

## Martial 2261

### Chapter 2261, I'll Return This To You

Aware of the bad intentions of the other party, Ning Yuan Shu was shocked and the light under his feet flashed as his figure receded rapidly.

But where could he go?

Before Ning Yuan Shu could move, Yang Kai had already stretched out his hand, grabbed his collar, and sent slap after slap across his handsome, sinister face.

\*Pa... pa...\*

After the crisp sound, Ning Yuan Shu was completely beaten up.

When Yang Kai ceased his action, both of Ning Yuan Shu's cheeks were already swollen, giving him the look of a pig's head that had been soaked in boiling water for several days.

The surrounding cultivators all went silent, avoiding eye contact with each other as they wore horrified expressions.

Previously, Yang Kai had acted out at the Qin Family and killed the Vice Valley Master of Evil Moon Valley and injured another unnamed middle-aged man. Neither Qu Huai Ren nor the middle-aged man were born into big Sects though, and none had an Emperor Realm Master standing behind them, so as long as Yang Kai was strong enough, there was no need for him to worry about being retaliated against.

However, Ning Yuan Shu was different. He was the Young Palace Master of Flying Saint Palace.

Flying Saint Palace was ranked quite highly amongst the second-class Sects and Ning Yuan Shu's father, Ning Bo Yang, was a First-Order Emperor Realm Master. There were also many masters in Flying Saint Palace, including Protectors Gao Shan and Liu Shui.

How could Flying Saint Palace let it slide when their Young Palace Master was beaten to a pulp?

Everyone looked at Yang Kai with not only a strong sense of fear, but also taking pleasure in his misfortune, thinking that a man as bold and boundless as him was destined to get into trouble.

"You... you dare hit me?" Ning Yuan Shu, who was still held by Yang Kai, his cheek so swollen the pain was numbing, ogled at Yang Kai and muttered in disbelief.

Yang Kai sneered, "Dare? I've already hit you."

"This Young Master is... "

"I know. The Young Palace Master of Flying Saint Palace!" Yang Kai cut him off and continued slapping him. He smiled at Qin Zhao Yang, "This boy is quite interesting. He doesn't forget about his home even after being beaten silly. It's as if he doesn't have any identity without his background."

While speaking, he lifted Ning Yuan Shu high and shouted "Come one, come all, everyone have a look, this is the famous Flying Saint Palace Young Palace Master Ning Yuan Shu. Remember his face well."

The cultivators around thought, [Everyone saw you beating him to a pulp, how could we not remember?]

Ning Yuan Shu roared as his blood seemed to flow backwards from his rage, resulting in him coughing up large mouthfuls of it.

He had an extraordinary background and was spoiled and doted on since he was a child, never suffering the slightest insult. But today, he had been slapped across the face repeatedly by Yang Kai in front of a massive crowd.

Although he spat blood, he did not faint, which at least proved his will wasn't weak.

Qin Zhao Yang smiled bitterly and did not know what to say to Yang Kai, but secretly sighing, he felt that young people today were indeed high spirited and uninhibited. It almost reminded him of his own youth.

\*Xiu... \*

Two beams of lights suddenly flew over from up ahead. These two newcomers were giving off slightly unsteady auras, as if they were escaping from a battle.

"Ah... Young Palace Master!" The lights stopped a short distance away from Yang Kai and the others, revealing Protectors Gao Shan and Liu Shui.

The two Elders of Flying Saint Palace looked quite embarrassed at the moment, their white hair and beards frazzled, their clothes torn. Gao Shan held a Guqin-like artifact in his arms, but the light coming from it was quite dim. It seemed the spirituality of his artifact had taken damage. The same was true for Liu Shui's flute on his waist.

The two of them could not fathom what happened as they came from the opposite direction and were shocked to see the state of Ning Yuan Shu.

"Left and Right Protectors..." When Ning Yuan Shu saw Gao Shan and Liu Shui, his eyes flashed with madness as he ground his teeth and shouted, "Quickly avenge this Young Master! Kill this bastard!"

"You did this?" Gao Shan stared at Yang Kai coldly.

Liu Shui's face was gloomy as he lifted up his flute and without saying a word poured his Source Qi into it.

Yang Kai turned a deaf ear to these two old men and instead looked at their backs with his squinted eyes, a moment later his expression turning into a solemn frown.

"Release the Young Master!" Seeing Yang Kai ignoring them, Gao Shan shouted in furious anger. At the same time, Liu Shui flickered and appeared suddenly beside Yang Kai, his flute artifact in hand.

“Brother Yang, be careful!” Qin Zhao Yang was shocked.

With his cultivation and eyesight, he could not see exactly how Liu Shui approached Yang Kai, and it was far too late to warn him about it.

Yang Kai laughed and ignored Liu Shui’s attack, however, simply moving Ning Yuan Shu in his hand in the direction of the incoming strike, completely using the Young Palace Master as a shield.

Liu Shui furrowed his brow and withdrew his attack before swiftly returning to Gao Shan’s side.

Gao Shan wore a gloomy look as he slowly strummed the Guqin in his arms with one hand. A clear and uplifting melody instantly spread out, forcing the nearby cultivators to circulate their Source Qi to protect themselves from the sound waves.

“Boy! What has Flying Saint Palace done to you to provoke such a vicious assault against the Young Palace Master?” Gao Shan asked while strumming his Guqin.

“That’s what I’d like to know,” Yang Kai held Ning Yuan Shu in front of him, only poking half his head out from behind him as he snickered. “You’ll have to ask your Young Palace Master about this. He just suddenly attacked me, so I just fought back.”

Ning Yuan Shu’s eyes were filled with hatred as he wanted to resist, but found himself completely suppressed, unable to even circulate his Source Qi. Gritting his teeth, he shouted, “Left and Right Protectors, this person is that brat surnamed Yang who might have killed my Eldest Brother. We must capture him and bring him back to the Sect for interrogation!”

“Huh? He’s the boy surnamed Yang?” Gao Shan and Liu Shui were shocked when they heard this, suddenly recalling they had not asked his name when they saw Yang Kai in the Qin Family earlier.

“I killed your Elder Brother?” Yang Kai asked, his mind turning quickly and quickly realizing Ning Yuan Shu why attacked him, “Believe it or not, the death of your brother has nothing to do with me!”

Although he destroyed Ning Yuan Cheng’s body, the true culprit behind his death was the Wood Spirit. The Wood Spirit Seed had exploded in Ning Yuan Cheng’s body, causing him to completely lose his vitality. What Yang Kai killed was nothing more than a shell for the Wood Spirit Soul Clone.

So, Ning Yuan Cheng’s death really had nothing to do with him.

“This is not something you can settle with a single statement! If you are smart enough, you will follow us back to the Sect and obediently submit to Sir Palace Master’s judgement!” Gao Shan shouted.

Yang Kai sneered, “And I should follow you just because you said so? How disgraceful would that be? And... is it really okay for you two to stand here leisurely? The one pursuing you is about to arrive!”

Many people were confused by his words.

Gao Shan and Liu Shui’s faces, however, changed drastically as they turned to look back quickly.

\*Weng... \*

There was a sudden tremor in space as a powerful coercion arrived from the horizon, sweeping across the crowd, anchoring all the cultivators present in place, as if a giant mountain had been dropped on their shoulders.

The rubble and soil on the ground slowly rose up amongst the inexplicable pressure, the scene simply unimaginable.

“What is this...”

“Could it be that an Emperor has come?”

“Ah, this is bad, we’re going to die...”

Ning Yuan Shu was wounded, and he was bleeding terribly, his white clothes now dyed red by his own blood, making for a shocking scene.

“This is...” the round-faced woman, together with the other disciples from Eight Paths Sect who had followed after Yang Kai and Qin Zhao Yang, stared off into the distance, their faces warping in fear.

At the edge of the sky, a figure appeared.

He was wrapped in an indescribable energy and a powerful, violent aura rumbled around him, causing all present to shudder.

The world collapsed and turned upside down wherever this person passed.

This newcomer’s aura was so intense that it was in no way inferior to an Emperor Realm Master’s. Amidst the chaotic energy, only a pair of bright eyes shone through with cold excitement, making those who were gazed upon feel as if they had been thrown into a winter blizzard.

This person, surprisingly, was Luo Yuan from Eight Paths Sect!

It was unknown what had happened between Gao Shan, Liu Shui, and Luo Yuan when the three of them flew out of the city to fight, but now Luo Yuan was chasing after Gao Shan and Liu Shui like they were stray dogs.

“Tsk tsk, this aura!” Yang Kai made a sound with a look of admiration, “It is rare to not lose one’s consciousness after releasing such power. Whatever Secret Technique he was cultivating is impressive. I wonder if he succeeded in mastering it now.”

Previously, Luo Yuan said that he was trying to comprehend some kind of Secret Technique, but had run into a bottleneck. As such, he wanted to fight with Yang Kai, but Yang Kai had instead pushed this trouble onto Gao Shan and Liu Shui. At this stage, Luo Yuan should not be far from successfully comprehending this new Secret Technique. Even Yang Kai had never seen a profound technique that could allow one’s aura to rise to the level of an Emperor despite still being a Dao Source Realm cultivator.

Luo Yuan was still far away, but in the blink of an eye, he arrived. No one was able to see how he moved.

“Not good!” Gao Shan and Liu Shui must have suffered a big loss at Luo Yuan’s hands, otherwise, they would not have fled in embarrassment. At this moment, they were so afraid that they would, obviously, not wait quietly for this madman to show up in front of them.

The two exchanged a knowing glance before one raised his flute to his lips and the other plucked his Guqin, sending out shocking music from their instruments.

The Souls of many cultivators present were sent into a daze.

Gao Shan and Liu Shui flanked Yang Kai on the left and right in an instant.

Liu Shui raised his flute horizontally and directed it to Yang Kai’s head before blowing into it. Gao Shan strummed his Guqin sharply at the same time with all five of his fingers, unleashing an invisible slash towards Yang Kai.

“Hahaha!” Yang Kai laughed sarcastically, “Since you want this back so badly, I’ll return it to you!”

As he spoke, his hand shook slightly and he threw Ning Yuan Shu, who was still in his grasp, towards the Guqin’s slash.

“How is that possible?!”

“Not good!”

Gao Shan and Liu Shui exclaimed in shock, their faces paling abruptly.

Chapter 2262, Shocking And Exaggerated Words

Gao Shan and Liu Shui were the Left and Right Protectors of Flying Saint Palace. Their cultivation and abilities were just below those of Palace Master Ning Bo Yang. If the two of them teamed up, they could even fight a few rounds with an ordinary Emperor Realm Master.

But right now, the confidence of these two old men had been crushed.

First, Luo Yuan from Eight Paths Sect had beaten them senseless and sent them scurrying like stray dogs despite it being two on one. Then, it was Yang Kai, who completely ignored their combined attack.

[What is happening with young people nowadays? It’s ridiculous that each and every one of them is acting so rampantly and have the skills to back up their arrogance.] Secretly, they could not help feeling old all of a sudden.

Seeing Ning Yuan Shu thrown out by Yang Kai towards the sound wave slash, the faces of Gao Shan and Liu Shui changed drastically. If Ning Yuan Shu died under their attack, there was no way they could explain themselves to Ning Bo Yang.

Following a shout, Liu Shui stored away his flute then used a profound Movement Skill to appear directly in front of Ning Yuan Shu. Using his bare back, Li Shui blocked the sound wave slash while simultaneously grabbing hold of Ning Yuan Shu.

\*Pu... \*

The slash hit Liu Shui's body, causing him to stagger forward. It was obvious that he was injured as fresh blood began leaking from the corner of his mouth.

"You! You court death!" Liu Shui was enraged after he had suffered such a big loss and glared sharply at Yang Kai.

"Hahaha..." Yang Kai said nothing and just laughed wickedly.

"Not good, we need to bring the Young Palace Master out of here!" Gao Shan quickly bellowed.

Liu Shui was also aware that they should not remain here any longer as Luo Yuan would soon catch up. In the distance, Luo Yuan could be seen with his arms stretched up towards the Heavens, as if he was trying to lift them above his head, the surrounding clouds swirling about him as an unimaginable pressure radiated from his body.

The faces of all the cultivators present turned pale at this sight.

On the other side, Gao Shan and Liu Shui's bodies flickered as they swiftly fled into the distance. When they left, they did not forget to leave some ruthless words behind though, "Little brat, I advise you to come to the palace to offer a humble apology and accept punishment, because you would not be able to escape from us even if you ran to the ends of the Earth!"

