

Martial 3261

Chapter 3261, Self Destruct

Following a loud bang, the Demon exploded. Although there were no bones nor body left after the explosion, flesh and blood did not splatter all over the place. More importantly though, a cloud of pitch-black Demon Qi was released and wrapped around Yang Kai with a whooshing sound.

Hong hong hong...

Explosion after explosion rang out as the Demons self-destructed, one after another. Yang Kai's heart sank upon hearing those explosions.

Clouds of Demon Qi that were as dense as blood appeared following the self-destruction. Across the sky above Orthodoxy Temple, the cultivators who were clashing against the Demons were instantly engulfed. It was as if a field of black mushrooms had suddenly sprouted, covering a vast area in the blink of an eye and forming an enormous black cloud that spread over more than a dozen kilometre radius.

The dozen or so Emperor Realm Masters following closely behind Yang Kai were caught off guard and, as a result, they were caught in the black cloud. Even Yang Kai was not spared.

The expressions of those people, who had been talking and laughing just now, changed drastically in an instant. The seemingly flimsy Demon Qi that they had been looking down on suddenly became thousands of times denser than before and its corruptive power increased accordingly.

Sizzling sounds could be heard everywhere. It was the sound of the Demon Qi eroding the protective layer of Emperor Qi surrounding their bodies. Despite the strength of the Emperor Realm Masters here, they could all feel their Emperor Qi was beginning to crumble under the erosion. Holes began appearing in their defences in a very short span of time, causing many to cry out in panic.

There was no need for anybody to say anything. The dozen or so people moved without any hesitation, desperately escaping outward. When they emerged from within the black cloud and looked back, their expressions were filled with lingering fear. They never expected the Demons to self-destruct, nor for their self-destruction to be so terrifying.

Meanwhile, Yang Kai's expression was incredibly sombre. There had been thousands of Demons rushing at them just now; however, he and the others couldn't have knocked out more than three hundred or four hundred in total. That meant that at least five to six hundred people had self-destructed in that moment just now. In other words, the Southern Territory had lost as many as six hundred elite disciples just in their direction. Similar situations no doubt must have occurred in all the other directions. The Southern Territory's losses could only be described as heavy!

"Brother Chen, you..." A horrified voice sounded suddenly.

Yang Kai turned to look in that direction, and his eyes narrowed at the sight. A middle-aged man was standing there with a look of helplessness. The protective layer of Emperor Qi surrounding his body had collapsed, and his body was wrapped in traces of pitch-black Demon Qi. The Demon Qi was like a pack of snakes, entering his body through his pores and his seven orifices. It changed his aura in a very short period of time, and his eyes were showing signs of being covered in the black Qi.

Yang Kai had no idea who this person was; nevertheless, this man was one of the reinforcements that he recruited from the Northern Territory.

When the others standing next to this man noticed his situation, they looked extremely shocked and hurriedly put some distance between themselves, all staring at him vigilantly, for fear that he might start violently attacking them.

This man seemed a little dazed himself and lifted his hands out in front of him, staring at them blankly. Then, he lifted his head to look at Yang Kai and begged, "Palace Master Yang, save me!"

If he was completely taken over by the Demon Qi and lost his reasoning, then he would be no different from the Demons that had self-destructed just now. In that situation, his life and death would be out of his control. He wouldn't even know if he suddenly self-destructed.

The moment those words left that man's mouth, Yang Kai had already appeared in front of him. The aura around Yang Kai suddenly underwent a huge change and a strange chant left his lips. A moment later, a ray of light burst from Yang Kai's hand and enveloped this man.

Chi chi chi...

It was as though the traces of black Qi had met their nemesis. When the light wrapped around that man, the black Qi flowed out of his pores and dissipated into nothingness. His chaotic consciousness also stabilized. He had the sense that he had just escaped the clutches of death; thus, he gratefully said, "Many thanks, Palace Master Yang."

Although he did not know what strange method Yang Kai had used just now, he could clearly sense that the Demon Qi invading his body had been driven out.

"All of you, be more careful." Yang Kai swept a cold gaze over these people. [He is an Emperor Realm Master, yet he nearly succumbed to the demonification just like that. What a fool.]

Yang Kai knew that it was not actually that difficult to guard against this kind of loose Demon Qi, this situation was the result of these people never having encountered Demons before. While the sudden self-destruct had played some role, it was mainly facing seemingly weaker opponents just now that had made these Masters lower their guard. Under normal circumstances, they would only need to maintain a strong protective layer of Emperor Qi around themselves at all times and such a situation would not have happened.

If this wasn't the case, how could Yang Kai have survived for so long under that monstrously powerful Demon Qi outside Maplewood City during the Demon Eye incident when he had only been a First-Order Dao Source Realm at the time? The Demon Qi might be very corrosive, but it was nothing as long as they protected themselves well and did not give the Demon Qi any opportunities to invade.

“Shamanic Spell!” A lurking black shadow hiding in the canopy of a large tree some distance away couldn’t help narrowing its eyes at this sight. The people around Yang Kai might not know what method he used to get rid of the Demon Qi, but this person was very familiar with it. That was a Shamanic Spell! Back in ancient times, the Demon Race had suffered great losses because of those Shamans. It was precisely because this figure was very familiar with that history that it was so shocked.

[Why are there people who know how to use Shamanic Spells in this era!? Moreover, he seems extremely proficient in Shamanic Spells from the way he cast that one just now. If not, he could not have casted the Demon Exorcism Technique so easily. But, how can this be!? People are the product of their time! Each era has its own distinctive Principles, and with the current Principles of this world, how can anybody successfully cultivate Shamanic Spells?]

Before this shadowy figure could finish that train of thought though, its vision blurred for a moment and a figure appeared out of nowhere and stood in front of it. It was so shocked that it immediately backed away without even thinking about it.

“Solidify!” A cold voice sounded in its ears, making it feel as though it had fallen into an ice chamber. It looked up and saw that Yang Kai, who had been several kilometres away just now, was standing directly in front of it. It didn’t even know when Yang Kai approached it. Following the word that Yang Kai uttered, the surrounding space became viscous and turned into an invisible cage that trapped it inside.

The figure struggled desperately, using all the strength it had to try to break free of these shackles. However, it felt as though it was trapped in a mire and the more it struggled, the more entangled it became.

“A Demon Spirit!” Yang Kai stared at the man’s pitch-black eyes and coldly snorted.

This person was obviously different from the Demons who had rushed at them just now. Although those Demons infected by Demon Qi had also been demonified, they lost their rationality and thinking abilities. In contrast, the man in front of Yang Kai was able to act autonomously. He had undoubtedly been possessed by a Demon Spirit, just like Lei Gu, and judging by the way he was dressed; he was probably one of the Elders of Orthodoxy Temple, signifying he was an Emperor Realm Master.

“Damn you!” He shouted through gritted teeth and his body abruptly began to swell. He was going to self-destruct without any warning! It was clear that he knew he was no match for Yang Kai, so he chose this path rather than being captured alive.

“You think you could self-destruct in front of me? Look into my eyes!” Yang Kai roared as his right eye suddenly turned into a golden shaft of light that pulsed with intense Spiritual Energy.

The Demon Spirit who was about to self-destruct suddenly froze. At the same time, his swollen body involuntarily shrank back to normal and before he could react, Yang Kai grabbed him by the neck and shoved him into the Small Sealed World to be suppressed in a certain corner of the world. Yang Kai did not kill because he still had many unanswered questions. He might be able to obtain some useful information if he left somebody alive to be questioned later. In addition, he wanted to see if he could rescue this person from a Demon Spirit’s possession just like how he saved those people who had been corrupted by Demon Qi.

Achieving his aim in one move, Yang Kai turned and looked back with a frown. The enormous black cloud in the sky was swirling non-stop. A moment later, hundreds of whirlpools materialized in the black cloud. The dense black Qi poured into those whirlpools and quickly disappeared.

Very quickly, the black cloud vanished without a trace and hundreds of figures with powerful Demon Qi reappeared. It was clear that they were part of those thousand or so Demons from before.

Among the Demons, five hundred to six hundred had self-destructed while three to four hundred had been knocked out by Yang Kai and the others while the remaining hundred or so had hidden inside the black cloud. It wasn't until now that they revealed themselves. After devouring the Demon Qi formed from their companions who had self-destructed, each of these surviving Demons had grown far stronger than before. The aura they were emitting currently was not inferior to that of an Emperor Realm Master.

"What is this!?" An Elder of Full Sky Sect stared so hard that his eyeballs trembled in their sockets. His expression was filled with shock and horror. It wasn't until this moment that he realized how ridiculous he had been to underestimate his enemies just now. The Emperor Realm Masters had looked down on the horde of around a thousand Demons earlier, but who could have imagined that those Demons could converge into a force that could rival them in strength? Fortunately, they soon realized that something was strange. Those hundred or so Demons might have grown exponentially in strength, but they simply stood there motionlessly like wooden pillars in the sky.

"Quickly knock them out!" Yang Kai shouted as he had a vague insight into the situation. It seemed that these Demons infected by Demon Qi did not have any ability to act independently. In that case, the reason they attacked just now was that they were being controlled by somebody, and the most likely candidate was the Elder of Orthodoxy Temple who had been possessed by a Demon Spirit. Since Yang Kai had captured the person controlling them though, those hundred or so Demons immediately became something akin to wooden puppets with cut strings.

When the dozen or so Emperor Realm Masters heard Yang Kai's shout, they cautiously rushed towards the demonified people. Upon launching their attacks, they soon realized that these Demons showed no signs of resistance and were quite simple to take out.

Observing the situation, Yang Kai became more and more affirmed in his conjecture. The Demons that had been infected by Demon Qi had no sentience. It was just that he had no idea if this would always be the case or if it was because they had not been demonified for long enough.

Whatever the case may be, Yang Kai had no time to think about it right now. He flew straight up into the air and looked around. Orthodoxy Temple had been divided into more than twenty battlefields, and every one of them was caught up in a fierce battle.

The situation on his side was noticeably better as he had rescued that Emperor Realm Master of the Northern Territory from being corrupted by Demon Qi and prevented the Demon Transformation from taking place. Moreover, he had successfully captured the Elder of Orthodoxy Temple and caused the Demons here to lose their ability to move.

Unfortunately, the other battlefields were not doing as well. Yang Kai could clearly see that several Emperor Realm Masters from the Northern Territory had become demonified and turned their weapons

on their companions. Those Emperor Realm Masters were currently fighting against their former friends and companions. Their companions were terrified but could only do their best to resist and deal with the situation. They couldn't very well kill their former companions, so they were greatly restrained in terms of strength and tactics.

At the same time, the Demons that had been boosted in strength after devouring a large amount of Demon Qi suddenly rushed in fiercely without fear of death and fought brutally against the reinforcements in both the Northern and Eastern Territories.

Yang Kai's gaze flashed as he looked down at a certain area and pushed his Divine Sense to send a transmission to the Stone Spirit Elder. Elder and the eight Stone Spirits had been pushing their way forward, leaving a bunch of defeated Demons in a terrible state in their wake. With their special constitution, they were completely unafraid of the Demon Qi. Since they had no need to worry about the dangers of demonification, and possessed incredible strength along with near invulnerability, ordinary Emperor Realm Masters were nothing in their eyes, much less mindless Demons. If not for the fact that they were afraid of using too much strength and did not dare to attack randomly, they would have killed the Demons and obtained a crushing victory by now

Chapter 3262, A Trap

When Elder received the Divine Sense transmission Yang Kai sent to him, his expression changed and he immediately instructed the other eight Stone Spirits in a soft voice. In the next moment, the nine members of the Stone Spirit Clan dispersed and headed in all directions.

An Elder of Orthodoxy Temple, who had been possessed by a Demon Spirit, stood atop a certain tree canopy. He carefully concealed his aura, hid his figure, and blended perfectly into his surrounding environment. Many people passed both above and below him, but nobody noticed his presence. He hid in this spot and watched the battlefield several kilometres away while controlling the hundreds of Demons that had been greatly boosted in strength to fight against more than a dozen Emperor Realm Masters.

At that moment, his vision darkened without warning as a large mountain stood in front of him and blocked the light coming from above. Surprised, he looked up only to see a Stone Spirit that was several tens of meters tall staring straight at him.

[I've been discovered! I can't believe I was discovered! And by a Stone Spirit at that! Since when does a Stone Spirit have such keen senses!?] In his opinion, his concealment was perfect and it was impossible to discover him unless a Third-Order Emperor Realm Master was deliberately searching for him.

Nevertheless, he immediately shrank back to retreat without any hesitation. At that moment, he felt something tightening around his leg which was followed by a pulling force. It felt like he had been caught by a large hand. He turned back to look in horror, revealing a look of disbelief on his face. The thing that was grabbing onto his ankle was not a large hand, but a vine.

His Demon Qi shot out and immediately turned that vine into dust; however, that momentary delay gave the Stone Spirit an opening to attack. A large fist came smashing towards him as though a meteor was falling from the sky. It landed squarely on his chest and in that instant, he felt as though he had been struck by lightning. The sound of bones breaking rang out and subsequently, his entire person collapsed to the ground like a ragged gunny sack. Before he touched the ground, fragments of his internal organs spurted out of his mouth and nose. Then, his neck tilted to the side and his aura disappeared completely.

Even though this person was possessed by a Demon Spirit, he was still just a First-Order Emperor. Each member of the Stone Spirit Clan was so powerful that even a Third-Order Emperor Realm Master would suffer heavy injuries if they took a direct hit from them, much less a mere First-Order Emperor. A single attack had immediately ended this man's life.

After that, the Stone Spirit turned and ran off in another direction, a soft whispering voice coming from behind him. It was true that the Stone Spirits did not have keen vision or senses, but it was different when they had the guidance of the Wood Spirits. The Wood Spirit Clan and the Stone Spirit Clan complemented each other perfectly and would fight side-by-side in battle. Furthermore, the Wood Spirit Clan's perception of plants was unparalleled. Those Demon Spirits who hid among the trees might be difficult to detect by most people, but the Wood Spirits simply needed to communicate with the surrounding forest to get a clear insight into where these Demon Spirits were hiding so they could accurately guide the Stone Spirits to their targets.

