

## Necropolis 851

### Chapter 851: Hero's Barrow

Lu Yun plucked the little fox off his head while Bai Zhaoju looked dumbly at the furry creature.

"It speaks? It's not actually that troublemaker, is... she?" He'd find it absolutely ludicrous if so.

"Do you know what's guarding this place?" Lu Yun had long picked up on its presence, but he hadn't been able to place the relationship between the guardian and tomb owner.

"Yinglong! Taiyi's empress." The little fox burrowed back into Lu Yun's clothes and left only her face exposed to the air. She said carefully, "This mountain is formed from her corpse!"

"Yinglong... Taiyi's empress?" Lu Yun blinked and he thought for a moment. "If that's the case, that's just as well. We'll head on in."

The little fox immediately ducked into his robes.

"She's that Tushan troublemaker alright," grumbled Bai Zhaoju. "Rumors have it that that bad news of a woman has been heavily injured and fallen into mundanity from being a peak chaos realm expert. But Qingqiu Mountain is too close to Mount Buzhou—with Fuzhou there, no one dares verify all the hearsay. To think those rumors would be true!"

The little fox spoke no more.

"Are there a lot of chaos realm cultivators around?" Lu Yun asked curiously.

"Connate demon gods are born as chaos realm powerhouses! There's also connate masters of combat arts who don't need to cultivate. They are born with a grasp of the heavenly dao and dominance over all life." Bai Zhaoju thought a bit further; he wasn't revealing any big secrets, so he could go on. "Children of connate great gods are born a bit weaker as empyrean cultivators, but that also makes them great masters of combat arts."

"Once the children of connate demon gods procreate, their children are born as divine kings, so on and so forth until their bloodline is so diluted they're born as ordinary beings. These offspring aren't even initiates into the connate great dao, so the label 'connate' can no longer be applied to them."

"Though these latter-day beings are also descendants of connate demon gods, the blood is so watered down that it's almost nonexistent. Some of the most tyrannical connate demon gods don't even acknowledge them... mm, us." Bai Zhaoju changed the reference after a moment of thought.

He, too, was one of the later descendants that he was talking about. He hadn't been born with a cultivation realm, and his current level of strength was a result of his own efforts.

"In the eyes of many of those demon gods, though we are their descendants, we're no better than food for the partaking whenever they wish. Of course, there are still a few who acknowledge us no matter what, and in turn we revere them as connate great gods," Bai Zhaoju sighed.

“But there are still a few races with extremely domineering bloodlines that are born into the connate great dao or the true divinity realm. Some are even stronger than that. The Bi Fang we met before, for instance, are born into true divinity.

“However, most of those races aren’t suitable to cultivate, so they remain in the same cultivation realm for their entire lives. It’s actually lowborn beings like us who can steadily improve from the cultivation methods we learn from the tribute spirits. Bad News Tushan is a classic example, and she’s one of the few descendants who reached chaos realm.”

Lu Yun finally had a more thorough view of the great wilderness, and the little fox leaned halfway out of his robes to wave her fists at Bai Zhaoju to express great dissatisfaction.

Lu Yun stuffed her back in.

.....

The entrance to the great tomb was beneath the mountain; Lu Yun didn’t have to expend too much energy to find it.

Yinglong was a connate great god and occupied the center point of the five directions. As the priest of earth in the five elements, she was a goddess of earth. Taiyi was one of the sky, so a marriage between heaven and earth made them quite the perfect match.

However, Yinglong could also create rivers by simply drawing a line in the ground, so somewhere along the line in the future, she was mistaken to be a goddess of water.

Now that she’d died, the great mountain over her body had been formed by the power of earth to protect her.

Tomb of the Great Yi!

Five bloody characters were carved into the enormous tombstone stuck into the mountain. The Great Yi was Hou Yi, another connate great god and once a protector of the Dongyi in the plains, so that they wouldn’t be preyed upon by the demon gods. Lu Yun had never thought he’d find this tomb here.

“Someone created this tombstone!” Lu Yun’s eyes darted around rapidly. “It doesn’t seem to have formed naturally, someone crafted it at a later date and combined it with the grand influence over heaven and earth... this is a hero’s barrow!

“Hou Yi’s body isn’t here, it should be his ultimate treasure that’s buried here!” Shock jolted his gaze.

“Hou Yi... the Great Yi is dead and left without even a body?”

He stared fixedly at the tombstone looming increasingly larger in his vision. There seemed to be a hint of demonic nature to it!

“A hero’s barrow shouldn’t be a place of danger, there’s something wrong with this tomb!”

“Shh, don’t say it out loud,” a soft voice suddenly rang by his ears.

The little fox in his arms had disappeared, as had Bai Zhaoju by his side. Small ripples oscillated through the air in front of him as a middle-aged woman in white court attire slowly paced out of the void.

A benevolent air exuded from her, as comforting and refreshing as the spring breeze. However, Lu Yun still sensed the thick presence of death from her.

“Taiyi’s empress, Yinglong?” he asked subconsciously as he looked at the woman.

“Don’t talk, you’re too weak to avoid the eyes and ears of the realm monsters,” the woman murmured to herself without answering.

“Realm monsters!” Lu Yun snapped his mouth shut without another word.

Realm monsters were an extraordinarily terrifying existence—monsters formed by the resentment of dead worlds. Even Ashu paled in fright when he heard their name.

“I can sense a trace of my daughters’ presence on you, but they haven’t been born yet... So it looks like the four celestial masters succeeded in going to the future and bringing you here.” Yinglong was exceedingly beautiful and in fact looked like a young lady, but her looks were offset by a mature charm. Her voice was soft and ethereal, and she was currently in human form.

Well, that was because Lu Yun was human, so he perceived her as human. If it’d been the little fox looking at Yinglong, then she’d be a fox.

“These are my daughters with Taiyi—Eternal and Arbiter.” Yinglong waved two eggs into Lu Yun’s hands.

“I’d like to ask you a favor. Can you send Arbiter to Mount Buzhou? She can draw on the mountain’s strength and inherit my power to become the goddess of earth.

“Send Eternal to the boundless Blood Sea of the netherdark, where she can absorb the sea’s strength and be the future guardian of the kingdom of hell.

“Nod if you accept, shake your head if you decline.” Pleading colored her gaze, which was replaced by delight when Lu Yun nodded. “I humbly thank my little friend.”

Yinglong curtsied to Lu Yun. “Great Yi’s body is no more and Taiyi’s corpse is beneath this great tomb. He can be found in the depths of the cosmos, sealing off the gap in chaos and preventing realm monsters from attacking.

“Dead spirits abound in the skies above... if my friend wishes to reach the skies through Yi’s tomb, please accept this star map.”

Yinglong sent a circle of light into Lu Yun’s consciousness.

## **Chapter 852: Suncrow**

“What’s with you?” Bai Zhaoju waved his hand in front of Lu Yun’s face, pulling him out of his reverie.

“What happened just now?” Lu Yun turned to Bai Zhaoju, confused. He couldn’t tell if it’d all been an illusion.

When he tried to recall the interaction that’d just taken place moments ago, he found himself unable to remember what Yinglong looked like. Even the faint memory of her figure was slowly fading away.

Deep within his mind, though, was a star map marked with regions of safety and danger in the cosmos... as well as some forbidden grounds that he should avoid. Lu Yun pinpointed the greatest danger on the map... There lay an enormous body—not that of Taiyi, but of Xing Chen.

“It was all real.” Lu Yun looked down at the little fox, who’d popped out of his arms to meet his eyes. She was holding two eggs about the same size as her, painting a comical scene. “These are the children of Yinglong and Taiyi. Why would they be entrusted to you?!”

“Wait, don’t say anything out loud,” the little fox continued softly in Lu Yun’s consciousness. “The karmic repercussions are too great for them. Other connate gods would use these children’s bodies to be born into this world. Don’t put anything into the spoken word, and don’t reveal their existence!”

The Bell of Chaos dangling before her chest emitted a faint haze as it collected the two eggs. Hailed as the top connate-grade treasure, the Bell of Chaos contained countless worlds within it. The little fox thrust the two eggs into a world located in the deepest part of the bell.

Lu Yun breathed out a sigh of relief. By now, Yinglong had completely faded out from his memory, along with what she’d said to him. All he knew was that he must take the two eggs to where they should be, and...

“Realm monsters!” He remembered the beings that Ashu viewed as nightmares. “It wasn’t the little fox who caused Yi and Taiyi’s death, but the realm monsters.”

The little fox nodded seriously.