"If you have any guts, don't run!" Yang Kai shouted, cupping his hands around his mouth.

Of course, Gao Shan and Liu Shui ignored him and disappeared.

The next moment, Luo Yuan's figure suddenly appeared in front of everyone.

Looking closely at Luo Yuan, his current state gave everyone a chill. A rich and substantive energy formed a vortex swirling around his body, one that seemed to be disrupting the local World Principles. Everywhere he passed, space collapsed and numerous Void Cracks flitted about. Of course, this damage was being repaired as quickly as it was caused as more World Principles flooded in towards the area.

Many cultivators who came here immediately moved back and did not dare to get within a thousand-metre range of Luo Yuan.

Yang Kai's expression turned solemn too as he stared at Luo Yuan indifferently.

Luo Yuan's aura was at its peak right now, but he was also covered in blood from head to toe. It could be seen that during the previous battle with the two old men, Gao Shan and Liu Shui, Luo Yuan did not really have the upper hand. However, although his appearance was quite miserable right now, the fire in his eyes was still burning brightly.

"Senior Brother Luo..." The round-faced woman stuttered, feeling pained about Luo Yuan's condition.

Luo Yuan did not turn his eyes to her but instead glanced at Yang Kai.

From that gaze, Yang Kai could see a strong fighting intent.

He hurriedly said, "Brother Luo, you shouldn't do things half-heartedly and should always finish what you started. Those two ran just now, so shouldn't you chase after them to settle this once and for all?"

While speaking, he pointed towards a certain direction for Luo Yuan.

Luo Yuan looked at him for a long while, then nodded slightly, "It won't be too late to wait until your cultivation has improved a little before we battle."

After that, Luo Yuan flew off to pursue Gao Shan and Liu Shui.

After he left, a number of gasps sounded as everyone breathed a sigh of relief, like a big rock had been lifted from their chests, all of them looking around, feeling lucky for having survived this calamity.

Among the crowd, there was one man, however, who was quietly trying to sneak away.

But before he could take a second step, he suddenly felt a chill down his back and his face drastically changed as he looked behind himself.

"Hu..." In front of his eyes was a short and sloppy fat man, with a rosy nose and a flushed face, breathing out a warm breath.

Zhuang Pan was caught off guard and inhaled most of that hot breath. His face could not help turning red as he took a few steps back with his mouth covered with his hands. There was an irritating sound coming from his throat and it seemed that he was about to retch, but luckily, his cultivation was still good enough for him to suppress that nausea.

The short fat man looked at him with a grin, then lifted his huge green bottle gourd and took a swig of it, finally ending with a loud burp.

"Drunkard..." Zhuang Pan's face turned ugly while looking at him.

When he saw a man come out from behind Drunkard's back, his face turned even uglier and the corner of his mouth twitched, "Sir City Lord!"

Duan Yuan Shan snorted coldly, "I'm surprised that you still remember this Duan is the City Lord here. How thoughtful of you, Deacon Zhuang."

At this moment, Duan Yuan Shan felt unspeakable joy as if he could finally vent out all the resentment in him.

Zhuang Pan forced a smile and replied, "Sir City Lord, you must be joking. This Zhuang worked under Sir City Lord for several dozen years, how could he have forgotten this?"

"Really?" Duan Yuan Shan looked at him from the corner of his eyes and sneered, "But I saw that Deacon Zhuang had forgotten about this for the past few days."

"There is no such thing." Zhuang Pan denied and explained, "the things that happened a few days ago... I have my reasons..."

Just as he was still speaking, Qin Zhao Yang suddenly appeared beside Zhuang Pan with a flicker of his body, forming a triangle with Duan Yuan Shan and Drunkard, surrounding Zhuang Pan.

Zhuang Pan was just a First-Order Dao Source Realm cultivator, so when he saw these three glaring at him unkindly, not knowing what they were going to do with him, he was so terrified his legs trembled and he yelled, "What do you want to do? Don't forget that this Zhuang is not the Vice City Lord of Maplewood City anymore, but a Deacon of Flying Saint Palace!"

As soon as he said this, the three men frowned and showed a look of hesitation.

Zhuang Pan was nothing to them, and if they teamed up, he would definitely die here. Even if they were to each act alone, they would not be at a disadvantage here.

However, the current status of Zhuang Pan was the source of their fear.

A Deacon in Flying Saint Palace was nothing impressive, but it was also not a low position either; after all, it was still a post that represented Flying Saint Palace's face. As such, if the three of them really killed Zhuang Pan in front of this crowd, word would soon spread to Flying Saint Palace.

Qin Zhao Yang had to protect the Qin Family, while Duan Yuan Shan and Drunkard still had to look after Maplewood City. If they really offended Flying Saint Palace due to this matter, their good days would come to an end.

Seeing the change of their expression, the cowardliness of Zhuang Pa was swept away and he laughed loudly with a grin, "City Lord Duan, I'm quite nervous having you three stare at me so menacingly. Could you please not be so fierce with your faces?"

His words were full of teasing and mocking, and it embarrassed the three of them.

While talking, Zhuang Pan took two steps forward, patted Drunkard's big belly and made fun of him, "Drunk old man, you should cut back on the wine a bit. You used to be a handsome Young Lord in Maplewood City, but what have you become after all these years? If those women who admired you before saw you now, they would be so heartbroken."

Drunkard remained silent, simply continuing to lift up his bottle as he took another mouthful of wine.

Zhuang Pan then cast his sight on Qin Zhao Yang, "Old Ghost Qin, isn't it difficult to support the Qin Family on your own? Have you ever wondered what would happen if you were gone one day, what kind of fate would befall your Qin Family? What would happen to Qin Yu?"

As soon as he said this, Qin Zhao Yang's face changed abruptly. Qin Yu was always Qin Zhao Yang's biggest weakness and also his reverse scale, so Zhuang Pan's words had clearly lit up the fire in him.

Zhuang Pan chuckled, "Those who know how to act according to the circumstances are the wisest. Why not consider joining Flying Saint Palace now? This Deacon may be able to recommend you."

"Hmph!" Qin Zhao Yang heavily snorted.

"Can't appreciate kindness!" The smiling face of Zhuang Pan darkened when he saw Qin Zhao Yang giving him that face, turning to Duan Yuan Shan next, "City Lord Duan, the purpose of this Zhuang accompanying Young Palace Master here to Maplewood City this time was to invite City Lord Duan to



join Flying Saint Palace in order to complete a certain important matter. I wonder what City Lord Duan's things of this?"

Maplewood City was a small city that was not rich in products or resources, so before now, none of the great forces had the intention to control this place; however, recently, the city had become a prize worth fighting over with the discovery of a Source Crystal lode and a number of Earth Veins nearby.

Duan Yuan Shan happened to be the City Lord of Maplewood City, so if he was willing to join Flying Saint Palace, Maplewood City would become a protectorate of Flying Saint Palace, allowing it to rightfully claim the Source Crystal lode and Earth Veins. For those other forces that wanted to harvest these resources, they would then have to weigh their own strength and confidence before contesting them.

After listening to Zhuang Pan's question, Duan Yuan Shan kept quiet with a cold face.

Zhuang Pan sneered, "City Lord Duan, this opportunity is right in front of you, don't let it slip through your fingertips... This Zhuang knows that City Lord Duan has spent his whole life cultivating, but has reached his limit at the Second-Order Dao Source Realm. Do you not want to go further? If you can obtain some guidance from Sir Palace Master, perhaps you would still have a chance to break through to the Third-Order."

Hearing this, Duan Yuan Shan shivered and his eyes gleamed, but soon, he regained his calm expression and snorted coldly, "It is impossible for this Duan to join Flying Saint Palace.

Zhuang Pan jumped up in anger and reprimanded, "Duan Yuan Shan, don't force me to get tough with you!"

"Go away and don't show your face in Maplewood City ever again, otherwise don't blame this Duan for being impolite with you."

This was the limit to his patience. Duan Yuan Shan could not hold back his murderous intent and let Zhuang Pan leave in peace for much longer. Given Zhuang Pan's previous desertion in the middle of the battle, Duan Yuan Shan killing him ten times over here and now would not be enough. Furthermore, this time, after Zhuang Pan returned to Maplewood City with Ning Yuan Shu, he had been taking advantage of the influence of others to constantly pressure and ridicule him and Drunkard.

If Zhuang Pan had not taken refuge in Flying Saint Palace, forcing Duan Yuan Shan to fear reprisals from the latter, how could he easily let such a villain posture like this in front of him?

Chapter 2263, World Energy Rain

"Impolite?" Zhuang Pan sneered, "And just how will you treat me impolitely? This Deacon is really curious to know how City Lord Duan will follow through on his threat."

"Beat me then, beat me if you dare!" Zhuang Pan put his face in front of Duan Yuan Shan and the others and blatantly provoked them.

The cultivators all around shook their heads with disdain.

These foreign cultivators were basically meeting Zhuang Pan for the first time and knew nothing about him before today, but the attitude and behaviour of a man could be easily seen when he spoke like this.

Zhuang Pan was undoubtedly a type of villain that would kick an opponent when they were down, the type of person everyone despises.

The Patriarchs from the few big families in Maplewood City who rushed here revealed their sad expressions as they were sympathetic to Duan Yuan Shan's plight.

Over the years, the big families had been under the management of the City Lord's Mansion, and although there were some frictions and conflicts between them, there were no big fights or wars. In fact, the City Lord's Mansion had mostly served as a buffer between the big families, earning it the respect of these families.

Seeing the City Lord, Vice City Lord, and the Patriarch from the Qin Family being bullied and disdained by Zhuang Pan at this moment, it was natural that those Patriarch would feel uncomfortable.

\*Pa... \*

A crisp sound suddenly resounded.

Everyone was dumbfounded as cold sweat formed on their foreheads, wondering to themselves if Sir City Lord had really lost his temper and acted rashly.

With doubt, they turned and looked.

The scene they saw stunned them.

They saw a figure standing in front of Zhuang Pan, cracking his neck and palming his fist, as if he was getting ready to fight.

"Who!? Who dares to strike me!?" Zhuang Pan was stunned by the slap just now. He felt half of his cheek swell up and go numb. His head had been struck sideways, so he couldn't see who had slapped him immediately, so he immediately shouted hysterically as he turned his face back, "Who dare... uh..."

Mid-shout, his eyes met with Yang Kai's grinning face and suddenly felt like he was being stared at by a vicious beast. This brought a chill to Zhuang Pan's back as he forcefully choked down the ruthless words he was about to say.

"Interesting..." While speaking, Yang Kai gave another slap again.

\*Pa... \*

With another crisp sound, Zhuang Pan's other cheek swelled up as several bloody teeth flew from his mouth.

Yang Kai grabbed Zhuang Pan's collar with one hand, fixing him in place, then proceeded to slap Zhuang Pan's face continuously with his free hand, each time adding a little force to his blow, the Source Qi on his palm growing more and more vigorous.

\*Pa pa pa... \*

Rhythmic and crisp music played out above the empty wilderness.

“This is the first time...” Yang Kai kept on slapping his face while sneering at him, “I’ve heard someone... wish to be beaten so badly... I simply had no choice but to oblige!”

All the cultivators felt pain from looking at the scene, and could not help touching their own cheeks.

Zhuang Pan was completely dumbfounded and it took a long time for him to recover. When he did, he struggled violently to free himself from Yang Kai’s grip.

But a man with just a First-Order Dao Source Realm cultivation like him could not possibly achieve this, so he remained completely suppressed by Yang Kai’s Source Qi.

In despair, Zhuang Pan cried loudly and begged for mercy, “Senior Yang, stop, stop, don’t beat me anymore.”

“Senior Yang, I know my mistake, I really know! Please let go of me, I apologize to you!”

“I’m a Deacon of Flying Saint Palace, quickly release me!”

“Bastard! You can kill me, but you can’t humiliate me. I will go all out on you if you keep doing this...”

“Wuwuwuwu... Senior Yang, please spare my life, I don’t want to die!”

The cultivators around watched this scene and heard every single word from Zhuang Pan, all of them openly despising him now for his lack of spine, honestly thinking his death would not be worth pitying.

After several dozen slaps, Zhuang Pan’s face no longer resembled that of a human.