The nine Stone Spirits acted together to root out the Demon Spirits hiding in various locations throughout Orthodoxy Temple and either killed or severely injured them. Without the control of these Demon Spirits, the mindless Demons quickly lost their ability to fight. They simply stood there motionlessly, allowing others to knock them unconscious or fall out of the sky like raindrops.

Yang Kai monitored his surroundings with a cold look in his eyes and his gaze quickly fixed on a certain spot in a certain direction. That was the mountain valley where the Martial Gathering had been held. When he left one day ago, that mountain valley had been swamped with Demon Qi, a complete sea of black. Now that he was looking at it again, the situation seemed even worse than before. Moreover, Wen Zi Shan and the others were trapped in that mountain valley.

The overall situation had been settled. Almost all the people who had been possessed by Demon Spirits had been eliminated, and without them, the remaining Demons could no longer cause any trouble. Thus, Yang Kai headed in the direction of the mountain valley.

Along the way, three streams of light rushed towards Yang Kai from three different directions and arrived next to him. They were Fan Wu, Cang Gou, and Luan Feng. They had clearly noticed his movements and came to provide support. No matter how much they disliked him and even wanted to kill him themselves at times, that woman, who was the natural enemy of all Divine Spirits, was standing behind him. They had personally witnessed the intimacy between him and that woman before she entered the Blood Gate and also knew how important he was to her; therefore, they knew that she would definitely make them suffer greatly the moment she came out of her retreat if they allowed Yang Kai to die right under their noses. For that reason, they had no choice but to stay by his side to prevent any accidents.

These four figures sped forward without running into any hindrances along the way and soon arrived next to the mountain valley, landing on a certain mountain peak. Looking around, the three Divine Spirits frowned, and a hint of fear showed in their eyes. That was because the mountain valley was flooded with dense Demon Qi, squirming and rolling about like a living thing. They did not know how the Demon Qi was formed, but they were certain that they would suffer greatly if they fell into it.

The sounds of fighting and killing came out from the middle of the mountain valley, making it clear people were trapped and besieged inside.

“Boy, how dare you ruin my plans!? Did you think you could rescue them? In your dreams!” Lei Gu’s voice came from somewhere inside the mountain valley, echoing from all directions, making it impossible to tell where it was coming from.

“Why are you hiding in the shadows!? If you have the guts, why don’t you come out and fight!?” Yang Kai snorted coldly.

Lei Gu laughed, “How naive! Just wait right there! I will finish them off first, then I’ll come and deal with you!” After those words left his mouth, the Demon Qi in the mountain valley churned even more violently and screams rang out from all over.

Yang Kai’s expression changed, “Junior Sister Murong!”

He distinctly heard Murong Xiao Xiao’s voice among those screams and was just about to rush in when Luan Feng grabbed his shoulder and shot him a glare as she snarled, “What are you doing!? Do you court death!?”

“Let go!” Yang Kai shook off her hand angrily.

Fan Wu’s figure flickered and stood in Yang Kai’s path, quickly warning, “Yang Kai, don’t be so impulsive. It’s clear as day that that guy is deliberately trying to provoke you and lead you into a trap. You will be doing exactly what he wants if you rush in right now!”

Cang Gou also tried to persuade Yang Kai, “That’s right. The Demon Qi is so dense here that it’s incredibly dangerous inside. You need to reconsider this.”

“To Hell with reconsidering!” Yang Kai shouted, spraying the three Divine Spirits in the face with his spit, his expression turning savage, “My friends are inside! I don’t know how much longer they can hold on for! How can I not go and rescue them!? Are you asking me to stand here and watch them die!?”

“Recklessly rushing in is not the way! At the very least, we need to know the situation inside!” Fan Wu scowled, “Let’s do this. Call over everyone outside and we will work together to disperse the Demon Qi in the mountain valley. That way, the situation will reveal itself on its own.”

Yang Kai’s expression was gloomy, but nevertheless, he did not insist on rushing in again either. Even he knew that that was the only choice they had at the moment.

At that moment, Murong Xiao Xiao’s screams rang out again.

“Lei Gu, you court death!” Yang Kai’s expression became hostile again and Space Principles flared before he vanished from where he stood, rushing in without any regard for anything else.

Fan Wu and the others were instantly dumbfounded.

Luan Feng was so livid that her chest heaved violently and she frustratedly cursed, "Fool!"

Similarly, Cang Gou shook his head with a helpless look, feeling helpless.

On the other hand, Fan Wu's expression was grim as he gritted his teeth and spoke up, "What are you still standing there for? Let's go."

Regardless of whether they wanted to or not, since Yang Kai had rushed in, they had no choice but to follow. Fortunately, the three of them were Divine Spirits so they had inherently strong resistance towards Demon Qi corruption and did not need to fear it in the short term. However, nobody dared to make any assumptions if they were exposed to this Demon Qi for an extended period. Besides, what worried them the most was Yang Kai as who knows what treachery Lei Gu had prepared in advance to deal with him? It would be a miracle if Yang Kai could survive for this long after plunging headlong into such an obvious trap.

As soon as they stepped into the Demon Qi, the three Divine Spirits felt their hearts sinking. That was because they immediately lost sight of each other. The Demon Qi was swirling in all directions and completely disoriented them, making it impossible to distinguish North from South. Even up, down, left, and right confused.

Burst of screams rang in their ears, further disturbing their senses. Moreover, murderous intent came from all directions while black shadows that were barely perceptible flitted around them like fish, moving so fast that one couldn't grasp their traces.

The Demons could bring out their full power in this environment while the three Divine Spirits had to remain on guard while protecting themselves against the corruption of the Demon Qi. If this situation continued for long, it would become extremely unfavourable for them.

The three of them were duty-bound though, so as soon as they entered this place, they kept calling out Yang Kai's name in hopes of receiving a reply. Unfortunately, each of them now felt as though they were the only person left in this world, so how could anyone else exist close to them?

Meanwhile, Yang Kai's figure flitted through the darkness. He kept speeding forward as Murong Xiao Xiao's screams resounded in his ears. She sounded like she was fighting somebody. He tracked the sounds and followed in the direction it was coming from, but even so, he couldn't find anybody.

All of a sudden, Murong Xiao Xiao let out a blood-curdling scream which then stopped abruptly. The veins in Yang Kai's forehead twitched in response and he paused mid-motion. His surroundings were completely silent, and no matter how he tried to listen, he couldn't hear a single voice anymore. It seemed something tragic had happened to her since her scream that came to such an abrupt end just now. As a result, Yang Kai's expression twisted and he raised his hand to summon out the Myriads Sword.

Yang Kai's Emperor Qi surged and a powerful sword wave flashed out as he roared, "Lei Gu, face me!"

Obviously, Lei Gu didn't react at all and instead, another scream came from the place where the sword wave had passed.

Yang Kai was stunned for a moment. He could tell that the voice belonged to Xiao Bai Yi. Rushing over, he saw a person leaning against a tree, dressed in familiar white robes now stained red in blood. This man used his hands to press against the wound but couldn't seem to stop the blood from flowing out, a crimson pool gathering below him.

"Xiao Bai!" Yang Kai walked up to Xiao Bai Yi and called out in a trembling voice.

Xiao Bai Yi looked up, his complexion utterly bloodless. When he saw Yang Kai, he smiled sorrowfully, "Junior Brother Yang..."

"Your injury..." Yang Kai stared blankly at the injury on Xiao Bai Yi's body. The injury stretched from Xiao Bai Yi's shoulder all the way to his abdomen and was clearly caused by a sword strike. In addition, traces of Yang Kai's Emperor Qi remained in the wound.

Yang Kai was dumbfounded.

"Junior Brother, don't blame yourself..." Xiao Bai Yi smiled at Yang Kai, blood trickling out from the corner of his mouth, "I was dying anyway. You need to escape. You have to run as far away as you can."

However, Yang Kai remained frozen to the spot as if somebody had cast a Binding Technique on him, his eyes fixed on the sword wound on Xiao Bai Yi's body. His gaze trembled lightly and his face filled with shock, fear, and guilt. He never expected that the random attack he unleashed would hit Xiao Bai Yi.

Chapter 3263, Nothing Ventured Nothing Gained

"Run!" Xiao Bai Yi suddenly mustered his strength and shouted. That violent movement affected his injury and the Emperor Qi wrapping around his body immediately collapsed. The boundless Demon Qi poured into his body through his nose, mouth, and open wound. Consequently, he showed signs of demonification within a short period of time.

A roar of pain and rage came out of his mouth as he tried his best to maintain his last shred of clarity. His eyes trembled intensely as they were gradually replaced by a pitch-black darkness. Just before his eyes were filled with black, he suddenly smiled bitterly and desperately called upon his strength. Subsequently, his body swelled and exploded in a loud explosion. Pieces of meat and blood splattered in all directions. It was as though a flower of blood had bloomed under that tall tree.

Yang Kai looked up to the sky and roared. His howl was filled with grief and fury. The Emperor Qi in his body surged fiercely, and his eyes turned red. All of a sudden, the howling stopped abruptly. He looked around coldly and spoke in a sinister voice, "Lei Gu, I swear if I don't rip your corpse into ten thousand pieces I won't be surnamed Yang anymore!"

When his words rang out, he heard Lei Gu's laughter ringing in his ears. He went mad with rage, and the Myriads Sword in his hands shone brightly. Wave after wave of light slashed out, slicing through the darkness before disappearing from sight. As Yang Kai vented his anger through those sword waves, his

emotions seemed to become more and more unstable. His eyes also became redder and redder and he looked like a volcano that could erupt at any moment. It was utterly terrifying.

“Senior Brother Yang...” A gentle yet uncertain voice rang out from behind him.

He didn’t even bother looking. Spinning around, he slashed out with his sword, releasing a three-metre long sword wave that broke through the protective layer of Emperor Qi around that person and sliced through them like butter.

Glaring in that direction, he saw Murong Xiao Xiao looking at him in a daze. She was covered in blood, and her beautiful eyes were filled with disbelief. Then, a line of blood appeared from the centre of her brow down to her chin. Her body split into half with a small explosion, her blood and internal organs scattering all over the ground, dying on the spot.

Yang Kai breathed heavily. His blood-coloured eyes froze for a moment, but that was all the reaction he showed. The black Qi around him churned and poured into his body without leaving a trace; however, he didn’t seem to notice it. It didn’t take long before he was filled to the brim with Demon Qi.

Lei Gu’s voice sounded again, “How does it feel to slaughter your own people? How does it feel to succumb to demonification?”

Yang Kai turned a deaf ear to those words, he simply waved the Myriads Sword in his hand around mechanically.

One by one, both familiar and unfamiliar faces appeared around him from all directions, but all of them were mercilessly split in half by him. He single-handedly killed all within a dozen meters of himself. Corpse after corpse quickly piled up on the ground.

Yang Kai did not know how long had passed when he finally leaned against the Myriads Sword breathlessly. His entire body was swirling with black Qi. Even his eyes turned pitch-black. He went on a rampage, venting his emotions wildly, but nevertheless, it was impossible to maintain such an uncontrolled burst of strength for long even if he was a Second-Order Emperor.

Meanwhile, two figures stood tall in the darkness. They were looking in Yang Kai’s direction through the dense layers of Demon Qi. They were none other than Lei Gu and Feng Ming.

“It should be done now, right?” Feng Ming asked.

Lei Gu frowned, seeming a little uncertain. Judging by the situation, there shouldn’t be any major problems. Even so, he shook his head just to be on the safe side, “He bears the blood of the Dragon Clan, which has a natural resistance towards Demon Qi. It is better to be careful and wait for a little longer.”

Feng Ming said, “It’s not as if there has never been a precedent for a member of the Dragon Clan undergoing demonification before. Besides, his bloodline is not pure. If he was in a stable mental state, he might have been able to resist for a bit, but he accidentally killed one of his own and formed a Heart Demon as a result. Trapped in this boundless Demon Qi, it is rare enough that he was able to persist for such a long time despite facing internal and external disturbances. I’m sure he has already completely succumbed to demonification by now.”

Lei Gu nodded, "That may be true, but..."

He still seemed to be hesitating.

Feng Ming took the initiative to suggest, "I'll go and test him. Someone like him is a rare find. If I can make use of him, it will surely be of great help in the future."

"En, act carefully!" Lei Gu warned.

Feng Ming nodded and flew over in the direction Yang Kai was located. He did not let his guard down as, although he was almost certain that Yang Kai had been completely demonified, he remained cautious and vigilant. The Demon Qi in his body fluctuated quietly and he was prepared to retreat at any time.

As Feng Ming walked forward, the boundless Demon Qi parted to open a path for him on its own and revealed the scenery shrouded in the darkness. When there were less than thirty metres between him and Yang Kai, he carefully observed the latter's situation while creeping forward little by little. It didn't take long for him to arrive one metre in front of Yang Kai. Feng Ming's hands transformed into claws and he struck at Yang Kai's chest without any warning. His claws that were rippling with power sliced through the air with an audible sound, looking quite powerful at a glance.

The tip of his claws pierced Yang Kai's chest a full finger length deep with a slashing sound, and blood instantly splattered all over; even so, Yang Kai remained motionless as though he couldn't feel any pain at all.

Feng Ming couldn't help but chuckle at the sight. [It's certain now. He has completed the Demon Transformation. I said it, didn't I? He didn't even hesitate to kill so many people; moreover, those were all his 'comrades'. How can he resist the Demon Qi's corruption under the influence of such a great Heart Demon? Judging by external appearances, this little brat is definitely under the influence of Demon Qi. My actions just now were the final test. If he was only pretending to be under the Demon Transformation, he would surely react to a fatal attack. It can only mean that we succeeded since he had no reaction whatsoever.]

On the other hand, Lei Gu let out a breath of relief when he saw this scene. [With this, I can finally finish my mission here. I was wondering how to report to the higher ups about the failure in the Southern Territory, but this mistake can be completely offset now that we managed to capture Yang Kai. Not only is he a Master in the Dao of Space, but he also seems to have the blood of the Dragon Clan. He will surely be useful in the future.]

Feng Ming withdrew his hand. The blood on Yang Kai's chest flowed freely, but his expression remained wooden and he seemed oblivious to his circumstances. Feng Ming circled around Yang Kai, carefully examining the latter and nodding repeatedly, "Good, good, good."

Coming back to stand in front of Yang Kai again, Feng Ming suddenly took out a black box from his pocket. That box was made from unknown materials that were neither gold nor jade. When he opened the box, a seed-like thing inside the box was revealed. The seed was also pitch-black in colour. It was only the size of a mung bean, but there were Spiritual Energy fluctuations coming from it. It was as though this was not a seed but a person.