“What are the two of you talking about?” Bai Zhaoju cast Lu Yun and the little fox a confused look.

“It’s unspeakable and undefinable.” Lu Yun shook his head. “Let’s enter the tomb!”

Realization of a sort dawned on Bai Zhaoju, and he nodded in understanding.

Gone was the giant tombstone. In its place was a great archaic door, which creaked open on its own before they approached, revealing a long, winding stairway that led underground.

Lu Yun took a deep breath and walked up to the stairs, Bai Zhaoju followed close behind him.

Whoosh!

Whoosh!

Whoosh!

The door behind them disappeared as soon as Lu Yun and Bai Zhaoju set foot on the stairs. Crimson flames bloomed one after another to illuminate their way. Lifelike paintings adorned the walls above the railings; Lu Yun and Bai Zhaoju found themselves instantly captivated.

“It’s Taiyi and Yi.” The little fox gazed at the figures on the walls with misty blue eyes, her expression mournful.

“They didn’t die because of No-Good Tushan?” Bai Zhaoju’s eyes shot open as he scanned the contents of the murals, his tone making clear his shock. “What are those things? How... the great god Kuafu wasn’t killed by the nine suncrows, but those things??”

The little fox nodded gently.

“White Emperor... Where would you say the netherdark is?” Lu Yun muttered, his eyes glued to the paintings.

“Netherdark?” Bai Zhaoju frowned. “It’s under Mount Buzhou. Above the mountain are the nine heavens, and underneath can be found the netherdark. Why do you ask?”

“Mount Buzhou?” Lu Yun nodded. “It’s said that there’s another world below the earth, so I was curious, nothing more.”

Falling silent, he shifted his attention to the paintings on each side of the stairway. They depicted an earth-shattering war, featuring many figures he’d only heard about in legends and myths.

“The suncrows were corrupted by those things, which was why the Great Yi killed them...” Bai Zhaoju sucked in a breath, visibly shocked.

According to the legends of the great wilderness, the catalyst for a great war hundreds of thousands of years ago was nine suncrows killing the great god Kuafu as he pursued the sun. As a result, the Great Yi shot down the nine in a fit of fury. That in turn gave rise to celestial emperor Taiyi’s wrath and he led hundreds of millions of soldiers down to Suncrows Plain, battling Yi to the death.

In the end, Taiyi won a pyrrhic victory and the Yi Clan was slaughtered. However, what the murals depicted was a completely different story.

Hundreds of thousands of years wasn’t that long a period of time in the great wilderness. Many powerful beings counted their closed door cultivation at million year increments. Thus, many still remembered the ins and outs of the great war.

“This... what these say can’t be true,” Bai Zhaoju protested weakly.

“The powerhouses of the great wilderness must give this tomb a wide berth because they know the truth differs from mainstream knowledge. They don’t want to risk their lives in coming here.” Lu Yun muttered to himself instead of answering Bai Zhaoju. “Luo Houluo must also know about the true history of the world, which explains his careful behavior.”

He couldn’t think of anything other than the realm monsters that could instill such fear in Luo Houluo.

Bai Zhaoju shut his mouth. The human youth was right. There were many things in the world that were considered distant secrets by the latecomers, but were nothing to the connate demon gods.

The demon gods dictated what the living knew. If they wanted to change history or hide something from the world, then the world’s denizens had no choice but to be obediently ignorant. If they said the great battle of Suncrows Plain had been between Taiyi and the Great Yi, then of course it had been, and not one with these strange monsters recorded by the murals.

The little fox also nodded in grave agreement.

Lu Yun and Bai Zhaoju followed the stairway downward for quite some distance before they finally reached its end. There, a palm-sized bird enveloped by flames hovered quietly.

It looked like a crow on fire, but under its belly were three thin legs... a suncrow.

However, it was dead and completely devoid of any life energy. It appeared to be nothing but a ball of crow-shaped flame.

It was a suncrow spirit, a living soul that Taiyi had awakened from the Fusang Purewood with his own blood. It carried his bloodline, making it one of the princes of the celestial court.

According to the murals, however, the three-footed suncrow had been corrupted by the realm monsters and ultimately slain by Yi.

"You mustn't go." The suncrow spirit looked up at Lu Yun with dim eyes. "The cosmos has become the territory of the realm monsters. You will die if you enter."

1. Kuafu is a giant in Chinese mythology who wished to capture the sun.

### **Chapter 853: Erased Memories**

"The cosmos is the world of the realm monsters?" Lu Yun frowned slightly. "There's a star map in my consciousness, but no realm monsters are labeled on it."

Many hotspots of danger and safe zones were marked on the map, and there were even details of what exactly could be found in each area. The only thing that was missing was any mention of realm monsters.

"A star map?! You've seen mother??" A faint light flashed through the suncrow's dim eyes. "Since mother's given the map to you, that means you have the strength to enter the cosmos. You may pass."

The figure that was the suncrow's body slowly faded away.

Lu Yun heaved a long sigh of relief while Bai Zhaoju cast him a surprised glance. He hadn't thought that Lu Yun would've made the acquaintance of Taiyi's empress!

Lu Yun paused at the end of the passage without immediately pressing forward.

"White Emperor, I remember that when I first met you, you told me that the great monster beneath the earth is Yi's body. But upon coming here, we've discovered that Yi's corpse actually doesn't exist anymore. So... what is that thing then?"

He'd previously tried to travel through the earth to avoid a flock of Bi Fang, but had been startled out of that plan by a shocking entity below ground. Bai Zhaoju had told him that it was the Great Yi's corpse.

Bai Zhaoju started when he heard the question. "But, isn't it the great god's corpse? What we learn in the great wilderness is that the Great Yi's resentment didn't disperse upon his death, so his corpse turned into a zombie spirit and stands at attention beneath the ground, ready to do battle with Taiyi at any moment..."

He cut himself off, reminded of the murals that they'd just viewed. Taiyi and the Great Yi had jointly defended the world against the realm monsters, and those monsters were the real culprits responsible for Yi's death. Therefore, that proved the great wilderness legends false.

"If it's... not the Great Yi's body, then what is it?" Bai Zhaoju looked lost.

“Yeah, what is it then?” Lu Yun frowned. “What’s the entity fighting Luo Houluo now? It’s definitely not a ghost formed of resentment...”

He’d deduced that what lay beyond the stairs wasn’t the cosmos, but the hero’s barrow of the Great Yi. His treasured bow was likely to be found there as well.

But now, Lu Yun hesitated.

If all of Suncrows Plain was a tomb, then what he’d seen below the earth was very likely in the tomb ahead of them. He and Bai Zhaoju wouldn’t be its match at all. The suncrow spirit they’d seen just now was a dead entity as well. There was just the tiniest bit of sentience left to it; it didn’t possess the ability to think anymore.

Tinkle.

A clear, pleasing jingle rang out from Lu Yun’s robes as the little fox shot to his head.

“I know who he is, we can go in. He won’t hurt us.” The Bell of Chaos glowed around her neck.

“Who?” Bai Zhaoju asked subconsciously.

“It should be the first connate god who died in Suncrows Plain,” the little fox responded softly.

“Kuafu?” Bai Zhaoju blinked.

The little fox nodded. That war had had enormous ramifications and dragged in a dozen connate demon gods. Kuafu had been the first casualty.

.....

Lu Yun was right, the end of the stairs wasn’t marked by the cosmos, but by the main chamber of Yi’s tomb—a magnificent underground palace.

The art of burial was currently in its most primitive state. Absent were the frills and extravagances of tomb passageways and burial chambers. For the dead, there was only one enormous underground palace that couldn’t be measured. Four enormous pillars supported it, and they were respectively carved with the images of the Azure Dragon, White Tiger, Vermilion Bird, and Black Tortoise. It was a formation of the four divisions.

“Those four great ones have come before?” Bai Zhaoju’s expression changed drastically when he saw the four pillars supporting the palace.

Azure Dragon, White Tiger, Vermilion Bird, and Black Tortoise were four connate divine beasts and gods on par with Taiyi and Leizhe. They were assigned to the four cardinal directions and wielded the rules of the four directions.

“While I don’t know if these four heavyweights ever paid a visit... I know for certain that Fuxi must have! No one in the great wilderness can set up this formation other than Fuxi!”

The formation in front of them was a connate formation, but one that showed clear signs of being shaped by another hand. With Fuxi’s strength and cultivation level, he absolutely had the ability to do so.

Bai Zhaoju didn't understand formations, so he naturally couldn't identify what the four pillars symbolized.