Previously during the fight, Yang Kai did not try to kill Ning Yuan Shu due to his unique identity and because he had a father who was an Emperor Realm Master. Yang Kai did not want to cause unnecessary trouble for himself.

But it was different with Zhuang Pan. Every slap from Yang Kai sent bursts of Source Qi into Zhuang Pan’s meridians, snapping and breaking them along the way.

In other words, even if Zhuang Pan survived this time, he would become a cripple without any cultivation and unable to cultivate anymore.

“Little Brother Yang...” Duan Yuan Shan could not bear the miserable look of Zhuang Pan “Forget it, being a coward is in his nature. In the end, he did not cause us any losses, so just give him a quick mercy.”

Drunkard made a burp, his eyes gleaming with cold light as he said, “Beat the snake to death to avoid it climbing up your stick. Allowing a tiger back to the mountains would only breed calamity for the future!”

While speaking, he suddenly reached out his hand and grabbed the top of Zhuang Pan’s head.

Yang Kai squinted, stretched his hand and pushed Drunkard’s hand away and smiled, “Sir Vice City Lord shouldn’t be bothered with such a trivial matter.”

It was inappropriate for Drunkard to do the dirty job, but not Yang Kai. He had beaten Ning Yuan Shu up before, so how could killing Zhuang Pan be worse than that? In any case, he already had a silent feud with Flying Saint Palace, so this act would not change anything.

When his words fell, Yang Kai clenched his hand tightly and poured his Source Qi into Zhuang Pan before tossing him out.

“Ahhhhh...” Zhuang Pan yelled miserably, but his scream ceased abruptly when his body exploded, turning into a rain of blood, showering down on the ground.

The surrounding cultivators kept silent like a cicada in the winter.

However, when they recalled the moment when Yang Kai killed the Vice Valley Master of Evil Moon Valley, they secretly felt that this scene in front of them was not a big deal.

Duan Yuan Shan and Drunkard simultaneously cast their grateful eyes at Yang Kai, thanking him for cleaning up Maplewood City’s mess.

At that moment, the ambient World Energy trembled again and an indescribable feeling suddenly surged forth from the horizon, followed by a muffled sound of thunder and a rumbling from the earth.

Everyone was shocked and looked around.

“Does anyone else feel like... the World Energy in the air has suddenly become richer?” A Second-Order Dao Source Realm cultivator among the crowd asked.

Someone immediately answered, “I felt it before, but I thought it was my imagination. Since Brother Liu has sensed it too though, it seems to be real!”

“Since there’s a change in the World Energy, it’s very likely something has happened to the Source Crystal lodes or the Earth Veins!”

As soon as this statement was made, everyone’s eyes lit up and after exchanging a few knowing glances, all of them executed their Movement Skills and rushed towards the place where the Source Crystal Lode and Earth Veins were located.

Duan Yuan Shan and Drunkard were the Lord and Vice Lord of Maplewood City, so obviously they could not just sit back and watch, immediately following after the others after saying goodbye to Yang Kai.

“Brother Yang...” Qin Zhao Yang looked at Yang Kai, “It seems that the tremor we sensed before was not triggered by the battle between Luo Yuan and Gao Shan and Lui Shui, but rather because something happened to the Earth Veins and Source Crystal lode.”

“It should be!” Yang Kai nodded. He also thought the tremor happened because of the battle between Luo Yuan and the two Protectors, but right now it seemed that there were other reasons.

“Would you like to check it out?” Qin Zhao Yang asked Yang Kai for his opinion.

“Of course I have to take a look at such an interesting matter,” Yang Kai grinned. Just as he was about to leave, however, he caught a glimpse of Ye Jing Han from the Thousand Leaves Sect standing not far away, looking at him quietly.

Yang Kai's face darkened.

This woman was like a sticky plaster he could not get rid of, which really annoyed him.

Acknowledging Yang Kai's annoyed face, Ye Jing Han stepped back some distance, her face filled with sorrow which made it hard to ignore.

"Let's go!" Shouting so, Yang Kai rushed towards the source of the tremor.

When the pair arrived, there saw a great glow on the horizon as well as a gathering of bright clouds high above. The barren wilderness seemed to have been transformed into some kind of paradise at this moment.

"What's happening?" Qin Zhao Yang was puzzled.

When Demon Qi flooded the city, he and Yang Kai had come to this region to assist Qin Yu in reinforcing the ancient seal. Although their plan failed, they did not notice anything unusual about the seal except for a boundless amount of Demon Qi.

However, a few months later, many Earth Veins and a Source Crystal lode had surprisingly been found here.

\*Hong... \*

A loud sound burst out at that moment as a massive pit appeared before Yang Kai's eyes. From this pit, an intense beam of light suddenly shot out into the sky.

"This is..."

"Heavens."

"Can there be such a thing in this world?"

All the cultivators who came here yelled as they looked up at the beam of light. Using their Divine Senses, they all immediately discovered the true nature of this phenomenon.

This beam of light was actually formed by a convergence of the purest World Energy, one so rich it actually began to form into a kind of condensation.

Everyone was so astonished that they could not believe their eyes, their faces filling with extreme excitement.

The purity and concentration of World Energy in this place were astonishing. The cultivators who came here were at best from second-class Sects and families which all had their own cultivation paradises, places where the World Energy aura was richer and could allow their disciples to cultivate faster.

But when everyone compared the World Energy in their own cultivation zones to this place, the difference was simply incomparable.

Perhaps, only the cultivation paradises occupied by peak level Sects could be like this.

All of sudden, the beam of light that soared into the sky burst apart and an unimaginably rich World Energy began to fall down on the surrounding area in tiny droplets.

\*Xi xi li li... \*

In an instant, it began to rain.

World Energy Rain.

The richness of the World Energy in this once barren wilderness rose at an incredible speed...

In no time, everyone was standing in what appeared to be a massive Spirit Qi Sea.

Chapter 2264 , Cultivation Paradise

In less time than it would take to brew a half cup of tea, the surrounding region for several thousand kilometres was covered by this extremely rich Spirit Qi Sea, engulfing many cultivators in it, blocking their vision. Even Maplewood City, which was two thousand kilometres away, benefited greatly. Countless cultivators rushed to the city walls and looked up full of excitement, opening their arms to welcome the raining World Energy.

(Silavin, Spirit Qi Sea is basically greatly condensed World Energy. The term is interchangeable.)

\*Hong Hong Hong... \*

The sound of the invisible shackles being opened came from every corner of Maplewood City, transmitted from the bodies of many cultivators, causing them to tremble and have weird expressions.

“I... I made a breakthrough to the Second-Order Origin King Realm!”

“Wo... I can die in peace now that I have broken the shackles of the Origin Returning Realm!”

“Hahahaha, this Young Master is truly talented, an undefeatable genius, instantly breaking through three Minor Realms straight to the Immortal Ascension Realm! This Young Master is truly invincible!”

The joyful cries of the cultivators filled the air as more and more of them broke through, reaching higher in the Martial Dao with the assistance of the dense Spirit Qi Sea.

Nothing much occurred when breaking through a Minor Realm within a Great Realm, but breaking through to a new Great Realm would always usher in a World Energy Baptism.

As a result, the sky covering Maplewood City soon grew dark, engulfing the entire city in black clouds as if the end was near. Soon after, winds began to gather and bolts of World Energy began pouring down from above, striking the bodies of those who had just advanced to the next Great Realm, washing their bodies and Souls.

Maplewood City instantly boiled up.

However, Yang Kai and the others, who were standing just above the ancient seal outside of the city, benefited even more.

Each and every Dao Source Realm Master stood frozen with their eyes closed, feeling the richness of World Energy around them, opening all their pores in order to absorb this energy even without consciously circulating their Secret Art. The ubiquitous World Energy continuously poured into their limbs even when they just stood still, making them feel completely relaxed and at ease.

A creaking sound came from inside Yang Kai's body, which made his expression strange and immediately excited.

"Brother Yang..." Qin Zhao Yang suddenly shouted with difficulty.

"What's wrong?" Yang Kai turned his head and looked at Qin Zhao Yang.

"This Old Master can't withstand it anymore..." Qin Zhao Yang looked like he was in pain as if he had constipation and suddenly glanced at Yang Kai, "I need to look for a place... to quietly break through!"

Yang Kai raised his brows immediately and said with great joy, "Congratulations, Patriarch Qin."

Qin Zhao Yang had shown no signs of breaking through for hundreds of years due to his advanced age, but when he was suddenly enveloped by this dense World Energy, it seemed his opportunity had come.

Without this opportunity, given Qin Zhao Yang's innate aptitude and age, he would never be able to reach the threshold of the Second-Order Dao Source Realm until the day he died. If he was able to break through at this time though, it would be a great blessing to the Qin Family, and even to Maplewood City.

Qin Zhao Yang smiled bitterly, "The timing couldn't be worse though. The situation here is turbulent at the moment, so this Old Master will have to ask Brother Yang to stand guard for him for a time!"

"No problem!" Yang Kai agreed readily before he began looking around. There were many cultivators present, all of whom showed excited looks as the Source Qi in their bodies became turbulent. Many seemed to similarly be on the verge of breaking through.

"Let's head to the source!" Yang Kai grabbed Qin Zhao Yang and rushed forward.

There were too many people around at this moment, all of whom were Dao Source Realm, and the impact that occurred during a breakthrough would be very chaotic, so it was not suitable to remain here. Since Qin Zhao Yang showed signs of a breakthrough, it could not be wasted.

Therefore, Yang Kai decided to go deep into the tiger's den.

"The source!" Qin Zhao Yang narrowed his eyes but quickly understood what Yang Kai was referring to.

Soon, the pair dove into a massive hole in the ground and rushed downwards against the constant upsurge of World Energy.

Yang Kai's approach was indeed correct. The deeper they dove, the more terrifying the purity and richness of the World Energy. The World Energy that appeared above ground was amazing enough, but the World Energy below the surface was on a completely different scale.

With the help of such a vast sea of World Energy, Qin Zhao Yang felt that it was simply impossible for him to fail to break through this time. He could not help but feel excited as his face glowed, making him appear several dozen years younger.

The two of them fell all the way down for more than a thousand metres before reaching solid ground.

The underground situation was the same as above, a literal lake.

However, the water here was not ordinary water, but rather Liquid Spirit Qi.

Yang Kai did not intend to linger here and simply looked for a direction before he continued to rush forward.

After a long time, he suddenly stopped, looked left and right, and said, "Patriarch Qin, you can break through here. No one should come here in a short time."

At this moment, everyone was busy absorbing World Energy to prepare for their own breakthrough, so how could they have the mind to explore this underground cave system? So, what Yang Kai said made sense.

Qin Zhao Yang was afraid that he could not suppress himself anymore so he simply nodded and sat down cross-legged without another word. Circulating his Secret Art, he instantly entered a meditative state.

Yang Kai waved his hand and summoned three beautiful figures before himself.

"Sir... what is this place?" Zhang Ruo Xi asked, noticing the strangeness around her instantly and couldn't help covering her lips in shock.

Hua Qing Si's beautiful eyes also widened as she trembled, "Yang... Yang Kai, don't tell me you broke into some great Sect's cultivation paradise without authorization?"

Liu Yan's dazzling eyes looked around while the corners of her mouth rose slightly to reveal a smile, but she did not comment out loud.

Yang Kai smiled and said, "Of course not."

"The World Energy here..." Hua Qing Si was shocked.

"How is it compared to the cultivation paradises of Star Soul Palace?" Yang Kai asked with interest.

"Not far off!" Hua Qing Si pondered for a while before groaning, "The cultivation paradise of Soul Palace is divided into three levels, Heaven, Earth, and Mortal. Those with my cultivation are only permitted to enter the Earth Grade cultivation paradises, and in order to do so, we need to offer a massive number of contribution points to the Sect. The World Energy here is even denser than in those Earth Grade cultivation rooms!"

"What about Heaven Grade?" Yang Kai frowned.

"I don't know!" Hua Qing Si shook her head, and said bitterly, "Only Emperor Realm Masters are allowed to cultivate under such conditions, I am not qualified to enter."

Yang Kai gently nodded.

"Where is this place? Why is there such rich World Energy here?" Hua Qing Si asked again.



“It’s the land around the ancient seal we visited last time. I don’t know what this place’s name is, or what lies below, but apparently, a number of Earth Veins and a Source Crystal lode suddenly appeared here...”

Hua Qing Si was stunned when she heard this.

