

## Old Gods 681

Chapter 681: How not to come...

At dusk, in the small courtyard of Cloud Sea Residence.

Jiang Ruyi sat at the stone table, quietly watching the sunset while sipping tea.

Suddenly, a wave of energy fluctuation came over.

She turned her head and saw a landing mirror opening, and a pair of man and woman emerged.

The woman's eyes were full of concern, while the man was rubbing his temples, staggering towards the Cloud Sea Residence.

Even the people within the courtyard didn't notice!

"Lady." It was Yan Shuangzi who noticed Lady Ran and immediately greeted her.

"Was the journey smooth?" Jiang Ruyi put down her teacup and asked.

Liu Huo, who was serving beside her, immediately picked up the teapot, ready to fill the tea, but was stopped by Jiang Ruyi.

Yan Shuangzi reported immediately: "Everything went well, just that searching and occupying three new islands took some time."

The three Evil Mirror Demons stationed around Cloud Sea Cliff were summoned by Lu Ran and stationed on the islands. The so-called Nine Star Island should be renamed Twelve Star Island now.

However, this name will soon change again.

Looking at Lu Ran's state just now, the Evil Mirror Demon Sculpture in his Sculpture Garden should be advancing.

Ascending from Sea Realm Second Rank to Third Rank.

With each minor rank the sculpture advances, it can create two more Evil Demon Minions.

So after tonight, Lu Ran should be able to summon two more Evil Mirror Demons in the Peak of the River Realm.

Jiang Ruyi nodded lightly: "Lu Ran mentioned last time that he asked the Evil Mirror Demon clan to record collected data?"

"Yes, the data discrepancy is large." Yan Shuangzi recalled, "Among the nine islands, the most collected was 85 strands of Holy Spirit Energy, the least was 32 strands."

The nine Evil Mirror Demons collectively provided 579 strands of Holy Spirit Energy for their master."

islands, 5 months, 579 strands of Holy Spirit Energy.

Jiang Ruyi did a simple calculation in her head and came up with a number.

On average, each island can provide Lu Ran with twelve to thirteen strands of Holy Spirit Energy per month.

Collecting diligently, yet the accumulation is slow.

To rapidly increase power in a short period, wild Evil Mirror Demons need to be slain.

A horse without night grass doesn't grow fat.

"Go back and rest." Jiang Ruyi stood up, casually instructing.

Yan Shuangzi did not respond.

Jiang Ruyi looked at the silent Sea Realm Great Power: "I remember, didn't you bring back a North Wind Disciple?"

Yan Shuangzi bowed her head: "She has already torn up the contract."

"Hmm, how do you plan to deal with her?"

"This person's martial skills are remarkable, I intend to have her pledge loyalty to Ran Sect and redeem her sins."

"What sin?"

"She...after all, was a North Wind Disciple, and was a beneficiary and supporter of the original order at Sword Ridge Peak." Yan Shuangzi said quietly, "If Lady doesn't like it..."

Jiang Ruyi said calmly: "Go back and discipline well, capture her early."

"Yes." This time, Yan Shuangzi responded and swiftly left.

Jiang Ruyi walked into the house, entering the bedroom, and indeed saw the young man lying limp on the bed.

Sprawled out without any demeanor of a master.

Jiang Ruyi showed a slight smile, sitting sideways on the bed's edge, looking down at the dazed young man.

Divine Power, truly a remarkable thing.

The heroic young man transformed, looking silly.

Hmm...kind of cute?

Jiang Ruyi unusually displayed a playful look, extending her slender fingers, gently pinching his cheek.

Indeed!

Silly~

...

Lu Ran "woke up" at the break of dawn.

He found himself leaning in a soft embrace, with a woman's fingers pressing gently on his forehead.

"You didn't sleep all night?" Lu Ran was somewhat surprised.

He clearly felt Jiang Fairy's fingertips tremble, as if frightened?

Lu Ran turned to look and saw her showing a disgruntled expression. He immediately drew close, kissing her delicate face, seeking her lips:

"Little Ruyi, you don't have to take such good care of me."

"Hmph." Jiang Ruyi turned her head away.

"I've already learned the technique to clear my mind! As long as I don't trouble myself or force myself to think, it won't be very difficult."

"Hmm...it's almost dawn...uh..." Jiang Ruyi ultimately couldn't resist someone, her body gradually softened.

Fine.

She was about to enter seclusion anyway, let him be.

She slightly lifted her coldly alluring face, closing her eyes, allowing someone to leave delicate kisses on her slender white neck.

Unexpectedly, Lu Ran suddenly stopped.

Her beautiful eyes became somewhat hazy, looking down, she whispered: "What's wrong?"

"Wait a moment." Lu Ran frowned.

Previously, he was in a state of clearing his mind, unaware of anything.

But now, recovering his state, Lu Ran felt someone faintly calling out to him in the void.

However, the call was too feeble.

Nothing like nightmares or evil shadows, those bound to evil sculptures.

More like a tiny ant, invoking the divine in the heavens.

Yet more sincere than the usual devotion and prayers of ordinary Ran Sect disciples.

Or rather: more urgent!

Who?

Lu Ran quickly checked, finally confirming it was the Evil Dog Sculpture from the Evil Demon Camp.

[Sect Leader! Sect Leader?]

[Sect Leader...]

[Speak.] Lu Ran finally found the believer pleading for the divine manifestation.

Shadow One was taken aback for a moment, then quickly responded: [Sect Leader, that Dust Spirit disciple has come again! Came last night, always watching the stars and moon among the flowers.]

[Still here now?]

[Yes, looks like he might wait for sunrise.]

[Specific location.] Lu Ran immediately asked.

A few seconds later, Lu Ran confirmed the young man's position, which was on the ridge where he spied before.

[Don't startle the snake.]

Lu Ran gave a caution, then looked at Jiang Fairy, grinning: "That Dust Shadow disciple has appeared again!"

"Hehe~" Jiang Ruyi couldn't help but laugh.

She could somewhat understand why Lu Ran was a bit annoyed.

This Dust Shadow disciple had already ruined Lu Ran's plans twice.

The last time, he interrupted Jiang Ruyi's sword dance, forcing Lu Ran to resort to muttering some mantra like, "Ruyi Ruyi, follow my heart's desire."

This time, his appearance had once again thwarted Lu Ran's ill intentions.

"Let's go take a look." Jiang Ruyi gently placed her delicate hand on Lu Ran's head, tidying his short hair, "If it's Qin Yanzhi, it's at least an explanation to a friend."

"Mm." Lu Ran reached out to the side and quickly cast a spell.

Jiang Ruyi adjusted her garments and reminded, "Remember to get him out of the Other Shore Flower's range first."

"Of course!" Lu Ran responded decisively.

This time, if I let him escape again, it would be disrespectful to the Shadow Guard Team's three months of patient waiting!

"Swish~"

The Transmission Mirror activated, and the two of them stepped inside, one after the other.

Jiang Ruyi looked around and found that Lu Ran had opened the Transmission Mirror within the Thousand Flower Inn in the River Valley.

[Give me ten seconds.]

A message was imprinted in her mind, and Jiang Ruyi nodded lightly, watching as Lu Ran's figure vanished.

He didn't flash away but vanished into invisibility.

"Swish~"

Jiang Ruyi sensed the divine power fluctuation right nearby, knowing that this time Lu Ran had indeed teleported away.

Completely invisible, Lu Ran appeared high in the sky, freely observing without a trace.

At the same time, on a tall mountain ridge where flowers were in full bloom.

A young man dressed in black stood quietly, gazing towards the east.

Today was a rare good day.

There was no wind, no rain, no cloud sea.

It had been half an hour since dawn, and in just a few minutes, the beautiful sunrise could be seen.

"Tap~"

The young man casually picked a small white flower, twirling it by the stem with his fingers.

Suddenly, there was a faint divine power fluctuation from behind.

The young man in black froze!

Because this divine power fluctuation was too close!

How close?

He could even feel a warm breath brushing against his ear.

It proved to be no illusion!

Because a deep voice spoke into his ear:

"You're up quite early?"

Young man in black: ???

"Hoo!!"

The young man in black leaped forward abruptly, the rotating flower between his fingers quietly falling.

And before the small white flower swayed to the ground,

A mysterious and stunning black Other Shore Flower suddenly blossomed in his hand.

"Zzz—"

Immortal Fog spread, the Black Gold Emperor Robe fluttered loudly.

As a qualified survivor, the young man in black not only leaped forward at the first moment, casting the Divine Technique·Other Shore Flower, but he also slightly turned to ward off the coming enemy.

Yet unexpectedly, the intruder was formless.

But also truly existed.

Because the young man saw the Immortal Fog spreading in the flower field and also five beautiful red silk threads piercing towards him.

"You!" The young man's pupils almost shrank to needlepoint!

The black Other Shore Flower blossomed and scattered again.

It couldn't be constrained.

Because the person within the flower was hurled out, taken away from the flower's range.

"Hoo!!"

The morning breeze blew, causing waves in the sea of flowers.

The young man in black was lightly tapped by the five thin red silk threads at his brow, wrists, and ankles.

And was lifted in mid-air.

Looking down along the five red threads, they tightened, finally connecting above the empty flower field.

Not knowing who was controlling them.

"Watching the sunrise?" The deep voice spoke again.

The young man in black's vision blurred, finally seeing the youth dressed in a Black Gold Emperor Robe.

He was utterly shocked!

This... wasn't this the person who admired the sword dance by the stream three months ago?

"Watch first." Lu Ran turned his head towards the east, gazing at the undulating mountains, faintly seeing the red glow.

His fingertips trembled slightly, and the marionette in mid-air slightly turned, facing east.

The young man in black was in a daze for a long time, a trace of bitterness gradually rising in his heart.

The Tethering Silk made him completely immobile.

The Tangled Silk caused his divine power to go wildly astray inside him.

Stepping back, even if he had opened the Divine Technique-Other Shore Flower, the opponent could easily take him out of the flower's range.

"Hoo~"

The gentle breeze swept by, the scent of flowers permeating the air.

A white-dressed fairy, surrounded by the Jade Talisman Formation, slowly descended.

The young man in black recognized this woman instantly, for she was the one who had performed that dance earlier.

A deep sense of powerlessness surged in his heart.

Having wandered in the mountains for five or six years, he was finally caught...

Knowing that these two had discovered Qianhua Ridge, why did he have to come again?

This pair had such an aura, how could they be ordinary people?

After catching a distant glimpse of them last time, he should have retreated, never stepping foot here again.

But...

But these flowers bloomed so brilliantly,

The stars twinkled, the moon set, the sun rose.

How could I not come...

...

Chapter 682: Soft light illuminates the eyebrows

The red sun rises, the sky is filled with a rosy glow.

Golden light falls, dyeing the mountain flowers.

Jiang Ruyi snuggled next to Lu Ran, a hint of admiration in her eyes, gazing at this beautiful and magnificent scene.

No wonder!

That mysterious youth took the risk to come here to watch the sunrise.

At least in this brief moment, he could forget being trapped in this senseless purgatory.

The rising sun finally left the mountains, completely hanging in the sky.

In a tranquil sea of flowers, Lu Ran had a thought, and the red silk thread lifted the puppet in front of Lu Jiang.

The black-clad youth was already tearful.

Fear? Despair?

Or a longing for life?

Lu Ran asked, "Why are you crying?"

Black-clad youth: "My eyes are dry."

Lu Ran: "..."

Staring at the sun, that's just it~

I even added so much drama for you!

The River Grade and River Grade's Silk Thread allowed the "puppet" to make expressions.

Sea Grade's Silk Thread doesn't even allow blinking!

The black-clad youth's speech was also vague, his lips could only tremble slightly, unable to close.

"What's your name?" Jiang Ruyi asked with a slight smile.

She didn't think it was Lu Ran's mistake, she just felt someone had ruined two good things, so he was punishing himself on purpose.

Lu Ran was naturally unaware of being wronged, at this moment he was listening carefully for the other's response.

However, the black-clad youth did not respond, only mumbled:

"Seen the mist, admired the flowers, let's leave it at that..."

"Do you think we want to kill you?"

"Hehe." The black-clad youth chuckled mournfully.

Even though no expressions were allowed, the bitterness in his laughter was evident to all.

In Holy Spirit Mountain, when encountering non-disciple folks, slaughter is the norm.

This couple discovered the beautiful Qianhua Ridge, so it became theirs.

They couldn't tolerate a Dust Shadow disciple knowing about this place and continuing to live.

The Dust Shadow Sect is too threatening!

The unique teleportation skill makes its disciples hard to control, unable to enslave.

Dust Shadow disciples can lead a squad, teleporting here and there, ready to attack anytime!

Emperor Robe Youth and Cold Fairy couldn't leave such a threat behind.

"Your name." Jiang Ruyi asked again.

The gentle demeanor while watching the sunrise with Lu Ran vanished completely.

"If you want to kill or flay, just do it." The black-clad youth muttered, shedding tears.

People,

The most ruthless beings.

He couldn't understand how this young couple would torture, humiliate him for amusement.

Capturing a Dust Shadow disciple wasn't easy.

Enough to entertain them for a long time.

Not telling his name might let him retain a last shred of dignity.

"Alright." Lu Ran looked at the youth with vacant eyes, "I'll go back and tell Rouyin, this is an unnamed person, not her target."

The black-clad youth's empty gaze regained a glimmer:

"Wait...wait a moment!"

"Oh?" Lu Ran's face lit up, "The dead boy spoke."

Jiang Ruyi looked confused: "What?"

Lu Ran shrugged: "There's a pause."

Jiang Ruyi rolled her eyes at Lu Ran.

What nonsense!

"I'll ask you one last time, your name!" Lu Ran looked at the youth.

"Qin Yanzhi."

"Alright!" Lu Ran nodded repeatedly, laughing as if exasperated, "Still not saying, right?"

Qin Yanzhi widened his eyes: ???

No!

I didn't say anything!

"Hehe~" Jiang Ruyi couldn't help but laugh.

The Cold Fairy, bathed in warm golden light, blossomed with a smile in this sea of flowers.

For a while, Lu Ran was lost in thought.

Jiang Ruyi naturally noticed his gaze, her pretty face flushed slightly, softly saying, "Hurry up and ask."

"Oh." Lu Ran shifted his gaze to the black-clad youth, "Before I came to Holy Spirit Mountain, a beautiful girl came to me.

She asked me to find someone named Qin Yanzhi and take good care of him."

"Li...Rouyin?" The black-clad youth said, trembling.