"The formation of the four divisions is an enormous seal that's blocking the opening that leads to the stars." Lu Yun glanced at the enormous sarcophagus in the middle of the palace. What lay buried within it wasn't Yi's body, or his bow, but the fissure that led to the cosmos.

He could sense the presence of the stars here.

"I've come here before, but I erased that part of my memories," he suddenly said with a frown. He was trying very hard to recall something, anything, but only managed a vague impression. "Duh, this matches up! How could an explosion from a small ruin separate me and Xing Chen, and also gravely injure my primary body?"

Lu Yun finally put all the pieces together. He and Luo Houluo probably arrived in the great wilderness perfectly healthy and intact. They successfully made it to this tomb, but as for what happened after... he'd forgotten everything. And judging from Luo Houluo's earlier behavior, he'd erased that part of his memories too.

However, there was something else that called to him from the tomb of the Great Yi and likewise, Xing Chen called out to Lu Yun.

"Xing Chen walked into the cosmos from here and took the bow with him." Though Lu Yun had destroyed that memory, he could still speculate what had taken place here from a few traces and clues. "Ah, then Xing Chen probably destroyed this part of Luo Houluo's memories as well."

A smirk tugged at his lips while curiosity blossomed in his heart. What had it been to make him choose to destroy his memories and willingly send Xing Chen into the cosmos?

However, his mind was so resolute that he knew very well what he needed to do, despite erasing part of his memories. He needed to find Xing Chen so he could have the ability to go toe-to-toe with the Luo Houluo of this era and take the Constellation Willow from him.

"Shouldn't be realm monsters..." Lu Yun looked back at Bai Zhaoju. "Shall we go in, White Emperor?"

Bai Zhaoju nodded. He needed Taiyi's true feather to do something, so he wouldn't shrink back no matter how dangerous the road ahead.

"This is a formation I set up last time I was here. Heh, looks like I knew I'd be coming back here someday." Lu Yun grinned as he looked at a tiny formation rune carved into the side of the sarcophagus. This was his style alright, he'd always leave a contingency plan for himself.

"Don't move!" The little fox suddenly tugged at his clothes and pointed a furry paw at the firmament of the palace.

Lu Yun raised his head subconsciously, then shuddered violently.

## **Chapter 854: Kuafu's Head**



Suspended from the ceiling of the palace, an enormous head silently regarded them with a pair of blood-red eyes. It was so big that it resembled a small mountain, and it was scarlet red to match its eyes. A slight hint of malice could be found within them.

“That’s Kuafu’s head!” Bai Zhaoju shrieked.

Though he was less than a hundred years old, he hailed from the Jin Clan of the west. The clan counted a connate great god among its members, and his own status was very high among his kin. That meant he was acquainted with the images of all sorts of moguls and titans of the great wilderness.

As Kuafu was a connate god of the great wilderness, Bai Zhaoju was naturally familiar with his appearance. Kuafu had been the first god to die in the battle of Suncrows Plain, and his head was hung in Great Yi’s tomb! He hadn’t been buried in a final resting place, but was dangling here in a manner that was almost sheer humiliation!

Bai Zhaoju found this too incredible to believe. Connate great gods, even those who’d died, should be shown respect and not have their heads displayed as a trophy in someone else’s tomb.

“Why would Fuxi do this??” he cried out incredulously. Since Lie Shan had mentioned all of this was the holy emperor’s doing, that was where his thoughts immediately jumped to.

“Not Fuxi.” Lu Yun shook his head and smiled at Kuafu. “Luo Houluo, so you couldn’t resist in the end.”

Kuafu’s eyes bulged from his sockets from the force of his glare. Though this was his head, someone else’s soul resided in it at the moment.

Luo Houluo.

Bai Zhaoju looked askance at Lie Shan.

“I think... I probably put his head here as a trap for Luo Houluo.” Lu Yun thought for a moment, his tone low. “There was already nothing left of Kuafu then.”

Of one thing he was certain of, and that was Luo Houluo of the future was much more terrifying than Luo Houluo of the present.

The Luo Houluo of this era was just a chaos realm demon god under the primitive great dao. But in the future, he would absorb the immortal dao at some point along the way and create blood demons, setting foot on a more horrifying path of demonic dao. Even his disciple cowered in fear of him, or would it be better described as shuddered in downright terror?

Kuafu’s soul fragment had likewise discovered the terrors of the demon god and thought up a plot with Lu Yun. He’d sacrificed himself to seal Luo Houluo in his own head.

Though Lu Yun had destroyed the relevant portion of his memories, certain instincts yet remained in his heart. He also had formula dao to call upon, so he could absolutely theorize what course of action he’d taken after he’d arrived here.

Blinking, Bai Zhaoju realized in this moment that this peak golden core human might not be as simple as he seemed.

“Let’s go, Luo Houluo won’t be getting out so long as this tomb stands.” Lu Yun pointed at the four pillars. “He’ll have to destroy this formation first if he wants to destroy the tomb, hah!”

He activated the formation rune on the sarcophagus as he spoke and summoned a small door made of light. He stepped right through it, Bai Zhaoju hot on his heels.

Above them, a strange light flashed through Luo Houluo’s eyes.

“Destroy the formation? If I was still an idiot life form of this era, of course I wouldn’t be able to do so. But, I have come back from the future, kyahahaha!!” he brayed with laughter.

.....

“Why did you let the demon know how to escape?” Bai Zhaoju asked in surprise as he quickly caught up to Lu Yun.

“Luo Houluo’s soul is incomplete, so he’s just an idiot for now, pure and simple. It’ll be his execution date the second he dares touch that formation,” Lu Yun replied absentmindedly as he scanned the surroundings.

A great expanse of gray earth was to be found beneath their feet, one pitted by meteorites of varying sizes. Lu Yun turned back to see a vividly blue planet enter his field of vision.

Bai Zhaoju had no response to that. The kid just shoved Luo Houluo head first into another trap! He subconsciously shuffled step to the side, adamantly maintaining what he thought was a safe distance from the human youth.

“Is that... Earth? But it’s so many times bigger than its future self.” Bafflement flashed through Lu Yun’s eyes. He was certain that this blue pearl of a planet was Earth, but it was much bigger than it should be. He and Bai Zhaoju should be standing on the moon, or the Taiyin Star as the people here called it. “The sun and the moon are also bigger than they should be in the future,” he murmured to himself.

“What are you talking about, the future?” Bai Zhaoju blinked.

Lu Yun nodded and sat down cross-legged, closing his eyes to call upon formula dao. He could now sense his replica after setting foot into the cosmos, and he would be able to recall Xing Chen with just a thought.

However, Lu Yun didn’t dare do anything when success was so close at hand. He’d been the one to send Xing Chen into the stars, so bad things might happen if he haphazardly recalled his replica like this.

The star beneath their feet was the Taiyin Star, a source of utmost yin energy. This was why it’d connected to Yi’s tomb in Suncrows Plain and become a door to the cosmos.

Fuxi was likely behind this as well.

The sun and moon stood side by side in space, creating an enormous forcefield that enveloped all of the constellations as seen in the great wilderness. This was a naturally occurring seal that didn’t need any protection. And since the Taiyin Star was one with the great wilderness, there was air and living beings here too as well, just not that many.

"Realm monsters alright!" Lu Yun's eyes shot open and he took a deep breath, an unpleasant expression settling on his face. "I know where Taiyi's body is, but it's keeping powerful realm monsters at bay. Are you sure you're willing to venture there?"

"What the heck are you talking about? If even a puny golden core cultivator like you dares to go there, what would a mighty celestial divinity like me have to fear?" Bai Zhaoju puffed his chest out and raked a glance over Lie Shan.

"Umm... I'm not going to the same place as you." Lu Yun rubbed his nose and pointed at his comrade, copying the star map that Yinglong had given him and sending it to Bai Zhaoju's mind.

The man froze, then went slack-jawed with astonishment.

"A star map, this is a star map!" He jumped into the air. "Only the celestial court would have this, so why would you... Oh, right. You met Yinglong, she gave this to you!"

"Shh." Lu Yun placed his finger to his lips and Bai Zhaoju hastily clapped both hands over his mouth.

This was the Taiyin Star, the dao arena of a connate demon god. Though she wouldn't care about two ants, her disciples wouldn't share the same indifference.

"I can evade the dangers in the cosmos thanks to this star map and find Taiyi's body all the faster!" Delight flashed across Bai Zhaoju's face. As for whether or not he'd be able to obtain the true feather he sought, he wasn't worried about that at all. He had his methods and would be able to find it as long as he was close to Taiyi's corpse.