Feng Ming stretched out a hand to pick up the seed; then, he slowly pressed it against Yang Kai's brow. The moment the two came into contact, the pitch-black seed stuck to Yang Kai's forehead. It desperately squeezed itself into his head as though it was alive and disappeared in the blink of an eye.

At the same time, a figure appeared inside Yang Kai's Knowledge Sea. The figure was wrapped in black Qi and its features were constantly distorting, so much so that one could not make out its facial features clearly.

"Is this how you possess the others?" A voice suddenly rang out.

The black figure was shocked and when it turned its head to look in the direction of the voice, it saw Yang Kai's Soul Avatar floating quietly above the Knowledge Sea. Yang Kai was holding a long sabre in his hand and looking in this direction with a grin full of ridicule and mockery.

"You weren't corrupted!?" A hoarse voice rang out. It was difficult to tell whether the voice belonged to a male or a female, but it carried a strong sense of disbelief in it.

How could it not realize that it had been tricked the moment it saw Yang Kai's Soul Avatar? If Yang Kai had been completely demonified, his Soul Avatar would also reflect it. Under such circumstances, it would only need to consume his Soul Avatar to possess his body.

[How can this be? His physical body has clearly completed the Demon Transformation! It's not a lie that he was consumed by the Demon Qi, so how is he preserving his consciousness? He even turned it to his advantage by waiting for me here! More than that, he didn't even react when Feng Ming attacked him just now! How could he be so sure that Feng Ming wouldn't take his life? He truly is reckless!]

"Nothing ventured, nothing gained." Yang Kai grinned at the black figure, revealing a mouthful of fangs.

The black figure flickered and transformed into a black mist, intending to escape Yang Kai's Knowledge Sea. Unfortunately, Yang Kai dominated everything in this space. It was easy to enter, but leaving would require his permission or a stronger force to tear down the defences of his Knowledge Sea. Although the black shadow was powerful, it was ultimately just a Demon Spirit. Without the support of a physical body, it could not exert its full strength, so how could it break through the defences of Yang Kai's Knowledge Sea? For a moment, it dashed about desperately like a beast trapped in a cage with no hope of escape. It couldn't even send word to the outside world.

Meanwhile, Yang Kai pointed his Soul Splitting Saber at the black figure from far away with a cold expression. Locked onto like that, the black figure clearly felt a sense of catastrophe looming over it. Even though it did not have a physical body, it felt cold all over. It was rather decisive though, and knowing that it could not escape from Yang Kai's Knowledge Sea, it decided to turn around and lunge at him instead. It was determined to bring Yang Kai down with it.

"Cut!" A shout rang out, and at the same time, the Soul Splitting Saber shuddered slightly and transformed into a blade of light. Slashing out in front, the light landed on that black figure's body and a blood-curdling scream rang out as it was split into two and exploded into nothingness.

After Yang Kai got rid of the Demon Spirit that had invaded his Knowledge Sea, his expression became solemn and his Soul Avatar left his Knowledge Sea. Inside the darkness, Yang Kai opened his eyes and moved his pitch-black eyes. A faint expression appeared on his face that had been stiff all this while.

Feng Ming stood in front of Yang Kai with his hand behind his back. He nodded when he saw the changes, "Let's go."

Without even the slightest doubt, he turned around and left.

Yang Kai watched Feng Ming's back. He was extremely tempted to stab Feng Ming to death but resisted the impulse.

Passing through the thick Demon Qi, the two of them soon arrived in front of Lei Gu. Feng Ming smiled and declared, "It's done."

Likewise, Lei Gu was smiling brightly. He nodded repeatedly while looking at Yang Kai. Yang Kai cupped his fists and greeted Lei Gu, "Sir."

At that moment, the smile on Lei Gu's face froze. Similarly, Feng Ming looked surprised and turned to look at Yang Kai.

Yang Kai felt his heart lurching at the sight as he keenly realized that he had blown his cover. [It was just one word! Is saying 'Sir' such a big deal?]

Before Yang Kai could even finish his thought, Lei Gu and Feng Ming suddenly split up in two directions and backed away hurriedly, so Yang Kai acted equally decisively. He immediately manipulated the Space Principles around him and caused the surrounding space to instantly solidify. He simultaneously shot out a Moon Blade at Lei Gu and Feng Ming respectively. Since the attack was made hurriedly though, he failed to bring out his full strength.

Lei Gu proved his strength as a Third-Order Emperor Realm Master as he broke through the spatial blockade, his movements only slightly hindered, and avoided the Moon Blade by a hair's breadth.

Chapter 3264, What Can You Do to Me?

On the other hand, Feng Ming was not as fortunate. He was imprisoned by the Space Principles and before he could recover from his shock, the Moon Blade sliced through him. A gaping crescent-shaped hole immediately appeared in his chest, and his internal organs could be seen clearly from his wound.

He looked down at the hideous gaping wound in his chest and widened his eyes in shock. He could barely believe what he was seeing. This was the body of a Second-Order Emperor, no different from Yang Kai, but it had been reduced to this state from just from a single attack. Although part of the reason was that he had been caught off guard, the other party's strength was still clearly overwhelming.

If he had really been Feng Ming, this attack would have robbed him of his mobility and left him as good as dead; however, he was a Demon Spirit who possessed a body to live, so even though he received a fatal wound, he did not collapse immediately. Instead, a large amount of Demon Qi emerged from the wound on his chest, wriggling as it tried to patch up the hole.

Meanwhile, Lei Gu gave a loud roar after dodging the Moon Blade. He used all his strength and managed to fully break free from the constraints of the Space Principles and retreated with a look of horror, trying to escape into the darkness. As long as he could avoid Yang Kai's sudden assault, he would be able to conceal himself again. Yang Kai would never find him amidst all this boundless Demon Qi.

How could Yang Kai let Lei Gu do as he wished though? After sending out two Moon Blades, he raised his hand and tossed out a small, pitch-black beast about thirty centimetres long. That small beast looked no different from an ordinary puppy, but a terrifying light that gave off a sense of joy and excitement shone in its eyes the moment it appeared. It was the Abyssal Returner!

After Yang Kai returned from the Frozen Earth, he let Ah Wang roam free in High Heaven Palace. He did not bring it along with him on his trip to Dragon Island as there wasn't much point, but having said that, the enemies he was currently facing were Demons and Demon Spirits. Ah Wang happened to be their nemesis, so how could Yang Kai not bring her along? When he returned to High Heaven Palace previously, he had summoned her and quietly slipped her into the Small Sealed World.

Lei Gu was slightly startled when the Abyssal Returner appeared. He did not understand the reason why Yang Kai had taken out a small, weak beast at this point in time; nevertheless, he couldn't help feeling an innate sense of fear coming from the depths of his heart at this moment, as though he had encountered his natural enemy.

The Myriads Sword shook and transformed into a sword net that enveloped Lei Gu and blocked his escape while Ah Wang rushed to Lei Gu's side in an instant and its mouth split open widely. The small dog's head suddenly became bigger than a house, and inside its maw was an abyss of pure chaos as it moved to swallow Lei Gu.

"Abyssal Returner!" Lei Gu was shocked and paled considerably. He had not recognized the Abyssal Returner just now because things had happened too suddenly, but how could he not realize it when faced with this abnormality? It turned out to be an actual Abyssal Returner!

The Abyssal Returner was a legendary existence in the Demon Realm, and any member of the Demon Race who had lived for long enough would know of its horror. The Abyssal Returner in front of him might not be on the same level as that terrifying existence that threatened to devour the entire world, but it still carried a trace of the Abyssal Returner's bloodline. That trace, however, was enough to make any Demon tremble at the mere mention of it.

That large, pitch-black mouth was emitting an extremely horrifying aura that caused Lei Gu's entire body to go cold with fear just looking at it. Combined with Yang Kai's sword net restraining his movements, he had no means of escape.

When he saw that he was about to be brutally swallowed by the Abyssal Returner, Lei Gu suddenly stretched out his hand. A figure appeared out of nowhere and stopped in front of him. That figure had long, fluttering hair; clothes that whipped about in the wind; an exquisite face accompanied by a cold expression; and eyes that were completely pitch-black.

Gao Xue Ting!

Yang Kai's eyes widened in shock and he frantically dispersed the sword net he erected around Lei Gu. He had guessed that something bad had happened to Gao Xue Ting, and now, it seemed that his guess

was right. She and Luo Chen must have been corrupted by Demon Qi and undergone demonization as a result.

Gao Xue Ting stood before Lei Gu motionlessly, with no intention of resisting at all, so how could Yang Kai bring himself to hurt her? When he pulled back, he saw that Ah Wang's mouth was still closing in, seemingly planning to devour both Lei Gu and Gao Xue Ting together!

Yang Kai didn't even stop to consider it as his figure flickered, appearing next to Ah Wang and kicking her away. In response, the Abyssal Returner let out a pitiful whimper as she was sent flying.

Yang Kai's face twitched involuntarily when he turned back to glare at Lei Gu again and curse, "Despicable!"

On the other side, Lei Gu had taken advantage of this gap to press his hand against the top of Gao Xue Ting's head, Demon Qi surging up wildly as he threatened to kill her at any moment.

Lei Gu did not experience the slightest joy of escaping from death though as the muscles on his face were twitching uncontrollably and his gaze fixed on Yang Kai, practically spitting fire from his eyes. He couldn't believe his grand plans had all been foiled by this damn brat!

He had been deceived earlier because Yang Kai's acting had been too real, not even dodging when Feng Ming tried to gouge out his heart! [How was he so sure that Feng Ming was only testing him!?!]

At this moment, Lei Gu was more like a beast trapped in a corner, struggling to survive. He had been forced to take Gao Xue Ting hostage to prevent his death. This was not how it was supposed to go. They conspired for so many years and planted so many Demon Seeds. Under normal circumstances, they should have wiped out or corrupted hundreds of Emperor Realm Masters and tens of thousands of elite disciples in the Southern Territory by now, then quietly turned the entire Southern Territory into a Demon Paradise.

Unfortunately, the plan began to fall apart when Yang Kai appeared. As a result, Lei Gu was forced to change his strategy. The worst part was that Yang Kai had managed to summon so many powerful reinforcements within just a single day, causing his plans to lose all hope of success. In the end, Yang Kai even plotted against him and nearly managed to infiltrate their ranks. It was only natural that Lei Gu's mood was as terrible as could be. [He disappeared for more than ten years! Why did he have to show up again at such a critical juncture to ruin my plans?!]

"Release her!" Yang Kai flicked the Myriads Sword and pointed it at Lei Gu.

Lei Gu stared at Yang Kai with an insidious expression.

Yang Kai returned the stare without showing any weakness. Seeing that Lei Gu had no intention of compromising though, he secretly felt troubled. He had previously considered this possibility; however, he could hardly rescue Gao Xue Ting first when he didn't even know where she was.

As he had suspected, Lei Gu had taken her hostage. What frustrated Yang Kai the most, though, was that she was currently being controlled and had no intention of resisting Lei Gu. On the contrary, she was under Lei Gu's complete control.

A soft whimpering sound entered Yang Kai's ears as Ah Wang got up from the side and whined at him, looking extremely aggrieved. When she saw that Yang Kai had no intention of paying any attention to her though, her small round eyes spun around for a bit then landed on Feng Ming.

Feng Ming had been heavily injured but had used his Demon Qi to seal his wound. It didn't seem like his life was in danger, but even so, he couldn't help feeling terrified under Ah Wang's stare as she quietly trotted closer towards him.

Ah Wang crouched low to the ground, her small eyes observing Feng Ming for a moment before she suddenly pounced without any warning.

Feng Ming's expression changed drastically and he moved his feet to dodge aside, but somehow, Ah Wang's mouth was already looming over him from the sky. The stench of blood filled his nose as he screamed, "Save m...!"

The shout was cut off abruptly as only the sound of Ah Wang's audibly gulping could be heard. A bulging lump that was visible to the naked eye travelled down her throat and all the way into her belly. She had swallowed Feng Ming once before when her bloodline had first been stimulated, but unfortunately for her, she had been too weak at the time. Feng Ming managed to escape from her mouth and avoided death by relying on his strong cultivation and assistance from his allies on the outside.

Many years had gone by now though, and Ah Wang had grown significantly since then. Moreover, she devoured a large amount of Demon Qi and many of the Demons back in the Revolving World, all of which had been transformed into her own strength. On the other hand, Feng Ming, who had been possessed by a Demon Spirit and turned into a Demon, was naturally suppressed when facing an awakened Abyssal Returner. Most importantly, Feng Ming had just been severely injured by Yang Kai, so how could he resist? As a result, he was swallowed up in one bite.

A myriad of expressions flashed across Lei Gu's face as he watched the Abyssal Returner warily out of the corner of his eyes, his face twitching slightly.

After devouring Feng Ming, the Abyssal Returner licked her lips with her tongue and turned to stare at Lei Gu eagerly, as if she wanted to swallow him too. She had not eaten anything that was to her palate ever since returning from the Revolving World as it was rare to encounter a Demon, so it was only natural that she wanted to eat her fill today.

She was also annoyed that Yang Kai did not allow her to do so. Nevertheless, she did not dare to act rashly and could only settle for an appetizer. Opening her large mouth again, an extremely strong suction came from within her mouth and the tumultuous Demon Qi in the air began pouring into her mouth, causing the amount of Demon Qi in the surroundings to decrease at a speed visible to the naked eye.

"You can't escape," Yang Kai looked at Lei Gu indifferently. "Surrender and I might be willing to spare your life!"

Lei Gu calmly replied, "Do you take me for a fool?"

Yang Kai coldly snorted, "Your life has no value to me."

Lei Gu said grimly, "That might be the case, but her life is different."

While speaking, he put some strength into his hand gripping the top of Gao Xue Ting's head, causing a pained expression to flash across her face.

Yang Kai gritted his teeth and growled, "What do you want?"

Lei Gu asked, "Why weren't you corrupted?"

This question had been bothering him all this while, and he couldn't help wanting to understand. Yang Kai's various actions up until now clearly indicated that he was being corrupted by the Demon Qi. Even now, his entire body was wrapped in the Demon Qi, so how was he able to maintain his consciousness without succumbing to it?