Though it came to this, he couldn't believe it in his heart.

"But here's the problem." Lu Ran had a thought, and the red silk thread lifted the black-clad youth forward, "How can you prove that you are Qin Yanzhi?"

Unexpectedly, the black-clad youth asked, "She's still in the human world, right? Is...is she well?"

Lu Ran: "..."

Your survival is uncertain, yet you're asking this kind of question.

No wonder Miss Li Rouyin thinks of you so fondly.

"Whether she's well or not, I don't know, but I'm not too good." Lu Ran huffed, "I've roamed the Mountain Realm from east to west, north to south.

Going round and round, I've been looking for you for a year and a half, do you know that?"

Qin Yanzhi: "..."

That strong?

Not content with hiding in a corner, endure and survive, but actually dominate the Mountain Realm?

Hmm...indeed!

To catch her eye, how could he be ordinary?

But Emperor Robe Youth's credentials were overly dazzling.

Qin Yanzhi didn't think the opponent was lying.

No way, the aura of Emperor Robe Youth was too strong, the presence too grand, and the red silk thread in his hand was too terrifying, clutching his life.

"I say, do you like crying?" Lu Ran shook his hand, making the youth on the silk thread sway side to side.

"Ah?"

"Don't you want to blink?"

"Yes."

"Then prove yourself quickly!" Lu Ran was quite convinced, "Do you like to be masochistic? Shall I turn you back to stare at the sun again?"

Qin Yanzhi was at a loss.

How could he prove it?

I didn't bring my ID or household registration book...

Seeing the other party not speaking for a while, Lu Ran helplessly reminded: "Soft light, reflect... brows."

Qin Yanzhi was stunned for a moment, and then visibly blushed.

Seeing such a reaction, Lu Ran felt confident in his heart!

No mistake!

Who wouldn't be embarrassed reading their youthful love notes aloud?

"Soft light, reflect... brows?" Jiang Ruyi was curious and looked at Lu Ran.

But Qin Yanzhi misunderstood, thinking she was urging him to continue the next line: "Rou, glorious youthful days..."

"Alright, alright." Lu Ran dispersed the Tethering Silk Thread.

After all, he was a childhood friend of Little Li the Cook, and a future soldier of the Ran Sect.

Qin Yanzhi stumbled to the ground, covering his eyes with one hand, rubbing vigorously.

[Love poem?] Jiang Ruyi raised her eyebrows slightly, glancing at Lu Ran.

Lu Ran had a strange expression: [Sort of, it's a personal, identity-confirming code.]

[Oh.] Jiang Ruyi lowered her eyes to the side, gently playing with a small white flower.

Seeing her expression, Lu Ran promptly shifted the blame:

[We've been childhood sweethearts, why haven't you ever written one for me?]

Jiang Ruyi: ?

Lu Ran complained: [We shared a desk for so long, and you never even passed me a note?]

Jiang Fairy finally lost her composure, suddenly lifting her long leg to kick at Lu Ran.

Such an action was like a return to their school days when she would blush with frustration.

I dodge~

Admittedly, Little Ruyi's legs have grown longer, with a wider attack range.

But Lu Ran's speed was faster...

The flower bushes swayed, petals flew.

Jiang Ruyi's gaze swept over the falling petals, glaring at the other party indignantly.

[You're getting angry now, that I didn't write you one?] Lu Ran looked righteous.

[What?] Jiang Ruyi was momentarily stunned.

[Ruyi, Ruyi, follow my heart's desire...]

"Haha." Jiang Ruyi was truly amused, releasing a circle of the Jade Talisman Formation.

"Hey! Hey... wrong, wrong!" Lu Ran was startled, quickly releasing his own circle of the Jade Talisman Formation.

Qin Yanzhi was utterly dumbfounded!

This... what is all this?

Divine Technique, Evil Technique, used at will?

What kind of person has Rouyin found...

Suddenly, the Cold Fairy's gaze swept over.

Qin Yanzhi silently lowered his head, rubbing his eyes.

Lu Ran seized the opportunity to approach: "Friend."

"Woo!!"

Qin Yanzhi, who was rubbing his eyes, suddenly stiffened, a mysterious, dark Other Shore Flower blossomed abruptly from his hand.

"Sizzle—"

Lu Ran grabbed Qin Yanzhi's arm, flying backward.

The Other Shore Flower bloomed and then scattered.

Qin Yanzhi was once again dragged out of the flower's range, stumbling into Lu Ran's arms.

"Um... I..."

Qin Yanzhi quickly took two steps back, looking a bit embarrassed.

Lu Ran also understood, he wasn't trying to escape on purpose, it was just a subconscious reaction.

Three words: Used to it!

"You can rest a thousand minds at ease!" Lu Ran patted the young man's shoulder, "In the Human World, Li Rouyin took good care of me, always treated me to big meals!"

"Big meals?" Qin Yanzhi was full of disbelief.

Li Rouyin didn't like to eat, even had an aversion to it.

"Ahh~ anyway, she treated me very well, and I naturally reciprocated." Lu Ran beamed, "In the future on Holy Spirit Mountain, I'll have your back!"

"May I ask for your honorable name?" Qin Yanzhi spoke very politely.

"Lu Ran! Lu like land, Ran like burning!" Lu Ran tilted his head slightly, "She's Jiang Ruyi, my fiancée."

Qin Yanzhi cupped his hands towards the two: "Rouyin she..."

"She's in the Human World, in the Demon Cave's Bamboo Sea." Lu Ran replied with a smile, "The Bamboo Sea is a top-notch healing spot, very peaceful, you don't have to worry.

However, she's likely thinking about you a lot."

Hearing this, a trace of bitterness welled up in Qin Yanzhi.

Didn't he also long to go home?

However, returning to the Human World, how could it be easy... Wait!

Qin Yanzhi looked up at Lu Ran, his mind racing.

This young man in the Emperor Robe has such amazing skills, could he also be, like Rouyin, a direct disciple of some reclusive Divine?

Reclusive Divine!

Direct Disciple!

If that's the case, if the young Emperor Robe does not follow the regular route set by God Demons...

If he lets Master Lu teleport him directly back to the Human World, he might not face the wrath of his own Divine?

Qin Yanzhi suppressed his complex emotions and asked: "Dare I ask Brother Lu, your skills..."

"That's a long story." Lu Ran reached out to the side.

Qin Yanzhi's eyes narrowed as he saw an antique copper mirror.

The Dust Shadow Sect's mortal enemy was precisely the Evil Mirror Demon clan!

He watched as the copper mirror transformed into a Landing Mirror, unfurling.

"Let's go down, have some tea and chat." Lu Ran invited with a smile.

Another Landing Mirror opened up at the River Valley, in front of the Thousand Flower Inn.

It was clear that Lu Ran was really good to the friends of old friends.

He planned to treat this fellow he had searched for a year and a half with Smoke Rain Tea.

"Alright." Qin Yanzhi no longer hesitated and stepped in.

"Ruyi?" Lu Ran turned to the woman admiring flowers at his side.

The Immortal played with the flower in her hand, remaining silent.

"Let's go home!" Lu Ran extended a Red Silk Thread from his finger, letting it gently fall on her shoulder.

With a thought, the red thread tugged gently, pulling the woman to his side.

The elders say there are four uncontrollable things in the world:

The New Year pig, the startled donkey, the angry wife, the fish ashore.

It turns out that the Tethering Silk Thread can hold them down~

A gentle fragrance in his arms.

Lu Ran gently left a light kiss on her hair and stepped back into the mirror.

The flower sea swayed with the breeze, and the jade figure vanished with the copper mirror.

...

Chapter 683: I have a master...

Inside Thousand Flower Inn, by the window in the main room.

Lu Ran sat by the window, where one could see the murmuring stream not far away, and the vibrant sea of flowers stretching to the horizon.

Besides, there were two young ladies, Xuan Shuang and Liu Huo, attending to him.

How cozy.

But Qin Yanzhi was not feeling cozy.

After Lu Ran casually revealed some secrets, Qin Yanzhi was completely baffled.

His understanding was greatly shaken, and he couldn't process it quickly.

"Slurp..." Lu Ran silently picked up the tea cup, took a shallow sip, and grimaced.

Damn it,

miscalculated!

He intended to mess with Qin Yanzhi, but ended up suffering himself.

The intensely bitter Smoke Rain Tea had excellent alertness effects!

But it was not enjoyable.

Lu Ran looked at the deep-in-thought Qin Yanzhi, the more he looked, the more annoyed he became.

"Brother Qin, don't just stand there." Lu Ran picked up his tea cup and gestured to Qin Yanzhi across the table, "After going through so many hardships, we've finally met, a blessing in life!

But our conditions are tough, so we can only use tea as wine.

Come! You down yours, I'll sip mine!"

Qin Yanzhi: "..."

Tough conditions?

Qin Yanzhi looked at Jiang Ruyi seated by Lu Ran, then at Leng Xushuang attending to them.

His gaze shifted outside the window, to Liu Huo brewing tea in the courtyard...

Are you having a tough time?

You're living the life!

Of course, Qin Yanzhi dared not say these words. The strength of the young man in the emperor robe was so overwhelming, it made one feel despair.

Thankfully, he was a friend!

Otherwise, Qin Yanzhi couldn't imagine what fate awaited him.

"Ding~"

The stone tea cups gently clinked together, and Qin Yanzhi followed the other's idea of "using tea as wine," attempting to drink the Smoke Rain Tea in one gulp.

"Hmm."

The moment the tea entered his mouth, Qin Yanzhi's expression changed.

He slowly put down the tea cup, looked at the clear tea, and then at the young man opposite.

Lu Ran smiled with pursed lips.

That image was classic, like an emoji.

Unexpectedly, Qin Yanzhi sipped again and tasted over and over.

"Brother Qin likes it?" Lu Ran asked curiously.

Qin Yanzhi nodded lightly: "Within Mountain Realm, such flavorful things are rare."

After speaking, he drank the tea completely.

"That's a novel perspective." Lu Ran smirked.

Earlier, he said, "You down yours, I'll sip mine," but now, Lu Ran also drank the bitter tea entirely.

Jiang Ruyi spoke softly: "Now it's Mr. Qin's turn, tell us about yourself."

"Me?"

"Being a Dust Shadow disciple, you must have visited many places and seen many things." Jiang Ruyi elegantly crossed her legs, looking gently at him.

Qin Yanzhi subconsciously averted his gaze.

Both being from Yangyang Sea, he ranked slightly higher than the woman before him, but...

This woman's aura was too strong!

There were distinctions between sects.

Disciples of auxiliary sects couldn't compare in presence to aggressive offence sect believers.

But more importantly, there was a difference in identity and status.

Because Qin Yanzhi had visited many places and seen many people, he was even more certain that this young woman was a high-ranking figure.

The kind who controlled life and death.

She was so young, if in the human world, she might be a student.

A well-behaved daughter under her parents' knees.

Yet, this Holy Spirit Mountain... devours humans.

And consumes hearts.

Sometimes, you don't even need to deliberately do anything.

When your prowess is reached, those around you will push you onto the throne, draping you in a dragon robe.

"Mr. Qin?" Jiang Ruyi called softly.

"Indeed, I've been to many places." Qin Yanzhi looked at the tea on the table, "Icy glaciers, Great Desert wastelands, sandy beaches and islands... many places."

"Now, Lu Ran wanting to find any evil demon will be easier." Jiang Ruyi glanced aside.

Lu Ran nodded repeatedly, silently praising Li Rouyin.

Am I finding friends here?

This is like giving me a map of Holy Spirit Mountain!

Jiang Ruyi propped her elbow on the table, one hand supporting her cheek, watched Qin Yanzhi with interest:

"You must have also seen many wonderful landscapes."

Qin Yanzhi's eyes showed a touch of reminiscence: "The flower sea and sunrise at Qianhua Ridge, the wind and sand and sunset at Mo Gu Peak.

The stars and moon at Moon Shadow Heavenly Pool."

Jiang Ruyi was a bit moved.

Since these locations were worthy of the same name as Qianhua Ridge, they must be breathtaking!

If... she could see them with Lu Ran.

It would surely be a wonderful experience.

Qin Yanzhi continued describing: "The light snow at Ice Heart Lake, the morning fog at Hidden Thousand Mountains;

The misty fine rain at Mist Rain Lake, the Galaxy Waterfall at Nine Heavens Cliff..."

Lu Ran suddenly said: "Brother Qin, you've been to Mist Rain Lake?"

"I have been."

"Never tried Smoke Rain Tea?"

"Never had the chance." Qin Yanzhi gently shook his head.

Lu Ran's expression turned odd, gesturing at the tea cup on the table: "What you're drinking now is."

Qin Yanzhi looked down at the tea, then chuckled in surprise: "I only saw the scenery, dared not interact with people.

The name Mist Rain Lake was something I heard by chance."

Jiang Ruyi patted Lu Ran's shoulder, teasing: "He hasn't finished talking yet."

Lu Ran laughed: "What, you want to visit each one?"

Jiang Ruyi picked up the tea cup, casually said: "You want to."

"I... uh, yes! I want to." Lu Ran nodded repeatedly.

I really want to!

"Continue." Jiang Ruyi slightly raised the corners of her mouth, sipping tea gracefully.

However, Qin Yanzhi did not continue, but instead said, "A place you can go whenever you want lacks something."

The teacup in Jiang Ruyi's hand just reached her lips and paused.

She lifted her gaze, looking across the table.

Qin Yanzhi felt a slight tremor within.

Yes, this is the gaze a person from the Mountain Realm should have.

Her constant gentle smile was merely a courtesy towards acquaintances; the coldness deep in her eyes came from her true self.

The Jade Talisman Sect was mostly composed of cool and stern individuals.

Equal to the North Wind Sect, they considered human lives as trivial.

If Qin Yanzhi encountered a Jade Talisman Disciple during his travels, he definitely wouldn't dare to approach.

"So, is the place you can't go to the most beautiful?" Jiang Ruyi set down the teacup, speaking blandly.

Qin Yanzhi felt his scalp tingle.

The icy and elegant Immortal continued, "Like up in the heavens?"

Qin Yanzhi shook his head, "The human world."

Jiang Ruyi quietly looked at the young man, and after a few seconds, her gaze softened slightly.

Realizing she might have misunderstood him.

All along, Jiang Ruyi was not only filled with awe but also hostility towards the Heavenly Realm!

She did not want her Lu Ran to be swayed by this Dust Shadow Believer, tempted to ascend prematurely when unprepared.