"Remember to erase it from your mind after you come back, or you'll attract fatal danger!" Lu Yun reminded seriously.

Bai Zhaoju nodded, raised a cupped fist salute to Lu Yun, then transformed into a thin line of sword light before vanishing among the stars.

Lu Yun didn't move a muscle. He turned around and looked behind him.

1. That's right, he doesn't know that Lu Yun is from the future.

## **Chapter 855: Changxi, Diexi**

A faint figure flew out of the horizon and instantly appeared before Lu Yun.

"You've come back," sounded a light, ethereal voice.

Summoned by the voice, the little fox burrowed out of Lu Yun's robes and looked a bit confusedly at the person in front of them... at this very good looking woman... Her eyes grew bigger and bigger before she finally sank back in.

"I..." Lu Yun opened his mouth and made abortive attempts to speak. He settled for staring wordlessly at the woman's face.

"Do you think I look a lot like someone?" She wore a layer of white silk that floated around her like moonlight, teasingly obscuring the shapely curves of her body. Exceedingly beautiful, she was as gentle as a ray of soft moonlight.

Lu Yun nodded. "But I don't believe that you also traveled to the future and became her."

"Indeed I didn't. I have always been me, the me you see now." The woman nodded. "However, Ah Zhi told me what my fate is to be... You told me too, the last time you were here."

Lu Yun fell silent. He'd guessed who this person was. Changxi, the connate demon god of the Taiyin Star.

Residing on the Taiyin Star, Changxi rarely set foot in the great wilderness. However, many were those who knew that there was such a lady ruling over the Taiyin Star.

"I've erased my memories of this place," Lu Yun said gravely.

"Mm, I guessed you would do so." Changxi nodded and waved a flying sword that resembled a butterfly into her hand. "This is Diexi. You may use it for now as you have no suitable treasure to call your own."

A violent tremor ran through Lu Yun's body.

Diexi!

Indeed, the Changxi before him, or rather her body, would be the Diexi of the future!

He didn't know what he'd shared with the lady of the Taiyin Star last time he visited, but his heart still churned with pain when he saw the shortsword called Diexi. Sometime in the future, Changxi would become a zombie and return to yang as a zombie king. Would she actually be Diexi's spirit then, or the shortsword's spirit, or still possess her own spirit?

Diexi had already arrived at the World Gates before he traveled to the great wilderness. She'd shouldered the duties of protecting them, along with Yueshen, Ruyi, and Violetgrave.

"My deepest thanks!" Lu Yun raised a cupped fist salute to Changxi.

"What for? You will save my life in the future." Changxi smiled. "I am here on Leizhe's orders to stand guard over Taiyin Star. I cannot leave, so I can't help you this time."

"That's no matter." Lu Yun waved a hand. "I can handle my own matters. I'll be taking my leave then."

Changxi nodded and slowly faded away. The shortsword known as Diexi transformed into several butterflies that flitted around Lu Yun's body and brought him into the cosmos. So it turned out that Diexi was a connate treasure that was extraordinarily powerful! That made sense, as she'd slain Zhao Qing with one blow sometime in the future.

.....

The void of stars was boundless and the celestial bodies radiant. Lu Yun followed the star map to where his replica was located. However, space was so limitless and incalculable that it'd take him tens of thousands of years at his current pace.

Granted, he wasn't in a hurry. Escorted by the Diexi shortsword, Lu Yun took in the sights as he strolled along the cosmos.

"I wonder what method Bai Zhaoju is using to get to Taiyi's corpse... It's at the center of space and much further away compared to my replica. Wait... these stars don't seem like stars either." He suddenly halted mid-stride.

He was very far away from the planet that was the great wilderness and had penetrated deep into space, but he could still glimpse where he'd come from when he turned back, despite being hundreds of millions of kilometers away. Being Changxi's treasure, Diexi was imbued with her strength and moved at a very fast speed.

He fixed his eyes on a big celestial body in front of him. Yellowish-brown, it appeared the same as its fellows hanging in space, but he adroitly captured some differences with this one.

"This is... a corpse!" Shock flashed through his eyes. "A master expert of combat arts died among the stars and turned into one of them upon death!"

He quickly scanned the premises. There were countless stars like this one in this patch of space alone! Terror jolted his gaze.

What the great wilderness hailed as great masters of combat arts were empyrean realm cultivators, and at least great emperors in his time! Only these kinds of experts grasped a great dao of their own and possessed the right to have their corpses become a star.

"This cosmos... is it one of stars, or a graveyard? These experts wouldn't have ferried their own corpses into space, so the only possible explanation is that a terrible war once ravaged the void, one so ferocious that countless masters perished." Lu Yun's heart skipped a beat. "Does this have something to do with me erasing my memories?"

He shook his head fiercely. The closest sun to him was also formed out of the corpse of a great master, and he was certain that this master had reached the chaos realm when alive.

There were countless suns like that one floating in space.

Lu Yun swallowed hard and took out the golden spirit pearl, placing it on top of his head so that its curtains of blinding radiance would cascade protectively around him.

"Is the night sky of the future also like this?" he murmured to himself.

"It is. The skies of the future world are also comprised of an endless tide of bodies." A voice suddenly popped out of the pearl—Fuxi.

"So you did come with me." A look of expected confirmation appeared over Lu Yun's face.

"I wouldn't have been able to enter the cosmos if I didn't go with you." Fuxi's body materialized inside the pearl and he stretched, taking the shape of a formation, one that looked like a snake's body with a human head.

Fuxi was born an empyrean cultivator, but his skills of comprehension were exceedingly strong. He'd observed the movements of the celestial bodies, trajectory of the sun and moon, and cycles of the lakes and mountains to grasp his own methods and break through to the chaos realm.

It was just that he usually presented the side of a good-for-nothing to the world, so there were very few who knew of his real strength. The demon god that'd visited Mount Buzhou to make trouble for him last time had been smacked to death the second he learned of Fuxi's true strength.

"You set up Great Yi's tomb and the formation of the four directions. But you find it difficult to enter space?" Lu Yun was taken aback. "Great Yi's tomb isn't the only way into the stars, is it..."

Fuxi shook his head. "There are indeed more ways than one, but the safest and most reliable method is through the tomb. The great wilderness has been sealed off and the connate demon gods have surrendered to the realm monsters to become their tools. They are now cancerous tumors preying on the great wilderness, and they must be excised."

Lu Yun shuddered despite himself. Excise connate demon gods?

He was rather dumbfounded by this crazy notion.

### **Chapter 856: Black Hole**

"Yes, I am indeed talking about eliminating the connate demon gods." Fuxi sighed, holding Lu Yun's gaze. "And I know I've already succeeded."

That gave Lu Yun pause. He was reminded of the human dao era, when great emperors ruled the world. Although there'd been those who exceeded the great emperor realm then, their numbers were very limited. In comparison, the great wilderness today saw a great abundance of chaos realm powerhouses.

"Those bodies... are they your handiwork?" Lu Yun pointed at the stars in the cosmos.

"They were generals and soldiers of the celestial court who served Taiyi," Fuxi relayed with an almost melancholic air. "Taiyi established his court not to conquer this realm and its various living souls, but to protect the world.

"He recruited countless powerful beings both within and without the great wilderness to build an army. They went after the realm monsters in space and waged a terrible war. These stars are the great beings who died in those battles.

"There are exceedingly few real stars in the cosmos. The four symbols and twenty-eight mansions revolve around the great wilderness, as well as the three hundred and sixty-five stars in the multiverse, along with the Taiyin and Sun Stars."

Lu Yun stared at space in disbelief. Most of the twinkling stars he saw from the ground were transformed from the dead experts of this world... Just how many of them were there?!

"How... how many such great beings are there in the great wilderness?" he asked despite his hesitation.

"Many." Fuxi looked up at the stars. "Upon the genesis of this world, there were as many connate demon gods as there are currently living souls in the great wilderness. Over the past hundreds of millions of years, countless powerful beings have been born in this world, and just as many of them have passed away.

"This is all because of the realm monsters.

"But the connate demon gods of today have thrown themselves under the realm monsters' banner, becoming fiends who wreak havoc all over the realm for them. This is why the demon gods must be excised!" Hatred blazed in Fuxi's eyes and twisted his face.

"If not for them, the Great Pangu wouldn't have perished and my parents wouldn't have suffered their great injuries! Taiyi would be alive, and God wouldn't have been forced to sacrifice his life for an intangible future he can neither see nor touch!

"The realm monsters must be eliminated, but so must the connate demon gods!"

