of burden couldn't be sustained indefinitely or it would begin damaging one's mind.

Yang Kai's performance so far had been quite good as he had not needed to circulate his strength to resist the Emperor Pressure so far. All this time, he had been silently comprehending the mysteries contained in this Emperor Pressure like Ning Xiang Chen had advised him to and had gained much in the process.

The other three Saint Kings, on the other hand, weren't so fortunate. As early as yesterday, the three of them had been forced to use their Spiritual Energy to resist the invasion of the Emperor Pressure. This alone painted a clear picture of whose Soul was more powerful.

This scene not only surprised the three Saint Kings, but also the Origin Realm masters.

Although Cai He and the other Juniors were Third-Order Saint Kings like Yang Kai, two of them were proficient in Spirit Arrays and the other was proficient in refining and operating puppets.

Both of these professions were extremely demanding on one's Soul, especially the puppeteering techniques Lian Guang used. In combat, he could manipulate hundreds of puppets at once, each of which required a thread of his Divine Sense. In fact, the requirements for Lian Guang's Divine Sense were even more terrifying than studying Spirit Arrays.

It could be said that the Soul cultivation of these three youths already far exceeded the average cultivator in their own realm.

But now, compared with Yang Kai, they were obviously weaker.

How could this not surprise them? All of them began secretly guessing what kind of Secret Art Yang Kai cultivated to allow his Soul to become so strong.

Of course, Yang Kai was not paying any attention to such things, he simply felt that by resisting the Emperor Pressure, the benefits obtained would be diminished, so he freely opened his mind and body to it instead.

When Du Si Si noticed this, she immediately showed a look of unwillingness; after all, since she began cultivating and studying Spirit Arrays, she had always had a much stronger Soul than other cultivators in the same realm. Yang Kai showing off so blatantly in front of her wounded her pride.

Grinding her teeth, she steeled herself and let go of her Knowledge Sea's defenses again.

Cai He didn't notice anything wrong until he saw Du Si Si's face go pale. Quickly stepping forward to ask if she was alright though, he was rebuffed by her once more and could only smile bitterly and withdraw.

Arriving at a large swamp, Fei Zhi Tu came to a halt and wore a dignified expression. Taking out the animal skin map again to verify their position, he soon whispered, "We're almost there. All of you, follow closely."

Hearing this, everyone felt their spirits lift and quickly kept up with his pace.

This swamp in Fallen Emperor Mountain was actually the basin of a huge mountain valley. No one knew why there was a swamp here, but because of the lingering miasma and clearly poisonous water, cultivators seldom came here.

After all, cultivators that came here did so to cultivate their Souls, so their first objective would be to find a comfortable place to cultivate. Who would come to this kind of place to suffer?

Following behind Fei Zhi Tu, the group traversed this swamp for some time before Fei Zhi Tu suddenly came to a stop in front of a particularly large puddle.

"Here?" Ning Xiang Chen stepped forward, stood side by side with Fei Zhi Tu and asked.

"Yes, according to the message from old Qian, it should be right here, but revealing the entrance requires a little trick!" Saying so, Fei Zhi Tu took out a kind of bead and tossed it towards the centre of the puddle.

In front of everyone's eyes, when the beads fell into the puddle, it immediately became turbulent, as if something underneath it was stirring the water.

Moreover, a whiff of white mist suddenly emerged from this puddle and caused the temperature in the surrounding thousand meter range to plummet.

Kacha...

With a loud crackling noise, the huge puddle froze into a sheet of ice at a speed visible to the naked eye, leaving behind only a dark, downward passage at its centre.

Yang Kai released his Divine Sense but was unable to explore what was at the bottom of this hole.

After waiting for a while, the crackling sounds ceased and the passage completely stabilized. Fei Zhi Tu then nodded, "Let's go. Brother Ning, you bring up the rear, I'll take these little guys down first."

"Understood," Ning Xiang Chen gently nodded.

Fei Zhi Tu glanced at Yang Kai and the others, but after seeing Du Si Si's pale complexion and sweat drenched brow, a trace of displeasure appeared on his face. How could he not understand that Du Si Si had done this to herself by acting recklessly out of a petty sense of rivalry? This operation was very important, and if not for him being unable to find a true Array Master, he would not have invited this little girl to help in the first place.

Releasing a blue halo of light, Fei Zhi Tu wrapped Yang Kai and the other Saint Kings in his Saint Qi before immediately jumping into the passage.

