

Powerful 1251

Chapter 1251: Lost Memories

"Uncle Hao, Uncle Hao! The big brother has woken up, the big brother has woken up."

Responding to the call was a rugged, simple and honest middle-aged man.

"Young man, you've finally woken up, you had me worried sick." The man's voice was thick and clumsy, with a lovable and honest appearance.

Suddenly as if remembering something, he waited for Yang Yan to speak, slapped his forehead and said: "Oh right, young man, what's your name? Where's your home? Why did you run into the deep mountains..."

The big man asked a slew of questions at once, not giving Yang Yan a chance to respond.

A moment later, he finally reacted, scratching his head warmly, and stared dumbly at Yang Yan.

"Can you tell me where this place is?."

Yang Yan looked confused.

"Oh! The big brother is so silly, he doesn't even know his own name."

"Why don't we give our big brother a name?"

"I'm called Daniu, you can be called Erniu."

"That's a terrible name, just call him Xiaohua! His skin is fair like a girl's."

...

A group of children chattered noisily, making the grass hut lively all of a sudden.

An old man, stepping slowly like a snail, walked in. Though appearing weak, he gave Yang Yan a mysterious and unpredictable feeling.

Seeing the old man coming, the children immediately quieted down, greeting in unison: "Hello Grandpa Village Chief!"

Hearing the children's voices, the village chief affectionately stroked his goatee: "Children, make some space, let grandpa take a look at the young man."

With that said, the children made way for the village chief to pass.

The village chief sat beside Yang Yan's bed, feeling his forehead and checking his pulse.

Yang Yan did not choose to shy away.

Firstly, he was currently utterly weak, feeling both physically and mentally exhausted, unable to avoid at all.

Secondly, Yang Yan felt the old man did not seem like a bad person.

Because if he intended harm, he wouldn't need to go through such trouble.

While Yang Yan was pondering, the village chief spoke again.

"Young man, what's your name? Where did you come from?"

"My name is... my name is..." Yang Yan was just about to answer the old man's question when a wave of intense pain hit his head.

He suddenly found he couldn't remember his name no matter how hard he tried!

Even his past experiences seemed to have been forcibly erased by an invisible hand.

He had actually lost his memory!

At this moment, the honest Daniu stepped forward, speaking in his thick voice: "Dad, he's called Erniu, we found him when our Hunting Team was hunting in the mountains, he was being attacked by a Hydra, almost got swallowed!"

The village chief looked at Daniu with some surprise, and the latter gave an embarrassed smile, shyly scratching his head.

Meanwhile, Yang Yan still displayed a look of pain, as if his head was splitting.

Helplessly, despite trying hard, Yang Yan couldn't remember his name, his identity, where he came from, or where he should go.

Yang Yan could only shake his head somewhat blankly, holding his head in disappointment and saying: "I forgot my name too, don't know who I am, and thinking about it makes my head hurt intensely."

Hearing Yang Yan's words, the old man smiled kindly.

"Young man, the place you appeared in is a forest, home to many powerful creatures often claiming lives, so we call it Soul-Falling Forest."

"Then where is this place?" Yang Yan asked curiously.

From the village chief's explanation, Yang Yan quickly understood that the village he was in was called Jiuan Village.

Surrounded by mountains with no road leading out, the people here have not interacted with outsiders for generations, naturally rarely visited by anyone.

Yang Yan is the first person to come here in decades.

Hearing the village chief's explanation, Yang Yan seems to understand a lot.

After chatting with Yang Yan for a while, the village chief left with the crowd, leaving Yang Yan alone, telling him to recuperate well.

During the following days, Daniu would bring a bowl of soup medicine prepared by the village chief and chat with Yang Yan every day.

According to Daniu, the ingredients for the soup were meticulously boiled from mountain herbs or animal organs, greatly beneficial to the body.

Yang Yan, possessing a rudimentary knowledge of medicine though unfamiliar with the ingredients, could clearly feel that the soup's effect was indeed as Daniu said, greatly nourishing the body.

Indeed, within a few days, Yang Yan's condition improved significantly, at least his spirit recovered more than half.

In less than five days, Yang Yan was able to get out of bed.

At this point, he desperately wanted to regain his memory, find out who he was, where he came from, and where he should go.