Lu Yun nodded in agreement, doubting not a single word of what Fuxi said. The fact that Great Yi's tomb had transformed into a hero's barrow under the influence of connate feng shui layouts, signaling a great sacrifice for all life, was telling enough.

"Well then, there's something I must do," Fuxi said while looking at Lu Yun's eyes, carefully enunciating his next words. "If I fail to return, you will be the ruler of Mount Buzhou and the emperor of the human race."

"What are you going to do?" Lu Yun's heart sank, it didn't bode well that Fuxi would entrust such a mantle to him.

"I go to fulfill my duty, of course." Fuxi smiled. "Worry not, I will be fine. I won't die before the connate demon gods have been erased from this world.

"Remember what I told you and become the emperor of the human race. I believe you already knew which emperor I mean."

"Wait!" Lu Yun stopped Fuxi mid-departure. "How do I return to my time?"

"You will naturally return after a hundred years." With that, he disappeared.

Only then did the little fox pop out of Lu Yun's robes and clutched at his collar. "You have to take me with you when you go back, I don't want to be left in this era!"

"Don't worry, we came together, so we'll go back together." Lu Yun petted her little head. She narrowed her eyes in satisfaction and burrowed herself back into his arms.

"Oh, one more thing." She popped out again. "I forgot to tell you something important. Your primary body mustn't ascend to the true divine realm under the great connate dao. Otherwise, it'll be difficult for you to meld back into the immortal dao after you return."

"Huh?" Lu Yun started.

"The immortal dao! Im-mor-tal dao!" the little fox warned gravely. "Although it's a dao for all living beings, it is a creation of the human race. The radical for the character for immortality means 'human'!"

"Why... didn't Fuxi tell me this?" Lu Yun asked, dumbfounded.

"Because he doesn't know either." The little fox curled her lip. "Though my bloodline is so diluted that I was born a regular nine-tailed fox, I made my way step by step to the chaos realm. Of course I know more about cultivation than he does."

Lu Yun nodded, hurriedly forcing down his agitating cultivation realm.

“And you?” he asked. “Why did you ascend back to the true divine realm yourself?”

“I was born under the great connate dao. Moreover, I’ve gone to the future and cultivated under the immortal dao. With both daos combined, the restriction doesn’t apply to me. Most importantly, I’m not human,” she continued gravely, “you’re different. You’re a human born under the immortal dao with its roots inside your body. Once you ascend to the true divine realm, your immortal roots will recede and become the foundation for the great connate dao. Then you’ll be ostracized by the immortal dao after you return.”

Lu Yun nodded.

“A hundred years... I only have a hundred years. I can’t go at a leisurely pace any longer then.” He descended from space and landed on one of the stars transformed from beings of great power. “Guard me, little fox. I’m going to locate my replica now.” He hauled the little fox out and gave her the Diexi shortsword and golden spirit pearl.

“No need, I have the Bell of Chaos!” The little fox puffed out her chest to show him the little bell.

“The Bell of Chaos? Are you trying to announce to the world that you’re what, Bad-News Tushan?” Lu Yun shot her a glare. “The pearl contains a strand of Fuxi’s nascent spirit, which will allow you to deploy it freely. Diexi belongs to Changxi. The two treasures will allow you to defeat most empyrean realm elites who come, so use those!”

The little fox awkwardly accepted the two peerless treasures. With a flash of dreamlike light, an unusually handsome young man emerged before Lu Yun. The little fox had transformed into the male form she’d assumed when they first met.

Lu Yun sat down with his legs crossed, establishing a connection to his replica.

.....

Deep within space, a young man dressed in a long black robe suddenly opened his eyes, staring deep into an enormous black hole: Xing Chen. The confusion that muddled his gaze was gradually replaced by the light of clarity.

“So I’ve been suppressing the black hole here!” He rose to his feet, staring pensively at the giant black hole.

“It’s a celestial body as well, and a star loftier than the sun... Was this someone’s corpse as well? Perhaps a creator?” Awe flashed through Xing Chen’s eyes and his brows furrowed when he recalled what Fuxi had once said. “According to Fuxi, there have only ever been two creators in the history of the great wilderness: Pangu and God. So whose body could the black hole be?”

“...yin spirits?” Expression abruptly tightening, Lu Yun extended a hand to release a giant flash of sword energy, aiming at the black hole in front of him.

## **Chapter 857: A Soybean in a Dream**

Hummmmm.



An enormous flash of sword light streaked through the void and cut down a yin spirit ferreting out of the black hole. Strength at peak empyrean realm deployed perfectly in this moment, shaking the celestial bodies in space.

The gravity from the black hole was so tremendous that even light couldn't escape from it, but that was nothing for an expert on Xing Chen's level.

"The things in the black hole are yin spirits alright." Xing Chen's eyes darted around and widened in realization. "Ah, yes. During my second visit to Yi's tomb, Yinglong told me that the cosmos is filled with yin spirits. It looks like I collected all of them the first time around and shoved them into this black hole.

"Then that means I didn't catch her eye the first time I entered the tomb, and she doesn't know what's recently taken place in space."

Lu Yun had been worrying that something bad might happen as a result of him recalling his replica, but now it seemed that his worries were extraneous.

"I'm guessing that my primary body was severely injured at the time and unable to hold off the yin spirits. That's why I had Xing Chen keep things under control here so that I could retreat with ease."

Picking up on what clues remained in the area, Lu Yun deduced what had happened on his first visit.

"I'm not the only one who came by, Changxi paid a visit as well. ...and the goddess who lives in the sun! That's strange, both of them are connate great gods and chaos realm powerhouses. Why did they need rescuing, how was I the one who pulled it off, and why did I reveal my primary body just like that?"

Lu Yun rubbed the back of his head and reached out with both hands. Beams of iridescent starlight burst forth from his body and blasted into the black hole. Devastating ripples traveled back out while the yin spirits inside were churned to pieces.

He then looked back at where his primary body was situated in space and vanished on the spot.

Three breaths after Lu Yun vanished, the black hole shuddered slightly, like it was an enormous face coming to life. Crimson eyes opened to look in the direction where Lu Yun had gone.

.....

"You're back!" The little fox flashed back to her original form upon seeing Xing Chen and darted into his arms.

Lu Yun stowed his primary body in another dimension inside his replica and rubbed his forehead. "You know, you can obviously walk on your own in human form. Why do you like presenting as a fox and tucking yourself into my robes?" He smiled wryly.

"I'm that troublemaker of a woman, No-Good, Bad News Tushan. The greatest femme fatale of the great wilderness!" the little fox declared proudly. "I'm worried that you won't be able to withstand temptation and cheat on Little Yu if you saw me in human form!"

Lu Yun curled his lip. It'd been ten years since he'd seen Qing Yu, and he really did miss her very much.

“We’ll be able to go back after another ninety years!” A warm smile curved his lips when he thought of his beloved. “Come on, let’s go find White Emperor and see what he’s been up to!”

He vanished upon taking a great stride forward.

.....

At the center of the cosmos.

A boundless sea of flames reigned dominant as dreadful connate fire threatened to set the very void aflame.

Countless dead spirits struggled and wailed in the conflagration. Some occasionally broke free, but would be quickly hunted down by the great masters standing guard next to the inferno.

There was an enormous corpse in the middle of the fiery ocean—an enormous three-legged suncrow. It was several times bigger than Xing Chen, and the conflagration originated from the flames on its body.

The corpse was already starting to transform and change into an incandescent sun. Nine slightly smaller three-legged suncrows revolved around it, and they too showed signs of converting into sun stars.

“Kid of the Jin Clan!” A muscular man wearing golden battle armor looked at Bai Zhaoju. “His Majesty and the great god Rushou have an agreement that if the great god’s descendant came, he would be allowed to retrieve His Majesty’s true feather. But you are too weak, far too weak!”

The man was in human form as well and eighteen meters tall. His four limbs were stocky and his voice especially loud.

“Just look at you, you’re as skinny as one of those duck-billed beasts. And you’re only a celestial divine! The dead spirits on the outskirts of these flames will skin you alive and swallow you whole, to say nothing of the realm monsters inside the flames proper!”

“Don’t worry, general, this junior wishes to make use of the dead spirits inside to temper my sword dao,” Bai Zhaoju replied expressionlessly.

“Sword dao? You’ve found your way onto the path of sword dao, kid?” The golden-armored man widened his eyes ferociously. “Then absolutely not! Rushou probably doesn’t know of your potential since he sent you here. You’re a solid pillar of the great wilderness after setting foot onto the great dao, and you’ll reach His Majesty’s level sooner or later...”