As long as Lei Gu couldn't figure out the answer to this question, he simply could not be at ease.

"What can this pitiful Demon Qi do to me?" Yang Kai sneered. The Ancient Demon Qi sealed in his dantian was of extremely high density and purity. Comparatively, the Demon Qi in his surroundings was nothing. Even without the Ancient Demon Qi, his Half-Dragon body had a strong immunity to Demon Qi. Saying so, Yang Kai snorted and with a flicker, the Demon Qi invading his body was forced out and he immediately returned to his original state.

"What about the Heart Demon?" Lei Gu's face twitched.

Yang Kai sneered, "What Heart Demon?"

Lei Gu said, "You killed so many people. Moreover, many of them were your friends..."

Yang Kai scoffed, "Did you think you could shake my mind with a paltry illusion?"

"How did you know?" Lei Gu grumbled. The people that Yang Kai killed had truly been nothing but illusions; however, they would seem extremely life-like in this boundless Demon Qi that dulled one's senses. Even if Yang Kai had some doubts, watching his fellow comrades and friends die at his hands should have affected his mind unless he had a heart as cold and hard as steel, or he had some way to distinguish between the truth and the lies.

"Xiao Bai!" Yang Kai showed an enigmatic smile.

"What?" Lei Gu frowned, obviously not understanding Yang Kai's answer.

"If you still don't understand, then stop asking, it only reveals your ignorance." Yang Kai snorted coldly.

In fact, when he first encountered Xiao Bai Yi here, Yang Kai had not been able to distinguish whether what he saw was real or fake either. He had to admit that Lei Gu's trick was amazing. However, Yang Kai knew something was wrong the moment he uttered the name 'Xiao Bai'.

Xiao Bai Yi would never accept being called 'Xiao Bai', no matter the circumstances, and would only have sternly reiterated his full name, as if he would not be able to die happily if he did not.

Chapter 3265, Acting Cautiously Lest Innocents Be Hurt

Before entering this mountain valley, Yang Kai had suspected that Lei Gu was leading him into a trap. The most obvious sign was Murong Xiao Xiao's screams. Her screams had been increasingly urgent, and the intention behind those screams could not be more obvious.

Needless to say, he rushed into the mountain valley alone in a fit of 'uncontrollable rage' just to see what Lei Gu was up to. After that, he simply went with the flow and achieved what he wanted in the end. He had baited Lei Gu out of the shadows; unfortunately, he now had to act cautiously or Gao Xue Ting would suffer the consequences.

Whilst their conversation was going on, the Demon Qi in the mountain valley had reduced drastically. All of it had flowed into Ah Wang's belly. As the darkness gradually dissipated, the original scenery in the mountain valley gradually emerged once again. Many figures stood tall while the ground was littered with countless corpses. The entire mountain valley was no longer green and lush like before. Looking around, the place was a mess, and the ground was practically stained red with blood.

Thousands stood in the centre of the mountain valley protected by a number of Spirit Arrays that were flickering slightly. These people were the cultivators from all over the Southern Territory who came to participate in the Martial Gathering and they were the only group of people that had yet to succumb to the Demon Qi. It could be seen that they only managed to hold out until now by relying on those Spirit Arrays. Nevertheless, every one of them was pale, regardless of their cultivation. They were clearly reaching their limits. On the other hand, tens of thousands of Demons gathered around this group of people, besieging them.

The sudden disappearance of the boundless Demon Qi surprised everyone.

Shua shua shua...

The sounds of something slicing through the air rang out as powerful auras emerged one after another and shot into the mountain valley. It was none other than the reinforcements Yang Kai brought with him. When Fan Wu and the others saw that Yang Kai was safe and sound, they quietly let out a breath of relief; however, their attention was quickly drawn towards Lei Gu.

Everybody could see that Yang Kai was currently confronting Lei Gu, while Lei Gu was holding a woman hostage. The woman also seemed to have experienced demonification and it was unclear what her relationship with Yang Kai was.

"Little Xue Ting!" Wen Zi Shan's voice called out, the expression on his face never having been more solemn. In the time it took for him to fling his purple robes out of the way, he had already arrived next to Yang Kai and was now staring at Lei Gu deeply. There was no need to ask anything; he already understood the situation in front of them.

Lei Gu's expression was dark as he slowly swept his gaze over his surroundings only to see enemy Masters standing in all directions. He instantly understood that the battle was lost and his plans were a complete failure. Thus, he couldn't help nursing a grudge in his heart. Although he had tens of thousands of demonified cultivators on his side still, the difference in strength was too great. In addition, they had not been demonified for long so they required precise control and would be unable to play a significant role on their own. The only thing they could be used for was to create a distraction.

“Do you think you can escape?” Yang Kai looked at Lei Gu and lightly continued, “Do you believe me when I say I can make you disappear so thoroughly that not even bones remain with just a simple order?”

Lei Gu laughed, “Of course I believe you, but I can drag her down with me before I die. If you don’t believe it, you can try me.”

Yang Kai nodded, “I believe you.”

Pausing for a moment, Yang Kai continued, “Like I said, your life means nothing to me. Let her go and I will spare you.”

“You can’t!” An angry roar rang out. It was the Holy Master of Heavenly Martial Holy Land, Ma Qing. He was covered in blood, and nobody could tell whether it was his own or someone else’s. His expression was savage as he stared at Lei Gu coldly, “He is the culprit behind all of this, we cannot let him escape. It’s clear that he has been plotting this for a long time. If we can capture him, we might still be able to get some information out of him.”

Both Yang Kai and Wen Zi Shan turned around to stare at Ma Qing in unison.

Ma Qing glared furiously, “If you let him escape today, the Southern Territory might face another catastrophe in the future. What do you think, Golden Envoy Xiao?”

Xiao Yu Yang furrowed his brow together without saying anything. Essentially, he agreed with what Ma Qing was saying and he also knew that Ma Qing’s words were not coming from selfish intentions. The Southern Territory had been hunting and suppressing Demon Spirits for more than ten years now and originally thought that they had more or less wiped them out. Even if one or two had escaped the purge, so few Demon Spirits would not be able to cause any trouble, but how could they have known that the entire Orthodoxy Temple had fallen to the Demon Spirits without anyone noticing?

Nobody knew who the mastermind behind this grand conspiracy was, nor what this conspiracy was ultimately hoping to achieve. If they could capture Lei Gu, there would certainly be some hope of obtaining some useful information from him. With that, they would be a little more prepared in the future. At the very least, they could find out who else among the Masters in the Southern Territory were being possessed by Demon Spirits.

Based on that point alone, they could not let Lei Gu escape. Unfortunately, Xiao Yu Yang knew that the decision was not in his hands. It was true that he was a Golden Star Envoy of Star Soul Palace who could act as its representative, and under normal circumstances, none of the cultivators of the Southern Territory would dare to disobey him if he issued an order, but right now...

Xiao Yu Yang turned and glanced at the unfamiliar faces of the many Masters around him, smiling bitterly in his heart, [I don’t think anything I say at this moment will change the situation. Yang Kai and Wen Zi Shan obviously want to save Gao Xue Ting from Lei Gu. I will only humiliate myself if I step forward and openly oppose them.]

When Ma Qing saw that Xiao Yu Yang was not saying anything and immediately understood what the latter was worrying about. Thus, he stopped putting his hopes in Xiao Yu Yang and instead turned to look at Wen Zi Shan, “Temple Master Wen, I understand your feelings, but I hope that you can consider

the bigger picture. The survival of the Southern Territory must be our top priority. You are the Temple Master of Azure Sun Temple, everything you say and do will become a model to the billions of cultivators in the Southern Territory. Please think twice!”

With such a heavy responsibility to bear, Wen Zi Shan showed a pained expression as he asked slowly, “Brother Ma, what would you do if it was Madam Qi in this situation instead?”

Madam Qi was Ma Qing’s wife, a Second-Order Emperor, and was at this moment, standing right next to him. Ma Qing’s face twitched in response to this question, but he gritted his teeth and declared, “Sacrifices for the greater good are necessary!”

His voice was filled with sorrow, as if he had truly given up on Madam Qi, and as soon as those words left his mouth, the woman next to him dressed in palace robes couldn’t help but tremble and slightly lower her eyes.

Wen Zi Shan gave a wry smile, “Brother Ma, I admire your valiance...”

“Shut him up!” Yang Kai snapped as he suddenly shot a look at Fan Wu.

Fan Wu’s figure flickered and appeared in front of Ma Qing in the next instant, raising his hand to knock Ma Qing out.

Ma Qing was shocked and the longsword in his hand bloomed with countless sword shadows that shot towards Fan Wu. In response, Fan Wu simply snorted and released a wild aura from his body, causing Ma Qing to feel as though he was dragged into an ancient world. The Emperor Qi in Ma Qing’s body became disordered, and his sword technique collapsed as a result.

Meanwhile, Fan Wu’s hand that was reaching out towards Ma Qing bypassed the sword shadows like a butterfly fluttering among the falling flower petals and accurately struck Ma Qing’s chest. The power contained in his fingertips was extremely astounding, enough to kill Ma Qing at any moment.

The people from Heavenly Martial Holy Land were shocked as they never expected their Holy Master to be subdued in a single move. Fortunately, the other party had no intention to kill; otherwise, Ma Qing would not be standing there alive at this moment. Ma Qing might have consumed a lot of his strength previously, but he was still a Third-Order Emperor Realm Master. How could he be defeated so easily?

“A Divine Spirit!” Ma Qing’s eyes bulged as he stared at Fan Wu blankly with a look of disbelief. The man standing in front of him was a genuine Divine Spirit! Although he had never met Fan Wu before, Ma Qing could not be mistaken about the unique aura coming from the other party. This person was a Divine Spirit that had assumed human form.

Ma Qing didn’t know what Divine Spirit this man was, but he knew that he wouldn’t be a match for him even if he was at his peak, let alone in his current condition. What horrified him even more was that a Divine Spirit was obeying Yang Kai’s commands. [W-What is going on? How can Yang Kai order a Divine Spirit around?]

Fan Wu looked at Ma Qing coldly, “I’m not in a good mood right now, so don’t force me to kill you!”

He poked Ma Qing lightly in the chest, making Ma Qing stagger several steps backwards from the force.

Ma Qing opened his mouth again; however, Madam Qi, who was standing next to him, tugged at his sleeve to warn him, so in the end, he just let out a long sigh. He could tell that the Divine Spirit in front of him was not bluffing. This man really would kill him if he stepped out of line again.

Thousands of cultivators from the Southern Territory and tens of thousands of Demons faced each other in the mountain valley, but it was completely silent. It was almost as if all eyes were fixed on Yang Kai and Lei Gu. Those two were the keys to resolving this situation.

“Alright. Now, we can talk.” Yang Kai’s gaze passed over Gao Xue Ting and stared directly at Lei Gu, “If you want to die, I’ll grant your wish right now. I guarantee there won’t be a shred of you left.”

Wen Zi Shan’s eyes flashed at those words, and his heart leapt into his throat. Luckily, Lei Gu did not move, showing no intention to kill.

Yang Kai smiled lightly at this sight, “It looks like you want to live after all! Good, it must not have been easy for you to possess a body and come back to life. Moreover, you even managed to possess a Third-Order Emperor, the height of luxury. Who would die willingly under such circumstances?”

Yang Kai’s gaze became sharp as he waved his hand around and continued, “Look around. Do you think you have a chance to leave here today?”

“Are you threatening me!?” Lei Gu coldly snorted.

Yang Kai replied, “I just want you to recognize the reality of your situation. Oh right, I forgot to introduce you, do you see that man standing over there? He is a Divine Spirit from the Eastern Territory, Fan Wu. That is Divine Spirit Cang Gou, and last but not least, this beautiful woman is Divine Spirit Luan Feng. As for them, they are the thirty-two Monster Kings serving under them...”

When Luan Feng heard those words, her lips twitched faintly, while on the contrary, it was the thirty-two Monster Kings who revealed fierce expressions and pushed their Monster Qi to press down on Lei Gu.

Meanwhile, many of the cultivators in the Southern Territory felt extremely frightened as well. It was shocking enough when they watched Ma Qing being subdued by Fan Wu in a single move. Even so, it wasn’t until this moment that they realized that there was not just one Divine Spirit here, but three! In addition, there were also thirty-two Monster Kings!

[What kind of force is this!? It’s practically unheard of and never seen before! Even Star Soul Palace couldn’t bring out such a powerful force, right?] What made them slightly more at ease was that the Divine Spirits and Yang Kai seemed to get along pretty well, so there was no need to worry that they would cause trouble for the Southern Territory.

“Additionally, there are more than two hundred Emperor Realm Masters from the Northern Territory with me...” Yang Kai pointed to the other side where those he had brought here from the North raised their heads and puffed out their chests proudly, not willing to look weaker than those Monster Kings.

Lei Gu shouted angrily, “You think that’s enough to scare me!?”

Yang Kai replied lightly, “I’m not trying to scare you. I just wanted to let you know that we still have room for negotiation.”

“Negotiation? Negotiate what?” Lei Gu snorted. Even while he was speaking, he kept a firm grip on Gao Xue Ting, refusing to give anybody a chance at silently taking him down.

“You want to live, and I want that woman, so the solution is simple. I let you go, and you let go of her.”

Lei Gu sneered, “Let me leave first. Once I confirm my safety, I will let her return.”

Yang Kai laughed coldly, “Do you think that’s possible?”

Wen Zi Shan interjected in their conversation, “I will replace her. You can take me as your hostage instead. I will even allow you to pour your Demon Qi into me!”

Chapter 3266, Boundaries

Upon hearing those words, Lei Gu sneered, “Why should this King do something so unnecessary?”

Gao Xue Ting was the best hostage he could get his hands on, so there was no need to exchange her for Wen Zi Shan. Additionally, the risks would be too great. Putting aside the question of whether there would be any accidents in the process of the exchange, even imbuing Wen Zi Shan with Demon Qi was questionable as he was a Minor Realm stronger than Gao Xue Ting.

The fact that there weren’t any other Third-Order Emperor Realm Masters among the cultivators that had been corrupted by the Demon Qi was a testament to this reality. It wasn’t that Lei Gu and Feng Ming didn’t want to corrupt them, it was simply that it was too difficult to actually execute such a plan. That was why they settled for second best and focused on those in the First and Second-Order Emperor Realm first.