Yang Kai estimated that their group fell several thousand meters before they reached the ground. The sound of a flowing stream entered his ear and with the help of the blue light around him, Yang Kai spotted an underground river nearby.

Moreover, the Emperor Pressure which had enveloped them all this time had suddenly disappeared.

"There's actually such a place underground here?" Cai He also looked around strangely, apparently never having expected that such a cave existed under Fallen Emperor Mountain.

"Yeah, if the location of this Ancient Ruin was easy to find, it would have long been turned upside down while that old ghost wouldn't have been able to obtain anything from it!" Fei Zhi Tu coldly snorted before shooting a sharp glare towards Du Si Si, "Rest here for a moment, if this happens again, you don't need to continue following us."

Du Si Si bit her red lips lightly and nodded. Although she was prideful and arrogant, she didn't dare rebel against Fei Zhi Tu.

After waiting for a while, Ning Xiang Chen and the other Origin Realm masters came down and the group of eight decided to take a short rest.

Yang Kai stared in one direction silently, not knowing whether it was an illusion or not that he felt some kind of ancient and desolate aura. He was unable to describe this aura in words, but he found it quite fascinating.

When Fei Zhi Tu saw him staring in that direction, he couldn't help raising his brow, because that was the direction they needed to head next, making him wonder whether Yang Kai had discovered something.

Chapter 1339, Ancient Ruins

About half an hour later, after everyone had restored themselves, Fei Zhi Tu stood up and motioned, "Let's go."

Having said that, he began following the underground river in the direction Yang Kai had originally been staring.

As they travelled further, the ancient and desolate aura Yang Kai felt earlier became more and more apparent until even Cai He and the other Saint Kings were able to notice it, causing some excitement to flash across their eyes.

Anything that was capable of exuding such an aura must be extremely ancient. Everyone in this group was an experienced cultivator and had been on many external excursions, so they could determine with great confidence that this place really had an Ancient Ruin!

Despite knowing it was impossible for Fei Zhi Tu to have deceived them, as they approached their destination, everyone couldn't help feeling excited.

For this time's mission, rescuing Qian Tong was naturally the priority, but there was no reason they couldn't obtain some benefits during their exploration of these Ancient Ruins.

The chances of finding treasure were particularly high in ruins like this one where very few, if any, people had previously come.

But a moment later, when a Space Array appeared, everyone couldn't help feeling surprised.

The desolate aura all of them had been feeling up until now was actually coming from this Space Array, and looking at its appearance, it was clearly somewhat different in design from the Space Arrays in use on Shadowed Star today. Although it shared many of the same characteristics, there were still many subtle differences.

Yang Kai had also seen a number of Space Arrays and had even cultivated the Dao of Space, so he was immediately able to determine that this Space Array was a relic from many millennia ago.

This being the case, it wasn't a surprise that this Space Array differed from the ones on Shadowed Star; after all, over many years, the Space Arrays on Shadowed Star would have been patched and altered numerous times.

Around the base of this Space Array were several grooves where a number of depleted High-Rank Saint Crystals were inserted. Obviously, these Saint Crystals had been consumed in order to activate it.

Fei Zhi Tu picked up one of the depleted Saint Crystals and examined it for a moment before nodding, "En, that old fogy Qian should have used this Space Array to teleport to the Ancient Ruins. These Saint Crystals were drained recently."

"Since that's the case, let's quickly go in," Ning Xiang Chen said anxiously.

Fei Zhi Tu shook his head slowly though, "We must certainly enter, but as for what is on the other side of this Space Array, we have no way of knowing. The message sent by that Old Qian is too vague, even us finding this place was in part due to luck. However, since these Ancient Ruins were capable of trapping him, whatever is inside them is definitely quite dangerous. You kids must not act rashly after we enter. Stick close to us at all times so that we can protect you if there is any danger, is that understood?"

Cai He and the others didn't dare to refute and all quickly nodded.

Seeing these four Saint King Realm juniors act obediently, Fei Zhi Tu nodded in satisfaction. With a big wave of his hand, Fei Zhi Tu inserted a number of High-Rank Saint Crystals into the grooves at the base of the array before using his own Saint Qi to cover everyone and step onto the platform.

In the next moment, the Space Array flashed and the group of eight disappeared.

When the eight people appeared again, they were already in a completely different place.