“No, absolutely not! I can’t do anything about Rushou treating you like cannon fodder, but I can and will prevent a precious genius like you from going to your death!” The stocky man shook his head rapidly and shoved Bai Zhaoju aside. “If you want to train, go to the netherdark beneath Mount Buzhou. There are plenty of ghosts and uncanny creatures there, and you won’t die with Fuxi keeping watch. You won’t be going inside this ocean no matter what, because you’re sure to lose your life here!”

The general wrapped up his emphatic speech with another resolute glare. “If you die now, that will be a tremendous loss for the great wilderness! You will reach at least His Majesty’s heights in the future!”

Bai Zhaoju didn’t know whether to laugh or cry. Why did this armored general think so highly of himself? Taiyi’s heights?

Well, he'd reach empyrean realm within a hundred years if he truly set foot into sword dao, but chaos realm was beyond imagination, to say nothing of becoming an ultimate expert like Taiyi.

"You you you you you—" The general's eyes suddenly shot wide open and he trembled like a leaf as he looked behind Bai Zhaoju, unable to form a single sentence.

"I think you look a bit familiar... have I seen you before somewhere?" Lu Yun had arrived, but was arrested by the sight before him.

The celestial court of the great wilderness and its celestial emperor had fallen, but its army still camped up in space!

With Taiyi's corpse as the center, at least a hundred million troops were densely stationed in a radius of a hundred million meters, completely sealing off the local space.

Realm monsters were kept outside of this local space by the bodies of Taiyi and the nine suncrows, but they too had troops in the form of endless dead spirits that could plague the cosmos and attack the great wilderness.

Thus the celestial army remained camped out here, intercepting the dead spirits. But their numbers were limited and they were unable to fully have a handle on everything, so many dead spirits managed to escape and wreak havoc in other places.

Currently, Lu Yun was frowning at the golden-armored general.

"I think I've seen you in a dream before!" The man's lips trembled as he looked at Lu Yun. "In my dream, you used a soybean..."

### **Chapter 858: The True Feather**

"In your dream, I used a soybean to summon you to my side and place you under my command, is that it?" Lu Yun asked carefully when he saw the golden-armored man. He could clearly identify the man's cultivation and strength—divine king!

Amid the hundred million celestial soldiers, their weakest was at the divine king realm. The man in front of him was already peak divine king realm and one step away from entering the empyrean realm.

"Correct!" The golden-armored man nodded heavily. "I am a divine king and stand guard at the center of the cosmos, so I have no need for sleep, nor can I indulge in it. However, I really do dream sometimes."

While the conversation was going on, Bai Zhaoju looked blankly at Lie Shan. He could distinctly feel that the boy's energy was now at peak empyrean realm! The human youth was only half a step away from the chaos realm!

How could a little cultivator stymied by a flock of Bi Fang suddenly turn into a master expert of combat arts like this??

"What was your dream like?" Lu Yun took in a deep breath, his eyes fixed on the golden-armored man. He didn't have attention to spare for Bai Zhaoju.

“We were all dead... dead from battle here and became yin gods of heaven and earth. We either drifted mindlessly through the cosmos, or entered a place called the Green Firmament. As for you... you could awaken our minds with a soybean and bring us to you.”

The muscular man’s gaze at Lu Yun sharpened with urgency. “Is that the future?! Was this domain of space overrun?! Did all life in the great wilderness and stars perish?”

“Yes.” Lu Yun nodded. “In the future, you are all dead. But at the same time, the realm monsters are also no more. They don’t exist in the future.”

A simple grin floated onto the man’s face. “That’s good, that’s very good. As long as there aren’t any realm monsters anymore!”

Lu Yun didn’t find it odd that the golden-armored man could dream of the future. This was someone chosen by the Tome of Life and Death to be a bean soldier. The book seemed to be a divine object that was ever present and could ignore the confines of time.

Bai Zhaoju walked up to them with a dazed expression. “Lie Shan... so you really are from the future... Does this mean Fuxi succeeded?! He successfully went to the future and brought you back?!”

Before he received an answer, he slapped his hands over his mouth in horror and promptly destroyed his recollection of the past couple moments. The golden-armored general did so as well.

The implications of this were far too important. The future was something inexplicable and unfathomable for current lifeforms, but Lie Shan was from the future. Everything he knew was incontrovertible and couldn’t be changed. He knew how everything would play out.

Lu Yun was also aware of this and had used a combat art to isolate the vicinity while they were conversing. No one, not even chaos realm powerhouses, would be able to eavesdrop on what was going on here.

Xing Chen was a body of heaven and earth that incorporated the five organs of the world and another three ultimate connate treasures. Though he was just at the empyrean realm, his true battle strength could very likely destroy some of the weaker connate demon gods.

“A great master of combat arts has come. I shall report this to the commander!” Though the golden-armored man had destroyed a strand of his memory, Lu Yun’s identity was apparent. Of that there could be no doubt or modification.

“No need, White Emperor and I will head into the sea of flames.” Lu Yun waved a hand.

“White Emperor?” The soldier looked blankly at Bai Zhaoju.

“In the future!” Bai Zhaoju claimed the title without skipping a beat or change in expression.

“Since a peak empyrean realm master stands by your side, then I will not bar your way any longer. Please proceed!” The golden-armored man took a few steps back.

“Let’s go!” Lu Yun grabbed Bai Zhaoju’s shoulder and sank into the flames.

The fiery ocean consisted of the most terrifying flame in the world—connate li fire. Though Lu Yun didn't possess any connate fire essence, Xing Chen boasted of the heart of the world. Having been nurtured on the Fire Altar, the energy from the altar wasn't any bit less than connate fire essence.

Lu Yun called upon the strength of the heart and released a blazing inferno from his body, beating back the li fire around them.

"You traveled to the stars to come back for your strength, didn't you?" Completely safe by Lu Yun's side, Bai Zhaoju tsk'ed with amazement.

"Mhmm." Lu Yun nodded. "My strength was lost among the cosmos and I successfully found it again after we came here."

"You've regained your power, now I go to obtain mine!" Determination flashed through Bai Zhaoju's eyes. "Connate li fire burns in this ocean. If I can break free of this elemental bane, then I'll be able to grasp my own sword dao and break through to the divine king realm!"

"Go on." Lu Yun waved a hand and dismissed part of the energy from the heart of the world. Bai Zhaoju flashed into the flames as a streak of light.

Lu Yun wasn't worried about the future White Emperor; he knew that this legendary figure in the making would succeed. Certain things were predestined, though they still required the individual to put in the effort.

Bai Zhaoju's primary goal was to obtain Taiyi's true feather, then to temper himself. Retrieving this feather was the mission that Patriarch Rushou of the Jin Clan had set for him.

Lu Yun also made his way to Taiyi's corpse. He wanted to see what was going on there and just what a real realm monster was. Xuanyuan Xiaoyue, who he'd met before, had been called a realm monster, but she was that in body only. Her spirit remained hers, and she perfectly controlled the realm monster thanks to her steady resolve.

In Lu Yun's eyes, Xuanyuan Xiaoyue wasn't a true realm monster, but he had the vague feeling that many things found in the future, such as the akasha ghosts and various oddities about the immortal dao, all had to do with the realm monsters.

Certain things, even in death, continued to have a great impact on the world. For instance, he'd just destroyed a great batch of yin spirits in a black hole, which somehow made the ones in this fiery ocean deeply fearful of him. They scattered whenever he approached, not daring to be near him at all.

He saw Bai Zhaoju pick up a golden-red feather from Taiyi's body and carefully stow it away into his robes. It'd all happened smoothly without a hitch.

"How dare you take something I've set my eyes on!" a furious protest sounded above Taiyi's body. A pair of hands covered in frost broke through the flames and grabbed at Bai Zhaoju.

"Something you've set your eyes on? What the fuck do you think you are?" A furious inferno blazed over Bai Zhaoju and his body was starting to melt from the heat around him, but it was as if he felt nothing at all. The sword in his hand burst forth with a radiant streak of light and fully enveloped him; he then leapt into the air and slashed down on the hand.

## Chapter 859.1: Taiyi

Bai Zhaoju's sword intent was sharp and straightforward. It drilled straight at its target with no regard for his own safety. Even when faced with an enemy whose level of strength he couldn't comprehend, he showed no signs of backing down.

He became one with terrifying sword intent and transformed into a tremendously sharp sword to swing at the giant hand of frost.