She had lost her freedom here in this place after Yang Kai captured her and threw her into his Sealed World Bead, eventually forcing her to surrender her Soul Brand.

However, because of that, she obtained an Extraordinary Treasure Pill, which greatly increased her chances of breaking through to the Emperor Realm.

It was hard to say if she had gained or lost from this event. In any case, Hua Qing Si was not upset with her current situation and she had grown a much friendlier opinion of Yang Kai.

“Enough nonsense, it would be a shame to let this opportunity slip by. Quickly meditate and cultivate, absorb as much World Energy as you can.”

Hua Qing Si and Zhang Ruo Xi nodded one after another at his words and quickly found a place to sit cross-legged and circulate their Secret Arts.

Hua Qing Si was a disciple of Star Soul Palace and had a powerful Third-Order Dao Source Realm cultivation, so although she failed miserably in her previous mission and wound up captured by Yang Kai, she was not someone to be underestimated. In a short time, her tender body became a bottomless pit that gathered a steady stream of World Energy towards it.

Yang Kai looked at her in amazement, secretly admiring the Secret Arts of Star Soul Palace.

Immediately afterwards, something that startled him even more happened.

A whistling noise emerged from Zhang Ruo Xi’s body, one that was created by a strong stream of wind. Instantly, Zhang Ruo Xi’s petite form also became a bottomless pit that rapidly absorbed the surrounding World Energy.

Zhang Ruo Xi’s cultivation aura soared upwards at a speed visible to the naked eye.

\*Ka... \*

An abnormal noise soon sounded and with Zhang Ruo Xi’s tender body as the centre, an invisible wave of pressure pulsed outwards.

“This...” Yang Kai ogled.

Ever since her bloodline power began to awaken, Zhang Ruo Xi’s cultivation speed had increased expeditiously, and the richer the World Energy was, the more obvious the effects of her cultivation were. She had no bottlenecks at all; as long as the accumulation of energy was sufficient, she could automatically break through. Even her Shi had easily reached the Grand Accomplishment Stage without any stagnation at all.

The scene before him was Zhang Ruo Xi easily breaking through to the Third-Order Origin Returning Realm!

Yang Kai was unsure of the condition of this young girl and her mysterious bloodline, but it was undeniable that this underground location was the most suitable place for Zhang Ruo Xi's cultivation.

Thoughts floated through Yang Kai's mind helplessly. [What would it be like if Zhang Ruo Xi were to cultivate in the Heaven Grade cultivation paradise of Star Soul Palace for several years?]

[Could she directly reach the Emperor Realm?]

"Master, you seem to be about to break through too!" Liu Yan looked at Yang Kai brightly with her beautiful eyes.

Her cultivation was much stronger now and was able to naturally detect the vibrations coming from Yang Kai's body.

Yang Kai nodded and responded, "You will need to stand guard at this place."

Saying so, Yang Kai reached out his hand and summoned the Sealed World Bead. After he performed a series of hand seals, the Sealed World Bead began emitting a huge suction force that drew in the surrounding World Energy. The Liquid Spirit Qi nearby surged as streams of water seemed to flow towards the small bead.

Tossing the Sealed World Bead to Liu Yan, Yang Kai said, "Find a place to hide, there are quite a lot of people here."

Liu Yan nodded, holding the Sealed World Bead as her tender body disappeared in a flash, hiding somewhere.

However, before she left, Yang Kai saw a hint of envy in her eyes.

This couldn't be helped though; everyone was benefiting from such a wondrous opportunity, but Liu Yan could not, naturally making her feel a bit distraught.

Chapter 2265 , Prevented from Breakthrough

Liu Yan did not have a physical body, so apart from swallowing and refining certain exotic flames, she was unable to directly absorb World Energy to increase her cultivation.

This was the reason why Yang Kai asked her to stand guard.

After Liu Yan hid, Yang Kai stretched out his hand again and released his two Blood Beasts, the Monster Insect Queen and Blue Flame Thunder Wolf, which had not been used for a while now.

With the improvement of his cultivation, the role these two Blood Beasts could play was getting lower and lower, especially the Blue Flame Thunder Wolf which was only as strong as a Second-Order Dao Source Realm cultivator. It was useless against strong enemies, but also unnecessary to use against weak enemies. However, it could be of use here and now.

With a pulse of his Divine Sense, Yang Kai ordered the two Blood Beasts to conceal themselves nearby before he also sat down with his legs crossed.

The fluctuations of his Source Qi were getting stronger and more prominent, which was a prelude to a breakthrough. Yang Kai focused his mind and ignored all the external influences as he began circulating his Secret Art.

Being here, in this underground, was like sitting on a Spirit Spring, so even without consciously circulating his Secret Art, the ambient World Energy would unendingly converge towards his body, flooding into his pores and making its way along his meridians to his Dantian.

As time passed, Yang Kai continued accumulating Qi inside himself.

At a certain moment, the Source Qi in his body reached a critical point and a kind of invisible wall that was barring his path shattered, allowing Yang Kai to take one more step forward.

Remaining unflustered, Yang Kai quietly gathered all of his strength and used it to bombard the shackles still holding him back.

\*Hong... \*

With a bang, Yang Kai's body trembled slightly and his face paled, showing a hint of pain on his face.

Beyond his expectations, this impact failed to have any effect.

This was something that he has rarely encountered since he began cultivating. Yang Kai had only experienced this when he was still very weak, so this failure actually gave him a feeling of nostalgia. Not panicking, Yang Kai simply grinned lightly.

This breakthrough was not induced by internal accumulation but instead was triggered by external stimulation, so it was only natural for there to be some difficulties. However, these difficulties could not stop Yang Kai and only further ignited his fighting spirit.

Remaining calm and composed, Yang Kai gathered his strength once more.

A moment later, he made another attempt.

\*Hong Hong Hong... \*

Again and again, Yang Kai pushed his Source Qi, each time enduring a sharp pain in his body and Soul that would render an ordinary man unconscious. If he were to give up now though, his Martial Heart would be damaged, and making further progress in the future would become impossible.

Countless cultivators started to doubt themselves because they were unable to bear this pain and became demoralized.

The only way for the cultivators to reach the peak was to persist.

The unceasing pain did not diminish Yang Kai's confidence, nor did it cause him to panic, all it did was reinforce his will.

“Dao begets one, one begets two, two begets three, three forms the basis for everything... Fate is made by oneself, the state is born from the heart, everything is transformed from form, and everything lives among the world. Illusions are born from the heart, and extinguished by the heart...”

A trace of comprehension leisurely appeared in Yang Kai’s mind as he reached a kind of enlightened state.

A layer of formless force lingered around his body, transforming into a kind of ethereal power that ground away at the shackles holding him down while at the same time smashing the ceiling above him, allowing Yang Kai to step out into a wider world.

\*Honglong...\*

A visible wave of Source Qi, with Yang Kai’s body as its centre, suddenly spread out in all directions, and the aura of a Second-Order Dao Source Realm Master instantly filled the air.

Yang Kai did not move at all as a strange feeling was born in his heart. His Soul Avatar seemed to emerge from his figure at that moment and slowly float up above his body, capturing everything underneath with its eyes.

Yang Kai clearly saw Liu Yan hiding nearby, holding the Sealed World Bead as Liquid Spirit Qi flowed into it, bolstering its World Energy.

Perhaps, due to some inexplicable connection between Yang Kai and Liu Yan, her beautiful eyes looked up in the direction of Yang Kai in bewilderment as she formed a slight frown on her face.

Yang Kai saw Hua Qing Si inhaling World Energy madly, laying a solid foundation for her breakthrough to the Emperor Realm.

Turning his attention towards Zhang Ruo Xi, Yang Kai saw that her cultivation was steadily increasing. Within just this short period of time, she had already reached the Origin King Realm and was now experiencing a World Energy Baptism.

Just like the last time when Zhang Ruo Xi broke through to the Origin Returning Realm in the Four Seasons Realm, the huge female phantom appeared behind her as she reached a new Great Realm.

This phantom was giant, white, and hazy, but looking at its silhouette, it was clearly a beautiful woman. This woman had a graceful figure and was holding a giant sword in front of her in both hands. She had a pair of beautiful eyes as mesmerizing as stars, sending Yang Kai’s Divine Sense into a trance with just one glance.

The giant phantom opened her mouth and breathed in suddenly, absorbing all the World Energy which had gathered in the sky for a baptism, then withdrew into Zhang Ruo Xi’s body.

The young girl broke through to the Origin King Realm just like that, without any obstacles or danger.

Yang Kai also witnessed many Dao Source Realm Masters breaking through their own bottlenecks. Some of them laughed crazily while others were focused on trying to break free from their shackles to reach the next Minor Realm.

Yang Kai's Soul Avatar continued to float up and rose several thousand metres in an instant. Lifting his eyes, Yang Kai was able to see Maplewood City two thousand kilometres away. At this moment, the city was buzzing in excitement, looking extremely lively and magnificent.

In the sky, many clusters of gathering World Energy had turned into visible clouds and were baptizing the ones who were attempting to break through to new Great Realms.

From time to time, someone would break through successfully and roar victoriously.

Yang Kai gazed farther away as his Soul Avatar continued to rise.

Soon, Maplewood City had become a small black dot, and when Yang Kai looked upward, the night sky was full of twinkling stars, forming various constellations.

In the darkness, the World Principles of the Star Boundary seemed to be within reach.

Yang Kai's face changed as he reached out his hand to the surrounding world and tried to grab hold of these mysterious Principles.

It seemed like he had caught nothing, but at the same time also like he was able to touch something.

Yang Kai was confused, but at that moment, a formless World Force abruptly plunged down from the sky and landed on top of Yang Kai's head, bringing with it unimaginable force and terrifying destructive energy.

"Not good!" Yang Kai exclaimed, pushing his Soul hard as he hastily descended back to his physical body.

\*Hong... \*

The World Force followed him closely and crashed onto him.

As if he was struck by lightning, Yang Kai's face changed drastically and his Source Qi shook uncontrollably.

\*Pu... \*

He spat out a puff of Golden Blood from his mouth and his aura was instantly weakened; however, his eyes remained as bright as the stars.

"What was that?" Yang Kai lifted his head and grinned towards the Heavens, "Is this some kind of warning that one cannot peek at World Principles before they obtain enough strength?"

He was confident that if it was not for the World Principles' suppression, he would have been able to catch a glimpse of the truth behind Principle Strength.

If that was the case, he would have been able to utilize Principle Strength directly, which was ordinarily a privilege only Emperor Realm Masters possessed.

Unfortunately, he was hindered by the World Principles at the last moment and fell short. It seemed the world itself was forbidding him from achieving success ahead of time.

However, that didn't mean Yang Kai gained nothing from this experience.

After a round of swearing, Yang Kai bowed his head again and opened his hands. As he moved his fingers about, Space Principles began to gather around his hand and numerous tiny Void Cracks flowed across his fingertips like little living creatures swimming around his palm.

Yang Kai found that his ability to motivate the surrounding Space Principles was much higher now than before.

Just as he flicked his fingers, those numerous tiny Void Cracks flew out like darts, plunged into the surrounding stone walls, carving cracks into many of them.

Yang Kai grinned and there was a trace of satisfaction on his face.

Back then, he could not manipulate Space Principles to such a subtle degree, but now he could do so easily.

This kind of attack was still weaker compared to his Moon Blade in terms of power, but it was harder for the enemies to evade. As such, it would be more effective than Moon Blade in some situations.

Next, Yang Kai immediately examined his own cultivation and realized he had already made a breakthrough to the Second-Order Dao Source Realm. He finally put down the last worries in his heart and began taking some pills.

Although the impact of the World Force just now did not hurt him too much, he still could not ignore it. Who knows if this kind of injury would have any side effects? So it was better to get it treated as soon as possible.

While Yang Kai was healing himself, Qin Zhao Yang had already gathered his own power to its peak and soon his body shook as a wave of Source Qi spread out from him. At the same time, his aura rose up and his robes flapped loudly.

In the next moment, the wrinkles on Qin Zhao Yang's face faded away slowly as he relaxed. In an instant, he seemed to become a dozen years younger and his complexion gradually became rosy. Even his head full of white hair began to show some black streaks in it now.

Second-Order Dao Source Realm!

Qin Zhao Yang made a breakthrough too!

He did not rush to open his eyes and instead continued to sit in place, absorbing the surrounding World Energy to consolidate his cultivation.

Time passed slowly.