Immediately after firmly steadying themselves, Fei Zhi Tu and the other Origin Realm masters released their Divine Senses to sweep their surroundings vigilantly while they all condensed their Saint Qi in case they needed to take action.

After confirming that there was no danger nearby, Fei Zhi Tu and the other masters relaxed and began to carefully examine their surroundings.

Yang Kai also took the opportunity to observe the area but after a quick scan, he couldn't help showing a strange look, because he found that after using that Space Array, the place they had arrived at was actually kind of bizarre.

The World Energy aura here seemed quite rich compared to the outside, even higher than the current Dragon Cave Mountain. Moreover, in the sky, there was blue, with white clouds and a sun shining in a seemingly boundless space.

The location his group had arrived at was actually among a large group of buildings that seemed to be the ruins of an ancient Sect.

However, under his Divine Sense's perception, Yang Kai found no living creatures other than the eight from his group.

"This is the Ancient Ruin?" Ning Xiang Chen and others couldn't help looking at each other, revealing a trace of suspicion.

"There's no doubt these are the Ancient Ruins we were looking for," Fei Zhi Tu replied confidently, seemingly having discovered something and pointing his finger in a certain direction, "Those characters are not the ones we currently use on Shadowed Star and haven't been widely seen for tens of thousands of years."

In the direction Fei Zhi Tu was pointing there was a loft. This loft was quite exquisitely constructed and had a plaque hanging from the second floor that had several stylized characters written on it. What these words meant, however, was unknown to anyone present.

In addition, there were some other buildings that also had plaques engraved with unreadable words.

"It's really an Ancient Ruin, and one that is so well preserved!" Ning Xiang Chen said excitedly, his old face suddenly looking a bit ruddy. The old lady and the Second-Order Origin Returning Realm cultivator also wore inspired looks.

It wasn't like other Ancient Ruins hadn't been discovered on Shadowed Star, but none of them were so complete. An intact ruin meant that no one had searched through them for treasures, so anything of value was likely still here. As long as they successfully rescued Qian Tong, there would be a lot of time to explore this place.

Thinking this, the several Origin Returning Realm masters suddenly felt far more enthusiastic.

“Finding Old Qian is our first priority, as for these ruins, it won’t be too late to explore them after!” Fei Zhi Tu understood his priorities and swiftly issued this order, to which everyone else nodded in agreement.

After all, he was the one with the greatest strength here and Ning Xiang Chen and the other Origin Realm cultivators had close friendships with him, so naturally, none of them would try to argue at this point.

Immediately, Fei Zhi Tu began looking around for marks left by Qian Tong. Fortunately, Qian Tong had acted cautiously and after entering these Ancient Ruins he had left markers along the path he travelled, otherwise Fei Zhi Tu wouldn’t even know where to begin looking for him.

After a short time, Fei Zhi Tu found the right direction and began leading the way.

Everyone followed after him, but glancing at the buildings around them they couldn’t help letting out some sighs. If they weren’t in a rush to rescue Qian Tong, they would have all gone to search through these buildings.

With so many intact structures around, finding something valuable was all but guaranteed.

But now, they could only try to ignore this urge to explore.

Unexpectedly, after about a stick of incense worth of time, the group of eight remained perfectly safe, as if there was no danger in this Ancient Ruin at all; however, this only made everyone’s expression grow more dignified.

Suddenly, a strange medicinal fragrance reached the tip of everyone’s nose, and all eight of them couldn’t help turning their heads in a certain direction as a sense of comfort and enlightenment washed over them.

“This is...” Ning Xiang Chen’s eyes widened as he pointed forward, “The medicinal fragrance is coming from there!”

Fei Zhi Tu’s expression also brightened and he accelerated the group’s pace. Only a valuable treasure would be able to produce such a rich medicinal fragrance, so naturally, he wanted to see what the source was.

Soon after, the group of eight arrived in front of a flower bed where a number of exotic flowers and grasses. Although most of these had substantial effects, only the half metre tall purple grass stalk in the very centre of the garden which stood straight like a sword was worthy of their attention.

The fragrance everyone smelled before was being exuded by this purple grass.

“Sword Soul Grass! And it’s purple!” Ning Xiang Chen exclaimed, staring hotly at this purple grass. Not just him though, even Fei Zhi Tu couldn’t hide his excitement.

Sword Soul Grass was the primary ingredient in the Sword Soul Pill, which was the most suitable auxiliary pill for cultivators who cultivated swordsmanship. Consuming a Sword Soul Pill would increase

a cultivator's ability to grasp and control the Dao of Swords and allow them to display greater strength when using sword type Divine Abilities.