“What do you want then!?” Wen Zi Shan no longer had his usual free-spirited demeanour. His expression had never been this solemn before, “All I want is for her to be safe. Just tell me whatever conditions you have!”

Lei Gu snorted, “I told you. Let me go free. I will let her go once I reach a safe place.”

“That’s impossible!” Wen Zi Shan slowly shook his head, “There is no guarantee that you will do what you say. How can I trust you?”

Lei Gu answered in a calm and leisurely manner, “You can only take that gamble if you want her to be safe. At worst, this woman will simply lose her life.” He let the Demon Qi in his hand flow and Gao Xue Ting immediately groaned in pain.

“Stop!” Wen Zi Shan burst out, raising his hand to stop Lei Gu, his expression changing drastically at the same time.

Lei Gu was about to reply when Yang Kai interjected, “I can’t agree to your proposal, and you won’t agree to my proposal either. Fine then, let’s both compromise.”

Lei Gu shifted his gaze to look at Yang Kai, "Let's hear it."

Yang Kai put his hands behind his back, "I'll let you go, but I will be following behind you. When we reach a place you think is safe enough, you will hand Senior Sister Gao back to me. This is my final offer, if you still think that is unacceptable, then there's nothing else to talk about anymore."

Lei Gu didn't answer but his eyes flickered. Meanwhile, Wen Zi Shan felt as though his heart was about to burst from his chest. He secretly circulated his Emperor Qi and prepared to attack immediately if he noticed anything wrong. The situation in the mountain valley seemed to have frozen over. There was no sound and no movement. Time never seemed to have flowed so slowly before.

Yang Kai did not know how long had passed, but taking a deep breath, he said, "I guess that's a no."

While speaking, he raised his hand high and shouted, "Monster Kings, heed my command!"

Hong...? An overpowering Monster Qi erupted into the sky. At the same time, all thirty-two Monster Kings moved to surround both Lei Gu and Gao Xue Ting. All paths of retreat in every direction were blocked off. The eyes of every single Monster King were gleaming with bloodlust and eagerness filled their faces.

"I will count to three. If he still doesn't answer, then shred him to pieces!" Yang Kai stared at Lei Gu coldly. Raising a finger on the hand he was holding up as he shouted in a firm manner, "One!"

Wen Zi Shan's body tensed. Both his fists tightened and relaxed repeatedly in a never-ending cycle, feeling indescribably anxious.

"Two..." A second finger was raised.

Murderous intent flowed out from thirty-two Monster Kings and shrouded Lei Gu. The Monster Qi in each and every Monster King's body was bubbling with ferocity. They didn't care for Lei Gu or Gao Xue Ting as these two were both strangers to them. At this moment, they were only acting on Yang Kai's orders, and since he had commanded them to rip Lei Gu to pieces on the count of three, then that was what they were going to do. They couldn't care less about whether Gao Xue Ting would live or die.

Shrouded by the murderous intent from thirty-two different directions, the Demon Qi covering the surface of Lei Gu's body became agitated. Despite being in the Third-Order Emperor Realm, he would not survive an assault from thirty-two Monster Kings working together. He would only die a brutal death the moment the fight began.

He stared at Yang Kai deeply, trying to look into the depths of his soul. He was hoping to see even the slightest hint of hesitation or bluff, but he was disappointed to see that Yang Kai's expression remained undaunted. There was only a firm determination in those eyes, so just as the third finger was raised halfway, he finally succumbed, "Only you are allowed to follow."

"Agreed!" Yang Kai put down his hand and clasped it behind his back, looking as calm as could be. However, the people standing behind him could clearly see that his hand was slightly shaking. It was obvious that he was not as calm as he seemed on the surface. Thus, they couldn't help feeling some doubt. [If Lei Gu had not said anything, would Yang Kai really have allowed the thirty-two Monster Kings to charge in?]

“Make way!” Yang Kai waved his hand and the thirty-two Monster Kings surrounding Lei Gu immediately stepped aside to open up a path for him.

Fan Wu, Cang Gou, and Luan Feng couldn't help sighing when they saw this. [Those are the Monster Kings under our command. Since when has a Human ever been allowed to order them around? The worst part is that these useless guys are just obeying everything he says like it's natural! They don't even show the slightest bit of hesitation! How absolutely infuriating!]

“Please,” Yang Kai gestured with his hand.

Lei Gu said unhurriedly, “You better mean what you say. If I discover you leaving any traces behind for them to track us down, or if I notice any of their auras following us... You will bear the consequences of your actions!”

“Don't worry; just put your heart back into your belly,” Yang Kai laughed mockingly.

Lei Gu coldly snorted in response. Pushing his Demon Qi, he wrapped Gao Xue Ting in it before he rushed out along the gap in the encirclement. Yang Kai followed closely behind him at a leisurely pace.

In the blink of an eye, the two figures disappeared from everybody's sight.

Looking in the direction those two left, Wen Zi Shan became hesitant. He was worried about Yang Kai chasing after Lei Gu alone and wanted to secretly follow after them. Even so, what Lei Gu said before made him cautious about acting recklessly lest he brought harm to them. If he accidentally exposed his aura and Lei Gu noticed, Gao Xue Ting would surely lose her life. He could also track them from a distance, but he couldn't grasp their exact direction if they were too far away. Unfortunately, Yang Kai would probably have no chance to leave any clues behind.

Ma Qing sighed, patted Wen Zi Shan on the shoulder, and said, “Brother Wen, I'm sure that boy will do everything he can to definitely bring Elder Gao back since he was the one who came up with this proposal in the first place. You should just wait and see.”

After saying that, Ma Qing saw that Wen Zi Shan was not going to respond and could only walk back to the others. He glanced at his wife and disciples, and asked with concern, “Are you all alright?”

The group of disciples nodded their heads in response, while on the other hand, Madam Qi stared at him coldly. Her chilling stare drilled into him and made a sheen of cold sweat ooze out of his forehead. Parting his lips, he asked, “Darling, what's wrong?”

In response, Madam Qi flicked her sleeve, turned around, and walked away, speaking in a frosty voice, “When we get back, you will write a letter of divorce for me. Holy Master Ma, you have a great and righteous justice, I'm afraid a lowly woman like me might drag you down in the future. So, let us go our separate ways and never cross paths again, lest I spoil your reputation one day.”

Cold sweat poured down Ma Qing's forehead as he hurried to catch up with her, “Darling, why do you say something like this?”

He knew that the words he had spoken earlier to try and persuade Wen Zi Shan had greatly hurt his wife. [I was just saying that because of the situation. Why is she taking it so seriously?]

On the other side, Wen Zi Shan, who had been standing in silence for a long time, finally closed his eyes in pain. Despite hesitating for so long, he did not have the courage to chase after Yang Kai and Lei Gu and now, it was too late to do anything. He could only pin all his hopes on Yang Kai and pray that he could bring Gao Xue Ting back safely. It was just that the sliver of hope was too slim. Yang Kai's strength might be extraordinary, but Lei Gu was not weak. Lei Gu was a Third-Order Emperor and Gao Xue Ting, who had been demonified, was also under his control. He simply couldn't think of how Yang Kai had any means of getting Gao Xue Ting back safely.

Just as he was mulling over those thoughts, Wen Zi Shan sensed somebody walking over to his side and tugging at his sleeves. He opened his eyes and lowered his head to look, only to see a seven-or-eight-year-old little girl who was so delicate that she looked like she had been carved out of jade looking up at him with pure, clear eyes.

"You are..." He looked at her suspiciously. Even though she looked like a mere child, Wen Zi Shan did not dare to take her lightly. That was because he had seen this little girl in action just now. The aura coming from her was so dense that even he felt inferior to her. He did not understand why so many monsters had gathered around Yang Kai. Putting aside the ability to easily mobilize three Divine Spirits and thirty-two Monster Kings, even a little girl like this was extremely powerful. Not to mention, there was also that black puppy that could swallow Demon Qi. It was simply one weird thing after another.

"Do you want to follow them?" Liu Yan asked.

Wen Zi Shan's expression brightened, "Can you track their whereabouts?"

Liu Yan shook her head, "I can't."

Wen Zi Shan's eyes immediately dimmed again, but to his surprise, Liu Yan pointed to the side and continued, "But, he can!"

Looking in the direction she was pointing, he saw a Stone Man standing there quietly, grinning at him.

"Him?" He looked confused. This Stone Man seemed a little different from the other Stone Men, more agile and intelligent. When the Stone Man saw Wen Zi Shan looking at him, he beckoned, "Follow me!"

Then, he reached out and pointed at the three Divine Spirits, "The three of you come along too."

Fan Wu and the two others glanced at each other but did not question any further. They simply nodded in agreement. After that, the Embodiment turned to leave. Liu Yan quickly followed and Wen Zi Shan no longer hesitated, following closely behind her. Behind them came the three Divine Spirits.

They moved as swift as the wind, the mountains and rivers passing by below them. This group of people all belonged to the strongest cultivators in the Star Boundary, so their flying speed was naturally not slow. After flying for a while, Wen Zi Shan spoke up suspiciously, "Is this the direction they went?"

"Shh!" Liu Yan turned her head and shushed him, raising a finger and pressing it against her lips.

Wen Zi Shan felt his face twitching slightly, but did not dare to ask any more questions. He had no choice except to follow them sullenly, hoping that they were going in the right direction.

Throughout their journey, the Embodiment took the lead while the rest of them did their best to conceal their auras while following behind him. He took many twists and turns, as if there was no pattern to his

actions. Only Liu Yan and the Embodiment were unwavering in their faith while tracking Yang Kai down. Wen Zi Shan and the three Divine Spirits were completely clueless as to what was going on as they had neither sensed Yang Kai nor Lei Gu's aura during this pursuit. Hence, they had no way of telling if they were heading in the right direction.

What made Wen Zi Shan even more anxious was that Embodiment would sometimes remain in a certain spot for a time before moving again. During this period, there were no signs that the Embodiment was searching for anything at all. It was almost as though he had gotten tired and simply decided to take a break before flying off in a random direction.

Meanwhile, Yang Kai strolled leisurely through the air with his hands behind his back ten thousand kilometres away. He was following closely behind Lei Gu. In the beginning, Lei Gu had tried to throw Yang Kai off his tracks; however, he realized that this was impossible after a few attempts.

Chapter 3267, The Plot Is Revealed in the End

Yang Kai could not compare to Lei Gu based on speed of flight alone as there was still a difference in cultivation of a Minor Realm between them; however, Yang Kai had his Space Techniques and could literally leap across space with them. Despite how Lei Gu desperately tried to put some distance between them, Yang Kai would always catch up in an instant. There was no way he could get away from Yang Kai; thus, he stopped his worthless efforts after trying several times.

Even so, Lei Gu was cautious enough to keep changing directions during his flight, and he even deliberately circled a few times around certain areas to make sure nobody was tracking them from behind.

On the other hand, Yang Kai left Lei Gu to do as he pleased and did not say anything, he simply followed Lei Gu at a distance not too far away.

Unfortunately for Lei Gu, he probably never imagined that Yang Kai had something like his Embodiment. Yang Kai didn't even need to leave behind any clues as the connection between Soul and the Embodiment was the best guide that could ever exist. The Embodiment could sense his presence and vice versa from across vast distances, more than far enough for outsiders to never notice.

Lei Gu finally confirmed that there were no pursuers following behind them after two days. Then, he went all out and flew in a certain direction at full speed. He flew for another two more days before a wide swamp appeared in front of them. It was so vast that one could not see where the swamp ended.

[To think we ended up at the Southern Swamp.] Yang Kai did not know whether Lei Gu came here by accident or on purpose, but the Southern Swamp was where the first Demon Cave had appeared. Since Lei Gu came here, it was clearly not without reason. He either had other helpers hiding here and wanted to borrow their strength to deal with Yang Kai, or he wanted to use the topography here to conceal himself completely and escape. In either case, Yang Kai could not allow Lei Gu to proceed any further into the Southern Swamp; therefore, he moved to block Lei Gu's path before he truly entered.

Lei Gu's figure stopped abruptly, his large hand still pressed against the top of Gao Xue Ting's head as he coldly snorted, "What are you trying to do?"

Yang Kai sighed lightly, "I've allowed you to travel tens of thousands of kilometres already, it's time we put an end to this. I've fulfilled my end of our deal, now it's your turn."

Lei Gu calmly replied, "This is not enough!"

Yang Kai curled his lips, "You have been running for days and confirmed there are no pursuers other than me. Release Senior Sister Gao, and we can go our separate ways!"

Lei Gu scoffed, "I'll be the one to decide when I release her. It's not up to you to decide."

Yang Kai became impatient, "Are you saying I have to keep following you around so long as you refuse to release her? Lei Gu, don't go too far; otherwise, I might just doubt your sincerity. My patience is at its limit, if you refuse, then I can only make my move here and now."

Lei Gu frowned. Turning his head, he looked around and muttered, "Well, we're already here anyways, so I don't think anybody will be chasing after me anymore."

"Good, now return Senior Sister Gao to me." Yang Kai stretched out his hand.

Lei Gu grinned, "I can give her back to you, but can you receive her? I don't know where you get your confidence from, but it's two against one right now. Aren't you afraid this King might work together with your precious Senior Sister Gao to kill you?"

Yang Kai looked undisturbed, "You can go ahead and try!"

Lei Gu threw his head back and laughed at the sky, "Little brat, talent makes a person conceited. En, this King admires you very much. Why don't you join the Demon Race instead? With your talent and ability, you will surely have a bright future. Becoming a Great Emperor won't just be a faraway dream."

Yang Kai wore a look of frustration, "Stop wasting my time. Hurry up and release her! Don't force my hand!"

Lei Gu's smile disappeared as he coldly snorted, "Since you insist... Here! Take her!" Saying so, he reached out and gently pushed Gao Xue Ting on the back. Following that, she flew towards Yang Kai.

Gao Xue Ting arrived in front of Yang Kai in an instant; however, the Demon Qi on the surface of her body suddenly swelled like mad before he could catch her. An incredibly dangerous aura spread out from all over her body and she even spread her arms wide as if she was going to embrace him.