At a certain moment, a cultivator who was at a critical point in his breakthrough suddenly frowned suspiciously.

A moment later, the aura coming from his body abruptly deflated like a punctured balloon.

After such a change, he instantly opened his eyes and yelled in anger, "What's wrong? I was on the verge of breaking through just now! Why did the surrounding World Energy suddenly decrease?"

He only began to break through here due to the richness of the surrounding World Energy, so when that same World Energy density lowered, he was unable to reach a critical point, causing his breakthrough to fail.

“Brother Liu, is it the same for you?” A man nearby spoke, “I thought it was just me.”

“Something’s not right, the surrounding World Energy was overflowing crazily just now so how could it drop so low all of a sudden? Even if a few Emperor Realm Masters appeared, they could not possibly have absorbed such a massive volume of World Energy in such a short time.”

“Is there some bastard down below blocking the Spirit Spring?” Another voice spoke out.

“Speaking of it, I thought I saw someone jump down there, maybe that’s why.”

“Who is this wicked bastard!? This is too much!”

“Let’s go and check. If I find that person, I’ll make him suffer for this! How dare he stop me from breaking through!”

Chapter 2266, Spirit Spring Eye

A thousand metres underground, Yang Kai stood up.

While this was a rare opportunity to cultivate, and it would be difficult to encounter such rich World Energy in the future, Yang Kai did not intend to waste time simply cultivating here and instead was determined to investigate what the root cause of this phenomenon was.

What’s more, he had just made a breakthrough and would not be able to break through again in a short period.

Sending Liu Yan a Divine Sense Message, Yang Kai asked her to continue protecting the others in their group before he began his own investigation.

Soon, something caught Yang Kai’s eye and he was about to take a closer look, when suddenly he frowned and turned to look in the direction of the entrance.

A vast crowd had gathered, and it seemed like many cultivators had found their way here, underground.

“There’s someone over there! There really was someone who came down ahead of us.”

“Bastard, he must be the one who interfered with my breakthrough!”

“Let’s go and find out who has such courage!”

The sound of loud chattering reached Yang Kai and he quickly released his Divine Sense to investigate the surrounding situation.

Soon, he discovered the problem. The surrounding World Energy had become a little bit thinner than before. Although the difference wasn't obvious, it was noticeable.

Perceiving this, Yang Kai could not help turning his head to look at Liu Yan's hiding place, unsure if it was because the Sealed World Bead was devouring World Energy.

This slight difference was not to be underestimated. It was very likely that this little change had prevented these cultivators from reaching a critical point in their breakthrough and had thus drawn so many of them down here to search for the cause.

Yang Kai hurriedly stretched out his hand to retrieve Liu Yan and the Sealed World Bead to avoid anyone catching them absorbing the World Energy.

Then, he stood there waiting quietly.

"Boy, no matter which Sect you are from, you're dead this time."

"Come over and apologize if you're smart, maybe I will spare you your life!"

"This old lady will fight you for taking away my precious opportunity to break through!"

A group of people protested, putting the blame all on Yang Kai, approaching him quickly.

After a while, a group of people stopped in front of Yang Kai.

"Ah... it's you... "

"This, this, this... "

All the cultivators who were yelling fell silent when they saw Yang Kai and stood in place with cold sweat on their foreheads, showing anxious looks on their faces.

The memory of Yang Kai killing Qu Huai Ren and murdering Zhuang Pan was still vivid in their minds, and all were fearful of provoking Yang Kai. All of them felt horrified about protesting without understanding the situation and were unsure if they had angered this monster.

"Need something?" Yang Kai looked at a group of people indifferently, his words cold.

"No, no, no..."

"It's nothing, we just came down to have a look, hahaha, the scenery below is good..."

"That's right, that's right, we were just curious to have a look!"

"Really?" Yang Kai raised the corners of his mouth and said lightly, "Since the scenery is good, you shouldn't miss it. You should all take a walk and look around."

"Yes, yes, yes! We'll go now!"

Not a single person dared to stop at the sight of his cold expression; they proceeded quickly and headed deeper. Just before leaving, many stared in the direction where Hua Qing Si sat.

With the strength of everyone present, it was natural for them to sense Hua Qing Si's cultivation realm. It was not shocking that they sensed her Third-Order Dao Source Realm aura though, as there were



several others with equivalent cultivations, what was noticeable, however, was the inexplicable aura lingering about her.

Emperor Intent!

Amazingly, they could sense Emperor Intent coming from Hua Qing Si, a sign she was on the verge of reaching the Emperor Realm.

In other words, this woman was very likely to break through to the Emperor Realm in the future.

Undoubtedly it would cause everyone to be shocked and envious. They did not know if Hua Qing Si had Emperor Intent before now, or if she only achieved it by cultivating here in this rich World Energy environment.

With the presence of such a Master here, being protected by this madman Yang Kai, no one dared to remain.

It didn't take long for everyone to scatter.

After they left, Yang Kai released Liu Yan again and had her remain here to stand guard.

Immediately afterwards, Yang Kai moved deeper as well.

The more he ventured inside, the richer the World Energy became, as if in some unknowable place down below, World Energy was gushing forth from some kind of source.

Yang Kai could not help being curious, wondering what could create such a surge of World Energy like this.

Those cultivators who left before him were not far ahead.

Suddenly, someone called out in shock up ahead, followed by many similar gasps.

They seemed to have discovered something extraordinary.

Yang Kai's expression changed, and pushing the surrounding Space Principles, he disappeared in a flash and reappeared beside everyone.

In the blink of an eye, he appeared at the head of the crowd.

Following the gazes of the others, Yang Kai could not help but squint at what he saw.

Not far in front of him was a round pit covering a five metre radius, and from this pit Liquid Spirit Qi was gushing up into the air.

"Spirit Spring! Heavens, it's a Spirit Spring Eye!"

"I can't believe there's a Spirit Spring Eye here... "

"No wonder the World Energy is so rich here, it's all thanks to this Spirit Spring."

"It should be a Mid-Rank Spirit Spring. If a Sect was established here, it would rise to prominence within a hundred years!"

Everyone present was from a second-class family or Sect, so none of their forces owned a treasure like a Spirit Spring. Only the first-class Sects were qualified to occupy such a treasure land.

Everyone was excited, their eyes brightening as they thought about what kind of earth-shaking changes would occur if they could migrate their Sect here to occupy this Spirit Spring.

It was possible that in less than a hundred years they would be able to rise to compete with first-class Sects.

“Now... I’m afraid there will be trouble,” someone said sadly with a heavy sigh.

“What does this friend mean? There is a Spirit Spring right in front of us, so why are you saying trouble will come?” Someone asked, unable to comprehend.

“That’s right, why are you acting so sullen with such a Heaven-sent opportunity before you?” Some sneered.

The speaker did not argue back and simply sighed, “Have you ever thought about why until now, despite a High-Rank Earth Vein and a Source Crystal lode appearing near Maplewood City no top tier Sect came to investigate?”

“Why? Because even though it is a High-Rank Earth Vein and a Source Crystal lode, it’s not worth those big Sects fighting over. Only small Sects like ours will regard them as treasures.”

“Exactly!” The man looked around, “But what if news of this Spirit Spring spreads out?”

With that, everyone was dumbfounded and their expressions changed slightly, finally understanding the situation.

If the news of a Spirit Spring spread out, none of them would be able to claim this place as the top forces would definitely send Masters to occupy this land, possibly even opening up branches of their Sects here.

The second-class families and Sects would simply be unable to fight against these behemoths and would be forced to watch this delicious meal be snatched away from them...

Considering all this, everyone was suddenly depressed, their earlier excitement and joy dissipating entirely.

“We... we could all swear an oath, on pain of a heart demon, to never spread this news out?” Someone suggested quietly.

Everyone glanced at the speaker, as if they were looking at an idiot, their eyes full of mockery.

There were no impervious walls in this world, and no matter how well they concealed the matter of the Spirit Spring, it was impossible to hide it forever. One day, it would become known to those top Sects.

Besides, many cultivators were allies with or even subjects of big Sects here, so they would send word to their backers after discovering this treasure.

How could this discovery be hidden for long?

“It was just a suggestion...” The man who proposed quickly realized that it would not work and smiled helplessly.

\*Hong... \*

At this moment, there was an explosion and a gush of Liquid Spirit Qi shot up from the sky, transforming into World Energy Rain that poured down on the surroundings.

“What?”

“What happened?”

“Heavens, are you kidding me?”

“It’s... another Spirit Spring!”

Everyone was stunned for a moment, gawking at a spot some fifty metres away from where another Spirit Spring had just appeared, Liquid Spirit Qi bursting out of it like a fountain.

The World Energy aura underground became richer in an instant.

Yang Kai too, stood dumbfounded.

Spirit Springs were naturally formed and could only be encountered by chance. It would already be a great stroke of fortune for a big Sect to occupy a single Spirit Spring and create a cultivation paradise.

However, two Spirit Springs appeared at once only two thousand kilometres away from Maplewood City. Looking at the scale, both these Spirit Springs were Mid-Rank as well.

\*Hong Hong Hong... \*

As if the incident was not shocking enough though, the air was filled with the rumbling sounds as the earth shook and the surrounding World Energy aura rapidly increased in density.

There were a few cultivators unable to reach the critical point in their breakthrough earlier because the World Energy had become too thin, but now, the Source Qi in their bodies fluctuated wildly all of a sudden, and they once again showed signs of breaking through.

However, everyone ignored their own conditions and stood in a daze as they stared around in awe.

It was dim underground, with the flood of World Energy, the surroundings became barely visible, but everyone present was a Dao Source Realm Master so they were able to grasp their situation with a sweep of their Divine Sense.

Everyone was shocked as one Spirit Spring after another appeared, and within a short time, the entire underground cavern before them was covered in densely packed Spirit Springs.

Chapter 2267 , Eighteen Stars Grand Array

After about a dozen breaths of time, eighteen Spirit Springs fully emerged in the vast underground cavern.

These Spirit Springs were no lower than Mid-Ranked, and three of them were even High-Ranked.

These eighteen Spirit Springs seemed to be arranged in a special pattern, scattered across the cavern with the three High-Rank springs arranged at the centre and the fifteen Mid-Rank ones surrounding them.

There seemed to be a great mystery behind this arrangement.

These eighteen Spirit Springs erupted together, and everyone was dumbstruck by this spectacular scene.

After experiencing the initial excitement and shock, everyone soon figured that there must be something more to this than mere coincidence.

The appearance of a Mid-Rank Spirit Spring would already attract the first-class great forces to come and seize it, but now eighteen Spirit Springs had emerged at once, with three of them being High-Rank, so this was no longer something that those first-class great forces could occupy alone. Perhaps even the peak level Sects like Azure Sun Temple, Heavenly Martial Holy Land and Orthodoxy Temple would be alarmed. Even Star Soul Palace might send someone here to investigate.

This was definitely a major event that would shake the entire Southern Territory, possibly even the whole Star Boundary.

Maplewood City would soon become famous across the world.

“It’s over, it’s over!” Someone muttered with the corner of his mouth twitching.

Although he didn’t speak clearly, everyone knew what he meant. With the emergence of these Spirit Springs, this place would now certainly have nothing to do with his own Sect.

“The arrangement of these Spirit Springs... could it be... the Eighteen Stars Grand Array?” A person among the crowd who was scanning the surroundings with his eyes uttered in amazement.

“Eighteen Stars Grand Array?” A man looked at that person in doubt and questioned, “Are you proficient in Spirit Arrays?”

“I know a little something...” That person nodded.

Everyone turned to that person in curiosity and asked, “Since you know about Spirit Arrays, would you enlighten us about this Eighteen Stars Grand Array?”

The face of that person turned pale and bitter, but after pondering for a moment, he quickly answered, “I’m not sure if this is the Eighteen Stars Grand Array; after all, that Spirit Array is an ancient one lost to history and I only chanced upon a brief description of it in an ancient text.”

“An Ancient Spirit Array!” An exclamation sounded abruptly.

Ancient Times and Primordial Times were two very special periods, and it was said that in those times the World Principles were far stronger and richer than they were today, as if over time Principle

Strength was gradually thinning, making it more and more difficult for cultivators reach the peak of the Martial Dao.

But anything involving Ancient Times and Primordial Times would bring excitement to the people.

So, when they heard that Eighteen Stars Grand Array was an Ancient Array, everyone was interested and wanted to inquire about it.