The Sword Soul Grass itself was an Origin Grade Mid-Rank spirit herb, so even taking all of Shadowed Star into consideration, it was incredibly rare. When mature, a Sword Soul Grass would have a pale blue colour, but as its medicinal age increased, its colour would also slowly deepen.

At present, this Sword Soul Grass that had turned purple must have a medicinal age exceeding ten thousand years, a rare and precious treasure.

If one were to use this Sword Soul Grass to refine a pill and then let a cultivator who cultivated the Dao of Swords consume it, the benefits that cultivator obtained would be difficult to estimate.

This spirit grass was of incredible value! What's more, it was incredibly useful for the Origin Returning Realm masters here, including Fei Zhi Tu.

Although no one here took the Dao of Swords as their primary cultivation path, all of them had more or less dabbled in it and mastered some Martial Skills or Divine Abilities related to swords. As a result, all of them naturally coveted this Sword Soul Grass greatly. Even if none of them could really use it, selling it would result in massive profits.

"Brother Fei..." Ning Xiang Chen turned his head to look at Fei Zhi Tu. Although this treasure was incredibly precious, it wasn't enough to destroy the friendship between these people. On top of that, they had just entered this Ancient Ruin and had already found such a thing, so if they continued searching, wouldn't they be able to find even more good things?

As such, Ning Xiang Chen's first response was to ask Fei Zhi Tu's opinion on how to deal with this Sword Soul Grass. While they couldn't go and explore the surrounding buildings for treasures for fear of complications, if a treasure were to appear right in front of them there was no reason to simply ignore it.

"If several friends are willing to trust this Fei, I will collect this Sword Soul Grass for now and after we exit, everyone can discuss how to assign it," Fei Zhi Tu declared.

"I have no objections," The old lady immediately expressed her support.

"We trust City Lord Fei, I have no objections!" The Second-Order Origin Returning Realm cultivator also nodded in agreement, and the remaining Ning Xiang Chen naturally wasn't going to disagree.

Seeing that everyone had reached an agreement, Fei Zhi Tu quickly took out a small jade shovel and walked over to the Sword Soul Grass, seemingly intent on digging it up completely.

"Brother Yang, why do you look so serious?" Cai He suddenly approached Yang Kai and asked with concern after accidentally having noticed Yang Kai's deeply furrowed brow.

Yang Kai turned a deaf ear to his question as he frowned even deeper, but in the next instant a look of understanding flashed across his face and he quickly shouted, "No, this isn't a Sword Soul Grass, City Lord Fei, stop!"

Cai He was taken aback by his sudden shout and quickly looked over towards Fei Zhi Tu, but Yang Kai's words came out a moment too late as the jade shovel in Fei Zhi Tu's hand had already dug into the soil of the flower bed.

Chapter 1340, Spectral Cloud Array

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When Fei Zhi Tu's jade shovel hit the soil of the flower bed where the Sword Soul Grass was planted, a white flash of light suddenly burst from it and an abnormal energy fluctuation filled the air at the same time.

Fei Zhi Tu's face changed dramatically as he hurriedly withdrew. The old lady and old man along with the Second-Order Origin Returning Realm master also pushed their Saint Qi rapidly to protect the four Saint King Realm juniors.

The Sword Soul Grass, which originally looked like a straight purple sword, suddenly distorted and in the blink of an eye disappeared. Replacing it was a dazzling halo of light that rapidly spread out and then transformed into a thick cloud bank which enveloped the group of eight.

Within just a breath, the surrounding environment had undergone a tremendous change. Looking around, there were no more lofts or buildings, no exotic flowers and no Sword Soul Grass, only an endless sky filled with strange clouds.

The place where everyone was standing now appeared to be inside a gathering of multicoloured clouds of all shapes and sizes, with nothing else visible for as far as the eye could see.

"A Spirit Array!" Fei Zhi Tu's face went black. By now it was obvious that the Sword Soul Grass everyone had been coveting a moment ago was just a trap. Once someone tried to pick the Sword Soul Grass, this Spirit Array would appear immediately and surround the would-be thieves.

However, this Spirit Array was incredibly well concealed. Among the eight cultivators present, only Yang Kai was able to notice something wrong and shout a last minute warning; unfortunately his warning came too late.