"Insect," snorted a derisive voice. The hand extended two fingers to flick Bai Zhaoju away.

Bam!

A violent ball of fire exploded from the sea of flames as the sword that was Bai Zhaoju cut into one of the fingers.

Hum.

Pure golden light flared from Bai Zhaoju's figure, which collected into an unstoppable beam that shot through the void, connecting heaven and earth.

He seemed to be a fine sword unsheathed and stabbed repeatedly into the heart of the sea of flames, agitating it while endless sword energy boiled over and killed all of the dead spirits in the vicinity.

Among the great celestial army stationed by the sea of flames, many experts shot to their feet and turned to the sea with shock.

"The sword energy has gone heavenward to meet the great dao. To wield dao through the sword... this is a divine king's great dao!"

"Who is it?" a chaos realm expert among the army called out in disbelief. "They're forging their sword intent in the sea of flames and using it to ascend to the divine king realm!"

"In response to Celestial King Bai, it's the Jin representative who's come to retrieve His Majesty's feather." The burly man in golden armor who Lu Yun had encountered earlier walked up to Celestial King Bai—Bai Ze.

"Rushou sent him?" Bai Ze asked, his brows furrowed.

"Yes," responded the soldier. "The boy's name is Bai Zhaoju."

"Bai Zhaoju, Bai Zhaoju..." Bai Ze nodded and sat back down. "Since he's become a divine king and formed his sword intent, the dead spirits in the sea cannot hurt him. We'll leave him be."

"But!" hurried out the armored soldier. "Rushou may be a connate god, but he's no good. The young man will surely be used up once he returns!"

"Only those with great perseverance and wisdom may acquire their own sword dao. Rushou is two-faced and plays a game of multiple sides. He wouldn't even be an initiate in the great dao were he not a connate demon god. How would he possibly be able to scheme against a divine king who walks the path of sword dao? There is no need to intervene." Bai Ze waved a dismissive hand.

The armored soldier bowed and turned away, but Bai Ze called out to him before he could leave. “How have your dreams been lately, Gongyou?”

“In response to the celestial king, Gongyou hasn’t been dreaming recently.” It seemed that he had more to say, but no other words came out of his parted lips.

“You may go.” Bai Ze waved him away.

.....

Within the sea of flames, Bai Zhaoju had formed his own sword intent, pushing his cultivation by leaps and bounds and instantly ascending from the celestial divine realm to the divine king realm.

Unleashing his full might, his connate-grade flying sword shattered the giant frosty hand with incredible strength. He himself quickly shot backward, departing from the hand’s range of attack.

“Congratulations, White Emperor! Felicitations on your ascension to the divine king realm!” Laughing heartily, Lu Yun came up to Bai Zhaoju.

“It’s all thanks to your guidance with sword dao that I was able to ascend to the divine king realm so quickly.” Bai Zhaoju tilted his head back with swashbuckling flair. “I have to say, Lie Shan, your Vast Dragon Seaturner is quite an amazing technique. Its possibilities are endless, and it can be used as the first move for three thousand sword daos!”

He’d put away his defensive treasure as he no longer feared the connate li fire after acquiring his own sword dao and ascending to divine king realm. He was free from the restraint of the five elements now.

Of course, that was also because the connate yang fire was here to suppress the yin spirits and realm monsters. It wouldn’t attack living souls from the great wilderness.

Lu Yun didn’t deem that praise worthy of a response.

“Oh, about the giant hand just now,” Bai Zhaoju was reminded of his attacker. “Was that a realm monster? It’s not as terrifying as I expected.”

“That’s because we’re in the sea of flames that Celestial Emperor Taiyi has transformed into.” Lu Yun sighed. “He sacrificed himself to become a sun in order to seal away the realm monsters. Realm monsters are of the ice element, possessing great ice energy. This sea of yang fire is their natural bane.”

He’d previously thought that the ice-attributed realm monster Xuanyuan Xiaoyue turned into was a special case, but it turned out that all realm monsters were of the same element. Otherwise, Taiyi wouldn’t have turned into a sun here.

“Ah, no wonder the yang fire here isn’t as dangerous as the yang fire in the other areas.” Realization dawned on Bai Zhaoju. Navigating through this ocean wasn’t as difficult as he’d imagined it to be. The yang fire here was thirty percent weaker than that of the other places—most likely due to what they sealed away.

While the yang fire kept the realm monsters in check, they in turn weakened the fire.

“Now that you’ve retrieved the true feather, you should get out of here, White Emperor,” Lu Yun said. “I’m going to the other side to see for myself what exactly realm monsters are.”

“I’ll go with you!” High on the rush of newly becoming a divine king, Bai Zhaoju was eager to join Lu Yun in exploring the other side of realm monster territory.

“Also known as the spot where Celestial Emperor Taiyi sacrificed himself to seal off,” Lu Yun said coolly, glancing at Bai Zhaoju.

A shudder ran down his spine, his enthusiasm instantly doused.

“I’m just going to take a look,” repeated Lu Yun. “With my current strength, I can only allow myself a single glance. If I stay for even a blink longer, it may very well get me killed.”

Bai Zhaoju smiled wryly. “Then you be careful, I’ll stay here and cultivate.”

“You should get out of here.” Lu Yun shook his head. “The yang fire around us has been burning and exhausting itself all this time. It won’t be long before the power in Taiyi’s body is depleted and the crack unsealed again. I have to find a way to gather the sea of flames and stopper this place for good.”

He believed he’d had the same idea the last time he was here, but had somehow failed that attempt.

The ten years he’d spent in the great wilderness had enabled him to take a good look at the connate great dao. Last time he’d been alone and attempted to use combat arts from the immortal dao, but without an immortal dao present in the world. Naturally, the task had been much harder than it should have been.

Now that he’d gained a good understanding of the connate great dao, he would be able to use it to seal the fissure.

“Tell the connate gods here to be prepared for any sudden changes,” he added after some deliberation.

He was certain that last time, he must’ve snuck into the sea of flames with no one being the wiser... He wouldn’t have shown himself this time, either, if he hadn’t seen Bai Zhaoju with the general in golden armor.

There were other factors to take into consideration this time. Sealing the sea of flames would surely result in a great chain reaction, alerting even the realm monsters lurking within the sea. He needed the celestial army in the area to be ready.

## **Chapter 859.2: Taiyi**

“Alright” Bai Zhaoju raised a cupped fist salute at Lu Yun before withdrawing from the area.

Lu Yun approached Taiyi’s corpse and gave it a silent inspection. Bai Zhaoju had driven away the giant hand reaching out from behind the body, leaving only Taiyi.

“Here you are.” The flames in the area twitched and gathered into a red-haired man dressed in red robes. Like Yinglong, the man assumed the form of whoever was looking at him. Humans saw a human when facing him, and other races would see their own kind.

“We met the last time I was here, didn’t we?” Lu Yun asked.



The man was Taiyi. Since he'd died, he was a powerful ghost instead of a living spirit, and he guarded the fissure to protect the living of this world.

"We did." Taiyi nodded. "The last time you were here, you were ostracized by the connate great dao. I didn't expect you to become a part of it so soon."

Lu Yun paused. His true form had cultivated the connate great dao and entered the golden core realm. His replica was in turn accepted by the connate great dao as well, enabling him to unleash greater power under the primitive dao.

"I'm going to the other side of the seal to see for myself what it's like," Lu Yun said after a pensive pause.

"The other side... holds no world, just pure chaos. A vast, endless chaos." Taiyi shook his head. "It's best that you don't cross over."

"Why?" Lu Yun frowned. "I'm only curious."

"You went to the other side last time because you were curious too, but you immediately erased your memory when you returned." Taiyi sighed. "I don't know what the chaos has become now, but you mustn't go."

"I erased my memory upon my return?" Lu Yun closed his eyes and rubbed his forehead. "When was my true form injured? Why don't I remember anything beyond entering this patch of space?"

"Has something followed me here?" The possibility tightened Lu Yun's expression and he recalled the black hole Xing Chen had been guarding. "I really shouldn't have erased all of my memories. At least... I should have left myself with the knowledge of what I should and shouldn't do."

A tremor passed through Lu Yun.

"You didn't have a choice back then. The great dao of this world was against you, and Tushan hadn't recovered her strength yet." Taiyi shook his head. As a ghost, he didn't possess the presence or strength he had when alive. All he had was his body and the connate yang fire it released.

The little fox popped out of Lu Yun's arms, looking at Taiyi. The celestial emperor's jealousy was clear on his face, which prompted the little fox to hide herself again.