However, such matters are left to chance.

Moreover, the villagers saved his life, so Yang Yan felt he couldn't just eat their food for free, he should do something within his power for the village.

Thinking to act, by the sixth day Yang Yan directly approached the village chief, wanting him to assign a job for him.

Hearing Yang Yan's request, the village chief appeared very surprised.

He originally intended to use the excuse of Yang Yan's injury not being healed to let him rest for a while, but now Yang Yan insisted on him assigning a job.

Unable to resist Yang Yan's persistence, the village chief had no choice but to arrange a job for him.

Discovering Yang Yan's body was stronger than the average person in the village, he assigned Yang Yan to work with the Hunting Team on hunts.

This not only ensured food supply for the village but also hoped that exploring might help Yang Yan recover his memory.

In fact, the village chief himself very much wanted to find out who Yang Yan really was, why he was discovered in that place.

For these long-time mountain dwellers, while the beasts appeared fierce, their rich experience allows them to easily handle with several people cooperating without much danger.

Their ability to cultivate land is minimal, so most of their staple food must be obtained from the mountains.

Therefore, the Hunting Team in the village bears a significant responsibility.

Their existence directly relates to the village's sustenance.

Their clothing is crafted from a small amount of local wild flax cloth, with more made from the skins of hunted animals.

Even the oil used to light lamps is boiled from animal organs.

After Yang Yan joined the Hunting Team, Daniu kept him closely by his side.

This was also the village chief's intention.

Yang Yan appeared robust, but after all, he had just recovered from a serious illness, not yet fully healed; added to worries about his lack of experience, for safety's sake, the village chief specifically instructed his son Daniu to take good care of Yang Yan.

Everything progressed very smoothly, perhaps because of Yang Yan's joining, the hunting luck seemed improved, reportedly increasing the usual harvest by at least thirty percent.

As a result, Yang Yan, the outsider, seemed never to have faced exclusion from the start, quickly becoming friends with the young people in the village.

Chapter 1252: Stepping Out

Time flies like an arrow, fleeting and unstoppable.

In the blink of an eye, ten years have passed without notice.

Yang Yan's physique and combat skills have greatly advanced, gradually becoming the strongest presence in the village, taking over from Daniu as the captain of the Hunting Squad.

Though his memory hasn't been recovered, Yang Yan has always inexplicably wanted to leave this village.

He's always yearned for a bigger world, instinctively feeling that the forest has trapped him, preventing him from achieving his soul's deep ambitions.

If not for that accident, Yang Yan might have lived here like a regular person for the rest of his life.

But perhaps due to fate, a misfortune inadvertently occurred.

And it was this accident that solidified Yang Yan's desire to venture out and find himself.

The village life isn't as tranquil as it appears; there are always sporadic attacks from the mountain beasts.

During one beast assault, the village's young people were out hunting, leaving behind only the elderly, weak, sick, and disabled.

Thus, many died of unnatural causes, leaving the village in chaos.

Even the most respected village elder lost his life in the beast attack.

By the time the Hunting Team returned, it was already too late.

Misfortune struck so suddenly that it was hard for everyone to accept, overwhelming them with grief.

This incident deeply affected Yang Yan, who had become part of this family and had a great appreciation for the village elder.

For the past decade, the elder had been helping him recover his memories, treating him with care despite not knowing his identity.

He even felt that the elder treated him as his own, along with Daniu, planning to pass the position of village chief to him after the elder's passing.

In this small village, the chief holds absolute power.

Although Yang Yan wasn't actually interested in being the chief, he was emotionally moved by such trust.

Over the decade, he silently accepted the name Erniu.

On the third day after the attack, Daniu carried his hunting knife and resolutely embarked alone on a path of revenge to Soul-Falling Forest, never to be heard from again.

A month later, villagers reported finding Daniu's corpse.

Daniu had killed the Wolf King from the invasion, but died from excessive blood loss along the way.

Upon hearing this news, Yang Yan was silent for a long time.

Despite deep sorrow, he finally understood what had been calling him all these years.

It was nothing else but the yearning for freedom, for the freedom of the outside world.

Jiuan Village is tranquil, yet perpetually isolated from the outside world.