Thinking of this, Fei Zhi Tu glanced over at Yang Kai curiously, wondering how he had noticed a flaw in this trap when none of the four Origin Returning Realm masters had.

Yang Kai naturally understood what Fei Zhi Tu was thinking and proactively explained, "Junior has some slight knowledge of alchemy. Since the Sword Soul Grass just now was purple, its medicinal age must be extremely high, but such a Sword Soul Grass should give off a slightly pungent fragrance that would make one feel as if they were being pricked by invisible sword blades."

Fei Zhi Tu was startled, but didn't dwell on the subject further. Now that the trap had been sprung and they had been surrounded by this Spirit Array, figuring out why wasn't the immediate priority. Turning to Cai He and Du Si Si, he asked, "You two are skilled in Spirit Arrays, do you have any idea what this one is?"

Hearing this, Du Si Si and Cai He began observing their surroundings, and after a while, Du Si Si's pretty face became gloomy as she reported, "If Junior is not mistaken, this should be a type of lost, ancient Spirit Array called the Spectral Cloud Array!"

"Junior concurs!" Cai He nodded in agreement with Du Si Si's conjecture.

"Spectral Cloud Array?" Fei Zhi Tu glanced at the other three Origin Returning Realm masters, but seeing their blank faces it was apparent none of them had heard of this Spirit Array before, so he turned back to the youths and asked, "Is this array difficult to crack? What kind of power does it have?"

Du Si Si smiled bitterly, "Setting aside cracking it for the moment... Junior should explain about this array's characteristics first. Do you all see the clouds surrounding us?"

"Naturally! These clouds don't seem to be illusions or a form of energy, truly peculiar!" Ning Xiang Chen nodded.

"Because they are real clouds!" Du Si Si declared.

"What?" Fei Zhi Tu and all the others couldn't help showing looks of shock as they asked, "You mean to say these are real clouds?"

"Yes, the reason why the Spectral Cloud Array became a lost Spirit Array was because of the requirement of refining the clouds in the sky. Currently, even the most powerful cultivators on Shadowed Star lack such ability, so naturally it became impossible to arrange this Spirit Array."

"Refine the clouds in the sky..." Fei Zhi Tu and all the others present were dumbfounded by Du Si Si's statement, finding it somewhat unbelievable.

What kind of shocking means would a cultivator need to even be capable of refining the clouds in the sky?

Du Si Si turned a blind eye to their stunned expressions and continued to explain, "Refining the clouds is just the first step. Next, different energy attributes need to be fused with these clouds along with the Souls of powerful Monster Beasts, transforming the originally inanimate clouds into a kind of life form. All the clouds in a Spectral Cloud Array can transform into Cloud Beasts. The Monster Beast Souls extracted by the one who arranged this array can vary greatly in strength, creating Cloud Beasts over different strengths, but regardless of what kind of strength they possess, these Cloud Beasts are extremely difficult to kill!"

"You mean all these things will transform..." Fei Zhi Tu glanced around at the countless different coloured clouds with an extremely ugly expression.

There was no need for Du Si Si to answer though, because before Fei Zhi Tu could even finish his question, a dozen or so of the scattered clouds began to wriggle and twist, transforming into different forms resembling Monster Beasts in the next moment. However it was apparent that these so called Cloud Beasts didn't have a true physical body and were simply a combination of the cloud they were formed from and a large amount of pure attribute energy, making them even stronger than ordinary Monster Beasts.

Everyone's Divine Sense swept through the bodies of these Cloud Beasts nervously, but after feeling the energy fluctuations emitted by them, Du Si Si breathed a sigh of relief and a bit of colour returned to her pretty face as she said, "It seems our luck isn't too bad, there are only Ninth-Order Cloud Beasts here."

Her thinking they were fortunate wasn't without reason. Since this Spirit Array was from ancient times, who could tell how powerful the master who arranged it was? If there was even one Tenth-Order Cloud Beasts here, all of them would certainly die here.

Even if they had Heaven shaking methods, there was no way Fei Zhi Tu and the other Origin Realm masters here could fight against a Tenth-Order Monster Beast, as it would be the same as trying to fight an Origin King.

Just having stepped into this Ancient Ruin and already falling into such a Spirit Array caused everyone to feel great pressure and naturally none of them dared to take the situation lightly. Fei Zhi Tu quickly shouted, "Du Girl and Cai Boy, focus on cracking this array, leave these Cloud Beasts to us!"