"You really are trouble," Lu Yun muttered. "Allow me to take a look still. I won't be able to rest easy otherwise. Moreover, I have a feeling that I must go." He looked at Taiyi with steely determination.

"I won't stop you if you wish to go, but you have to leave Tushan here. She may be in danger if she goes with you."

The little fox had gone to the other side with Lu Yun last time, but she didn't remember the trip either.

"No!" The little fox showed herself again, equally determined. "I'm going with him!"

Taiyi scowled. The last time the little fox returned from the chaos, she'd been on the brink of death. He wouldn't allow her to risk herself again. Though the tale told in the great wilderness about Taiyi and Yi killing each other due to fighting over Tushan might be hearsay, Taiyi's affections for Tushan weren't.

"Let them go. They didn't lose the last time they went there." Fuxi's voice suddenly sounded from the golden spirit pearl, which floated out of Lu Yun's robes in response

"Fuxi... so you've come as well!" The emergence of the pearl put Taiyi somewhat at ease. "Then I won't stop you since Fuxi's here to protect you."

He gave Tushan a meaningful look, reluctance still tugging at his heart. When all was said and done, he was nothing but a dead man.

"Have you completed your task?" Lu Yun perked up.

"Not yet." Fuxi manifested his true self, a human with the body of a snake. "I have to enter the chaos to recover something else first."

"You... you can't be serious!" Taiyi reacted immediately when he heard Fuxi's words.

"Their existence does only harm and no good. If not for them, Pangu wouldn't have died and you wouldn't have ended up like this." Fuxi scoffed. "Put away your useless pity. As long as they're around, they will destroy the great wilderness sooner or later and this world will become another realm monster!"

Lu Yun turned to Fuxi in horror. The world will become another realm monster?

"Do you know where realm monsters come from, Lie Shan?" Fuxi asked, holding Lu Yun's gaze.

The little fox turned to Fuxi with curiosity as well.

"Aren't they transformed from dead worlds?" Lu Yun asked in return.

"Indeed, they originate from dead worlds... The worlds before our own. They've all died and become realm monsters!

"Our world will follow the same trajectory," Fuxi said with an impassive look. "It will die and become another realm monster, which will make us the yin spirits residing within its body."

Lu Yun took a deep breath. He finally understood why Ashu reacted with such despairing horror when realm monsters were mentioned.

"In the future... realm monsters have been eliminated," he murmured.

A realm monster was a world, and the world Lu Yun currently resided in was vast and boundless. There were countless worlds in the universe. More than hundreds of millions. How terrifying must realm monsters be?

"The future?" Fuxi shook his head. "If this world is destroyed and turned into a realm monster, there will be no future.

"The universe, in its endless space and time, is the scaffolding of the world... If our world is destroyed by the realm monsters and becomes one of them, the universe will be naught, along with all points in time along this timeline, be it the past or the future!"

The revelation chilled Lu Yun to the bone.

## Chapter 860: Chaos

Taiyi nodded slightly. If this wasn't the case, how would he—the greatest of connate gods and almost a creator himself—willingly go to his death so that he could safeguard the lifeforms of this world?

"Let's go." Fuxi grabbed Lu Yun and the little fox, vanishing into the sea of fire.

.....

Chaos.

A murky mass of something, but also nothing. Time and orientation held no meaning here.

Perhaps chaos was infinitely big, each of its dust particles bigger than the entire great wilderness.

Or perhaps chaos was imperceptibly small, tinier than even a grain of sand in their world.

Chaos was just a concept, an opaque and blurry concept. Undefined and unquantifiable.

When Lu Yun looked around, murky, undefined gray air currents greeted his eye. He looked back, but didn't find the stars. It was like they didn't exist.

Lu Yun felt rather... lost.

Though there was no sense of space or time in the chaos, he was a life form that possessed those concepts. Affected by his presence, the notion of time and space blossomed in this patch of chaos as well.

It wasn't the little fox's first time here either. She'd participated in the war against the realm monsters; that battlefield had been located in chaos.

"It's the great dao! I can sense the primitive great dao!" Lu Yun trembled violently and he lifted his head to see a giant flower blooming quietly over his head. The presence of the primitive great dao cascaded gracefully from its pure white petals, sinking into his body.

"The Dao Flower! So the Dao Flower is rooted in the chaos!" He took a deep breath. A strange light flashed through his eyes when he looked at it, then he reached out and tried to touch it.

However, though it appeared close at hand, it was also infinitely far away. He couldn't touch it no matter how hard he tried.

"This is the great dao of your heart." Fuxi lightly held onto Lu Yun's arm to have him give up on his goal.

"Chaos is neutral. Most of what you see here is projected from your consciousness, including the perception of time, space, and the Dao Flower." He, too, looked at the flower.

"The great dao of my heart?" Lu Yun carefully observed the runes upon the flower. They were much simpler than the ones of the immortal dao. At least... the primitive great dao held no secrets in his eyes.

He reached out again and this time, successfully closed his hand around the flower, to Fuxi's great, uncomprehending shock.

The Dao Flower should've been incredibly large—larger than the galaxy, larger than even the multiverse. But now, it'd solidly flown into Lu Yun's hands and landed in the palm of his hand.

“So this is indeed the case.” The trace of a smile appeared on his face. “There is only one Dao Flower that exists. No matter which era I’m in, the one I see will always be this one...”

“Um... this...” Fuxi wasn’t sure what to do now.

The Dao Flower was coalesced from the collective consciousness of all life forms. The connate demon gods had initially theorized that the great dao was concentrated on one flower alone. When it blossomed was when the great dao bloomed, and when it wilted was when the great dao declined.

This notion had been passed on through generation upon generation while the Dao Flower continued blooming in chaos. However, no one had ever truly obtained it or touched this incomparable existence.

“I see the connate great dao on it, then human dao, demonic dao, divine dao, and... the immortal dao! So demonic dao rules the world after the destruction of the human dao and prior to the establishment of the immortal dao.”

By now, Fuxi numbly listened to what Lu Yun was saying. He could only see the primitive great dao on the flower and nothing else.

“I see, I see... I finally understand why I erased my memories. It was because of the Dao Flower.” Lu Yun frowned slightly. “Perhaps I should do so again after I return to the stars.”

The Dao Flower was too important and had too great of an impact. If it was broken, all living beings beneath the heavens would be stripped of their great dao, and even connate demon gods would be demoted back to mortality.

As the first person who could actually touch the Dao Flower, there would definitely come certain people who wanted to use his hand to destroy it... such as the realm monsters.

When he lifted his head, he saw an enormous eyeball hovering in chaos and staring unblinkingly at him. It should’ve been a pair of eyes, but something had happened to the other one—like it’d been dug out.

“Ah, so my replica wasn’t suppressing those mewling dead spirits, but your eyeballs.” Lu Yun shook his head at the eyes above. He dragged his hand forward and placed the flower back into chaos over his head.

“You want to use my hand or spy on my memories to find out how to touch the Dao Flower, don’t you? That’ll make it easy for you to destroy it then,” Lu Yun remarked faintly as he looked at the eyes.

The eyes looked emotionlessly back, not expressing anything.

Swoosh!

Diexi appeared in Lu Yun’s hand and he pointed it straight at the eyes, keen sword energy flaring from the shortsword’s edge.

“I still dug out one of your eyeballs last time even though I didn’t have a proper weapon in hand. Do you think I can straight up end you this time?” Lu Yun leered, a savage grin on his face.

Fuxi spread his hands out, two bamboo scrolls shimmering with strange radiance appearing in his hands. These were his ultimate weapons.

The eye closed slowly and vanished without a trace.

“You don’t need to erase your memory this time,” Fuxi said in a low voice.

The method to touch the Dao Flower was imprinted in Lu Yun’s mind. It would disappear if he erased that memory, but would spring forth again next time he visited the chaos and saw the Dao Flower.

Lu Yun looked back at Fuxi.

“If I seal it with my Yellow River Map and Inscription of the River Luo , and your Compass of Heaven and Earth, that will protect it.” Fuxi looked gravely back at him.

“Compass of Heaven and Earth?” Lu Yun started, then realized he meant the feng shui luopan.

The luopan concentrated the power of heaven and earth, including the mighty heavenly palace and kingdom of hell. It wasn’t wrong to call it a compass of heaven and earth.

He finally realized how his primary body had been injured. The luopan was one with his body and great injuries would occur if he tried to take it out. However, he’d refused to bring it out last time even though he’d almost died, and he’d nearly taken the little fox with him.

Lu Yun nodded and walked out of Xing Chen’s body.