Yang Yan wants to break free from these mountains, to find a path to lead the villagers away from this place, no longer living in poverty, backwardness, or constant fear.

With this belief, Yang Yan set out.

He took several days' worth of rations and embarked on the path from which he awoke.

He believed there was definitely a route to leave from there.

Because he came from there.

After about ten days of walking, Yang Yan reached the edge of the forest.

Over the years, he had become extremely familiar with the terrain here.

Further ahead, a massive stone monument rose up on the mountain path.

Behind the monument was a barrier, completely blocking the mountain path.

The surrounding area is extremely steep, simply inaccessible by human strength.

The path from the village to the outside was thus completely cut off.

The elder once said that Jiuan Village couldn't connect with the outside world mainly because of this barrier.

Legend has it, someone from the village angered an Immortal, and in his fury, he set up this barrier as punishment, preventing the people of Jiuan Village from leaving.

Behind the barrier lies an Illusion Realm, requiring someone to completely pass through its numerous challenges for the barrier to vanish.

Over the years, many have attempted to breach this area but never returned.

Gradually, the village treated it as a forbidden area, banning villagers from entering.

Now, Yang Yan is about to enter this forbidden ground.

If successful, he would open a path of hope for the entire village.

If he fails, he would become a skeleton among many, finding a sense of release.

With a firm resolve, Yang Yan unhesitatingly touched the monument.

Afterward, a feeling of dizziness and vertigo overwhelmed him.

When he awoke again, before him was a completely dark world.

The sensation... seemed familiar.

For the past decade, similar scenes have appeared countless times in Yang Yan's dreams.

Though he felt an unusual fear about such an environment, at this moment, Yang Yan unexpectedly felt a bit of anticipation.

Indeed!

This might truly be the road home!

Yang Yan struggled to get up, but for a moment, he couldn't discern any direction.

He knew well enough that urgent now was to figure out what this mysterious place was.

For now, where he headed today would have to be left to fate.

The people of Jiuan Village believe in fate, and ten years of life have subconsciously led Yang Yan to believe in the existence of deities.

Hence, with this thought, Yang Yan lit his torch, pulling a small sword from his belongings, and spinning it in his palm.

As the sword stopped, it pointed to a direction.

To Yang Yan's surprise, the sword pointed straight in a direction, its blade seemingly vibrating as if drawn by some invisible force.

Without much thought, Yang Yan got up and strode in the direction pointed by the sword.

Before long, as if triggering some mechanism, suddenly a light bloomed from Yang Yan's side.

In the glow, faintly, a bustling city appeared.

Inside, people came and went, lively and vibrant.

Yet, everything before him was blurry, like a mirage-like illusion.

The strange scene made the light appear as if it was the Cloud Ascending Ladder to Paradise.

However, the light raised suspicion in Yang Yan, who had just arrived.

In this dark and sunless space, the torch could barely illuminate a three-meter radius around him, how could this light suddenly appear?

Although the light tempted him to move toward its source, his intuition prompted Yang Yan to remain unmoved.

Yang Yan preferred to trust his sixth sense, which had saved him numerous times from life-threatening situations, so he gently closed his eyes.

As he was well aware, under these circumstances, it was better to have his eyes shut.

Only with closed eyes could his judgment remain unclouded, following his heart.

Continuing to gropingly explore a bit further, Yang Yan accidentally heard strange sounds resonating from the darkness.

The sound sometimes resembled a mountain stream, sometimes like a symphony, then transformed into the myriad sounds of the world, similarly enticing him towards it.

Chapter 1253: Holding Fast to the Dao Heart, Breaking Through the Barrier

At this moment, Yang Yan had been walking in darkness for several hours.

In such an eerie situation, it's very easy for a person to become fatigued, and the spirit more prone to slack, thus making the voice even more tempting.

It seems that as long as you follow the voice, you can relieve all fatigue and sadness.

Yang Yan roughly understood the situation at this point.

These lights and sounds were all meant to lure people.

But what is their purpose, and what is the source of the voice, Yang Yan didn't know.

He just felt that if he really followed the voice, something bad would happen.

Gradually, a soothing fragrance drifted from afar.

This was a kind of exotic scent Yang Yan had never smelled before, equally full of temptation, making people want to seek it out.