"Yes!" Cai He and Du Si Si nodded hurriedly and knowing that the time for them to display their talents they immediately became spirited.

Fei Zhi Tu glanced over at Yang Kai and the reticent Lian Guang next, "You two take care of yourselves, don't accidentally fall here."

Yang Kai nodded lightly while Lian Guang said nothing. However, he did take out a number of palm sized puppets from his Space Ring; all exquisitely refined. With a wave of his hand he scattered them around. Immediately after, Lian Guang began pouring his Saint Qi into each of these puppets.

In the next moment, these puppets rapidly grew bigger, causing Yang Kai's eyes to flash in surprise and interest.

This was the first time he had witnessed someone using puppet techniques. Lian Guang was a Third-Order Saint King Realm cultivator, but all of the puppets he was operating gave off energy fluctuations equivalent to First or Second-Order Saint Kings.

There were six puppets in total, all of them different shapes and sizes. The smallest one looked like a small snake while the biggest was actually the size of a house, but all of them had an imposing aura to them.

Yang Kai immediately understood the reason why the Lian Family was so famous, and clearly deserving of their reputation. With these puppets, Lian Guang was invincible among cultivators in the same realm, and even if he were to encounter an Origin Realm master, he would still have an opportunity to escape.

Nearby, Fei Zhi Tu summoned his Blue Jade Bowl and expanded it to over ten metres in diameter. With a wave of his hand, Fei Zhi Tu sent out his Blue Jade Bowl towards one of the menacing Cloud Beasts and in the next instant, a flash of blue light erupted. Before this Ninth-Order Cloud Beast could even launch a single attack, it was engulfed by this blue light and, despite struggling and howling fiercely, it was dragged into and captured by the Blue Jade Bowl.

Seeing this, Yang Kai realized he had greatly underestimated the power of this Blue Jade Bowl.

At the same time, Ning Xiang Chen snorted and a cane-like artifact appeared in his hand. With a flick of his wrist, this cane transformed into a black streak that struck towards a nearby Cloud Beast while the old lady sent out a large net-like artifact that emitted a dazzling three-coloured light that not only captured another Cloud Beasts but also began viciously cutting into it.

When the Origin Realm masters of this group all suddenly took action, the surrounding Cloud Beasts seemingly became enraged and bestial roars rang out. Besides the Ninth-Order Cloud Beast which had been swallowed by the Blue Jade Bowl, all the others leapt forward with their great maws opening wide. Before any of them even arrived, beams of energy shot out from their mouths, raining down on the group with imposing might.

This scene caused Fei Zhi Tu and the other Origin Realm masters' expressions to grow even more dignified. Summoning back the Blue Jade Bowl, Fei Zhi Tu used it to create a light shield around Cai He and Du Si Si to protect them.

"Brother Wen, take care of Du Girl and Cai Boy," Fei Zhi Tu left behind his Blue Jade Bowl while shouting to the middle-aged Second-Order Origin Realm man before he pushed his Saint Qi and shot forward to meet the approaching Cloud Beasts.

Ning Xiang Chen followed with his cane artifact along with the old woman and her net artifact, the three of them intercepting eight of the attacking Cloud Beasts.

The middle-aged man surnamed Wen remained where he was, but seeing Du Si Si and Cai He standing there stunned, he shouted, "Haven't you begun yet?"

"Oh!" Hearing this scolding, Cai He and Du Si Si recovered and quickly took out some specialized tools from their Space Rings and injected their Saint Qi before spreading them around.

Yang Kai glanced over at them and seeing them begin to study this Spectral Cloud Array, he calmed down.

He had been together with Yang Yan for a long time now and naturally knew that the tools these two had scattered a moment ago were called bases and plates. These things were used not only to arrange Spirit Arrays but were also essential when one was trying to crack them.

Moreover, with these tools, even if one wasn't proficient in arranging Spirit Arrays, they could still set up some simple ones.

Before, Yang Kai had wanted to ask Yang Yan to refine a couple powerful sets of these tools for him, but unfortunately he had not found the opportunity or time to ask her. It seemed that after returning from this mission, he would need to prioritize asking her for these tools.

Although using such tools to arrange a Spirit Array wouldn't result in as powerful a Spirit Array as when one follows an orthodox methodology, as long as the tools themselves weren't damaged, they could be reused without limit. For someone like Yang Kai who frequently encountered crisis when out exploring the world, such tools would undoubtedly be beneficial to have on him.