Yang Kai's expression also changed slightly as he looked at that person and questioned, "Is your surname Gong?"

"One of the Heavenly River Valley Gong Family?" Someone yelled immediately.

If someone could recognize Ancient Arrays at just a glance, his attainment of Spirit Arrays must not be underestimated. In the entire Southern Territory, the Heavenly River Valley Gong Family was renowned for its comprehension and proficiency in the Dao of Spirit Arrays, so anyone from the Gong Family was known as an Array Master.

Yang Kai had dealt with Gong Wen Shan from the Gong Family in the Four Seasons Realm and had witnessed the prowess of the Gong Family in Spirit Arrays, which was why he asked this question.

"I... It's you..." The cultivator who stood beside Yang Kai did not seem to notice his presence until now, but he immediately opened some distance with him once he did come to his senses.

Others followed suit, and in an instant, there was no one left beside Yang Kai.

Yang Kai pointed to himself, "I was just taking a walk here, no need to be so tense."

He also did not expect that others would be so afraid of him.

Seeing him acting so casually, not showing any murderous intent, the others present felt a little relieved.

"Brother Gong..." Yang Kai spoke to that person again.

The person gave a wry smile, "My surname is not Gong... but I'm still considered a half-member of the Gong Family."

What he said confused everyone.

The person explained, "My wife belongs to the Gong Family, so this one also studied a bit about Spirit Arrays from the Gong Family.

"So that's how it is!" Everyone nodded in understanding, secretly guessing this man had married into the Gong Family just to get him an opportunity to study Spirit Arrays.

"Please tell us about the Eighteen Stars Grand Array," Yang Kai requested, "I'm also curious about what this Spirit Array does."

"The Eighteen Stars Grand Array is a powerful Ancient Array that has extremely harsh requirements to arrange. As you can see, you need to gather eighteen objects that can continuously generate World Energy on their own as the base of this array, making Spirit Springs the best building blocks!" The Gong

Family son-in-law spoke rapidly about the Spirit Array with a solemn face. Obviously, he possessed a strong foundation, so what he said was convincing, "And the use of this Ancient Array is... "

He paused for a while and continued, "To suppress and seal something!"

"Suppress and seal?"

"Seal what?"

The crowd was puzzled.

"I don't know," the man shook his head and turned to Duan Yuan Shan, "City Lord Duan, was something unusual buried here once?"

The corner of Duan Yuan Shan's mouth twitched as he glanced over at Yang Kai and answered, "Since all of you have come to Maplewood City for a while now, you must know that Maplewood City was flooded by Ancient Demon Qi a few months ago."

"Could it be that the thing that was sealed was actually..."

"Ancient Demon Qi?"

Everyone's face changed drastically as their legs began shaking in fear.

Yang Kai was also in a daze as he secretly admired the powerful methods of ancient times.

Among the people present, he knew best what was sealed here. It was not the Ancient Demon Qi, but rather the Black Eye of a Giant Ancient Demon.

The Black Eye was capable of casting darkness across the world.

And all the Ancient Demon Qi which had gathered in this place had been born from that Black Eye.

It was indeed a good way to seal Demon Qi with World Energy, but it was a pity that even those ancient powerhouses had underestimated the power of the Black Eye. After countless years, the Black Eye had not disappeared and although it had lost its spirituality and will, it continued to exist and finally broke free, only to be acquired by Yang Kai in the end.

"You don't have to worry. After that Demon Qi flooded the city, three Emperor Realm Masters arrived and dealt with it, so there should be no danger anymore. We also didn't notice any existence of Demon Qi for these past few months anyway," Duan Yuan Shan comforted the people.

He always believed that the retreat of the Demon Qi that day was due to the efforts of Gao Xue Ting and the others.

"It seems that Demon Qi was being sealed here by this Eighteen Stars Grand Array!" The Gong Family son-in-law's face paled, feeling afraid.

The rest also shivered slightly.

After a moment of silence, a person voiced, "Let's not worry about the Ancient Demon Qi. Given that these eighteen Spirit Springs have appeared, this is undoubtedly an opportunity for all of us."

“Yes, yes! Since we cannot occupy them forever, why not take this opportunity to absorb as much as we can? What are we still waiting for?!” Another person shouted before charging towards a Spirit Spring.

This person was decisive and immediately rushed towards one of the High-Rank Spirit Springs in an attempt to occupy it and absorb World Energy as it erupted from it.

There were only three High-Rank Spirit Springs while the number of forces present was between twenty and thirty, so it was natural that people wanted to seize the initiative.

As soon as the person moved, everyone could not help using their Movement Skills and rushing towards the Spirit Springs too.

Yang Kai also made a move and immediately teleported on top of one of the High-Rank Spirit Springs, hovering mid-air as he gazed around coldly.

He could see several cultivators were dashing over crazily, seemingly belonging to the same Sect, their cultivations all decent, the lowest of which was Second-Order Dao Source Realm while their leader was a Third-Order. They seemed intent on seizing this High-Rank Spirit Spring.

However, Yang Kai arrived before them in just the blink of an eye.

This group stopped their steps as all their faces turned ugly.

The leader of the cultivators was a calm, handsome looking middle-aged man. After pondering for a moment, he cupped his fists and spoke, “Brother Yang, can we have a discussion?”

“No!” Yang Kai replied decisively.

The middle-aged man’s face darkened, forcing a smile, “I haven’t said anything yet.”

“My answer is no!”

“Don’t be like this. Everyone here wants the best, can you not give us a chance? Besides, this Spirit Spring is too big for you alone, how about we take half while Brother Yang occupies the other half? That way everyone will be satisfied.”

“I like monopolizing treasures and never share with others,” Yang Kai lifted his nose high to the sky, acting like he was invincible.

“Little brat, don’t get cocky! Don’t you think that we’re afraid of you, we’re just giving you a bit of face,” A cultivator behind the middle-aged man suddenly clamoured.

The middle-aged man furrowed his brow, but he did not speak to stop him. Obviously, he was displeased too.

Yang Kai glanced at the person from the corner of his eyes, “If you’re not afraid, don’t just flap your lips, come up and snatch it from me!”

The man was enraged and stepped forward, seemingly wanting to do just as Yang Kai proposed.

The middle-aged leader was frightened when he saw this and hurriedly raised his hand to block his companion, turning to Yang Kai and asking once more, “Brother Yang, can we really not share?”

Yang Kai answered coldly, "I've already given you face when we first spoke, yet you still continue to challenge me. If you dare to fight with me, don't blame me for slapping you."

"Slapping..." The middle-aged man's face changed drastically, horrified as he recalled the moment when Ning Yuan Shu and Zhuang Pan were slapped by Yang Kai...

Yang Kai glanced away at that point and continued, "If you go to grab another Spirit Spring now, you might still have a chance, but if you continue to idle here, I'm afraid that you wouldn't even be able to drink some soup from this meal."

The middle-aged man anxiously turned his head to look before waving and shouting, "Let's go!"

As Yang Kai's said, more than half the eighteen Spirit Springs were already occupied, and battles had begun to break out for the ones that remained. The scene was quite shocking as World Energy swirled about and stones from the cavern broke apart.

The scene was especially frigid around the other two High-Rank Spirit Springs as the strongest groups were all competing for these prizes.

Duan Yuan Shan and the rest of Maplewood City's Old Ancestors, who were familiar with one another, knew they did not have the strength to compete for a High-Rank Spirit Spring, so they instead chose to cooperate to occupy one of the Mid-Rank ones.

Chapter 2268 , Source Crystal Eruption

Among the eighteen Spirit Springs, only the one occupied by Yang Kai remained calm and peaceful.

Everyone had seen how brutal Yang Kai could be and avoided competing with him for anything, not daring to provoke him.

Yang Kai was naturally pleased to see this.

He did not pay attention to the fights occurring above the other Spirit Springs and instead sent a message to Liu Yan with his Divine Sense, asking her to escort Hua Qing Si and the others to him.

He then rushed towards the Spirit Spring Eye and landed above its centre axis.

In the next instant, Yang Kai was surrounded by rich, liquid World Energy. The feeling of the World Energy pouring into his body made him feel extremely comfortable and his Second-Order Dao Source Realm cultivation was rapidly being consolidated.

Yang Kai was overjoyed and immediately circulated his Secret Art to absorb more World Energy.

At the same time, he took out the Sealed World Bead and opened a gap in it to allow the surrounding World Energy to pour into it.



Yang Kai soon frowned though and looked down intently, his eyes gleaming, as if trying to see across space.

He seemed to have vaguely sensed something down below that was rising up along with the gushing World Energy from the Spirit Spring Eye. A moment later, a whooshing sound appeared beneath where he sat.

“Not good!” Yang Kai’s heart sank. He did not know what was shooting up from inside the Spirit Spring Eye, but he felt an extremely dangerous aura coming from it, so he quickly urged his Source Qi to protect himself while also hurriedly trying to retreat from where he stood.

But he acted one step too late.

\*Xiu xiu xiu... \*

\*Hong Hong Hong... \*

One by one, inexplicable objects rushed out at an incredible speed and struck Yang Kai, each one carrying an extremely potent force behind them like a falling meteor.

Yang Kai felt pain all over his body but still managed to use these impacts to help himself leave the range of the Spirit Spring.

Right behind him, streaks of white light, like shooting stars, shot up into the cavern.

“What the hell!” Yang Kai looked shocked and quickly dodged aside, finally able to analyse what was happening.

Soon, his irritated expression was replaced by one of excitement.

The objects which had emerged from under the Spirit Spring and struck him turned out to be fist-sized Source Crystals!

Judging from the colour and purity of these Source Crystals, they were all at least Mid-Rank, with a large number of them being High-Rank.

Yang Kai gawked at the scene, his eyes hot with enthusiasm.

Across the Star Boundary, the currency for trading between cultivators was Low-Rank Source Crystals. For example, he had spent ten million Low-Rank Source Crystals to purchase the Faceless Profound Grass from Gao Xue Ting in Azure Sun Temple. If those were to be converted directly, they would total a hundred thousand Mid-Rank Source Crystals, or a thousand High-Rank Source Crystals.

The Source Crystals that Yang Kai had obtained so far were basically all Low-Rank, with a few Mid-Rank and even fewer High-Rank mixed in.

High-Rank Source Crystals were not easy to obtain and could only be mined from the Top-Grade Source Crystal lodes.

Top-Grade Source Crystals lodes were always controlled by great forces, and once any High-Rank Source Crystals were mined, they would directly enter the Sect’s coffers for internal use, rarely being circulated to the outside world.

The higher the rank of Source Crystals, the more useful they were. Many of the massive Spirit Arrays Sects arranged required High-Rank Source Crystals to run, and when it came to making breakthroughs, High-Rank Source Crystals were the preferred choice for high-level cultivators.

As such, how could Yang Kai not be shocked when so many Mid-Rank and High-Rank Source Crystals suddenly appeared in this place?

While he was still lost in his thoughts, the seventeen other Spirit Springs erupted together.

A large number of Source Crystals shot up from below the Spirit Springs together with the eruption of World Energy. Whooshing sounds rang out all over at the cavern which was illuminated by the countless white streaks of light.

The cultivators who did not notice the incoming Source Crystals in time were struck by them and could not help but grunting loudly, traces of blood often trickling from the corners of their mouths.

Just a moment later though, the entire underground was filled with excited cultivators.

“Source Crystals, High-Rank Source Crystals!”

“This Spirit Spring actually has High-Rank Source Crystals coming from it! Hahahaha, I’m rich!”

“Scram! This Spring Eye is ours! Be wise and leave, otherwise don’t blame my fellow brothers for not considering the relationship between our Sects.”

“What a joke, treasures belong to those who can occupy them! You think the few of you can hoard all of these for yourselves? If you have a death wish, I’ll grant it!”

“Since you refuse my kind gesture, then you will suffer the consequences!”

The appearance of the eighteen Spring Eyes had caused chaos, but the emergence of countless Source Crystal put all the cultivators present into a maddened frenzy.

After all, Spring Springs could not be taken away, and everyone present knew they had a limited amount of time to cultivate here before word spread and true powerhouses came to claim this place; however, Source Crystals were different. Source Crystals could be stuffed into one’s Space Ring and taken away, and they were a common currency used across the entire Star Boundary. One piece of High-Rank Source Crystal was equivalent to ten thousand pieces of Low-Rank Source Crystal. From the number of Source Crystals that emerged from this eruption, just occupying a single Spirit Spring for a few days would be enough to double or even triple a small Sect’s financial resources.