"Shameless!" Yang Kai yelled angrily. He knew Lei Gu would never release Gao Xue Ting so easily. Just as Lei Gu mentioned before, he could control her and use her to fight Yang Kai. Even so, Yang Kai never imagined that Lei Gu would command Gao Xue Ting to self-destruct. If he allowed her to self-destruct, then everything he did until now would have been for nothing. Moreover, it was impossible for him to come out unscathed at such a close distance. The power behind the self-destruction of a Second-Order Emperor Realm Master was absolutely terrifying. Following that, Lei Gu would be able to take the opportunity to kill.

Fortunately, Yang Kai had not come unprepared. At a fleeting moment of anger, Yang Kai's left eye transformed into a golden shaft of light. His Spiritual Energy surged outward like a tidal wave and enveloped Gao Xue Ting completely within it. At the same time, he spread his palms and summoned the Sealed World Bead which he gripped tightly. Controlling the Sealed World Bead, he opened an entrance and a huge vortex appeared in front of his palm.

Gao Xue Ting, whose body was churning with Demon Qi and who had fallen into a state of danger, plunged headfirst into the vortex as though she was swallowed up by an invisible beast and disappeared in the blink of an eye.

At the same time, Yang Kai sent his consciousness into the Sealed World Bead without pausing and urged the power of the Small Sealed World to suppress Gao Xue Ting, only feeling relieved when he saw the Demon Qi on the surface of her body showing signs of stabilizing.

A huge force struck Yang Kai's chest and abdomen with a loud bang at that moment and he felt an intense pain spreading across his body, causing his consciousness to abruptly return to the outside. Coughing up a mouthful of Golden Blood, Yang Kai's face paled and looked rather weak. Nevertheless, he took advantage of the impact to withdraw a few thousand metres, opening up some distance from his attacker.

A few thousand metres away, Lei Gu looked at Yang Kai in amazement. He was holding a ball hammer in his hands, and his eyes were filled with surprise. Gao Xue Ting had disappeared right under his nose, making him doubt his own eyes.

Using Gao Xue Ting's self-destruction to cause some damage to Yang Kai, then seizing the opportunity to take Yang Kai's life could be said to have been a foolproof plan unless Yang Kai kept his distance from her without regard for her life; however, Lei Gu saw that Yang Kai showed no signs of avoiding her. Instead, Gao Xue Ting abruptly disappeared just before self-destructing, causing Lei Gu's plans to go awry. Be that as it may, he reacted quickly and swiftly continued with the second part of the plan even though an unexpected accident had occurred. Taking advantage of the moment when Yang Kai was distracted, he struck him with his ball hammer.

Needless to say, Lei Gu had not held back with his attack, and it should have been absolutely impossible for a Second-Order Emperor Realm to survive such a blow. Yang Kai would definitely be smashed into pieces. Unfortunately, something even more unexpected occurred. Yang Kai didn't die. The sound of bones breaking rang out loudly, a large indentation appeared in his chest, and his aura weakened considerably. Nevertheless, he survived.

It was at this moment that Lei Gu realized he had underestimated the toughness of Yang Kai's physique. He had once seen Yang Kai in his Half-Dragon Form, so he immediately understood that he had underestimated the heritage of a Half-Dragon's Body. However, now that things had come to this, Lei Gu had no intention of backing down either. [How long can he last with such a heavily wounded body even if he has his Space Techniques? The reason the plan for the Southern Territory failed is all because of him! How can I let him go free? He must be killed, here and now!]

Their gazes met. Lei Gu's eyes were cold and stern, but also burned with murderous intent. On the other hand, Yang Kai's aura was weak and his complexion was pale. Even so, he was smirking. When he

grinned though, he accidentally moved in a way that aggravated his wounds; thus, he spewed out another mouthful of Golden Blood.

Lei Gu lifted his ball hammer and pointed at Yang Kai, "Little brat, you ruined this King's plans! For that reason, today will be the day you die!" As soon as the words left his mouth, the ball hammer turned into a stream of light and appeared above Yang Kai's head. Wrapped in a Heaven-destroying and Earth-shattering power, the hammer smashed down, shattering the surrounding space before it even landed.

Yang Kai took a deep breath and lifted his hand, summoning out the Mountains and Rivers Bell to block the ball hammer.

A loud clang rang out, followed by a shock wave visible to the naked eye that spread wildly, seemingly splitting the world into two like an invisible blade. The Mountains and Rivers Bell flashed wildly and was sent flying, but the ball hammer's attack was successfully blocked.

Unfortunately, Yang Kai couldn't withstand this impact in his injured state and his body began to fall, causing him to plunge into the muddy swamp waters. He was a complete mess, but he did not dare to remain in one place for long. Thus, he hurriedly rushed into the sky. Whilst collecting and stowing away the Mountains and Rivers Bell, he turned and fled in the direction he came from.

Even a tiger could be bullied by a dog if it leaves the mountains, and a Dragon may be teased by a shrimp if it finds itself in shallow waters. When the strong become weak, even the weak can take advantage and gain from it. At this moment, Yang Kai's heart was full of grief and anger.

If he had been at his peak, he would not have been afraid of Lei Gu even if the latter was a Third-Order Emperor. If he was lucky, he might even be able to kill Lei Gu; however, he was distracted for a moment when he had to suppress Gao Xue Ting and prevent her from self-destructing. During that moment, he was hit in the chest by Lei Gu's Emperor Artifact. His internal organs had all been shifted, and if not for his Half-Dragon Body being able to withstand the force of that blow, he would have been smashed to pieces already. Still, the injuries he sustained were rather serious. How could it be so easy to take the full-powered blow of an Emperor Artifact wielded by a Third-Order Emperor Realm Master? The flow of Emperor Qi in his body was unstable, and it was inconvenient for him to use his strength at the moment. Even if he used the Mountains and Rivers Bell to block his opponent's attack, it was only dragging out his final moments.

If he did not escape immediately, he would lose his chance to escape as soon as Lei Gu caught up to him. Yang Kai was feeling quite depressed at the moment, [If I had known this would happen earlier, I would have hidden Liu Yan in the Small Sealed World. Lei Gu would be a dead man walking with Liu Yan, that little killer, around. Now, I can only buy time until my reinforcements arrive. That will mark the end of Lei Gu. It's too bad I didn't have the chance to kill him myself, but for now, I can only keep him occupied.]

While flying, Yang Kai suddenly heard a loud noise coming from behind and felt a terrifying pressure descending from the sky. He looked up and had a sudden impulse to curse. Dense hammer shadows were falling down from above. It was clear that Lei Gu was truly incensed and had no plans of letting Yang Kai leave this place alive.

Yang Kai took a deep breath, enduring the pain all over his body and pushed his Space Principles. As the hammer shadows rained down from the sky, they smashed huge holes in the ground one after another. Simultaneously, Yang Kai was smashed to pieces. However, Lei Gu suddenly turned his gaze to the side and looked in a different direction.

Not too far away, Yang Kai's figure appeared out of nowhere. It was obvious he had used his teleportation Divine Ability to avoid receiving that fatal attack.

Lei Gu was so furious that he roared. He had long heard that those who were proficient in the Dao of Space were unparalleled when it came to escaping. At this moment, he realized that this reputation was well deserved. At the same time, he also inferred from the distance of the teleportation that Yang Kai was an arrow at the end of its flight. Yang Kai was incapable of using similar means of escape for more than a few more times; therefore, he immediately soared into the sky and chased Yang Kai like maggots on rotting bones, refusing to let Yang Kai escape. He Roared, "Little brat, where are you trying to run!?"

Rather than becoming angry, Yang Kai was happy when he heard those words. He had been a little worried that Lei Gu would not come after him. If that had happened instead, he would have needed to turn back to keep Lei Gu's attention on him. That would have been far too dangerous in his current state since he could not fight with his full strength.

Chapter 3268, Lured Into a Trap

[Fortunately, Lei Gu seems fixated on killing me. He has no intention of letting me escape, which honestly saves me some effort.] Yang Kai took some time to grab a handful of Spirit Pills and stuffed them into his mouth. Then, he cursed Lei Gu incoherently with his mouth full, "Are you sick in the head!? If you continue chasing me, I won't hold back anymore!"

Lei Gu sneered, "Little brat, today next year will be your death anniversary! Are you satisfied with the burial place I chose for you?" While speaking, the ball hammer in his hand turned into many streams of light and shot out.

Yang Kai could only dodge those attacks awkwardly as he had no way of retaliating whatsoever. Those attacks brushed past his body dangerously on several occasions, and he only managed to evade them by using his Space Divine Abilities. Any other person with such a heavily injured body would not have been able to escape from the fury of a Third-Order Emperor Realm Master. Nevertheless, it was a miserable and pathetic sight to watch, which put Lei Gu in a good mood.

Back at Orthodoxy Temple, Yang Kai had summoned hundreds of reinforcements to surround Lei Gu. Now the tables had turned, and Lei Gu could finally rub it in Yang Kai's face as to how unpredictable the future could be.

Still, he had to admit that Yang Kai's survival skills were first-class. His Space Divine Ability was unpredictable when used and truly made one envious. If not for the fact that Lei Gu knew not everybody could cultivate Space Principles, he might have spared Yang Kai's life in order to capture him alive and

thoroughly interrogate him about his specific cultivation methods. It was also precisely because of this that Lei Gu's determination to kill Yang Kai grew stronger and stronger. If he did not take the opportunity to kill Yang Kai now, he might not get another chance to do so again in the future.

Despite how long the cat-and-mouse chase had been going on, Yang Kai was still alive and kicking. The tenacity of his vitality was beyond imagination. Even so, Lei Gu could see that Yang Kai would cough up a mouthful of Golden Blood every time he used that instantaneous movement Secret Technique. It was too heavy a burden and Yang Kai was unable to withstand the cost for much longer.

"Little brat, this King can give you a painless death if you stop right now, but if you continue to run, this King will make you beg for death!" Lei Gu threatened while pursuing.

Yang Kai was so furious that smoke seemed to be coming out of his ears as he snapped back with a grievous look, "The world is vast, but if you don't run now, you won't get another chance to escape again! Did you really think I came here alone!?"

Upon hearing those words, Lei Gu looked shocked and involuntarily paused in the middle of controlling his Emperor Artifact. Nevertheless, he soon came back to his senses and roared in anger, "It doesn't matter how glib-tongued you are! Don't even think about escaping alive today!"

He believed that Yang Kai was merely bluffing. [I'm sure there were other pursuers behind us when we first left Orthodoxy Temple together, but it's impossible that anybody managed to track us after all the effort I put in these past few days to erase my tracks. Even if we had pursuers, they would long ago have been thrown off my trail. This boy is simply trying to scare me! It's obvious that he is a spent arrow that has reached the end of its flight!]

"Good, good, good! You don't seem to believe me! Well, just you wait and see!" Yang Kai pressed his hand against his chest. Feeling a strong wind coming from behind, he hurriedly manipulated the Space Principles to repeat his same old trick again; however, when he attempted to teleport, an intense pain spread from his chest and left him feeling breathless. Even the Emperor Qi circulation in his body became chaotic, and as a result, he couldn't use his Space Divine Ability.

This development shocked him greatly. His Embodiment had already laid out a trap with Liu Yan and the others up ahead and was waiting for him to lead Lei Gu into it, but if he was killed by Lei Gu in this place, all this effort would be in vain.

This was neither the first time Yang Kai suffered such severe injuries nor the first time he found himself in such a miserable state while being chased; however, this was his first time coming so close to death.

At the critical moment, he spun around abruptly and exhausted all his strength to slash the air with the Myriads Sword. All the colours in the world faded, and only the light of this sword remained. When the ball hammer smashed down, the sword wave collapsed and blood sprayed out. The sounds of bones breaking came from both Yang Kai's arms, and his entire body was thrown backwards like a sack.

Despite adding new injuries on top of his old injuries, Yang Kai made the most accurate response at the most critical moment and managed to save himself from certain death. Borrowing the force of the ball hammer's blow, he opened some distance between himself and Lei Gu. He then flicked his hand and brought out the two Wood Spirits from the Sealed World Bead.

It was obvious that Mu Zhu and Mu Lu did not understand what was going on and thus had blank looks on their faces when they appeared.

“Help me!” Yang Kai struggled to speak, a spurt of fresh blood coming from his mouth as he did.

Mu Zhu and Mu Lu were shocked by the sight but quickly turned to look at Lei Gu who was chasing them from behind. How could they not realize that Yang Kai was being hunted down after seeing all this? Glancing at each other, they did not hesitate to use a Secret Technique and their bodies suddenly dissipated into bits of light that gathered behind Yang Kai’s shoulder blades. A moment later, a set of delicate wings appeared behind him.

Whenever the Wood Spirits and the Stone Spirits fought together side by side, the Wood Spirits would use this method to assist the Stone Spirits, giving them the ability to fly, so this was not an unfamiliar tactic. With a flutter of those wings, Yang Kai shot forward with an incredible speed like an arrow shot from a string.

Lei Gu, who was chasing Yang Kai from behind, was startled at this sight and stared extremely suspiciously at the scene before him. [What was that? I was just about to kill him! How did he suddenly grow a pair of wings!? Preposterous! Worse, his speed increased dramatically now that he has that pair of wings!]

Furious, Lei Gu stowed away his ball hammer and pushed the Demon Qi in his body hard. It was unclear what Secret Technique he used, but he shot forward at a high speed in the next moment, stubbornly pursuing Yang Kai’s trail.

Mu Zhu and Mu Lu were clueless about the situation. All they knew was that Yang Kai was evading capture, so they used all their strength to fly. Unfortunately, Lei Gu was determined to kill Yang Kai, so how could they shake him off their trail? The distance between the two sides quickly narrowed, causing the two Wood Spirits to feel anxious. In response, the wings they transformed into flapped faster and faster.

Yang Kai weakly directed them towards a certain spot before closing his eyes to circulate his Secret Art and refine the medicinal efficacies of the Spirit Pills he swallowed a moment ago. A quarter of an hour passed as the cat-and-mouse chase continued. When they passed a valley surrounded by mountains though, Yang Kai suddenly opened his eyes.

Behind them, Lei Gu felt alarm bells ringing in his heart all of a sudden when he flew into the mountain valley. His entire body was practically screaming with a sense of extreme danger and crisis, which caused him to stop suddenly and look around with a vigilant expression.

A thousand meters away, Yang Kai also came to a halt and turned around, spat out a mouthful of blood, and stared at Lei Gu leisurely, “Go on; chase me! Why aren’t you chasing me anymore?”