Moreover, there was an unusual feeling stirring in his mind, vaguely producing an illusion.

Yang Yan quickly realized what was going on.

First it was vision, then hearing, and now smell, what's next?

Taste and touch?

Thinking of this, Yang Yan couldn't help but snicker.

He bit his tongue lightly, settling his mind, becoming increasingly interested in the environment he was in.

Though he wanted to seek answers, Yang Yan was unmoved, continuing to walk in the original direction.

Because the more these things tried to stop his steps, the more he believed firmly that the direction the sword pointed was correct, and the answers he wanted should be ahead.

After ten years of honing, Yang Yan's disposition had shed its impetuousness, becoming more stable, like an immovable rock.

A cultivator's talent only represents how fast he can cultivate, but a cultivator's Dao Heart determines how far he can go.

The Dao Heart is like the capacity of a vessel.

If you are a pond, you can only hold pond water.

If you are a sea, you can encompass rivers and lakes.

And a true Dao Heart should be honed among people.

A true lack of emotion should be understanding emotion after experiencing it.

Just as someone says he loves to drink plain water, it shouldn't mean he's had only plain water all his life, but should mean that after tasting all the fine brewed drinks in the world, he still retains that affectionate heart for plain water.

Calming his mood, Yang Yan only felt that his Dao Heart had reached a higher level.

Slowly opening his eyes, Yang Yan no longer needed to shut off his senses to quiet his mind.

All phenomena in the world originate from the heart and perish by the heart.

Only by controlling one's inner self can one face the vast world with calmness.

With this thought, Yang Yan only felt the world before him turning to dust, unable to see or hear.

Though he could see, there was no ripple in his heart.

At this moment, everything returned to silence.

The mirage vanished, the flower scent dissipated, the music calmed, returning to the initial dark, lonely space.

Seeing this, a slight smile slowly tugged at Yang Yan's lips.

He had gained more certain answers about this place in his heart.

Stepping forward, he continued to walk swiftly in the previous direction, as if treading on flat ground, unimpeded.

After several more hours, Yang Yan's body was quite fatigued by now.

In fact, as a cultivator, his physical fitness was definitely better than most people's.

But at this moment, Yang Yan was unable to use Spiritual Power, could only walk on foot, measuring this distance step by step.

Yang Yan discovered that the farther he walked in this direction, the greater the gravitational force on his body became.

Moreover, the air seemed to be stagnant, and breathing gradually became difficult.

Yet the more this was the case, the more his belief in his heart solidified, unless death could stop him, he would take another step forward if he had even a trace of strength!

Soon, the darkness around Yang Yan receded, the scene changed instantly, and magma flowed everywhere.

In an instant, Yang Yan seemed to be placed in a volcanic Purgatory.

Looking at the scene before him, this time Yang Yan hesitated a bit.

Because if he continued walking in the original direction, he would step into the surging magma.

The only path before him was to retreat.

Feeling the heat waves rolling toward him, it was hard not to have thoughts of retreat.

However, Yang Yan was never one to give up easily, and he was extremely stubborn in his bones, the more he faced difficulties, the harder it was for him to compromise.

Most critically, he believed firmly that all before him were illusions meant to stop him from seeking the stepping stone to freedom!

Setting his mind, Yang Yan suddenly closed his eyes, stepped toward the magma...

Sure enough!

With Yang Yan's step forward, the scenario of falling into the abyss, being swallowed by magma, did not occur!

Crack!

Instead, the sound of something shattering like a mirror echoed in his ears.

But upon reopening his eyes, Yang Yan found the scene did not transform back into darkness, but instead a gust of Cold Wind swept over, making him instinctively raise his hand to block it, to avoid his eyes being stung by sand.

After pausing for two or three seconds, she attempted to open her eyes again, scrutinizing the surrounding world.

The surroundings instantly turned into an extremely cold glacier, with snow falling from the sky, landing on his body as if it really had a chill.

In just a few seconds, Yang Yan felt his body gradually becoming stiff.

And moving forward was an endless abyss, a bottomless black hole.

Yang Yan ignored the intensifying snowstorm ahead, and likewise ignored the abyss beneath, resolutely braving the Cold Wind, moving forward step by step.