Due to this phenomenon, Sects that were already on bad terms became more hostile with each other, and tension even formed between Sects which were previously allies.

Men die for wealth, birds die for food. This was an immutable truth.

“Yang Kai!” While Yang Kai was still glancing around in shock, Hua Qing Si had rushed over with Zhang Ruo Xi, Liu Yan, and Qin Zhao Yang to his side. Seeing the wonders of this place for the first time, Hua Qing Si’s eyes were filled with awe and her delicate hand covered her red lips, “What’s going on here?!”

“Spirit Spring Eyes appeared, then Source Crystals began erupting out of them, that’s what happened,” Yang Kai grinned.

Zhang Ruo Xi was young and had little experience, but she still paled at the sight of such a shocking scene.

Qin Zhao Yang’s eyeballs almost dropped out of their sockets as he stared at the Spirit Springs and Source Crystals before him for a long time, his limbs shaking, speechless.

“Ruo Xi, don’t worry about anything else, just find a safe place to cultivate, Liu Yan will stand guard for you,” Yang Kai gave Liu Yan a meaningful look. Liu Yan nodded and guided Zhang Ruo Xi to sit next to the High-Rank Spirit Spring in understanding.

While she stood there, Liu Yan reached out and snatched any Source Crystals that flew her way.

Yang Kai saw this and tossed a Space Ring to Liu Yan before saying to Hua Qing Si, “Follow me and collect these Source Crystals, we’ll leave cultivating for later!”

“Good!” Hua Qing Si nodded. With a sway of her tender body, she and Yang Kai floated up to a spot above the Spirit Spring.

Source Crystals were constantly erupting from the Spirit Spring, so Yang Kai stretched out his hands and released a hundred Golden Blood Threads, weaving them together into a giant golden net.

\*Chi chi chi...\*

The Source Crystals that spewed out all entered the golden net while Hua Qing Si immediately formed a series of seals with her hands, creating a kind of suction force that drew the captured Source Crystals over to her, swiftly storing them into her Space Ring.

The two worked together seamlessly to capture every Source Crystal exiting the spring, leaving none behind.

“It seems that you don’t need my help here...” Qin Zhao Yang watched them for a moment as his mouth twitched slightly, “Brother Yang, you continue to deal with your business here, I’ll seek my own opportunities!”

This was a great opportunity to accumulate a fortune and greatly enhance the foundation of the Qin Family. The Spirit Spring occupied by Yang Kai no longer required Qing Zhao Yang’s assistance, so he decided to move elsewhere.

His eyes swept around before he grinned meaningfully and with a flicker, Qing Zhao Yang appeared above the Mid-Rank Spirit Spring where Duan Yuan Shan and the others from Maplewood City were gathered, “Greetings City Lord Duan, fellow brothers.”

“Is this old thing trying to seek some undue advantage?” The Du Family Patriarch, Du Li Shen glared at him.

The Zhou Family Patriarch, Zhou Yi snorted, “Old Dog Qin is pretty good at faking sincerity, where did he learn such skill from?”

“How am I being fake?” Qin Zhao Yang was immediately unhappy as he pulled his beard in anger, “You two disrespectful fools! Do you want this Old Master to beat you up so badly your mothers can’t recognize you?”

Zhou Yi and Du Li Shen looked at each other and laughed, “Would your mother recognise you if she was still alive?”

Qin Zhao Yang’s face darkened immediately.

“Good, let’s stop the nonsense, help out since you’re here. Every Source Crystal we miss winds up in someone else’s pocket,” Duan Yuan Shan waved his hand and shouted in a low voice.

“I will obey City Lord Duan’s orders!” Qin Zhao Yang grinned meaningfully and joined the team.

The Patriarchs were all from Maplewood City and had known each other for quite some time, so although there were some grievances between them, they were much more accepting of each other than the foreign enemies they were facing. Despite their banter earlier, their relationship would not be affected.

“Hey, Zhou Yi, you old fart, you actually managed to break through to the Second-Order Dao Source Realm. The Heavens must really be blind...” Qin Zhao Yang commented as he collected Source Crystals after noticing the Patriarch of the Zhou Family had also broken through as he had.

“What are you talking about!” Zhou Yi snapped, “If an old fart like you can break through, why can’t this Old Master?”

“It seems that everyone has made a breakthrough,” Du Li Shen grinned meaningfully.

Qin Zhao Yang only then thought of investigating the cultivations of the others and realized that everyone had indeed made a breakthrough. All the old Patriarchs had now reached the Second-Order Dao Source Realm, together with Drunkard! Meanwhile, Duan Yuan Shan had reached the Third-Order Dao Source Realm!

“Oh, congratulations everyone!” Qin Zhao Yang laughed.

“Let’s rejoice together!” Duan Yuan Shan grinned meaningfully, “Today, Maplewood City can no longer be regarded as weak! As the saying goes, internal disunity dissolves at the threat of external invasion. This Duan hopes that we all can work together in the future.”

If these Patriarchs all joined forces, together with the strength of Duan Yuan Shan and Drunkard, they would be quite formidable. At least, they would be able to go up against some second-class Sects and families. The only thing they were missing now was the protection of an Emperor Realm Master.

However, there were not many Emperors out there, and most second-class forces did not have such a Master assuming command.

Everyone nodded solemnly after listening to Duan Yuan Shan’s statement.

Chapter 2269 , Source Crystal Lode

There were three High-Rank Spirit Spring Eyes – Yang Kai and the Eight Paths Sect each occupied one, while the last one was occupied by two other Sects who had joined forces specifically to do so.

The other fifteen Mid-Rank Spirit Springs were also crowded with people.

The Eight Paths Sect disciples were actually not strong enough to occupy a High-Rank Spirit Spring all to themselves, but everyone had scruples about the brutal Luo Yuan, so none dared to provoke Eight Paths Sect as they did not know when Luo Yuan would return. Seeing how he had chased Protectors Gao Shan and Liu Shui away, no one would have the guts to oppose him.

As he worked with Hua Qing Si to collect the Source Crystals erupting from the High-Rank Spirit Spring, Yang Kai's expression abruptly changed as he sent her a message, "I'm going down to investigate."

It was impossible for Source Crystals to simply erupt from below without a reason, so Yang Kai guessed that there must be some mystery beneath the Spirit Springs and wanted to investigate. Now, with his Golden Blood Thread net above the Spirit Spring, blocking the Source Crystals from flying away, he did not need to remain as Hua Qing Si could collect the Source Crystals for him.

What was more, Liu Yan was here too. If anyone was blind enough to come and try to seize this Spirit Spring, the two of them would be enough to chase them off.

"Be careful!" Hua Qing Si did not try to stop him, simply warning him seriously as she saw him off.

Yang Kai nodded and leapt downward for a second time.

Just like before, he plunged into the Spirit Spring and faced a strong resistance that tried to push him upwards. There were also countless Source Crystals whizzing up and striking him as he tried to descend.

Yang Kai felt pain all over his body and was forced to endure it with his Source Qi. He also manipulated the surrounding Space Principles to shield himself, easing his descent.

The more he sank down, the greater the resistance and the denser the surrounding World Energy became.

Yang Kai took out his Sealed World Bead once more and began allowing it to swallow up the surging World Energy mixed with Source Crystals.

He had no idea how deep he had sunken, only that the surroundings were now all but opaque, making it difficult to see anything around himself. Yang Kai released his Divine Sense to compensate, but was only able to scan a ten-metre distance in front of himself, any further was hindered by the boundless World Energy.

At a certain point, Yang Kai suddenly stopped and landed on solid ground.

This should be the bottom of the Spirit Spring. He stood still on the ground and felt the surroundings for a moment. He could clearly sense that the space here was not as small as he imagined; in fact, it was extremely broad.

He stood there thinking with an odd expression for a while before releasing his Divine Sense once more to explore his surroundings vigilantly.

\*Xiu xiu xiu...\*

Numerous pieces of Source Crystals mixed in with the surrounding World Energy kept shooting upwards in surging torrents.

Yang Kai focused his eye to perceive the surrounding space and soon pinpointed the direction from which the Source Crystals were originating and walked towards it.

Along the way, his harvest was unimaginable as his Sealed World Bead continued to devour the World Energy and Source Crystals.

Not long after, Yang Kai suddenly stopped and stared ahead intently.

In the misty white world filled with Liquid Spirit Qi, there seemed to be something gigantic lying in front of him. Although there was still a distance between them, Yang Kai was able to see its fuzzy silhouette.

He did not know what was before him, only that it was gigantic and did not have the slightest life aura. All he could tell was that all the Source Crystals were shooting out from its direction.

Yang Kai pondered for a while before moving forward again.

He came to the front of this object and upon closer inspection, finally saw exactly what it was.

Yang Kai was stunned and unable to speak for a moment.

After quite a while, he only broke the silence with a burst of joyful laughter.

He realized now that the 'giant' lying in front of him was actually a Source Crystal lode. Fist-sized Source Crystals were separated from this lode and entered the flow of World Energy, splitting into eighteen branches as they shot upwards.

The Source Crystals collected by the cultivators above were obviously separated from this gigantic lode.

The lode shone brightly and was extremely pure, containing not the slightest impurities. There would not be another Source Crystal lode as huge and pure as this in the entire Star Boundary, only in Ancient Times would such a treasure be found.

Yang Kai was quietly feeling the eighteen branches of the World Energy torrent on top of the mine and pondering.

[The Eighteen Spirit Springs... are actually connected to each other? So, if this lode was claimed, the people above... ]

He frowned and thought for a while before he gradually stopped restraining his excitement. A tremendous Divine Sense like a Flood Dragon swam out, transforming into a formless power that began enveloping the mine.

In the next instant, Yang Kai's expression changed as his cheeks turned pale and big drops of sweat condensed on his forehead, rolling down his trembling body.

He underestimated the size of this lode, and with the current strength of his Divine Sense, he could only barely envelop it. As a result, he could not pack it into his Sealed World Bead.

The Sealed World Bead was an Isolated World, and although it could collect anything, including living people, Yang Kai needed to use his Divine Sense to do so. The larger the object he tried to store away or take out, the greater the energy it possessed, and the more Spiritual Energy he needed to expend.

Just like the first time Yang Kai collected the Embodiment into his Sealed World Bead, even though the Embodiment did not resist Yang Kai and was cooperative, Yang Kai still almost collapsed due to its massive volume.

This lode was similar. Although it was no doubt a lot smaller than his Embodiment, which was newly formed at that time, this Source Crystal Lode contained an astonishing amount of energy. Yang Kai reckoned that if he forcefully collected such existence alone, his Knowledge Sea would be damaged.

At this point, he sent a message to the Embodiment in the Sealed World Bead.

The next moment, the Void Crack appeared before the Sealed World Bead and widened leisurely in front of Yang Kai.

Blue veins emerged on Yang Kai's forehead as his body shook violently and his Source Qi fluctuated violently.

"Now!" He suddenly bellowed.

Two giant hands shot out from the Void Crack. These hands were remarkably hard and had sharp edges to them. They were the hands of the Embodiment.

The Embodiment crossed the boundary between the Sealed World Bead and the outside with its arms, stretching them to the left and right in a hugging posture. Holding the gigantic lode in its palms, it lifted it up with a robust force only possible for a Stone Puppet.

At the same time, Yang Kai sent out waves of Divine Sense, working together with the movements of the Embodiment to draw in the lode.

\*Hong long long... \*

There was a loud noise.

The lode slowly rose and moved little by little.

Yang Kai's pale face turned even paler and his clothes were soaked in sweat. He felt pain in his head like ten million needles were piercing his skull.

His Divine Sense had been damaged by his actions.

The Soul Warming Lotus released its seven coloured glow, repairing the damage to his Soul with its soothing power, which made Yang Kai feel much better.

Creaking sounds could be heard from the Embodiment's arms as rubble actually fell from it. It too seemed incapable of bearing such weight and the scene caused Yang Kai to be extremely nervous and anxious.

It was just a moment, but seemed like ten million years had passed.

Just when Yang Kai could not stand it anymore, the Embodiment in the Sealed World Bead forcefully retracted its arms, together with the Source Crystal lode, dragging it into the Void Crack and disappearing.

Simultaneously, the radiance of the Sealed World Bead flashed crazily as the Void Crack closed.