A quarter-hour of recovery combined with his own powerful restorative abilities gave him some slight relief, and although he was still far from healed, he was not as weak as he had been before.

Lei Gu looked at Yang Kai coldly when he heard the words before hurriedly turning around to leave, but at that moment, a figure shot out from behind him. Fan Wu blocked Lei Gu’s path of retreat, standing there with his hands behind his back as he flatly declared, “This path is closed.”

Lei Gu's eyes narrowed.

Without breaking a stride, he swerved to the left only to have the same thing happen again. Another figure appeared in that direction. It was a woman dressed in white palace clothes.

Lei Gu looked to the right and similarly saw a man with a lean body and short stature appear as silently as a ghost.

His heart sank deep into the abyss at the sight of these three. He knew who they were as Yang Kai had specially introduced them to him a few days earlier. These three were all Divine Spirits.

[How is this possible!? They were waiting to ambush me here! Judging from Yang Kai's previous actions, I was truly foolish to allow him to lead me directly into a trap like this.] There was only one thing he couldn't understand. [How did they communicate with each other in secret? I didn't see Yang Kai taking out any communication artifacts nor did I detect any traces of Yang Kai leaving behind clues.]

[Three Divine Spirits...] Lei Gu couldn't even bring himself to smile bitterly. One Divine Spirit was already too much for him, much less three of them. At that moment, even his guts were filled with regret. [If I had known this was going to happen, I would have escaped directly into the Southern Swamp. Why would I have tried to hunt Yang Kai down? Now what? I fell headfirst into his trap and won't be able to escape anymore...]

Even at such a critical juncture where his life was at stake, Lei Gu remained decisive. There were Divine Spirits to his left, right, and behind him. All three of them were not opponents he could win against. Thus, he rushed forward as it was the only path he had left if he wanted to survive. Yang Kai in his current state was certainly no match for Lei Gu at all.

Yang Kai remained motionless as Lei Gu rushed at him aggressively; however, a sardonic smile lifted the corner of his lips.

Lei Gu immediately had a bad feeling as he realized that Yang Kai was hiding a trump card still, but he was an arrow released from its string already and could not stop anymore. The Demon Qi around him flared and transformed into a giant palm that tried to grab Yang Kai.

[As long as I capture this boy, I can make those three Divine Spirits hesitant to act. That way, I can do the same thing as before and get away from here safely.]

The giant Demon Qi palm swept through the air, but just as it was about to capture Yang Kai, a petite figure suddenly appeared from behind his back. That figure was a seven-or-eight-year-old girl that was beautiful and adorable. However, what the little girl did next scared Lei Gu so much that his soul nearly escaped from his body.

Opening her mouth, the little girl blew out a breath of raging flames that seemed capable of burning everything in the world to ashes. When the giant Demon Qi palm came into contact with those flames, it was reduced to cinders. That wasn't all; the flames turned into fire blades mid-air and struck Lei Gu.

An aura of death enveloped Lei Gu, and his expression changed drastically. Although he couldn't figure out what kind of fire this was, he knew that he could not afford to be touched by it.

Summoning out his ball hammer again, Lei Gu made it expand to the size of a house and used it to block above his head. The fire blades slashed against the ball hammer but failed to break through its defences. However, Lei Gu noticed that a small flame was still burning on the ball hammer when he withdrew his Emperor Artifact, and no matter how much energy he poured into it, he couldn't put out that fire. That fire continued to burn the ball hammer until it wildly flashed.

"I told you; I won't hold back anymore if you continue chasing me, but you refused to listen to *Cough, cough, cough...*" Yang Kai clutched at his chest as he choked. He wanted to taunt Lei Gu a little more, but unfortunately, his body refused to do what his head wanted, and he had no choice but to give up on that thought.

Lei Gu's face turned ashen. He, too, knew that there was no way he could escape from this place alive. The hatred in his heart was so strong that nothing could ever soothe it.

"Kill him!" Yang Kai waved his hand gently.

Four figures rushed towards Lei Gu from all sides, their thick murderous intent locking him in place.

Cornered, Lei Gu held up the ball hammer and roared, "The Demon Race shall never die!"

With that defiant shout, the Demon Qi in his body surged wildly and his body swelled up rapidly.

When Fan Wu and the others saw this, they all stopped in their tracks and hurriedly retreated.

Chapter 3269, Success

Following a loud explosion, Lei Gu exploded into a cloud of blood.

Fan Wu and the others were shocked and impressed by his resolve. Even if they knew they were bound to die, not many in this world would choose to self-destruct. If they had been in his shoes, they would surely choose to die fighting. Even if the final outcome was predetermined, who would know what the results might be if they didn't at least try to resist?

[Is the Demon Race so fanatical?] The three Divine Spirits shuddered at the thought. While they were caught up in their thoughts, Yang Kai suddenly flew down weakly and began searching among Lei Gu's remains.

Luan Feng frowned and landed lightly next to him, asking in a somewhat annoyed tone, "What are you looking for? Why aren't you healing your wounds?"

Yang Kai coughed lightly and explained, "As long as their Demon Heart remains, a Demon will not die!"

Back in the Thousand Illusions Dreamworld, Yang Kai had dealt with the Demon Race for years and understood just how tenacious the Demon Race's vitality was. Even if the body had been destroyed, they could revive again as long as their Demon Heart was not destroyed; therefore, one must completely destroy all Demon Hearts to really kill those from the Demon Race.

Although Lei Gu had resolutely chosen to self-destruct, Yang Kai still had to guard against him feigning death to escape. Fortunately, he did not find anything similar to a Demon Heart after searching around

for a while. It would seem that being possessed by a Demon Spirit was a little different from being born as a member of the Demon Race.

Nevertheless, he made Liu Yan burn down the entire area just to be safe. Only then did he let out a breath of relief. Even if Lei Gu planned to escape just now, there was no way he could revive again after being incinerated by Liu Yan's Phoenix Fire.

Then, the Embodiment and Wen Zi Shan came over from the sidelines. They had remained in hiding a little further away so that they could guard against Lei Gu's escape. Who could have known that they would have no chance to participate?

Nonetheless, it was only thanks to the connection between the Embodiment and Yang Kai that they managed to pull off this trap safely and catch Lei Gu off guard. If that were not the case, Yang Kai would not have agreed to follow Lei Gu alone so readily. The Embodiment had been his greatest trump card.

When the few people gathered, they didn't say much. Yang Kai was severely injured and required immediate treatment; however, he made a single statement to Wen Zi Shan before disappearing, "She's fine..."

Yang Kai immediately handed the Sealed World Bead to Liu Yan for safekeeping before entering the Small Sealed World to heal his injuries. The existence of the Sealed World Bead was his biggest secret and trump card, but there was not as much of a need to deliberately keep it secret anymore as he had grown stronger. Besides, Fan Wu and the others would not publicize this matter, so it wasn't a big deal if the secret of the Sealed World Bead was exposed to them. Likewise, Wen Zi Shan was someone he could trust.

Wen Zi Shan wanted to ask Yang Kai more about Gao Xue Ting, but he couldn't find the opportunity to do so. Before he could ask anything, Yang Kai had already disappeared into the strange bead. Such an item must be one of Yang Kai's cards and Wen Zi Shan was tactful enough to not pry further. Nonetheless, he knew that answers would have to wait.

Unfortunately, he could not simply just stand around waiting. He was still a Sect Master and had duties to perform, especially during such a crisis. What's more, he was not the only one eager to go back.

The thirty-two Monster Kings were still back at Orthodoxy Temple, and who knows what sort of trouble they would have caused by now? One should not be fooled by their appearances. Although they acted docile in front of Yang Kai, each one of them was truly an unruly individual; therefore, nobody wanted to stay here for too long.

It was then that the Embodiment spoke up. He told Wen Zi Shan to head back first while the rest would stay and check the area to make certain that Lei Gu was truly dead.

Inside the Sealed World Bead, Yang Kai appeared in the medicine garden and sat cross-legged before the Immortal Tree while Mu Zhu and Mu Lu used their Secret Technique to guide its essence to treat his injuries.

He had used the Immortal Tree to treat his injuries many times before, but he mostly consumed the leaves directly. There were not many leaves on the Immortal Tree in the first place, so it was almost bald after it was plucked over the years by him. He didn't dare to touch the rest of its leaves for fear that he

might damage the foundation of the Immortal Tree. Fortunately, the Wood Spirit Clan's mysterious methods could pull the vitality from the Immortal Tree and pour it into his body without harming the Immortal Tree.

Supplemented by his strong physique and powerful restoration ability, Yang Kai was almost fully recovered within three days and felt delighted by the speed of recovery. Without the assistance of the two Wood Spirits, it would have taken him at least a month to recover from the injuries he sustained this time.

In his joy, he generously praised Mu Zhu and Mu Lu for their magical methods. He complimented them so much that the two Wood Spirits were blushing furiously and feeling extremely shy.

After he recovered, he finally had the time to deal with Gao Xue Ting. Gao Xue Ting had been infected by Demon Qi and both her body and mind had been demonified. Afterwards, she was controlled by Lei Gu and nearly self-destructed. It was only thanks to Yang Kai pulling her into the Small Sealed World and suppressing her in time that she managed to survive.

With a flicker, Yang Kai came to the area where a number of houses remained. Gao Xue Ting was currently being suppressed in one of these huts. Pushing open the door and entering, Yang Kai was slightly taken aback because she suddenly turned to look at him with a pair of pitch-black eyes when she noticed somebody approaching her. Then, she made a strange sound from her throat and looked at him with a hideous expression as if she wanted to eat his flesh and drink his blood.

That change in her behaviour made him frown. Based on his previous observations, the Demons in Orthodoxy Temple were divided into two types. One was like Lei Gu and Feng Ming who were possessed by Demon Spirits. These Demons were complete Demons and possessed sentience. They were also fully dedicated to the Demon Race.

The other type was those like Gao Xue Ting and the others from the Southern Territory that had been infected by Demon Qi and underwent Demon Transformation. They did not have the ability to act and think independently and needed to be controlled by the former type of Demon.

Now, however, Gao Xue Ting was clearly showing some signs of independent thought. However, that was not her own consciousness. Judging from that hideous expression, it was a reaction formed after she was demonified.

Yang Kai walked over to her and looked at her with a complicated expression. He called out to her a few times in a soft voice, but she did not react at all. She only continued to growl and struggle against her restraints. If not for the fact that her cultivation had been suppressed, she might have already lunged at him.

It made Yang Kai wonder whether the rest of the Demons with no consciousness would also become like this, acting based on their instincts, if enough time had passed after they were demonified. If that was the case, then the situation at Orthodoxy Temple might be a little tricky.

No longer hesitating, Yang Kai's aura changed abruptly. It became ancient and desolate, almost as if he had walked out of a scroll depicting the primordial world. He formed a seal with his hands and began chanting at the same time. Following that, a ray of light penetrated Gao Xue Ting's body. It was the

Bloodlust Spell, one of the most commonly used Shamanic Spells and a method proven to be very effective at resisting Demon Qi corruption.

Red light shone brightly in an instant as the Blood Essence in Gao Xue Ting's body was stimulated. She looked like she was covered in a layer of red light, and a tinge of pain flashed across her face. Concurrently, the boundless black Qi oozing out from the surface of her body intertwined with the red light as both tried to destroy each other.

Then, Yang Kai began chanting the Demon Exorcism Spell. A cold light descended from the sky, cleansing both Gao Xue Ting's body and her mind. A hissing sound rang out as wisps of black smoke escaped from her body as if it had met its natural enemy, soon dissipating into nothing.

Yang Kai stood in front of Gao Xue Ting with a solemn expression, impatiently casting the Demon Exorcism Spell. As time passed, the Demon Qi flowing out of her body became less and less dense and the black and red light that had been flickering unsteadily began to show signs that the red light was taking dominance.

Finally, the blackness in her eyes faded away and she blinked blankly as her vision focused. Soon after, Gao Xue Ting saw Yang Kai standing in front of her with a smile, a peculiar ancient aura lingering around his figure.

"Junior Brother..." Gao Xue Ting called out softly, seemingly extremely weak.

"Senior Sister Gao, you're awake!" Yang Kai secretly breathed a sigh of relief. After such a long delay, he had been worried that she could no longer be saved. Fortunately, the Ancient Shamanic Spells seemed to still be quite effective against Demon Qi so his efforts had not been in vain.

"Why are you..." Gao Xue Ting was still feeling very confused about her situation. She only knew that her entire body was very weak at the moment. Moreover, traces of an unsettling power remained in her meridians and her body.

"Senior Sister, do you remember what happened?" he asked while looking at her.

"What happened..." She frowned, her thoughts a confused mess.

"At Orthodoxy Temple during the Southern Territory Martial Gathering!" He reminded her.

Gao Xue Ting was jerked awake when she heard those words and her pupils contracted as she anxiously said, "There's a conspiracy going on at Orthodoxy Temple! Junior Brother, hurry up and warn the Temple Master!"

Yang Kai hurriedly comforted her, "Senior Sister Gao, calm down. The conspiracy at Orthodoxy Temple has been thwarted. Lei Gu and Feng Ming have also been brought to justice."

"Lei Gu and Feng Ming are dead?" Her expression changed before quickly asking, "What were they planning?"

Yang Kai countered her question with another question, "How much do you remember, Senior Sister?"

She shook her head slowly, "I'm not sure. That night, Junior Brother Luo and I received an invitation from Elder Feng... Feng Ming to visit his residence to discuss our cultivation experiences. More than twenty others were there with us, but after drinking something, we all fell asleep and couldn't wake up."

Yang Kai nodded lightly. Whatever it was that demonified Gao Xue Ting and the others should have been in that drink. He had previously wondered how a group of Emperor Realm Masters could fall to the Demon Transformation so easily. As long as one of them noticed a hint of something strange, they only needed to push their Emperor Qi to defend themselves. That should have allowed them to fight back to some extent. In the worst case, they could still have raised a fuss and alerted others.

It now appeared that Feng Ming had used a method similar to poisoning to inject Gao Xue Ting and the others with Demon Qi from the inside. There was no way they could have defended against that and probably never would have imagined that Feng Ming would do something like this. After all, they had all known each other for many years, making it easy for Feng Ming to deceive them and get them to lower their defences.

"Where is Junior Brother Luo?" she asked.

"I don't know," Yang Kai shook his head. He had not seen Luo Chen since that night at the mountain peak ambush and only knew he too had been demonified.