In fact, if it were another believer, she might not have misunderstood.

Yet, sitting opposite is a Dust Shadow Believer!

Looking at Qin Yanzhi's history, you could tell a little.

If given the chance to ascend, Jiang Ruyi believed this Dust Shadow disciple would surely relish the Heavenly Realm.

"To return home, one must pass through the Heavenly Realm." Jiang Ruyi sighed softly, "Whether it's a return to the human world or a death in the underworld, it's uncertain."

As she spoke, she signaled Xuan Shuang beside her to serve tea to the young man.

"There's actually a shortcut." Qin Yanzhi glanced over at Lu Ran.

"Oh?" Lu Ran's eyes lit up.

Qin Yanzhi organized his thoughts: "Since Brother Lu can steal power from Evil Demons and use Evil Mirror Magic,

once Brother Lu reaches beyond the Sea Realm and uses the higher than Sea Grade Mirror Flower Moon, he should be able to cross dimensions and return to the human world."

"Haha, I think so too." Despite smiling, Lu Ran sighed inwardly.

Right now, I'm just at Sea Realm·Second Rank!

Reaching higher than the Sea Realm still requires a year or two of cultivation.

And that's only assuming everything goes smoothly.

He looked at Qin Yanzhi, "Qin brother is also at Sea Realm Second Rank, maybe you'll ascend to the Heavenly Realm sooner than I."

Such words were full of politeness.

Yet Qin Yanzhi asked, "Where did Brother Lu hear the words 'Heavenly Realm'?"

"Mist Rain Lake·Thousand Boat Island..." Lu Ran explained briefly.

Since Lu Ran wanted to recruit Qin Yanzhi, he also recounted that remarkable battle.

Truly captivating!

This made Qin Yanzhi's emotions surge.

Listening to this, could it be that the Ran Sect created by Lu Ran has a very upright character?

Jiang Ruyi observed the black-clothed youth deep in thought and suddenly spoke:

"Where did Mr. Qin hear the words 'Heavenly Realm' from?"

Qin Yanzhi's heart tightened.

That woman...

He calmed his mind, explaining, "I rarely interact with people; it's a name I randomly came up with myself, associating it with the sky, and didn't expect it to match Leader Yun's view."

Jiang Ruyi looked gently at Qin Yanzhi.

Noticing his slightly nervous act of drinking tea, she spoke again: "Mr. Qin, how do you know that the Heavenly Grade·Mirror Flower Moon can definitely connect to the human world?"

Qin Yanzhi set down his teacup, forcing a smile, "It's my personal speculation, based on the effects of different grades of Mirror Flower Moon.

To be precise, it's more of a beautiful wish."

Lu Ran glanced at Jiang Ruyi, feeling somewhat uneasy.

In essence, Jiang Ruyi is not a "cute" person.

She once was.

But from the moment she ascended to the River Realm, she was no longer the gentle Ru Yi who treated the world softly.

Except, towards Lu Ran, she never changed.

Showed slight preferential treatment to a few close friends by her side.

So Lu Ran was a bit unsure of her attitude at this moment...

"Hehe." Suddenly, Jiang Ruyi laughed, "Lu Ran and Li Rouyin are friends; Lu Ran once told me they even met the Divine.

We showed courtesy to Mr. Qin and even shared some secrets.

We trust Mr. Qin like this, and is this how you treat us?"

Qin Yanzhi fell silent.

Jiang Ruyi continued, "Mr. Qin should know, from the moment you saw the Silk Thread, you were already a warrior of my Ran Sect."

Lu Ran is willing to treat an old acquaintance's childhood friend with courtesy, and Jiang Ruyi certainly has no objection.

Yet Lu Ran's safety always takes the utmost priority for Jiang Ruyi.

Whether Qin Yanzhi is willing to join the Ran Sect,

even Qin Yanzhi's every wish and personal will are entirely irrelevant.

Opening one's heart and walking side by side is good for everyone.

If there's a divergence in mind, then there's no choice.

Qin Yanzhi suddenly picked up the teacup, apologizing, "I was being petty, I apologize to the Sect Leader and the Lady."

Finishing his words, Qin Yanzhi stood up and drank the tea in one gulp.

Lu Ran raised his head to look at the young man, curiously asking, "Qin brother, what secret do you have? Always hiding it?"

Qin Yanzhi didn't sit back down, and said solemnly, "I have a master; he is a Dust Shadow believer.

A Heavenly Realm·Dust Shadow Believer!"

"Crack!"

Lu Ran couldn't control his strength, and the teacup in his hand was directly crushed.

Outwardly composed, Jian Ruyi experienced equally intense emotional turmoil; she took Lu Ran's hand and cleared the shattered stones from his palm.

Lu Ran trembled, "Then your master is still... still..."

"Still in the Mountain Realm!" Qin Yanzhi nodded heavily.

Lu Ran: !!!

Chapter 684: The Temptation to Go Home

Calamity!

After calming down, a thought emerged in Jiang Ruyi's mind.

Indeed,

The temptation to return home was hard for her to resist, and her heart was extremely excited.

But after calming down, Jiang Ruyi considered the possibility of Lu Ran's secret being exposed!

In this Mountain Realm, after roaming for a long time, the two of them, Lu and Jiang, indeed had become somewhat reckless, thinking that the hands of the Gods could not reach this place, Lu Ran gradually let go.

However, a message from Qin Yanzhi was like a blow to the head!

He actually had a master who was a Heavenly Realm Dust Shadow Believer and was also capable of activating the Divine Technique·Other Shore Flower, capable of teleporting someone back to the Human World Da Xia!

Once Qin Yanzhi returned to the Human World with Lu Ran's secret, and if it were to be discovered by the Divine Dust Shadow...

Lu Ran would have no way other than death.

Not even Lord Immortal Sheep could protect him!

Or rather, even Lord Immortal Sheep would be exterminated by the joint forces of All Gods!

The Divine Lord Wang Quan, whom Li Rouyin worshipped, is a good example.

Even though the two Divine Beings differ qualitatively, Lord Wang Quan was banished to a Demon Cave just for consuming some Dead Souls to nourish himself, not allowed to take a step out.

The crowd would not allow the Wagner sect to expand, so Divine Wang Quan could only endure hardships with his sole disciple, Li Rouyin.

As for Lord Immortal Sheep...

What it imparted to Lu Ran was not just about consuming Dead Souls.

Lu Ran was shaking the very foundation of All Gods!

Subverting the regime created by the union of the Gods and Demons!

Being attacked by all is the inevitable conclusion for one person and one sheep.

What should be done now?

Let Qin Yanzhi break the contract and switch to Lu Ran's sect, worshiping the Evil Mirror Demon's Stone Sculpture?

That was the only way.

"Heh..." Jiang Ruyi slowly exhaled, calming her emotions.

It was all because the Dust Shadow disciples were too special.

To catch Qin Yanzhi, Lu Ran would inevitably have to use other Divine Techniques or Evil Techniques.

No solution!

"Ruyi."

"Hmm?" Jiang Ruyi snapped back to her senses and looked up at Lu Ran.

Lu Ran wrapped his arms around her shoulders, pulling her into his embrace.

Even with outsiders present this time, Jiang Ruyi did not resist, obediently leaning into his arms.

"Brother Qin, what is your revered master's full name?"

At this moment, Lu Ran also calmed down.

"My master is Lu Yuan, Yuan as in broad."

Qin Yanzhi paused before continuing, "Master Lu, though over seventy years old, came here at the beginning of the God Demon descent when the worldly conflicts had just settled."

Lu Ran nodded secretly.

It seemed he was the same as Elder Cheng, one of the first-generation disciples.

He should also be someone who founded this realm!

In the early days of All Gods' descent, their unified goal was to rectify Human World order and strike against Evil Demons.

At that time, Divine Dust Shadow certainly contributed to these efforts.

But later, when the Gods and Demons reached a tacit balance, constructing a new order after the apocalypse, Divine Dust Shadow gradually showcased its traits.

Only then did the Dust Shadow Sect transition, recruiting disciples who were mostly onlookers detached from the worldly affairs.

In other words, the new era's disciple, Qin Yanzhi, was likely just an observer of the Human World.

But the first-generation disciple, Lu Yuan, was someone who defended the country and supported Da Xia from falling!

He was definitely not an observer!

From Lu Ran's embrace, Jiang Ruyi's cold clear voice emerged, "Since your esteemed master is a Heavenly Realm Power, why is he still stuck in the Mountain Realm?"

Upon hearing this, Qin Yanzhi smiled bitterly, "To be honest, Master Lu cannot leave."

"Oh?" Lu Ran asked, "Isn't it said that the Heavenly Grade·Other Shore Flower can take you back to the Human World?"

The Evil Technique·Mirror Flower Moon corresponds to the Dust Shadow Divine Skill·Other Shore Flower.

Qin Yanzhi slowly uttered four words:

"The Divine does not allow."

"The Divine does not allow?"

"Yes." Qin Yanzhi nodded heavily, "After Master Lu ascended to the Heavenly Realm, he once activated the Other Shore Flower to return to Da Xia."

"He... your master has already gone back?" Lu Ran's heart trembled slightly.

Qin Yanzhi continued slowly, "Soon after, Master Lu received a voice transmission from the Divine Dust Shadow, and nearly lost his life on the spot.

Master Lu immediately teleported back to Holy Spirit Mountain, barely escaping death."

Lu Ran frowned, "From what I know, there are Human Clan believers who entered the Divine Ruins and have returned to the Human World."

Though such people are extremely rare, they objectively exist.

"Master Lu, there is something you might not know. Master Lu's return to the Human World by teleportation breaks the rules."

"Rules?"

Qin Yanzhi pointed upwards, "To return to the Human World, you must go from the sky."

Lu Ran frowned deeper.

He was too familiar with the true nature of the Divine, naturally speculating some information.

How could All Gods easily let these people who knew secrets and had the ability to influence the Human World's situation return to the Human World?

Thus...

Holy Spirit Mountain is a slaughterhouse for the people of Jianghai.

Once people's strength reached the Heavenly Realm, there was no more threat in the Mountain Realm, and the so-called "Heavenly Realm" emerged at the right time.

The Holy Spirit Mountain is a huge cage; people wishing to go home can only fly upwards.

And is the Heavenly Realm above the Cloud Sea a slaughterhouse for Heavenly Realm persons?

"Master Lu cannot return home, and if he sends someone else back, it would harm that person, and Master Lu might also suffer consequences." Qin Yanzhi sighed helplessly.

Jiang Ruyi pondered, "It sounds like your master is a hidden danger to the All Gods."

If so, why not eliminate him directly?

Though the hands of All Gods indeed could not reach into Holy Spirit Mountain, humans could break contracts unilaterally, and so could the Divine simply cut the contract threads unilaterally.

By expelling Lu Yuan from the sect, rendering him powerless in Divine Techniques...

No matter how terrifying Lu Yuan's physical strength, he would die miserably in the Mountain Realm.

That is undoubtedly!

Or to simplify, the Divine Dust Shadow could just ignore Lu Yuan's requests for spellcasting.

The almighty Divine, holding the life essence of their believers, could effortlessly put any believer to death!

So why would such a gigantic hidden danger like Lu Yuan still live?

How could he still retain his identity as a Dust Shadow believer...

Wait!

Jiang Ruyi's eyes flickered slightly.

Holy Spirit Energy!

The energy source of All Gods and Demons!

Lu Yuan, after gathering three to four decades' worth of Holy Spirit Energy from the mountains, surely had an impressive amount.

Such resources were evidently something that even Divine Dust Shadow couldn't bear to part with.

Once the contract is torn, Lu Yuan's soul, after his death, will not embrace the Divine Dust Shadow.

The massive amount of Holy Spirit Energy contained within the soul will not be enjoyed by Lord Dust Shadow.

Jiang Ruyi pondered carefully and voiced her thoughts.

The atmosphere in the room grew increasingly oppressive.

Qin Yanzhi's face was filled with bitterness; he knew in his heart that Jiang Ruyi's speculation was most likely correct.

"I'm afraid so." Lu Ran nodded, "Dust Shadow still allows Master Lu to cast techniques, also to let him continue collecting Holy Spirit Energy.

Only waiting for Master Lu's death, then Dust Shadow can feast on a gluttonous banquet."

Qin Yanzhi: "Within the Mountain Realm, there is no one who can kill Master Lu!"

Though he said that, Qin Yanzhi looked at Lu Ran with some hesitation in his heart.

Before meeting Lu Ran, Qin Yanzhi truly believed his mentor was "invincible in the Holy Spirit Mountain".

Lest to say he could defeat enemies, at least Master Lu would not die.

But after meeting Lu Ran...

The unwavering belief in his heart had been completely shattered.

Lu Ran's strength was of another dimension.

It was omnipotent.

It stood shoulder to shoulder with the Divine!

No!

Master Lu...is an existence that can surpass the Divine!

Jiang Ruyi rose from Lu Ran's embrace, reaching for the teacup: "In the Mountain Realm, perhaps there are none who can harm your mentor."

On the final word "person," Jiang Ruyi deliberately emphasized.

Qin Yanzhi looked at Jiang Ruyi in confusion.

"Time can." Jiang Ruyi said calmly, "It will eventually take everyone away."

Qin Yanzhi's breath caught.

Indeed.

Time!

Whether river or sea, even in the Heavenly Realm, people are essentially still flesh and blood.

The stronger you are, perhaps the longer you live.

But a hundred years? Two hundred years? Three hundred years?

There must come an end!

You cannot consider problems from the perspective of the Human Clan.

To All Gods, a hundred years may be just a snap of fingers.

All Gods have already secured their foothold in the Human World, establishing a system of rule, thereafter enslaving the Human Clan for generations.

Whether Lu Yuan will die in battle does not matter.

He will eventually be taken away by the years!

Afterward, his soul will return to the embrace of the Divine Dust Shadow with an astounding amount of Holy Spirit Energy.

"Alas..." Qin Yanzhi bowed his head, sighing heavily.

Master Lu is like this, am I any different?

Cannot return.

Home, forever cannot return.

Jiang Ruyi sipped her tea, softly asking, "Since the Divine indicates that the correct route home is to ascend the Heavenly Realm.

After your mentor was forced back into the Mountain Realm, did he attempt to go to the Heavenly Realm?"

"He went."

"He went?" Lu Ran slightly opened his eyes.

Honestly, he felt immense admiration and even a bit of envy.

Such a Lu Yuan!

Such a pioneering first-generation disciple!

The Mountain Realm was traversed.