In this way, Yang Yan experienced volcanoes, ice fields, mountain of blades, forest of swords, Ghostly Land, Demon Realm...

Each of these perilous environments felt utterly real, forming one by one before Yang Yan, yet dissipating into nothingness due to his resolute attempts.

In the end, everything before him returned to endless darkness, as if those scenes never appeared.

Thus, Yang Yan kept walking in that direction, not knowing how long he had walked.

One day... two days... three days...

Even a month...

Finally, his body, exhausted to the point of collapse, swayed and fell heavily.

Crouching on the ground, he struggled to raise his head, looking powerlessly into the distance, trying several times, but found he could no longer move an inch.

Just then, a door gently lit up before his eyes, a soft glow spilled over his body.

Bathed in the radiance, images flashed through Yang Yan's mind like a slideshow.

He recalled the deceased village chief and Daniu, recalled the villagers living in constant fear...

Gradually, he felt a surge of strength from somewhere, using all his might to crawl forward.

Though moving slowly, he was still advancing.

One step, two steps, three steps...

Creak—

With the sound that made one's teeth ache, the door pushed opened...

In an instant, all darkness was completely shattered, the entire Illusion Realm crumbling apart.

Before his eyes, the stone monument reappeared.

Yet the barrier behind the stone monument had vanished without a trace.

Chapter 1254: Nine Rounds of Reincarnation

Looking at the scene before him, Yang Yan was initially stunned, then a joyful smile slowly appeared at the corner of his mouth, and soon after, he fell heavily into a coma on the ground.

Buzz...

At this moment, a golden glow slowly emerged from his chest, as if branded onto it.

Faintly, a desolate and lonely voice came from the Void: "Cut the fruit of this life, cultivate the ties of other worlds. Only by passing through nine trials can one complete the cycle!"

Born in the Red Dust, the Dao Heart is not yet calm, how can one detach from the mundane?

Freedom, love, hatred, greed, arrogance, anger, laziness, jealousy, and ignorance, these are the nine challenges of life.

If the nine trials are not crossed, how can one achieve reincarnation?!

If Yang Yan could still see the dazzling golden patterns, along with the rapidly circulating memories of his past life, he would know it was indeed the legendary Reincarnation Seal.

In each life, Yang Yan would undergo a challenge, forming a golden pattern on his chest, with faint fragments of memories accumulating.

Under the flickering light, Yang Yan's soul was taken to another cycle...

In the second life, Yang Yan was born in the Hanque Empire.

In this nation exists a Sin Slave system.

As the name suggests, if someone committed a major crime, it would implicate nine generations. However, without beheading, his entire family and future descendants would become eternal Sin Slaves, subject to others' control.

In the empire, the status of Sin Slaves was the lowest, only slightly higher than livestock; women became maids, men became slaves, enduring endless exploitation.

Unless they achieved great merits and received royal pardon, they could never rise.

Yang Yan came to this world, born right into a Sin Slave family.

As usual, he lost all memories and became a common person.

Like all descendants of Sin Slaves, in the eyes of others, he was born with sin.

Life's hardships were the only way to cleanse sin; no one would sympathize with them.

Yang Yan worked on heavy labor daily, eating the lowest quality food, day after day, year after year, with no hope in sight.

From a young age, he witnessed all the evils of this world.

He saw a gambler lose everything in his house, then gamble away his wife and children to others.

He also saw a drunkard, who after failing to molest a young girl, flew into a rage and killed her, only paying a little money as compensation since she was a Sin Slave and faced no other punishment.

Gradually, hatred twisted Yang Yan's psyche in this life.

He wanted to know why people were born different.

He was discontent, he hated, he resented the world's injustice.

And so, he exploded.

He began secretly gathering Sin Slaves who shared his ideas, developing his forces in the shadows, amassing strength.

Contacting other oppressed Sin Slaves like him.

Finally, after several years of development, his wings gradually filled out.

He challenged the royal family, the government sent troops to suppress him, but due to the long-standing tyrannical regime, they lacked public support, and their military was weak, returning with no success.

Thus, after fighting for over a decade, Yang Yan overthrew the corrupt regime, donned the green robes, and became emperor.

He granted amnesty across the nation, abolishing the noble and Sin Slave system, making everyone equal at birth, becoming a beloved wise ruler.