"And where is this place?"

Yang Kai smiled, "It's a Sealed World. Senior Sister Gao, please rest peacefully. We will arrive back at Orthodoxy Temple soon." After saying that, he took out a bottle of Emperor Grade recovery pills and placed it next to her. She had been corrupted by Demon Qi, which damaged her foundation, and she nearly self-destructed under Lei Gu's command. Although Yang Kai had forcibly suppressed this self-destruct, Gao Xue Ting would still have suffered some damage.

She did not act reserved around him, picked up the jade bottle, took out a Spirit Pill, and stuffed it into her mouth. While refining the medicinal efficacies of the pill, she asked, "What exactly happened?"

"It's a long story," Yang Kai sighed. Sitting cross-legged opposite her, he briefly recounted everything that happened over the last few days. Her expression changed constantly as she listened as she never imagined that the Southern Territory Martial Gathering would be involved in such a terrifying conspiracy.

Yang Kai's tone was calm and collected, but nevertheless, Gao Xue Ting realized that if he had not come along on this trip and mysteriously rallied a large number of reinforcements from the Northern and Eastern Territories, the Southern Territory would have been finished. If Orthodoxy Temple's conspiracy had succeeded, there would have been hundreds of Emperor Realm Masters and tens of thousands of elite who experienced demonification who would then scatter throughout the Southern Territory. In time, the entire Southern Territory would have been turned into a Demon Paradise.

Then, Embodiment sneaked over from the side. He had remained in hiding a little further away so that he could guard against Lei Gu's escape. Who could have known that he would have no chance to shine? Still, it was only thanks to the connection between him and Yang Kai that they managed to pull off this trap safely and catch Lei Gu off guard. If that were not the case, Yang Kai would not have agreed to follow Lei Gu alone so readily. Embodiment had been his greatest trump card.

When the few people gathered together, they didn't say much. Yang Kai was severely injured and required immediate treatment. They also still had to clean up the mess back at Orthodoxy Temple. The 32 Monster Kings were still at that place. Who knows what sort of trouble they caused by now? One should not be fooled by their appearances. Although they acted docile in front of Yang Kai, each one of them was truly an unruly individual. Therefore, nobody wanted to stay here for long and immediately returned in the direction they came.

Meanwhile, Yang Kai handed the Sealed World Bead to Liu Yan for safekeeping before hiding in the Small Sealed World to heal his injuries. The existence of the Sealed World Bead was his biggest secret and trump card, but it was no longer a need to deliberately keep it secret anymore as he grew stronger and stronger over time. Besides, Fan Wu and the others would not publicize this matter, so it wasn't a big deal if the secret of the Sealed World Bead was exposed to them.

There was no need to explain as Liu Yan and the others travelled back to Orthodoxy Temple. On the other hand, Yang Kai came to the medicine garden and sat cross-legged under the Immortal Tree while Mu Zhu and Mu Lu used their Secret Technique to guide the essence of the Immortal Tree to treat his injuries.

Chapter 3270, Does It Hurt

Orthodoxy Temple was one of the top three Sects in the Southern Territory, but it was now a chaotic mess. There were broken ruins everywhere and traces of the great battle from before were clearly visible.

The remaining cultivators camped separately on the numerous mountain peaks in the area. All their faces were filled with a lingering sense of fear. They couldn't help shuddering slightly whenever they recalled the experience they went through over the past few days.

On the other hand, the people from the Northern Territory tirelessly went around to check on some of the Emperor Realm Masters of the Southern Territory. The thirty-two Monster Kings from the Ancient Wild Lands occupied an entire Spirit Peak alone. They had managed to procure a lot of food and wine from somewhere and they were celebrating merrily, having the time of their lives. Their celebrative atmosphere formed a stark contrast with the gloom and depression among those from the Southern Territory. To those of the Monster Race, the life and death of these Humans were none of their concern. They would never have intervened in the affairs of the Southern Territory if they had not followed Yang Kai here.

Meanwhile, the people of the Southern Territory were glad that the current situation between the Humans and the Monster Kings was only as such. It was no lie to say that each and every one of those Monster Kings was not to be trifled with. Moreover, most of the Monster Race had innately violent personalities. Conflicts might arise if they were to co-mingle with the Humans, and there was nobody here that could stop them if it came to that; thus, nobody objected to their actions; they could drink and have fun all they want if that was what they wanted to do.

A few days passed just like that. Murong Xiao Xiao quietly floated in mid-air and monitored the surroundings for any commotion. All of a sudden, her expression became stern as she carefully studied something that appeared on the horizon. A moment later, she happily shouted downward, "They're back!"

Shua...

Wen Zi Shan's figure suddenly appeared beside her. He looked nervously in that direction and saw several figures rushing towards them at a high speed. Yang Kai was in the lead, followed by the seven-or-eight-year-old little girl, then the three great Divine Spirits of the Eastern Territory, and... no one else. Seeing this, Wen Zi Shan's complexion suddenly became as pale as could be, and his fists clenched tightly together.

Similarly, Murong Xiao Xiao seemed to have realized something and her pretty face changed slightly, her eyes reddening.

"Temple Master!" Yang Kai flew over to Wen Zi Shan and cupped his fists. He then noticed that Wen Zi Shan and Murong Xiao Xiao's expressions were a little off, so he couldn't help feeling worried for a moment, "What's wrong?"

Wen Zi Shan hesitated a moment before speaking up, "You've worked hard." He then opened his mouth again as if he had a question he wanted to ask but didn't dare to, lest he heard an answer he did not want to hear.

Murong Xiao Xiao asked the question on his behalf in a choked-up voice, "Where is Senior Sister Gao?"

Only then did Yang Kai understand why these two had such solemn expressions. It turned out to be related to Gao Xue Ting's safety. His expression became serious, and he said in a low voice, "Senior Sister Gao, she..."

Upon hearing those words, Murong Xiao Xiao promptly covered her mouth with her hands as large, pea-like tears slid down her cheeks as she broke down in tears.

Yang Kai instantly felt speechless. [I haven't even finished talking. Why are you crying? I already told him before that she is fine... He should have shared this piece of information with you. Why are you immediately assuming the worst?]

Turning to glance at Wen Zi Shan, he discovered that Wen Zi Shan had an extremely mournful expression that looked more sorrowful than death itself, he even swayed unsteadily on his feet as though he would collapse at any time.

"Senior Sister Gao was injured, but it's nothing too serious." Yang Kai finally finished his sentence. At the same time, he stretched out his hand to summon Gao Xue Ting from the Small Sealed World.

Gao Xue Ting looked a little confused, suddenly being brought to a new place, but she quickly pushed her Emperor Qi to steady herself. Lifting her head to look around, she asked curiously, "Junior Sister, what happened to you?"

Murong Xiao Xiao's tears were still flowing down her face, but her eyes widened and she looked at Gao Xue Ting stupidly for a moment before she burst into laughter and called out softly, "Senior Sister Gao!"

Gao Xue Ting nodded lightly before looking at Wen Zi Shan and furrowed her brow slightly, "And what's wrong with you?"

Wen Zi Shan gulped with some difficulty and walked over to her slowly, looking as if he couldn't believe his eyes. He finally came to a standstill when he stood in front of her, then he reached out a hand to stroke her face.

A blush instantly crept onto Gao Xue Ting's face as she leaned back slightly and bit her red lips lightly, "What are you doing?"

"Don't move!" Wen Zi Shan shouted, causing her body to stiffen as she obediently stayed still and allowed that large hand to press against half of her face. A slight tremor came from that hand, making her feel confused, but when she realized that he was tremendously worried about her safety, a shy expression immediately appeared in her eyes. Even so, her heart felt incredibly warm.

[How many years has it been since he last looked so worried? The last time was probably during that incident when I was just a child where I snuck out to play and nearly got myself eaten by a Monster Beast...] Lost in her memories, Gao Xue Ting felt like time had reversed for a moment as bits and pieces of memories of their time together over hundreds of years flashed through her mind.

In the next moment, he pinched her cheek hard as though he wanted to pull her flesh off and with widened eyes he asked anxiously, "Does it hurt?"

Yang Kai, who had been watching the show from the side with great relish, palmed his forehead and couldn't bear to look straight at them anymore.

The blush receded from Gao Xue Ting's face and an icy cold light flashed from her eyes. Her leg came out from under her skirt and swiftly kicked Wen Zi Shan in the stomach, sending him flying with a loud bam. Her expression remained frosty as she coldly snorted, "Does it hurt?"

Wen Zi Shan doubled over in pain, his hand clutching at his abdomen. Even so, he was smiling happily, "It hurts! It hurts! It hurts to death!"

"What is wrong with you!?" She rubbed at her cheek and turned to look at Murong Xiao Xiao, "I'm fine. I'm sorry for worrying you."

Murong Xiao Xiao nodded repeatedly and vigorously like a chicken pecking at rice. A moment later, her expression darkened again, "Senior Brother Luo, he... he fell."

Yang Kai's expression shifted slightly, "Senior Brother Luo died?"

Murong Xiao Xiao nodded, tears flowing down her cheeks again. Although Yang Kai had suspected as much, he still couldn't help feeling a little forlorn when he heard the news. He and Luo Chen had not interacted much, but they were both from Azure Sun Temple after all. It was only natural to feel a little saddened by this news.

"What about Xiao Bai?" Yang Kai asked. Although he was sure that what he 'killed' before was just an illusion, he didn't know the specific details about how Xiao Bai Yi was faring.

Murong Xiao Xiao replied, "Senior Brother Xiao was slightly injured, but it's nothing serious."

At that moment, Wen Zi Shan regained his usual composure and sighed softly, "The Southern Territory... Has suffered heavy losses in this incident."

Yang Kai raised his gaze and looked at the people down below. Sweeping the surroundings with his Divine Sense, he got a vague grasp of the current situation. Great losses were certainly suffered. Approximately a third of the several hundred Emperor Realm Masters had lost their lives. Similarly, about half of the tens of thousands of elite disciples were dead too. The Southern Territory would need at least five hundred years to recover from such a catastrophe.

"What's the situation over there?" He suddenly pointed his finger at the mountain valley where the Martial Gathering was held and was currently wrapped in countless layers of vines. At a glance, the entire mountain valley looked like a ball made out of vines. Furthermore, a dreadful and terrifying pitch-black Demon Qi continued to churn within, even dyeing some of the vines black.

Hundreds of petite Wood Spirits were surrounding the mountain valley and seemed to be continuously using Secret Techniques while under the protection of the Stone Spirits.

Wen Zi Shan explained, "It's the doing of the Wood Spirits you brought with you. They seem to have a way to suppress the Demon Qi, so we placed all those that were demonified there." After saying that, he sighed, "But, that's not a solution. What they are doing doesn't solve the root of the problem. Those people will be completely corrupted by Demon Qi, sooner or later, and when that happens... There's nothing we can do for them anymore."

"I'll go and take a look," Yang Kai said before rushing in that direction.

Ma Qing and Xiao Yu Yang were guarding this area as well. Nobody knew how effective the Wood Spirits' methods were, so if those demonified cultivators went wild and began acting violent, somebody would need to be around to subdue them.

Those two had naturally noticed Yang Kai's return a long time ago, but they had a duty to fulfil; hence, they could not go over to ask about the situation. When Ma Qing saw Yang Kai coming over, he anxiously asked, "Is he really dead?"

"Lei Gu is definitely dead."

Both Ma Qing and Xiao Yu Yang's expressions brightened hearing those words and they both nodded, "Good!"

Who knows what would happen in the future if Lei Gu was allowed to escape? Since Lei Gu had been brought to justice, then this matter was more or less settled. The only issue left to deal with were these demonified cultivators. They were rather troubled by this issue. There were many such cultivators here, at least ten thousand of them. It was one thing to kill them off in battle; however, they had captured these tens of thousands of Demons that they could neither kill nor release. It was extremely troubling, to say the least. Besides, practically every Sect had disciples among these ten thousand. Who could harden their hearts and slaughter every one of them? While they were borrowing the power of the Wood Spirits to suppress the Demon Qi with mysterious methods, it was only a temporary solution rather than a permanent cure.

Xiao Yu Yang thoughtfully asked, "Elder Yang, do you have a way to awaken the consciousness of these Demons?" He had seen that Gao Xue Ting had returned safely and soundly, which served as the basis for his conjecture. Gao Xue Ting had previously been demonified, and yet she currently looked no different from normal. That could only mean that the Demon Qi in her body had been purged somehow. The only ones who could do something so mysterious were either Yang Kai or the three Divine Spirits. Having seen what Yang Kai was capable of, Xiao Yu Yang had higher expectations of him than the three Divine Spirits.

"I'll try," Yang Kai nodded. He would have done the same even without Xiao Yu Yang saying anything. Turning to look at Mu Na, who was standing not too far away, Yang Kai called out, "Matriarch, please withdraw your Secret Technique."

Mu Na nodded when she heard those words before coordinating with the other Wood Spirits. The vines that were wrapping around the mountain valley soon retracted and revealed the situation inside.

Ten thousand Demons stood there motionlessly as Yang Kai studied them for a moment. [If my guess is right... Not enough time has passed since they were demonified, so they don't have the ability to act independently for the time being. They can't move unless they are being controlled by a Demon Spirit. Good, that will make things a bit easier for me.]

With a slight shift of his body, Yang Kai stood in the sky above the centre of the mountain valley. He gave a wave of his hand and brought out several Demons in the Emperor Realm who had been suppressed in the Small Sealed World all this time. These Demons were the ones who attacked him on top of the mountain previously and subsequently got knocked out, captured, and suppressed inside the Small Sealed World by him. Now that he was about to exorcise the Demon Qi, it was only natural to bring them out so that he could treat them too.

When all the preparations were complete, Yang Kai took a light breath and simultaneously closed his eyes. In front of everyone's fixed gazes, his eyes jerked open and the aura around his body underwent an unbelievable change, becoming extremely ancient and desolate.

Xiao Yu Yang and Ma Qing both watched in amazement. Exchanging a glance, the two of them could both see the other was completely at a loss about what technique could be so peculiar.

When a difficult-sounding chant rang out, Yang Kai slowly lowered his fingers and pointed. A faint light bloomed at the tip of his fingers and a circle of light suddenly fluctuated and spread out, sweeping across the bodies of the ten thousand cultivators below.