The Human World I have seen.

Even the Heavenly Realm, I have ventured once!

"Why did the honored mentor return?" Jiang Ruyi pursued.

Always forthright Qin Yanzhi this time stumbled.

He looked troubled, raising his eyes to the cold and gorgeous Immortal: "Lady, I truly do not know, Master Lu has never informed me of matters concerning the Heavenly Realm."

Jiang Ruyi slightly furrowed her brow.

From what Qin Yanzhi knows, these two mentor-student duo are intimately connected.

Lu Yuan's past experiences, Qin Yanzhi knows like the back of his hand.

Why in matters related to the Heavenly Realm, has Lu Yuan remained silent?

"I...absolutely do not lie." Qin Yanzhi changed his address, feeling sincere, "Moreover, ever since returning from the Heavenly Realm, Master Lu himself..."

"How so?"

"Relaxed? Peaceful?" Qin Yanzhi uttered two words in succession, attempting to describe Lu Yuan's state, "In any case, he no longer has that previous fighting spirit."

Lu Ran's heart tightened: "Did he see something, and his heart was completely dead?"

"No!" Qin Yanzhi negated, "I've seen far too many walking corpses within the Mountain Realm. Master Lu is not in that state."

"Peaceful." Jiang Ruyi chewed on this word.

So it might be the kind of peace after having seen everything, understood everything?

Qin Yanzhi looked at Lu Ran, with a solemn expression: "Sect Leader, if you return to the Human World, will you face the wrath of the Divine?"

"No!" Lu Ran's reply was crisp.

Qin Yanzhi pondered, confirming again: "Does the Sect Leader have absolute confidence?"

Previously, Lu Yuan returned to the Human World on his own, which already amounted to committing a colossal mistake.

If someone is sent back again and creates another calamity, it might very well implicate others.

For example, Dust Shadow may send someone, particularly to kill Lu Yuan, collect his soul early, isn't it easy?

Just at a key moment, a thought, prohibiting Lu Yuan from casting techniques, how would he survive?

To maintain the current situation, let Master Lu continue collecting Holy Spirit Energy, at least he can still live steadily, until his life is exhausted by the passage of time.

But...

But Master Lu expressed his true feelings more than once.

Missing his wife and daughter, wanting to know if his wife is still alive, if his daughter is living smoothly, if she is married...

Protect home and country, protect home and country.

Lu Yuan knelt devoutly before the Divine, becoming a Believer, first for protecting the home.

It's for his wife and daughter at home!

But now, Lu Yuan is in this desolate land, like a lone soul and wild ghost, wandered for thirty to forty years.

Anxious in remaining days.

"Of course, I have absolute confidence!" Lu Ran said with equal seriousness, "You must understand one thing."

Lu Ran stared into Qin Yanzhi's eyes, voicing firmly:

"The Divine you worship wants to maintain the status quo, make rule everlasting, wants us dead.

Whereas the Divine I worship wants to destroy the order, overturn the rule...

Wants All Gods dead!"

...

Chapter 685: Yunzhujian

Lu Ran's words were spoken with resounding authority.

Qin Yanzhi forcibly suppressed the tremor in his heart and said, "In that case, Sect Leader, do you wish to return home?"

This question made Lu Ran smile.

Do I want to go home?

In the Mountain Realm, among all beings, who wouldn't want to?

Lu Ran also had people he missed.

Mother, Little Yuanxi... including Lord Immortal Sheep.

Lu Ran was eager to have a good conversation with Lord Immortal Sheep and seek his advice.

There was another urgent matter: many soldiers of the Ran Sect were desperately in need to nullify the contract without harm!

"Sect Leader?"

"I do!"

Qin Yanzhi felt a relief in his heart, "If Master Lu knew that the Sect Leader could roam freely in the human world, he would be very happy."

Lu Ran speculated, "Does your master have an unfinished wish in the human world?"

Qin Yanzhi replied, "Master Lu has someone he cares about in the human world. If the Sect Leader could help to check in on them and take care of them a bit, and relay the news back, my master would be endlessly grateful!"

"Who?"

"Before Master Lu was sent to the Holy Spirit Mountain, his wife just gave birth to a daughter..." Qin Yanzhi explained in detail.

Listening to it, Lu Jiang couldn't help but sigh.

You cannot view the first-generation disciples with today's perspective.

For example, within the Immortal Sheep Sect, the elders bearing the Cheng surname.

They do not have issues with weakness or cowardice.

On the contrary, the Cheng Family's Five Tigers were courageous, elite soldiers fighting against the invasion of Evil Demons on the battlefield's front line!

Old man Lu Yuan was also the same.

It's a pity that after his blood and sweat, bringing relative peace to the human world, he was heartlessly thrown into the Holy Spirit Mountain by the Divine.

Leaving behind only a lone daughter and her widowed mother in the world.

"Dust Shadow, truly worthless..." Lu Ran murmured.

Jiang Ruyi couldn't help but feel some emotions, but more than that, she believed such an elder should stand by Lu Ran's side.

They were all from the Human Clan, with common enemies.

Divine Dust Shadow had broken Lu Yuan's heart!

It's hard to imagine how devastated Lu Yuan must have felt upon returning to the human world after a lifetime of hardships, eager to reunite with his wife and daughter, only to be blocked by the Divine, forced back into the Holy Spirit Mountain...

On that day, just how shattered was Lu Yuan?

How deep was his hatred for the Divine?

Lu Ran's appearance might become Lu Yuan's lifeline.

Provided that everything Qin Yanzhi said was true.

Since their connection, Jiang Ruyi had been closely observing Qin Yanzhi, having greatly revised her opinion of this young man, and was willing to trust his sincerity.

Placing a hand on Lu Ran's leg, she sent a message telepathically.

The two exchanged a silent conversation for a moment, then Lu Ran nodded lightly, looking at Qin Yanzhi and said, word by word:

"Brother Qin, do you plan to become a God?"

"Ah?" Qin Yanzhi was stunned by the question.

The abrupt topic shift left him a bit confused.

What shocked Qin Yanzhi more was Lu Ran's words, pure heresy!

Also, sheer fantasy!

But Qin Yanzhi quickly realized who he was speaking to.

This was someone capable of stealing the power of gods and demons!

Qin Yanzhi was moved!

He had had enough of this prison named "Holy Spirit Mountain."

Compared to others, Qin Yanzhi knew more information and had already seen through everything.

In this life, he saw his end before him.

The current Master Lu, would be his future self.

Destitute for the rest of his life.

Dying old in the mountains.

"Sect... Sect Leader can also help others steal the power of gods and demons?" Qin Yanzhi's voice carried a trace of trembling.

Lu Ran smiled again.

He tilted his head slightly, indicating towards the cool and glamorous immortal beside him: "Do you think she is a Jade Talisman Believer?"

The word "Believer" was emphasized by Lu Ran.

"Gulp." Qin Yanzhi's Adam's apple moved.

He had a vague understanding of Lu Ran's abilities, knowing only that Lu Ran could steal the power of gods and demons.

But Lu Ran's words now couldn't be clearer!

Lu Ran pushed the tea cup aside slightly.

A Xuan Shuang Guard immediately stepped forward with a pot.

Lu Ran pointed to the stunning woman silently pouring tea: "Pseudo Evil God, Ice Plum Demon Queen."

Ice Plum Demon Queen?

Qin Yanzhi struggled to remain calm, although this was merely Lu Ran's assertion, Lu Ran's authority was overwhelming.

Every word, every phrase radiated undeniable authority.

Lu Ran then looked towards the woman in red clothes boiling tea outside the window: "Pseudo Evil God, Black Fire Colt."

Qin Yanzhi: "..."

What virtue or capability do I possess?

To have two pseudo Evil Gods boiling tea and pouring tea for me?

Rouyin, this friend you entrusted to care for...

Lu Ran picked up the tea cup, staring into Qin Yanzhi's eyes: "So, Brother Qin, do you intend to become a God?"

Qin Yanzhi remained silent for a long while, then asked, "What is the price?"

"The price..." Lu Ran took a sip of the bitter tea, his smile turning somewhat bitter, "The price is, we may die on the path of resistance.

The Evil God I speak of needs a 'Pseudo' prefix before it.

We might die on the path of challenging the Divine and capturing a Divine Position."

Qin Yanzhi sat silently for a long time, suddenly speaking: "This doesn't sound like a cost, but a qualification.

A qualification anyone would go mad for."

Jiang Ruyi revealed a faint smile.

Li Rouyin's childhood friend was indeed quite a character.

"Heh." Lu Ran nodded with a smile, "If Brother Qin thinks that way, then there is no price."

Qin Yanzhi gazed at Lu Ran with a serious expression: "Is there truly no cost?"

Could such a thing like a pie falling from the sky be possible?

Lu Ran had a peculiar expression.

He pondered for quite a while, then tentatively suggested, "How about, you make tea for me in the future?"

Qin Yan:..."

No cost, just looking for trouble, huh?

"Forget it then." Lu Ran curled his lips and said, "If Li, the private chef, finds out, and doesn't give me food, I'll be at a big loss."

At this moment, Qin Yan probably figured out what Lu Ran meant by "feast" earlier.

Master Lu... should be the type that devours dead souls like Rouyin!

Only this way, could the two have intersected and formed a deep friendship.

"So?" Lu Ran raised an eyebrow.

"I do!"

"Hmm." Lu Ran awkwardly took a sip of tea.

A fair and handsome young man saying such things to me, always feels a bit strange?

Oh well, never mind.

Love to hear it~

The uniqueness of the Dust Shadow Sect made Lu Ran inevitably wary.

A very real problem: once Qin Yan casts the Divine Technique-Other Shore Flower, all words between the two of them can reset to zero.

There's no guarantee whether Qin Yan will teleport away alone when the flower contracts, or take Lu Ran with him.

You cannot control a Dust Shadow Believer.

And having Qin Yan break the contract and switch to another sect is not wise either.

Ran Sect does not lack River Realm Peak!

What Lu Ran lacks is Sea Realm power, Heavenly Realm power!

Qin Yan even has an intimate Heavenly Realm-master, which is Qin Yan's backing and the person Lu Ran is eager to win over in the future.

So...

Clear things up now, offer benefits to him, and lower the risks, further and further!

"I intend to make you a Pseudo Evil God-Evil Mirror Demon." Lu Ran put down the teacup.

"Evil Mirror Demon..." Qin Yan pondered secretly.

He seemed to understand. The Ice Plum Demon Queen serving by the side might have once been a Cold Plum Disciple.

And the Evil God-Black Fire Colt outside brewing tea, is likely a Blazing Blood Believer!

"Here's the problem, to become a Fake God, you first have to break your contract with Divine Dust Shadow, and that action will cost you dearly..."

Lu Ran made the pros and cons clear, then stated the real purpose: "If I return to the Human World, I can seek guidance from my own Divine.

Find a way to dissolve the contract without harm."

Qin Yan immediately expressed: "I will exhaust every effort to find Master Lu!"

"Exhaust every effort?" Lu Ran was taken aback.

Don't you and your master have any means of communication?

Hmm... it seems that Qin Yan indeed doesn't have any Divine Weapon or Magic Artifact on him.

Qin Yan explained: "Master Lu, like me, has always been traveling around."

Lu Ran's heart sank.

The Holy Spirit Mountain is vast, where to find him?

Seeing Lu Ran's expression, Qin Yan quickly said: "Master needn't worry! Every three to five months, Master Lu returns to the residence, staying for a few days.

It's been over a month since we last met.

Even if I can't find Master Lu, I can wait for him."

Lu Ran felt a bit relieved, and asked: "Where do you live?"

"Not far from here, located within the territory of the Bamboo Wood Demon Clan. Master Lu has named that place Cloud Bamboo Stream."

Poor Bamboo Wood Demon Clan~

They really have no face!

Others have built their home inside their very base...

Qin Yan suggested: "Master, why don't we go take a look now?"

"Sure." Lu Ran nodded immediately.

Qin Yan opened his palm, a pitch-black mysterious Other Shore Flower quietly bloomed: "Should this Ice Plum... lady join us?"

"I'll go with Lu Ran." Jiang Ruyi stood up, observing the Other Shore Flower enveloping their side.

The Divine Technique·Other Shore Flower can envelop many people.

But the target of the teleportation is controlled by the caster.

"Swish~"

The Other Shore Flower contracted rapidly.

Lu and Jiang only saw a blur before their eyes, and the scenery around them changed.

Looking around, it was a lush bamboo forest shrouded in a faint mist.

Behind Lu Ran stood a bamboo and wood house, with a babbling stream running through the nearby bamboo forest.

The scent of flowers at the nose was replaced by an invigorating aroma of bamboo and wood.

"Cloud Bamboo Stream."

Lu Ran murmured, feeling the name was quite fitting.

There was mist, there was bamboo.

And there was also a stream in the forest.

"Master Lu?" Qin Yan pushed open the bamboo and wood-made fence gate, striding inside.

Lu and Jiang followed, examining the rather exquisite bamboo house.

A stone table stood on the left side of the courtyard, with a chessboard carved on it, and two sets of chess pieces arranged within.

Lu Ran had no understanding of the game of Go and could not comprehend the board's strategy.

"Rustle~"

A breeze blew through, bringing the pleasant sound of bamboo leaves rubbing against one another, attracting Lu Ran over.

Looking far into the distance, the bamboo forest at the field's end was veiled in light white mist.

Shadowy and beautiful, like the Immortal Realm.

Not something the Holy Spirit Mountain should possess.

"My humble abode."

Beside him, Jiang Ruyi's gentle voice came.

"Hmm?" Lu Ran turned to look.

Jiang Ruyi was standing at the bamboo house's entrance, looking up at the lintel.

There were three big characters there.

"What does it mean?" Lu Ran walked over.

"Literally, it means 'my dwelling is small'." Jiang Ruyi admired the engraved writing.

The pen was firm, vigorous and powerful.

"Oh." Lu Ran scratched his head, "I thought it was some profound house name."

Jiang Ruyi nodded gently: "My humble abode, there's another line."

"What?"

"Dragon and snake beyond the shadow, in the sounds of wind and rain."

...

Chapter 686: Add Another Divine General

"Sect Master." Qin Yanzhi stepped out of the bamboo house, "Lu Shi is not at home. From the setup inside, he hasn't returned since we parted last month."

Lu Ran nodded, having been mentally prepared for this.

Jiang Ruyi said, "Aren't you inviting us in for a sit-down?"

"Ah!" Qin Yanzhi apologetically stepped aside, "Sect Master, Lady, please."