Yang Kai staggered as he felt like his eyes, ears, mouth and nose were filled with a fishy and salty smell. Stars were floating in front of his eyes, and the world seemed to spin around him. He lost his balance and fell to his butt on the ground.

Only then did he suddenly feel a sense of fear.

Although the Soul Warming Lotus protected his Soul from fatal damage, what he just did was undoubtedly extremely dangerous and reckless. If he used too much of his Spiritual Energy just now and caused crippling damage to his Soul, he might have never been able to recover.

A line of cold sweat rolled down Yang Kai's forehead as his whole body shivered.

"Who?!" Yang Kai hastily turned around and gazed in a certain direction as wariness flashed across his eyes, "Who's there?!"

At that moment, he actually heard the sound of footsteps.

He was completely exhausted and could hardly move, so if someone who wanted to harm him appeared at this moment, he wouldn't even be able to escape. As such, Yang Kai immediately became vigilant and hurriedly wiped away the blood and cold sweat on his face, sitting with his legs crossed to put on a calm appearance.

After Yang Kai called out, the footsteps paused for a moment, but soon they sounded again, this time even faster than before.

Yang Kai's face turned ugly as he moved his gaze slightly downwards and stared intently at the incoming person.

After a short while, a beautiful figure appeared in front of Yang Kai. This person stood still about ten metres away from him and asked in hesitation, "Grandmaster Yang?"

Hearing this person's voice, Yang Kai furrowed his brow and revealed an odd face, "It's you?"

The one who had come was none other than Ye Jing Han, the woman who had tried to latch onto him and just wouldn't let go no matter how he refused her.

Unexpectedly, she had come down here too.

Yang Kai stayed alert and asked coldly, "Instead of collecting Source Crystals up top, why did you come down here?"

Although Yang Kai did not know what this woman wanted with him, they had no relationship and he had clearly rejected her previously. However, she still kept following him, which annoyed him greatly.



Ye Jing Han replied, "This Mistress is the only person present from Thousand Leaves Sect and she knows she is unable to compete with others up top."

Her words were full of bitterness and loneliness.

"Seeing that Grandmaster Yang went down, this Mistress thought about coming down as well to take a look..." While speaking, she suddenly coughed twice.

"Are you hurt?" Yang Kai raised his eyebrows.

"A minor injury..." Ye Jing Han answered, "I was hit by someone when I came down."

Hearing this, Yang Kai roughly understood what happened.

Everyone was busy occupying their own Spirit Spring at this moment, so if Ye Jing Han wanted to come down here, she would need to force her way through one of the Spirit Springs. Someone must have thought she was trying to snatch their Source Crystals and attacked her. Since she only had a Second-Order Dao Source Realm cultivation, it was natural that she could not force her way through completely uninjured.

Chapter 2270, Demonic War Hammer

"Do your parents know that you act so recklessly?" Yang Kai sat cross-legged in the same place, looking at Ye Jing Han coldly.

Ye Jing Han replied bitterly, "This Mistress has been an orphan since she was a child."

Yang Kai was struck speechless and remained silent for a while before asking in a deep voice, "What did you see just now?"

"What?" Ye Jing Han asked with a blank face.

"Nothing," Yang Kai exhaled softly. Ye Jing Han's tone and expression seemed genuine, so she should have seen nothing just now.

"Grandmaster Yang..." Ye Jing Han stammered, "Can you give this Mistress a chance to say a few words?"

"Aren't you already talking?" Yang Kai was now completely weakened at the moment, and although Ye Jing Han probably would not act disadvantageous to him, it was wise to always be on guard. He concealed his fatigue and quietly recuperated, restoring his strength while casually answering.

"Many thanks, Grandmaster Yang!" Ye Jing Han was overjoyed when she heard these words, feeling emotional that her sincerity and efforts had finally paid off. After considering her words carefully, she spoke seriously, "This Mistress is actually looking for Grandmaster Yang to ask a favour."

Yang Kai closed his eyes and focused, ignoring her.

Ye Jing Han continued, "This Mistress hopes that Grandmaster Yang... eh? Grandmaster, be careful behind you!"

"What!?" Yang Kai was startled because at that moment he felt a sudden chill coming from behind, like a sharp blade that was cutting into his skin.

His face changed drastically! He was so focused on restoring his strength that he failed to notice danger approaching from behind him. If it had not been for Ye Jing Han's warning, he probably would not have even noticed it.

Deep down, he felt extremely shocked and perplexed at who could have come this close to him without him noticing.

In haste, Yang Kai pushed his Source Qi madly and leapt into the air, turning around as he crossed his arms in front of his chest.

\*Hong... \*

A huge force struck him head-on at that moment.

\*Gezhizhi...\*

The sound of bones fracturing rang out.

Yang Kai was extremely shocked this time.

His physique was incredibly intrepid, to the point that even a simple blow from an Emperor Realm Master would not be able to crack his bones, but this inexplicable attack did just that.

"Dragon Transformation!" Yang Kai snarled abruptly and accompanied by a high-pitched dragon roar, Dragon Scales covered his arms, blocking the impact of the violent power.

"This power..." Yang Kai's expression turned solemn as he suddenly noticed something odd about the force which attacked him. It did not seem to be Source Qi that he was familiar with, but another kind of unknown power.

He looked up immediately, releasing his Divine Sense, trying to search for the culprit who had the courage to attack him.

Yang Kai gasped when he finally saw it.

Not far from Yang Kai stood a dark silhouette, one without the slightest vitality, filled with so much violent energy that it was constantly fluctuating unstably.

In the darkness, two scarlet predatory eyes which could make anyone shudder stared at him.

Yang Kai's face darkened and he asked in a low voice, "Who is Your Excellency!?"

There was no answer. The figure just tilted its head and looked at Yang Kai blankly before lifting its fist and swinging it towards him fiercely.

Although it was just a simple fist, the wind generated from this attack was like a storm of a thousand sharp blades, cutting through the air fiercely.

Having suffered a loss just now, Yang Kai was extremely vigilant, and with a flick of his ten fingers, he summoned a series of tiny Void Cracks that flew out like a rain of needles towards the incoming assault.

His opponent seemed to understand this attack was dangerous and withdrew from the battle, tilting its head as it stared at Yang Kai from a distance.

The black shadow did not have quick reflexes, and even seemed a bit stiff and jerky in its movements, almost like it had not moved about for a long time, but Yang Kai instinctively knew that this was a formidable enemy!

\*Om...\* a strange sound reverberated from the black shadow, and Yang Kai suddenly felt a hot sensation coming from his lower abdomen.

“What?” Yang Kai was perplexed and backed away with a tap of his foot.

He would not be flustered even if his opponent was a genuine Emperor Realm Master, but at this moment, he couldn’t help wanting to get as far away as possible from this dark shadow.

The reason was that the Ancient Demon Qi sealed in his lower abdomen was somehow aroused. Thankfully, the mysterious power of the gold and silver seal suppressed this Ancient Demon Qi firmly, otherwise, Yang Kai would definitely transform into a Demon again.

[This shadow... is it related to that Ancient Demon?] An unimaginable thought surfaced in Yang Kai’s mind and he suddenly paled.

Although the surging Demon Spirit in his lower abdomen was suppressed, it was clearly noticed by the black shadow. In a short time, the murderous thoughts of the black shadow spread out like a tide, unspeakable hostility permeating towards him, and even the dark energy becoming visible to the naked eye.

“Demon Qi!” Yang Kai exclaimed.

At this moment, he was absolutely sure that the black shadow before him was related to the Ancient Demon, because the energy fluctuations of the two were almost the same.

“Kill!” A single word came out of the black shadow’s throat before it shot towards Yang Kai, sending out a punch that seemed capable of collapsing the world.

Yang Kai’s eyes widened, flicking his wrist without hesitation, and summoned the Emperor Artifact Myriads Sword into his hands. With a great bellow, he flourished his sword, “Myriad Sword Arts, One Man As A Mountain!”

\*Zheng...\*

The wave of Sword Qi surged out and filled the air.

A thick and solid barrier formed from sharp Sword Qi appeared before Yang Kai, blocking the first strike, but the black shadow quickly sent another punch, causing Yang Kai’s body to tremble and almost shattered his sword barrier.

“Grandmaster Yang, this Mistress will assist you!” Ye Jing Han’s voice trembled slightly, revealing her inner panic and fear, but she still braced herself and flew over. Summoning a bracelet onto her delicate wrist as she channelled her Source Qi into it. Next, the bracelet enlarged into the size of a washbasin and whirled towards the black shadow.

“Don’t!” Yang Kai let out a loud shout.

Although Ye Jing Han’s cultivation was similar to his, she would have no chance to fight against this black shadow, and a single mistake here would result in her death.

He was too late though, because the bracelet artifact activated in the blink of an eye and struck towards the dark shadow’s head. The dark shadow did nothing to prevent it though, and simply let the attack hit.

\*Dang...\*

As if hitting a solid object with a loud clunk, the light on the bracelet flickered wildly and a trace of Demon Qi began to contaminate it, corrupting its spirituality.

\*Pu...\*

Ye Jing Han spurted a mouthful of blood, her aura instantly weakening.

The bracelet artifact was her Natal Artifact, cultivated together with her own life essence from when she was young. If this artifact was damaged, her physical body would also be affected. She immediately retrieved the bracelet with a wave of her hand as a deep fear gripped her.

Looking down at the bracelet, a black Qi intertwined around it, gradually spreading to its surroundings, corroding everything it touched.

Ye Jing Han was mortified as only now did she fathom the gap in strength between herself and the dark shadow.

“Kill!” The hoarse screeching voice which sounded like metal rubbing against metal sounded, making the two people present extremely uncomfortable.

Yang Kai composed himself as he lifted the Myriads Sword once again towards the black shadow. Staring at his opponent solemnly, he shouted in a low voice, “Who exactly is Your Excellency? What is your relationship to that One-Eyed Great Demon?”

“Kill!” The black shadow repeated the same word, ignoring his question.

“Are you underestimating me?” Yang Kai was furious and a golden gleam suddenly appeared in his left eye, activating his Demon Eye of Annihilation to spy on the black shadow.

He wanted to see exactly who this black shadow was.

The sight which greeted him, however, turned Yang Kai’s expression strange as he muttered in shock, “This... this is...”

Yang Kai could see through all illusions using his Demon Eye of Annihilation, so he was able to observe the true form of the black shadow.

He discovered that this black shadow, just like Liu Yan, was not a living thing at all, but a kind of existence similar to an Artifact Spirit assuming human form.

However, this dark shadow's original form seemed to be a giant hammer.

The hammer was hidden and enclosed in the black shadow's body and contained a boundless amount of Demon Qi. Exquisite runes flowed across the surface of this hammer like living creatures.

Yang Kai felt a sharp sting in his left eye, followed by a moist and hot sensation trickling down from its corner.

He forced himself to examine the shape of the hammer carefully, feeling a sense of familiarity the more he looked at it.

Then, he remembered.

He had indeed seen this hammer before, not in his life, but rather from when he scanned the memories of Young Lord Jiang Chu He of the Jiang Family.

When the Demon Qi flooded Maplewood City previously, Jiang Chu He had been transformed into a Demon when he was corroded by the Ancient Demon Qi. Yang Kai and Qin Yu had worked together to display a Secret Technique that allowed them to scan his memories at the time.

Among those memories was one of this hammer.

During a great ancient battle, the weapon used by the Ancient Demon was this War Hammer. Its power was all-conquering and countless ancient mighty warriors had died tragically under it.

"Demonic War Hammer!" Yang Kai yelled as he quickly dismissed his Demon Eye of Annihilation, not daring to look at it again.

If it really was the Ancient Demon's War Hammer, it made sense for the Demon Spirit sealed in Yang Kai to resonate with the black shadow. There was an inseparable relationship between the two, and it was only natural for them to react to each other.

If that was the case, the mighty men in ancient times did not only seal the Black Eye of the Ancient Demon here, but also the Demonic War Hammer!

It was just that the Demonic War Hammer had been suppressed by the Eighteen Stars Grand Array and was only just now released!

Perhaps it was related to the Source Crystal lode that Yang Kai collected. The Source Crystal lode could have been the key to suppressing the Demonic War Hammer!

Although that was his deduction, Yang Kai did not feel any regret in collecting the Source Crystal lode.

Silavin, Original Title – Demonic War Hammer

Also, not like you have any regrets taking treasure away from the start. When has that been the case?

\*rolls eyes\*