The bamboo house was very small, and the interior layout was quite simple, without even a partition, just one single room.

On each side, a bamboo bed was placed, and in the center of the room was a bamboo table and a few bamboo chairs.

As simple as the house was, the bamboo carvings were equally exquisite!

Jiang Ruyi's eyes brightened!

On the bamboo table were cylindrical bamboo cups, carved with various landscape images.

The craftsmanship of these carvings was so exquisite, they were breathtaking.

Jiang Ruyi picked up a bamboo cup, looking at the small house in the bamboo forest.

Wasn't this exactly the Yunzhu Stream where everyone was?

"If Lady likes this bamboo carving, it's yours to have," Qin Yanzhi immediately said.

"Did you carve it?" Jiang Ruyi slowly turned the bamboo cup.

Among the exquisitely carved bamboo forest, one could also see the figures of Bamboo Wood Demons.

They weren't sinistly lurking, but gathered in threes and fives, gesturing at something, looking rather silly.

Quite vividly portrayed.

"Yes, learned from Master Lu, but my skills are not sophisticated," Qin Yanzhi said with a face full of remorse.

"You're being modest," Jiang Ruyi put down the bamboo cup.

"Our Qin Divine General, probably isn't being modest." Lu Ran's voice came from the side.

The two in the center of the room turned their heads to look to the left.

Lu Ran was standing by the bamboo bed on the west side, looking at the bamboo cups on a small shelf.

The cups were not landscapes, but figures.

It was a middle-aged woman, her eyelids drooped, cascading black hair flowing over her shoulders, a subtle gentle smile on her face, exuding an air of grace.

Admiringly, Lu Ran clicked his tongue.

It's hard to imagine finding such "elegance" in a piece of craftsmanship.

The woman wasn't stunningly beautiful, but she was genuinely beautiful.

Qin Yanzhi introduced, "This is Master Lu's wife, but Master Lu has never mentioned her name."

Jiang Ruyi came forward to admire it closely.

Lu Ran leaned over, bumped Jiang Ruyi's shoulder, "Aren't you worried that she'll suddenly look up at us both?"

"Hehe~" Jiang Ruyi couldn't help but chuckle.

"Sect Master, you just mentioned... Divine General?"

"Yes! There are several sequences in our Ran Sect, including the four Great Protectors, the eight Divine Generals, and such." Lu Ran turned his head to look at the young man, "You are the fifth Divine General."

Qin Yanzhi was astonished.

He was already at Sea Realm·Second Rank!

Logically, to live up to the title "Divine General" and to stand neck and neck with him, one must also be from the venerable Yangyang Sea!

And from Lu Ran's words, is there a Protector sequence above the Divine Generals?

This Ran Sect...

Is a haven of hidden talents?!

It makes sense, the Sect Master is this powerful and ambitious, surely there are countless experts under him!

"What do you say, Brother Qin?" Lu Ran asked with a smile, "Would you like to accept the title of Divine General?"

Qin Yanzhi was delighted, immediately clasping his hands, "Sect Master has faith in me, I will not dishonor this title as a subordinate."

He, who relied on his master for life, had found another great support in Lu Ran.

Master Lu was indeed strong.

But as elusive as a dragon.

Lu Ran and his Ran Sect, however, were solidly established there!

With the title of "Ran Sect Divine General," there would surely be many companions to look after each other.

"Great!" Lu Ran smiled at Qin Yanzhi.

Perhaps, Qin Yanzhi really seldom interacted with others...

But his various reactions and behaviors, despite never having tasted pork, likely seen many pigs run!

Qin Yanzhi couldn't help but inquire, "The first four Divine Generals, are they also Sea Realm?"

Lu Ran nodded, then shook his head.

Qin Yanzhi was somewhat puzzled.

Lu Ran: "They are all indeed Sea Realm, but not just four."

Qin Yanzhi was even more puzzled, "Aren't I the fifth Divine General under the Sect Master?"

Lu Ran shrugged, "There are nine out of eight Divine Generals, it's quite normal!"

Qin Yanzhi: "..."

Alright then.

You are the Sect Master, what you say goes!

...

Lu Jiang stayed at Yunzhu Stream for a few days.

During the time, they also wandered in the Bamboo Sea, slaying quite a few Bamboo Wood Demons.

Unfortunately, they couldn't wait for Lu Yuan to return home.

On May 13, Lu Ran had to return to Cloud Sea Cliff.

The Great Phoenix of West Desolation had, after several days of closed-door cultivation, finally broken through the bottleneck, entering the advancement mode!

Lu Ran certainly couldn't miss such a great opportunity for cultivation.

He ordered Shadow Three to stay at Yunzhu Stream, and then took Jiang Ruyi and two members of the Shadow Guard Team back to Cloud Sea Cliff together.

According to the Shadow Guard Team, the two sisters of the Zhong Family still had potential advancements in their cultivation path.

They should be able to return to Jiang Realm·Fourth Rank.

The youngest sister of the Zhong Family seemingly had no hopes, fearing she would only remain at Jiang Realm·Third Rank for her life.

No way, the three sisters of the Zhong Family signed a master-servant contract with Lu Ran, devoted to the Evil Sculpture·Yan Shuangzi.

They simply couldn't enhance their cultivation talent.

Mmm... but it shouldn't be so absolute.

After all, there still exists the method of "Divine Blessing" in this world.

If Lu Ran could seize a Divine Position, he could possess the skill of "Blessing."

At that time, he could perform Body Tempering and Marrow Cleansing for his subordinates.

After returning to Cloud Sea Cliff, Lu Ran quickly entered a state of vigilance, fiercely absorbing Divine Power while also guarding Xue Fengchen.

Jiang Ruyi went into seclusion.

Lu Ran also only found out upon returning that Big Nightmare had already gone into seclusion ahead of time.

The two girls had both advanced last December, one in the early and another in the late month.

Considering the dates, it's indeed about time.

With Xue Fengchen's advancement as the trigger, hoping they both can successfully break through their cultivation shackles.

As for the newly joined Divine General·Qin Yanzhi, early on, when Lu Jiang were staying for a while at the Cloud Bamboo Ravine, he took the Divine Weapon·Silent Night Blade to search for his mentor.

The world is vast, and finding one person is indeed a slim hope.

But it was evident that Qin Yanzhi had genuine feelings for his master, and he was eager to convey this happy news to his teacher.

Lu Ran and Jiang Ruyi did not stop him.

If Qin Yanzhi found his master soon, Lu Ran could return home earlier to report the results to Lord Immortal Sheep.

The Phoenix General's advancement went smoothly.

On May 19, Xue Fengchen successfully emerged from seclusion and specifically came to the sea cliff to report the good news to Lu Ran.

At that time, Cloud Sea Cliff was still shrouded in mist!

The Big Nightmare was in the process of leveling up, tumultuously advancing to the Sea Realm·Third Rank!

Lu Ran also noticed that every year or so, whenever the generals of the Ran Sect advanced, they would follow suit in succession.

Since the advancement time for a Sea Realm Great Power is long enough, it indeed benefits many people.

Until May 27, the mist within the cliff finally dispersed.

The Fake God-Night Charm emerged from seclusion!

Deng Yuxiang, with the terrifying power of Sea Realm-Third Rank, caught up with Xun Yifei, Shangguan Hongfu, these "old fellows" in their thirties, at the age of twenty-three.

He also left the likes of Divine Color General, Qin Divine General, and Phoenix and Swallow Generals, all these Sea Realm-Second Rank Great Powers, far behind.

The so-called first Protector of the Ran Sect was finally going to live up to their name!

Now the only ones who could suppress her were the Dragon Guardian and Luo Divine General, just a few.

Oh, right!

There was also a Great Martial Artist-Wu Xiao!

Hmm... let's forget about that one.

That one is a bit too fierce~

Unfortunately, Jiang Ruyi wasn't able to catch a break; after the mist cleared, the Jiang Fairy was still meditating in seclusion.

Lu Ran naturally did not disturb her.

Ever since meeting Qin Yanzhi, Lu Ran's mindset had somewhat changed; he was not in such a hurry and wanted to continue cultivating, just waiting for good news from the Silent Night Blade.

Time flew, and it was now early June.

On this day, the Evil Shadow Guardian brought a criminal to the sea cliff.

"Master." Yan Shuangzi called softly as she looked at Lu Ran's back.

"Hmm?" Lu Ran did not turn around, his calves still hanging outside the cliff, leisurely swaying.

Cultivation does not necessarily require sitting upright and serious.

Lu Ran was very adept at finding joy amidst hardship.

"I want her to join the Shadow Guard Team." Yan Shuangzi requested.

Lu Ran finally turned to look.

He saw the former North Wind Disciple-He Jing kneeling properly on the ground, her head respectfully lowered.

"Can you trust her?" Lu Ran asked.

This question was directed at Yan Shuangzi.

For Lu Ran personally, after this person signed a master-servant contract with the Evil Dog Sculpture, she was equivalent to having her life in Lu Ran's hands.

Lu Ran needed only one thought to make her lose all her Evil Techniques.

And with just a thought, he could make her die suddenly.

"Yes." Yan Shuangzi nodded slightly, "Her overall competence is no less than the three sisters of the Zhong Family; her martial arts are exceptional, qualified to join the Shadow Guard Team.

I also want her to become an Evil Dog Follower to follow and revere me from now on."

"Fine, as long as you've considered it well." Lu Ran's figure flashed, standing before the woman.

He placed a hand down, slowly closing his eyes.

"Hoo!!"

A phantom of the Evil God suddenly burst from within him.

The Evil Dog's nose and Lu Ran's hand overlapped, pressing onto the woman's head.

He Jing widened her eyes slightly.

She had never expected that after more than ten years, she could once again relive the feeling of signing a contract at the God Worship Platform.

A few seconds later, an Evil Dog Disciple was born.

"From now on, you are Shadow Four." Yan Shuangzi said.

"Thank you, Sect Master, for giving me a new life. I will faithfully follow both of you." He Jing lowered her head, a flash of joy as a Believer passed, her eyes full of deep respect.

Reflecting on the deeds of the people at Sword Ridge Peak, she even found it somewhat laughable.

A group of people unaware of the vastness of the heavens and earth dared to imprison and torment a future Evil God...

During these days, she had felt countless times lucky that she had once expressed a hint of goodwill to Lord Evil God.

Yan Shuangzi looked at Lu Ran, "She was once at the River Realm Peak and dropped to Jiang Realm·Third Rank after breaking the contract.

A few days ago, when Yuxiang advanced, she again ascended to Jiang Realm·Fourth Rank."

"Oh?" Lu Ran was somewhat surprised.

This is quite a valuable piece of information: Can a person still improve their cultivation without any sect or group?

It is known that ordinary people cannot cultivate Divine Power.

One must sign a contract with the Divine at the God Worship Platform and alter their physique to be eligible to receive this wondrous power of "Divine Power."

Now it seems, after a person's body is transformed and then breaks the contract, they can still continue to climb as "an ordinary person?"

"Truly a disciple of a Second-class God, with very high aptitude." Lu Ran lamented.

"Indeed, her potential is very high and can continue to grow." Yan Shuangzi spoke softly, "Your Shadow Guard Team shouldn't just be River Realm."

Lu Ran laughed at the Evil Shadow Guardian, "You've just been promoted to Sea Realm and want to arrange a Sea Realm Guard Team for me?"

Yan Shuangzi replied, "My Lady's two guards are both Evil Gods; their growth has no upper limit and will become stronger."

"Uh?" Lu Ran blinked his eyes.

He and Little Ruyi were inseparable; moreover, those two Evil Gods also belonged to Lu Ran.

But looking at Yan Shuangzi's stance, are they aiming for a showdown?

Lu Ran said, "Then I'll find you an Evil God to join your Shadow Guard Team?"

Yan Shuangzi seriously said, "Okay!"

Lu Ran: "..."

Since successfully taking revenge and advancing to Sea Realm, Yan Shuangzi indeed changed a lot.

Daring to make demands, the whole person became more radiant.

The prideful nature of the past seemed to be gradually returning.

Good, very good!

Lu Ran pondered for a moment and tentatively said, "Call me Sect Leader from now on."

They looked at each other for a long time.

Yan Shuangzi did not respond to Lu Ran; she simply bent down and patted Shadow Four's shoulder, "Let's go. I'll show you how to guard him."

Shadow Four saluted Lu Ran, then quickly caught up with Yan Shuangzi and walked towards the mountain forest.

Leaving Lu Ran pouting, standing there in the sea breeze.

Chapter 687: What lantern to believe in?

"Sigh..."

Gazing at the retreating figure of Yan Shuangzi leading people away, Lu Ran sighed.

In his mind, Deng Yuxiang's words resurfaced, "You really don't understand her."

Indeed.

He didn't understand her well enough.

Lu Ran originally believed that after piecing the shattered Yan Shuangzi back together, granting her rebirth, guiding her revenge, and supporting her ascension to the Sea Realm, she would regain her former glory.

No longer belittling herself.

The Great Evil Shadow did indeed shine once more, yet she still refused to change how she addressed him.

In truth, the address was merely superficial; the key was her sense of self...

"Swish~"

Lu Ran's figure flickered, disappearing from sight.

Oh, whatever, women are just troublesome!

Let it be.

I've done my best...

[Where did you go?] Suddenly, Yan Shuangzi's voice echoed in his mind.

[Huh?] Lu Ran was momentarily stunned.

How dare she question me?

This is absurd!

Yan Shuangzi seemed to sense the issue and her tone softened: [Master, where have you gone? I'm teaching Shadow Four how to protect you.]

Lu Ran sat on the village chief's seat in the Council Hall, snorted:

[I'm in the Council Hall. Call Mr. Conglong here.]

[Yes.]

Lu Ran changed his target and transmitted a message: [Nightmare, come to the Council Hall.]

[Mhm.]

A faint nasal sound made Lu Ran shiver.

Well then~

The Big Nightmare, the Great Evil Shadow.

The two big ladies, both with the background of North Wind Disciples... there's no nice person, is there?

Lu Ran propped his elbow on the desk, resting his face in his palm, waiting silently.

Deng Yuxiang arrived first. Seeing Lu Ran's bored look of "waiting for class," a smile tugged at her lips.

This is the time to say, "Class starts now."

Would he stand up and say, "Good day, teacher"?

"Sit." Lu Ran said casually.

"So idle today?" Deng Yuxiang strode over with her long legs and plopped into the first seat on the left.

She was like a great general!

This demeanor, this aura, far better suited for the village chief's seat than Lu Ran.

"I was originally devoted to cultivation but was disturbed by your Great Evil Shadow." Lu Ran pouted.

Deng Yuxiang leaned back, relaxing against the chair back.

She tilted her head to look at the young man behind the desk and couldn't help but say, "Teachers don't like tattletales."

Lu Ran: ?

It truly proves that power can change a person.

The Sea Realm·Third Rank Big Nightmare was so dazzling.

The more Lu Ran looked, the more he liked it.

Alright~

In respect of this sect leader's appreciation, let it be.

"Sect Leader." A refined gentleman entered the hall, holding a paper fan, and saluted Lu Ran with a cupped fist.

"Sir, please take a seat." Lu Ran nodded with a smile, casting a glance at Deng Yuxiang.

Look at him!

A Sea Realm Fourth Rank Great Power, when did he float by?

Yu Changsheng approached the right row of seats, gracing the first seat with elegance.

Seeing that both guardians had arrived, Lu Ran spoke, "Since I returned to the cliff, Phoenix General and Nightmare Guardian have successively advanced. There is one matter I haven't shared with you."

Both of them regarded the young sect leader behind the lavish desk with some curiosity.

"I have recruited another Divine General." Lu Ran announced.

He then briefly recounted capturing Dust Shadow Disciple-Qin Yanzhi at Qianhua Ridge.

"Congratulations, Sect Leader!" Yu Changsheng immediately offered his felicitations.

"Congratulations all around." Lu Ran responded habitually.

Yu Changsheng wondered, "Why hasn't Qin Divine General returned to the cliff?"

With Xue Fengchen and Deng Yuxiang, the two Sea Realm Great Powers, advancing, wouldn't Qin Divine General be interested in such a great cultivation environment?

"Qin Divine General has gone out to search for his master."

"Master?" Deng Yuxiang raised an eyebrow slightly.

Lu Ran glanced over them: "Heavenly Realm-Dust Shadow Believer."

Yu Changsheng's breath caught slightly.

"Crack!"

Deng Yuxiang didn't control her strength, crushing the armrest.

"Oh dear, my Big Nightmare, go easy!" Lu Ran felt a pang of heartache.

The furniture from Langhua Village and Wolf Bone Village, with such exquisite craftsmanship, was unmatched by other factional organizations.

Deng Yuxiang looked at the young emperor on the throne, her voice trembling: "C-could we return home early?"

Who among those in the mountains doesn't want to go home?

Deng Yuxiang had parents and a wayward younger brother.

Blood ties are a wonderful thing.

Even someone like the Big Nightmare would occasionally think of family far away in the human world during quiet nights.

"Finding Senior Lu Yuan should make it possible." Lu Ran nodded.

Yu Changsheng stood up: "Are you certain, Heavenly Grade-Other Shore Flower can take us home?"

"Certainly."

"Why so sure?" Yu Changsheng was quite surprised.

Lu Ran smiled: "Because Senior Lu Yuan has returned there before."

Deng Yuxiang's eyes lit up!

Yu Changsheng also paused for quite a while.

"Hehe~"

Lu Ran laughed inwardly, watching the shocked expressions of the two greats of Yangyang Sea, finding it quite amusing.

Yet, he feigned a pained expression: "Nightmare Guardian, Dragon Guardian! You two are giants of Yangyang Sea, how can you lack composure?

What decorum is there!"

Yu Changsheng's eyes looked deeply at Lu Ran.

Deng Yuxiang merely laughed, "Heh."

She simply didn't believe that when Lu Ran first heard this information, he could remain as steady as a mountain!

She and Lu Ran had nearly identical growth paths.

Putting aside the longing for family, the emotions both held for their hometown Rain Alley City and for the Wu Lie River were extremely strong!

"Sit down and listen carefully as I tell you..." Lu Ran transformed into a storyteller, recounting every detail of those few days.

The experiences of Senior Lu Yuan were heard, leaving Yu Changsheng sighing internally.

Comparatively, Deng Yuxiang was more focused on herself and Lu Ran: "So, in at most three months, we can expect Senior Lu's return to Cloud Bamboo Stream?"

The information provided by Qin Yanzhi was rather vague, saying that every three to five months, the master would return to his residence for a few days.

It was now early June, and Senior Lu Yuan had been away for two months.

"Probably." Lu Ran nodded.

Yu Changsheng sighed deeply.

"Mr. Conglong?"

Yu Changsheng smiled and shook his head: "Given Senior Lu Yuan's experiences, I am unable to return.

If I don't ascend, directly reaching the Human World...

I'm afraid that Divine-Dragon Carp would immediately deprive me of my life and devour my soul."

Lu Ran remained silent for a moment, then spoke solemnly: "If there's a chance to return to the Human World, I will seek guidance from Lord Immortal Sheep, find a way to nullify the contract for you without harm."

Yu Changsheng cupped his hands: "Thank you, Sect Leader."

Deng Yuxiang looked at Yu Changsheng, and with her keen perception, she noticed a hint of sorrow in this usually elegant gentleman's eyes.

Clearly, with the Human World so close, Yu Changsheng still couldn't return.

It truly was cruel.

Undoubtedly, what made Yu Changsheng more anxious was whether his friends and family in the Human World were still alive, after all these years.

"Sect Leader." Yu Changsheng stood up again, "Does anyone else know about this?"

"The Shadow Guard Team, and two of the lady's personal guards."

"The Sect Leader must strictly control this information, and not let anyone else know." Yu Changsheng's tone was particularly serious.

Lu Ran nodded silently.

Now, with Ran Sect disciples living tranquilly within the cliff, hearing such news unexpectedly might cause unforeseen chaos.

Yu Changsheng continued: "If there's a chance to return to the Human World, there shouldn't be too many people involved. The key is for Sect Leader to communicate with Lord Immortal Sheep!"

Sect Leader must be aware that what you are about to do is akin to dancing on the edge of a blade; any slight mistake could lead to eternal damnation!"

"I understand." Lu Ran nodded heavily.

Yu Changsheng, still a bit uneasy, advised further: "The Sect Leader's identity is extremely special, well-known in the Human World; it's best not to expose yourself in public to avoid drawing too much attention.

The so-called glorious return must not happen now."

Lu Ran looked at the strategist, waiting for further words.

Yu Changsheng said solemnly: "A glorious return should be the day when The Pride of Da Xia overturns the existing order, topples the divine tyranny, imposes their force over the seas, and brings blessings to all..."

The day they ascend the throne!"

Lu Ran pressed a hand on the bookcase.

Dammit,

It ignited him!

Yu Changsheng raised his eyes, looking at Lu Ran on the throne: "What does the Sect Leader think?"

Lu Ran calmed his thoughts and sighed: "Mr. Conglong, you still love using idioms so much."

Yu Changsheng: "..."

Lu Ran chuckled, then said: "Thanks for the guidance, sir. I will act discreetly. But there's something I wish to discuss with you."

"Please speak, Sect Leader."

"In the Human World, I have a few sworn siblings." Lu Ran said, glancing at Deng Yuxiang.

Deng Yuxiang was naturally aware that among those Lu Ran spoke of, her own brother was included.

Lu Ran continued: "These people are not exceptionally gifted; all are Fourth or Fifth-class God disciples, at most a Third-class God disciple, who is my own sister.

Instead of waiting for the divine to throw them into the mountains... somewhere unknown, possibly captured by villains, suffering slavery and a tragic death,

why not I take them in directly!"

At this moment, Lu Ran's mindset had greatly shifted.

With the Ran Sect now strong and getting stronger, they truly had the ability to protect the siblings.

Yu Changsheng pondered for a moment then nodded: "It's indeed feasible and can also relieve the Sect Leader of future worries."

The root of overthrowing the God Demon tyranny lay in Lu Ran himself.

Whether those people were willing to join the mountains, whether they were willing to embark on this perilous path to ascension...

Was not of consequence!

As long as it benefitted Lu Ran, even if it only brought a shred of peace of mind to the Sect Leader, it was enough.

This was also all Yu Changsheng needed to consider.

However, such thoughts could not be expressed by Yu Changsheng.

He covertly glanced at Deng Yuxiang across from him.

It seemed that he would have to talk to her privately.

If those people were willing to accept the Sect Leader's invitation, all would be well.

If they were unwilling to accept...

She could make them accept.

Yu Changsheng reached a conclusion in his mind and suggested: "This time, when the Sect Leader returns to the Human World, you might as well ask Lord Immortal Sheep to help those few tear up the contract without harm.

From the Sect Leader's words, their innate talent is not outstanding.

Bringing them into the mountains, binding them to the Sect Leader's Stone Sculpture early on, can enhance their cultivation talent sooner."

"Yes, that's exactly what I'm thinking." Lu Ran nodded repeatedly.

He was truly worried that one day, Divine-Lantern would suddenly act and throw Little Yuanxi into Holy Spirit Mountain.

The Sea Realm Third Rank Lantern disciple, Shangguan Hongfu, still had to become someone's son in order to barely survive.

What could Little Yuanxi have to survive?

Just thinking about it made Lu Ran shiver in fear.

If he could return to the Human World, Lu Ran would definitely bring Little Yuanxi out!

Hell with believing in Divine-Lantern?

Believe in me!

Believe in Evil God-Black Light!

...

Chapter 688: Martial Emperor!

"The reason I've summoned the two of you today is that there's another matter to discuss," Lu Ran said, calming his thoughts before speaking.

The two of them looked toward Lu Ran.

Lu Ran gave a sheepish smile, "Ever since I learned I could return to the Human World, it's been like my heart has sprouted weeds."

"Hehe."

Hearing this, both of them laughed.

"It's only through immersing myself in cultivation that I can find some peace," Lu Ran sighed. "That's why I've been sitting by the cliff all these days.

Our original plan was, after helping the Evil Shadow Guardian get revenge, to continue heading south to the base of the Wusheng Sect."

By this point, the two of them understood Lu Ran's intention.

Lu Ran's tone became a bit more serious, "Do you think I should stay here and continue my cultivation to avoid causing any disturbances, waiting for news from Senior Lu..."

or should we continue heading south and carry out our mission?"

Deng Yuxiang didn't express an opinion immediately but looked at Yu Changsheng instead.

After pondering for a moment, Yu Changsheng asked, "How does the Sect Leader intend to deal with the Wusheng Sect?"

Lu Ran responded decisively, clearly having a plan, "I want to mold Wu Xiao into a second He Qifeng!

We will take over this sect and establish another Forbidden City.

This way, the Martial Monk and Wusheng factions can complement each other from the north to the south, expanding their influence to protect more refugees."

Yu Changsheng nodded lightly, "Sect Leader has great ambition!"

Lu Ran said helplessly, "I didn't invite you here to praise me."

"Let me say a few things then," Yu Changsheng pondered for a moment and continued, "Sect Leader, our Ran Sect conquering the Wusheng Sect is different from warring at Thunder Mountain or Sword Ridge Peak.

We have the trump card of Wu Xiao, at the peak of the Sea Realm, and we should use it wisely."

"Continue," Lu Ran said, feeling somewhat moved.

With such an asset, he naturally wanted to capitalize on Wu Xiao's presence.

Yu Changsheng spoke bluntly, "Back in the day, when the Wujifeng Martial Monk faction could change its sect policies because of a word from Tufeng Master, transforming its conduct.

Now, the same could happen with the Wusheng Sect due to a word from the sect leader."

"That's indeed the case," Lu Ran nodded repeatedly.

At this point, Deng Yuxiang spoke up, "Mr. Conglong, don't forget, the disciples of these two factions do have differences in nature."

The Martial Monk faction is relatively righteous by nature.

While the Martial Monk disciples are aggressive, they generally care about their reputation.

Their transformation into 'Evil Monks' was due to the overall atmosphere on the Holy Spirit Mountain.

So once a new leader took office, Tufeng Master directly changed direction, opposing the mountain's ethos, facing relatively little resistance.

But the Wusheng Sect is quite complex in its composition.

This faction not only has diverse styles and myriad skills, but its believers also possess a variety of temperaments.

Sly, honest, brave, cowardly, calm, reckless...

It's a real hodgepodge.

The nature of the Divine Martial Artist itself is also unpredictable and difficult to grasp.

"Everything changes, but the core remains the same," Yu Changsheng looked at Deng Yuxiang, "Strength as the respect is the unchanging truth."

"That's true," Deng Yuxiang agreed with the statement.

No matter who you are,

surrender or die!

When you possess absolute strength, many things become inconsequential.

Yu Changsheng turned to Lu Ran and suggested, "The Nightmare Guardian also made a valid point. Since the Wusheng disciples have varied dispositions, we should adapt to people accordingly."

Lu Ran: "Elaborate?"

Yu Changsheng said solemnly, "Recruit some, suppress some, and execute some."

Lu Ran nodded thoughtfully, "Mr. Conglong, please have a seat."

Yu Changsheng sat back down, "We can have Wu Xiao return to the Wusheng Sect, using his formidable strength and influence to gather likeminded individuals.

Unite all forces that can be united, suppress those who waver, and when the time comes, eliminate those obstinate and unyielding.

This way, the sect can retain its strong forces and belong to the Ran Sect."

"Your words are exciting," Lu Ran firstly acknowledged and then said, "But all of this relies on Wu Xiao's absolute martial prowess?"

The Wusheng Sect is a first-class divine sect!

It's not impossible that its sect master is a Heavenly Realm Power."

Yu Changsheng smiled and nodded, "Sect Leader is not wrong! Before today, this strategy might indeed face heavy resistance due to a Heavenly Realm powerhouse."

But after today..."

Lu Ran raised an eyebrow, "What do you mean?"

Yu Changsheng unfurled his folding fan gracefully, "If they are a Heavenly Realm Power, they shouldn't linger in the Mountain Realm, getting involved in our Jianghai affairs."

If they insist on staying here...

Then we could trouble Senior Lu to send the Heavenly Realm Wusheng disciples where they belong.

What do you think, Sect Leader?"

"I should go?" Lu Ran's mouth dropped slightly.

"Hehe~" Deng Yuxiang couldn't help but laugh, quite arrogantly.

Lu Yuan, as a Heavenly Realm Dust Shadow disciple, indeed belongs to a support type, not good in combat.

But he can teleport people from the battlefield, he can help them ascend.

He can even send them back to the Human World, having the Divine Martial Artist himself deal with the disciple who broke the rules directly!

He's practically a living cheat!

Any believer who returns to the Human World through 'official channels' must have sacrificed something.

If you're illegally re-entering with a belly full of secrets, would the Divine still let you live?

Execution,

on the spot!

Of course, sending others back to the Human World might implicate Senior Lu as well.

So it's unnecessary to take risks, just send them directly to ascend to the Heavenly Realm.

If you're already at the Heavenly Realm, what are you hanging around the Holy Spirit Mountain for?

Quickly follow Lord God's will and ascend!

What?

You don't want to go?

No worries, I'll help you~

"Mr. Conglong is really sinis... sinis..." Lu Ran suddenly paused.

Because Yu Changsheng was looking at the Sect Leader with a deep gaze.

"Sinis... Wise and mighty! Truly the reincarnation of Kongming!" Lu Ran quickly changed his tone, fully acknowledging.

"Sect Master, you flatter me. My little tricks are nothing compared to Mr. Wolong, at best I'm just a Li Ru."

Lu Ran waved his hand broadly: "Hey~ Mr. Wolong, there's no need... hey?"

Is he secretly implying that I'm like that foolish, indulgent fatso Dong?

"Ahem." Yu Changsheng realized that the Sect Master seemed to have caught on and quickly said, "You just mentioned Senior Lu's matter.

If we can fulfill his wish and under the right circumstances send people to take care of his wife and daughter in the human world, Senior Lu would naturally be willing to join our Ran Sect.

Such a small favor, of course, we would help."

Lu Ran found this quite reasonable.

Seeing this, Yu Changsheng suggested: "Sect Master, why don't we call Wu Xiao to discuss together?"

Lu Ran shot a glance at Yu Changsheng: "Go, call Wu Xiao."

Yu Changsheng paused his fan-waving motion and asked, "Shall I go?"

Lu Ran snorted: "Mr. Worry-free, be more confident. This little errand is naturally for the Shadow Guard Team."

Yu Changsheng was momentarily stunned.

Worry-free?

He chuckled silently, cupped his hands, and said: "Sect Master, how wise!"

Although Lu Ran wasn't well-versed in poetry and songs, he had a broad knowledge of crosstalks and storytelling.

After all, when surviving in the human world, spiritual sustenance is indispensable.

He relied on these things to fall asleep every day.

Soon, a brave young man walked in from the entrance of the Council Hall.

How imposing!

Moreover, he held a Sky-piercing Halberd!

On ordinary days, Lu Ran didn't think much of it, but now seeing Wu Xiao, he felt a bit overwhelmed!

"Sect Master!"

Wu Xiao knelt on one knee and cupped his hands in salute.

Maybe he was worried about unexpected problems with the Purple Lightning Mad Dragon Spear, so he tightly gripped his Sky-piercing Halberd while saluting.

The tip of the shiny halberd made Lu Ran's scalp tingle!

"Martial Emperor, sit!" Lu Ran immediately said.

Wu Xiao was puzzled, unsure of the origin of this title.

However, he wasn't a talkative person, nor was he curious, so he stood up and went to sit down.

Lu Ran spoke: "Do you know why I've never given you a title despite you having been in the Ran Sect for so long?"

Wu Xiao stood up again, expressionless: "I don't know."

Lu Ran smiled: "Ran Sect not only has four great protectors and eight divine generals, but there's also another series—Heavenly Emperor."

It signifies a human clan emperor who rules one part of the world."

Wu Xiao lowered his head silently, unaffected.

This series was specially requested and named by He Qifeng for Lu Ran.

Back then, when He Qifeng received this title, he was overjoyed.

It's evident that the Martial Monk faction values reputation.

Looking at the great martial artist below, there's no reaction at all!

It also made Deng Yuxiang secretly nod her head.

Ran Sect has many warriors, each of different types.

She particularly liked people like Wu Xiao, Yu Changsheng, and Yan Shuangzi.

Taking part personally, Deng Yuxiang also liked herself.

Under Lu Ran's leadership.

"In Ran Sect, there's also a Wind Emperor, though you've never met her." Lu Ran slowly spoke, "She's a Martial Monk disciple, leaning on Wuji Peak, and has built a Forbidden City in the center of the Holy Spirit Mountain Continent.

It's used to reform the atmosphere of Holy Spirit Mountain, gathering refugees, and also to supply talent for our Ran Sect."

Wu Xiao listened quietly.

In a few words, he understood what Sect Master wanted him to do.

Indeed, Lu Ran shifted the topic: "Now, I want you to seize the position of sect master of the Wusheng Sect.

Emulate the Wind Emperor, build an ancient city in the south of the Holy Spirit Mountain Continent, and protect all living beings.

Does the Martial Emperor have confidence?"

Wu Xiao's response was brief: "As ordered!"

Lu Ran: "..."

Deng Yuxiang furrowed her brows slightly and spoke: "The Martial Emperor's personal strength is beyond doubt.

But the ability to infiltrate and develop members secretly..."

Lu Ran also furrowed his brows.

Talents come in different types.

Wu Xiao is definitely not someone who is eloquent...

"Sect Master!" Yu Changsheng volunteered, "Why not let me accompany the Martial Emperor back to the Pear Garden Sect?"

Pear Garden Sect, the base of the Wusheng Sect.

Also stands on the towering great mountains.

But it's not named mountain or peak or anything like that.

"Is Mr. Conglong going to take risks?" Lu Ran felt a bit resistant.

Yu Changsheng's expression was as usual, comforting: "Sect Master need not worry, under my command is a survival carp, able to escape in an instant.

Moreover, with the Martial Emperor's imposing might, no one will dare to harm me."

Wu Xiao rarely spoke, uttering a long sentence: "Many years ago, I stayed at the Pear Garden Sect for a while, and have some close disciples there.

If the Sect Master wants a peaceful evolution, these people can be the entry points."

"Peace is only relative, and hard bones, after all, need to be gnawed." Lu Ran muttered.

Shall I send Yu Changsheng?

Dragon Carp Divine Skill·Survival Carp, indeed very strong... Hmm?

Lu Ran suddenly looked up.

In the Council Hall, tendrils of mist began to emerge.

What is this?

Lu Ran thought of something, immediately connected with the Fiery Phoenix Patterned Gourd, and indeed found the little guy was cheering joyfully.

Jiang Fairy has activated the upgrade mode!

Chapter 689: tourists

On the eighth of June, a light rain drizzled down.

In the evening, led by Lu Ran, everyone waited in front of the tunnel entrance of seclusion room number one.

The mist inside the cliff had dissipated, and Lady Ran could come out of closed-door training at any time.

As figures moved in the tunnel, everyone perked up, but to their surprise, it wasn't Jiang Fairy who appeared.

It was the personal guard, Liu Huo.

She wore a bright smile, her red dress vibrant yet tasteful: "Everyone, please go back and rest. The Lady appreciates your concerns but wishes to further solidify her realm."

Everyone took her advice and left one by one.

Only Lu Ran remained, looking pitifully: "Must I leave too?"

"Hehe~" Liu Huo let out a beautiful smile.

She realized she was being a bit forward and quickly lowered her head: "The Lady needs more secluded time, Sect Leader you... you..."

"Alright, alright, I won't trouble you." Lu Ran waved his hand.

"Thank you, Sect Leader." Liu Huo bowed and turned to re-enter the cave.

"By the way." Lu Ran spoke again.

Liu Huo paused and turned to look at the young man who continued: "I plan to request Wu Xiao's Divine Weapon, Dream Sword, for you as your personal sword."

Liu Huo was a bit puzzled.

Lu Ran continued: "In the coming days, Wu Xiao will be going out on a mission. If he has anything to report, it should be communicated through this sword.

You are the Lady's personal guard, always by our side.

This Dream Sword will be entrusted to you."

Liu Huo's heart tightened: "Sect Leader, Brother Xiao will be on a mission, having an extra Divine Weapon would ensure more safety..."

She didn't know what Wu Xiao's mission was.

Regardless, in this perilous Holy Spirit Mountain, having an extra Divine Weapon increases the chance of survival.

Suddenly, a cold voice came from behind: "Obey the order."

Liu Huo shivered and turned to look into the depths of the tunnel.

It was Jiang Ruyi, brimming with energy, advancing slowly.

With each step she took, it felt as if she was stepping on an invisible lake, spreading ripples of Divine Power below her feet.

Her eyes sparkled brilliantly, light flowing within, and the surrounding pressure was as overwhelming as a tidal wave.

Sea Realm, Second Rank!

Such a formidable presence, intensified as Jiang Fairy had just advanced.

"Lady." Liu Huo's heart clenched, she hurriedly knelt and bowed her head.

Jiang Ruyi's thin lips opened slightly, as if trying to explain something.

But in the end, she said nothing.

A Sea Realm Great Power, especially someone who just advanced with untempered Divinity, speaking to or even approaching a River Realm person, was a punishment in itself.

Lu Ran stepped forward to shield Liu Huo, bearing the imposing presence of Jiang Fairy for the weaklings, and asked:

"Didn't you say you needed more secluded time to stabilize your realm?"

"I just wanted them to leave, didn't feel like talking much." Jiang Ruyi replied casually.

"Oh." Lu Ran extended his hand, "Come, let me admire you."

Jiang Ruyi: ?

Do you take me for a little tabby cat?

"Hm." Jiang Ruyi let out a soft exclamation as someone wrapped an arm around her waist and pulled her into an embrace.

Lu Ran, taking advantage of his own realm's advantage, boldly gazed into the fairy's eyes, admiring the shimmering eyes.

So beautiful~

Jiang Ruyi discontentedly gave Lu Ran a gentle pat.

There was Liu Huo in front, Xuan Shuang at the back.

Though both were personal guards, but...

No need for 'but' anymore.

Lu Ran took a further step, choosing just when Jiang Fairy's presence peaked, and kissed her.

Until her slightly rigid body turned soft.

Lu Ran reached to the side, activated the Transmission Mirror, and directly connected to Cloud Sea Residence.

In the bedroom,

behind a beautifully crafted screen, two vague silhouettes.

From May eighth, disrupted by someone watching the sunrise, to today, June eighth, everything has come to fruition.

The foolish king finally got his wish.

The light rain pattered softly.

Until late at night.

On the bed, Lu Ran embraced his fiancée, listening to the night rain outside the window, his thoughts drifted far away.

Jiang Ruyi lay sideways, resting her head on Lu Ran's arm, voice soft and warm:

"Are you planning to take action against the Wusheng Sect?"

"That's right! A few days ago, I discussed it with Cong Long and Nightmare..." Lu Ran summarized the plan in a few words.

Jiang Ruyi listened for a long time and praised: "Not bad.

Seizing the Pear Garden Sect from the top down will preserve the combat strength to the greatest extent, facilitating the construction of our city in the future."

"Yes, I plan to have Liu Huo carry Wu Xiao's Dream Sword, and give my Dawn Blade to Mr. Conglong." Lu Ran played with a strand of her hair, twisting it playfully.

A double insurance, to ensure smooth communication.

Lu Ran had three Divine Weapons, the Silent Night Blade temporarily lent to Qin Divine General.

Among the remaining two Divine Weapons, naturally, the Dawn Blade was more suitable for missions.

The Eight Desolate Blade's temperament was too fierce, prone to causing trouble.

Only in Lu Ran's hands could it behave properly.

"That's good." Jiang Ruyi agreed, "Let them infiltrate secretly first, gather strength, and try to avoid conflict with strong enemies before returning to the Human World."

Lu Ran then said: "The headquarters of the Yan Zhi Clan and the Ghost Talisman Doll Clan are not far from Qianhua Ridge.

After delivering them to the Pear Garden Sect, shall we take a walk?"

"Okay~" Jiang Ruyi replied softly.

From her languid voice, Lu Ran sensed a bit of fatigue.

He kissed her gently on the top of her head: "Sleep now."

"Mm." Jiang Ruyi rubbed her face against his arm and slowly closed her eyes.

The sound of night rain pattered softly.

Accompanying her into dreams.

...

The next day, in the morning.

A Landing Mirror opened in the River Valley of Qianhua Ridge.

A group of people filed out.

"Dada...dada..."

The horse hooves lightly stepped, without any flames, as if afraid of burning the flowers.

This time, the group wasn't as large as before.

Si Xianxian of Jiang Realm·Fourth Rank was left inside the cliff by Jiang Ruyi and instructed to focus on cultivation.

The Evil Shadow Guardian kept his promise, lending the auxiliary cultivation Magic Artifact·Moonlight Tassel Sachet to the Mad Immortal Guardian.

Now, Si Xianxian is quite motivated.

After all, she only needs to take one more step to reach the Peak of Jiang Realm and lead everyone to fight in the Hidden Wolf Forest.

It turns out that a clear mind is effective.

Yan Shuangzi broke through her shackles after slaying Elder Xing.

Si Xianxian also wants to replicate this pattern!

With Xian'er not in the team and the Divine Color General returning to Mist Rain Lake,

this period has been quite rewarding for He Yingcai, enjoying the blessings of the heavens with great success in cultivation!

The Divine Color General advanced to Sea Realm·Second Rank in February this year, and judging by her spirited appearance during the farewell, her promotion to Third Rank seems imminent.

Currently, in Lu Ran's team, there's only Jiang Ruyi, Deng Yuxiang, Yu Changsheng, Yan Shuangzi, Wu Xiao, and Shangguan Hongfu.

Plus a Shadow Guard Team.

"Shall we go?" Deng Yuxiang still took the lead, his steed galloping into mid-air.

"Wait a moment." Lu Ran hurriedly said.

"Hmm?" Deng Yuxiang turned to look.

"I've called someone, let's first escort two warriors to Pear Garden Sect, then head straight to Deceitful Moon Forest."

Deceitful Moon Forest is the base camp of the Yan Zhi Clan.

Deng Yuxiang raised an eyebrow slightly, "You called the Qin Divine General?"

"That's right, it's a good chance for everyone to meet." Lu Ran nodded with a smile.

"Woo!!"

As soon as the words fell, a surge of energy rose from Lu Ran.

Everyone looked up.

They saw a floating array opening just above Lu Ran's head.

This array was circular and translucent, resembling a 3D terrain map.

And it was dynamic, with undulating mountains and flowing rivers on it.

Strange yet magnificent.

For Dust Shadow Sect disciples, it opened a black flower; as for the teleportation destination/target, it fell as a teleportation array.

Dust Shadow Divine Skill·Other Shore Flower!

The Evil Mirror Clan and Dust Shadow Sect's teleportation skills each have their strengths.

The Evil Mirror Clan's Transmission Mirror is more like a space gate.

It can exist continuously, always connecting two places.

The Divine Skill·Other Shore Flower is a one-time deal.

But the Other Shore Flower can not only teleport to a certain place but also leave a mark on a living being to teleport directly to the target's side.

With only one point:

The mark left by the Dust Shadow disciple on a living being will gradually fade over time.

"Woo!!"

A surge of energy erupted from the large terrain map again.

Beside Lu Ran, a tall figure descended.

A young man in black, carrying the Divine Weapon·Silent Night Blade, landed steadily.

He clasped his fist to Lu Ran, apologizing, "Sect Leader, these days, I've searched many places but still couldn't find Master Lu."

"It's okay, good things take time!" Lu Ran patted Qin Yanzhi's shoulder, "Come, let me introduce you to your comrades!"

Under Lu Ran's introduction, Qin Yanzhi met everyone one by one.

Looking around, all he saw was the vast Yangyang Sea!

In terms of strength and realm, the lowest were probably the Sea Realm·Second Rank Sect Leader and Lady?

The others must be mid to high rank in Sea Realm.

Hmm~

The courageous young man with the Sky-piercing Halberd must be at Sea Realm Peak!

Qin Yanzhi showed no expression outwardly, but inside, he marveled.

Especially that woman riding a black steed, standing in mid-air, stunningly beautiful yet with an extremely fierce gaze.

As her eyes swept over, Qin Yanzhi felt as if knives were slicing back and forth across his body.

Qianhua Ridge had pleasant weather.

But Qin Yanzhi's heart was chillingly cold...

This?!

Which Evil God might this be?

Just the gaze was terrifying to such an extent?

The well-informed Dust Shadow disciple activated an encyclopedia mode, quickly sorting through everything seen and heard in his life.

First-class Evil God·Blood Skull?

No, it's fierce enough but lacks the scent of blood.

Second-class Evil God·Yinli Tiger?

Also no, it's ferocious enough but lacks in treachery.

Barbaric Female Demon, missing a bit of rampant... Ha!

She is Night Charm!

Deng Yuxiang's expression was strange, initially wanting to give the other party a show of strength.

But what's with this young man?

Using this kind of gaze on him, why does it feel like... he's a bit excited?

"Pleasure to meet you!" Yu Changsheng walked up with a smile, "With Qin Divine General, the Sect Leader is like a tiger with wings."

"I don't deserve such praise." Qin Yanzhi hurriedly showed modesty, feeling the sky clearing up when looking at Yu Changsheng again.

So, what kind of god is this?

A handsome devil·Sea Merfolk?

Lu Ran slapped him on the shoulder, "Qin Divine General, truly worthy of being a Dust Shadow disciple, quite the excellent travel blogger!"

Those big eyes like a camera, snapping away at everyone!"

Qin Yanzhi: "..."

"Ha ha!"

"Hehe~" Everyone burst into laughter.

"Let's go, to the Pear Garden Sect!" Lu Ran urged, "Oh, and make sure not to teleport us inside the sect!"

Qin Yanzhi said weakly, "Sect Leader, as you said, I'm just a tourist, I never enter other people's homes..."

## Chapter 690: Goodbye Rouge Paper

Over twenty kilometers northeast of the Pear Garden Sect, in a lush mountain forest.

Lu Ran held Yu Changsheng's hands and repeatedly reminded him, "Take care, sir. If anything seems off, let's run away!"

Our lives are important, so don't go head-to-head with these Great Wu!"

Yu Changsheng: "..."

I also need to be able to hold my own against them!

I'm just a doctor, how can I take on these performers...

Jiang Ruyi watched the scene with a smile and said, "After you've assessed the overall strength of the Pear Garden Sect, let us know as soon as possible."

Whether there's a Heavenly Realm Power in the Pear Garden Sect determines the next overall strategy for the Ran Sect.

"I'll do my utmost!" Yu Changsheng released Lu Ran's hands and bowed to Jiang Ruyi.

Lu Ran then looked at the silent Wu Xiao and advised, "Speak with caution and consult the gentleman in all things."

"Yes!" Wu Xiao gripped the Sky-piercing Halberd, bowing his head with fists clasped.

The bright tip of the halberd made Lu Ran instinctively step back.

"Alright, go ahead." Jiang Ruyi took Lu Ran's arm and said softly.

The two took their leave, leaving behind two majestic black steeds.

The Pear Garden Sect was very conspicuous.

Similar to Sword Ridge Peak and Knife Spine Peak, the mountain of the Pear Garden Sect also had a sharp peak piercing the sky.

Within the Holy Spirit Mountain Realm, mountains were plentiful.

But there were not many peaks that touched the sky and clouds.

This peak seemed to declare to all beings: The power entrenched here is formidable!

Only after the figures of the two disappeared into the forest did Lu Ran retract his gaze, open a Transmission Mirror, and send the horses back to Cloud Sea Cliff.

"Let's go, to the Deceitful Moon Forest." Lu Ran turned to look at Qin Yanzhi.

Qin Yanzhi immediately opened his palm, revealing a black Other Shore Flower blooming.

Everyone felt a blur before their eyes, and both people and horses were transferred to a cliff.

"Master, that's the Deceitful Moon Forest over there." Qin Yanzhi stepped on the edge of the cliff, pointing southeast.

Deng Yuxiang rode forward, his gaze extending far.

The distant mountain environment suddenly changed, no longer lush green forest.

There the withered trees were mostly tall and their branches crooked and oddly shaped.

Like numerous dry arms reaching towards the sky, trying to grab something.

"Well, now~"

Lu Ran smirked; his vision was much sharper than Deng Yuxiang's, seeing it more clearly.

He saw the huge withered trees covered with cracks, like twisted faces.

Ferocious and eerie.

If no one had guided him, Lu Ran would certainly have thought this was the gathering place of the Evil Demon·Tree Face Demon clan.

"Why is it called Deceitful Moon Forest?" Deng Yuxiang casually asked.

This name was told to everyone by Qin Yanzhi, but its origin was unknown.

Qin Yanzhi responded, "In this place, the giant trees stand tall, and the withered branches intertwine, casting the forest in darkness.

On deep nights, moonlight filters through the dense interwoven branches, leaving mottled shadows on the ground.

Mysterious and eerie, like a shattered dreamscape..."

Everyone looked at each other.

The world as seen through the eyes of a Dust Shadow Sect disciple was different from ordinary people.

To ordinary people, in the Holy Spirit Mountain, they see danger and think of survival struggle.

Qin Yanzhi, however, observes the world, admires the scenery, and feels the atmosphere...

"Wind, frost, rain, snow, sun, moon, and stars." Qin Yanzhi gazed at the distant mountains, "Among various natural conditions, only under moonlight does this forest feel the most fitting and have the most artistic conception.

Master Lu named this place Deceitful Moon Forest."

Everyone: "..."

So, this name has nothing to do with the demons that dwell within?

But rather expresses when people should come to see the perfect scenery?

Hmm... acceptable.

Very Dust Shadow.

"Let's go, let's visit Sister Yan Paper... ahem, Yan Paperman." Lu Ran paused, then opened a Transmission Mirror.

Directly reaching the edge of the Withered Wood Forest.

Deng Yuxiang gave a barely smirking glance at Lu Ran.

Jiang Ruyi couldn't help but laugh, recalling past years of Lu Ran and Yan Paperman's "complicated relationship."

Qin Yanzhi followed everyone into the mirror, quickly catching up to Lu Ran, curiously asking, "Master seems to bear no hostility towards such demons?"

"Why wouldn't I?" Lu Ran reminisced, "When I first became a Believer and participated in the fifteen siege city for the first time, I was caught by a River Realm Yan Paperman."

"Ah?" Qin Yanzhi was astonished.

Shangguan Hongfu, Yan Shuangzi, and others listened intently.

A Mist Realm believer being caught by a River Realm Yan Paperman and surviving?

"That night, it was the Nightmare Guardian who saved me." Lu Ran looked to the left front, viewing the woman's heroic silhouette.

Deng Yuxiang did not turn back, only the corner of her lips slightly raised.

Memories surged up in her heart.

She hadn't imagined rescuing a Master of Gods and Demons.

The blade that cut through layers of rain curtains...

Saved her years later.

Beside them, Jiang Ruyi also felt a million emotions.

She surely remembered the feeling of helpless despair as her younger, weaker self.

She watched as Yan Paperman took Lu Ran away, disappearing into the vast night rain.

Lu Ran suddenly transmitted, "When we return to the Human World, I'll buy a hundred or two yellow raincoats to wear at Holy Spirit Mountain."

Deng Yuxiang nodded with a smile, "Alright."

Qin Yanzhi, ever curious to get to the bottom of things, asked in confusion, "Then why does the master call Yan Paperman... um, that...?"

The term "Sister Yan Paper" was something Qin Yanzhi couldn't say out loud.

After all, he was of the Human Clan.

Yan Paperman were exceedingly brutal demons.

Arriving at the Withered Wood Mountain Forest, Lu Ran looked at the dim environment, inhaling the faint scent of decay:

"I'm different from you; no deity paid attention to me at the God Worship Platform back then."

"Oh?" Qin Yanzhi's interest was piqued.

The Dust Shadow Sect not only traveled the world and appreciated local customs.

Its disciples also documented the rise and fall of dynasties and important events!

Qin Yanzhi really loved listening to stories.

Especially when the protagonist of the story was the mysterious and powerful Master Lu.

Lu Ran shrugged his shoulders, "The first to reach out to me was the Evil God-Yan Paper Man."

Qin Yanzhi's mouth opened in surprise.

Shangguan Hongfu, who was secretly eavesdropping, was also a bit dumbfounded!

So was our Sect Master originally a one-in-a-million Evil Demon Disciple?

"If it weren't for Lord Immortal Sheep's great mercy coming to the rescue later, I fear I would have no ties to the path of cultivation." Lu Ran sighed deeply.

Although Qin Yanzhi didn't take out a notebook, he was furiously recording in his mind.

But then he felt puzzled and somewhat disbelieving, "Master can summon the Evil God, which shows your outstanding talent.

If so, why wouldn't first- or second-class divine beings come to take you as a disciple?"

Qin Yanzhi was willing to believe Lu Ran.

But this didn't make sense!

"Even now, I haven't figured it out myself." Lu Ran shook his head.

Deng Yuxiang snorted coldly, "When we slay the divine beings, we can ask them face to face."

The words made Qin Yanzhi secretly click his tongue.

No wonder it's the Evil God-Night Charm!

Truly ruthless!

"You don't believe?" Lu Ran, riding the Black Fire Colt, looked down at Qin Yanzhi, who was following beside him.

"I believe, of course I believe." Qin Yanzhi quickly responded.

If only Lu Ran were present, Qin Yanzhi might dare to continue expressing doubts.

But with such a great Evil God by his side, Qin Yanzhi was afraid of saying the wrong thing and getting stabbed by Lord Night Charm!

Lu Ran smiled, "Then I'll prove it to you that on the God Worship Platform, I did summon the Evil God-Yan Paper Man."

Qin Yanzhi's heart was startled.

How is this going to be proven?

"Da da da..." Lu Ran squeezed the horse's belly and rushed to the front of the team.

He locked his eyes on the right front, where a vague red figure could be seen among the trees.

"Whistle~" Lu Ran whistled.

A silent figure wandering beyond the withered wood stopped abruptly.

She slowly moved closer to the tree, revealing half of a pale face.

Lu Ran looked back at her.

After nearly two years, they met again.

The last time they met was on the night of the college entrance exam, right?

In the Human World, the fifteenth of every month felt like a blind box, possibly encountering various Evil Demons.

Since entering the Holy Spirit Mountain, it was indeed hard for Lu Ran to see her unless he went to the headquarters of the Yan Zhi Clan.

"Master, the Yan Zhi Clan after all has the Evil Technique·Paper Mache... huh?" Qin Yanzhi didn't finish his sentence and wasn't feeling well.

The Yan Paper Man, who was supposed to hunt humans and torment prey, actually floated out!

The key was her expression!

Due to the dim light in the Deceitful Moon Forest, Qin Yanzhi thought he was seeing things.

The sinister and beautiful face of the Yan Paper Man was devoid of its malicious intent.

What was left was surprise and delight.

"What the—" Qin Yanzhi couldn't help rubbing his eyes.

He thought he had seen much through his travels of mountains and seas.

But since meeting Lu Ran, Qin Yanzhi realized the world he knew seemed different.

A woman in a red wedding dress floated slowly towards him.

The exquisite phoenix crown vaguely produced sounds, and the big red robe fluttered lightly.

Elegantly majestic, graceful and poised.

But her lips trembled slightly with excitement, seemingly unable to maintain any composure.

She just wanted to hold the young man in the emperor's robe in her arms.

Now that Lu Ran had reached the Second Rank of the Sea Realm, he had the capital of "bold because of great skills"!

He sat astride his horse, reaching out to the frighteningly beautiful Yan Paper Man.

The Yan Paper Man became even more amazed!

Her beautiful eyes couldn't see anyone else, and she lightly flew forward, falling into Lu Ran's embrace.

"Crack!"

That was the sound of the Vermilion Paper Evil Technique-Red Wedding Dress shattering.

"Szzz!"

This was the eerie sound of the Eight Desolate Blade stabbing into the Yan Paper Man's heart, the blade piercing the flesh.

Lu Ran, riding on horseback, bent slightly, embracing the Yan Paper Man's waist with his left hand and holding the knife's handle with his right.

The Yan Paper Man lifted her eyes, staring blankly into Lu Ran's eyes.

Grievance, pain.

Until her face turned hideous!

"Whoosh~"

Lu Ran tightened his grip on the handle, and Divine Power surged on the blade, shattering her heart.

The Yan Paper Man's body completely stiffened.

Those eyes, still fixated on the young man in the emperor's robe.

Reluctance.

And a deep sense of attachment...

"When I meet your true self, I must ask why it was me." Lu Ran's arm around her waist tightened slightly.

"Poof~"

The beauty in his arms shattered into mist.

Just like Qin Yanzhi had previously said, it was like the mottled shadows in the Deceitful Moon Forest, like a broken dream.

"This... this?" Qin Yanzhi was numb!

The Yan Paper Man stripped of her Evil Demon aura, leaving behind her sorrowful gaze, made him imagine too much.

A devoted woman wearing a wedding dress day and night, passionately waiting, finally seeing her lover.

And the lover gives her a stab in return?

Master Lu, you are truly the real Believer of Martial Arts!

Those in the Pear Garden Sect are just pretenders.

You, damn, are the real performer...