Unfortunately, good times didn't last, as those former nobles hired assassins out of resentment, and he ultimately died a wrongful death.

In the third life, Yang Yan was born into a normal family but befriended the daughter of Landlord Wang's family next door from a young age.

These two children grew up together, practically childhood sweethearts.

Gradually, affection developed between them.

However, when it came to discussing marriage, Landlord Wang felt the families were mismatched, so the couple was forcibly separated.

Thus, an awakened Yang Yan decided to pursue a career, studying hard for several years before setting off for the Capital City, where he encountered bandits and unexpectedly befriended a straightforward heroine.

Upon inquiry, they found they were heading in the same direction, so they traveled together to the Capital City.

Along the way, they admired each other, and the heroine expressed her affection for Yang Yan.

But Yang Yan knew someone was waiting for him back home, so he politely declined.

However, upon returning home after achieving his career success, Yang Yan found his beloved had already married another and disappeared.

At this time, the heroine came looking for him, and after several years together, they planned to wed.

But on the joyous day, the bride suddenly fell ill and died of a cold.

The celebration turned into mourning, and in despair, Yang Yan took the tonsure and entered a temple, living a life of asceticism.

Thirty years later, a young monk outside said a female benefactor wished to see him,

When they met, both had grown old, their hair grey, facing each other speechlessly.

By this time, Yang Yan was already the renowned Master Che Wu, and the daughter asked if he had seen a scholar heading to the Capital City for exams.

Yang Yan was silent for a long time before replying, "Benefactor, please return. This monk, in his seventy-odd years, never recognized any scholar heading to the Capital City for exams."

After the daughter left, Master Che Wu passed away in peaceful meditation.

When the young monk gathered the master's remains, he discovered the wooden fish in front of the Puduan had been burned through by a single tear.

In the fourth life, he was born into a wealthy merchant family, traveling the Silk Road with caravans and sailing to the South Seas with fleets from a young age.

He spent most of his life accumulating wealth, eventually becoming as rich as a nation, yet he remained unsatisfied.

He craved more wealth, sought to gain more.

On one trade route, he heard locals mention a small island with endless treasures, and whoever discovered it could become the wealthiest person in the world.

Thus, driven by this belief, he set off, only to die in the furious waves.

In the fifth life, he was born into the martial world, unaware of his parents' identities, raised by elders in a fishing village.

To uncover his lineage, he relentlessly trained in martial arts, later guided by a master, becoming a Grandmaster.

Yet, after achieving Great Success, he became arrogant, looking down on others, and ceased practicing martial arts.

After suffering defeat in a duel, unable to accept reality, he ended his life.

In the sixth life, he became a butcher's son, with a bad temper and rushed behavior, earning the nickname Mo Taichong.

Named Mo Taichong to calm him, encouraging him to be less impulsive.

Once, Mo Taichong went to a tavern for a drink and angrily grabbed the chef's neck for a re-cook due to excessive fatty beef.

The chef harbored resentment and told the passing waiter to spit in the dish.

Unbeknownst to them, the waiter had tuberculosis, infecting him, thus ending Yang Yan's life in this cycle.

In the eighth life, he was born among commoners, striving hard, joined the army to serve the nation, achieving marquis status from a humble background, his great merit causing jealousy among the rulers, falling victim to court intrigues and eventually dying unjustly on the battlefield.

In the ninth life, he was born a fool, eventually dying from food poisoning due to ignorance.

Nine lives of reincarnation, nine lives of nine challenges, nine petals of Bodhi, the end of the reincarnation road, all is complete.

Chapter 1255: The Door That Cannot Be Opened

"Who am I? Where am I?" In the void, Yang Yan looked bewildered.

He gazed around at the darkness, unsure of where to go.

Yang Yan tried hard to recall something, but only waves of pain filled his mind.

Occasionally, bits of light flickered in the void, prompting Yang Yan to sense them and dash toward them.

At that moment, he was unburdened by wandering thoughts, unaware of fatigue, and charging forward relentlessly.

He didn't know how long he had been running.

One day, two days, three days...

He seemed to have traversed several epochs before a massive golden key appeared before him.

"What is this?"

Yang Yan didn't have time to think much before the key shone brightly, and scenes from the past flashed in his mind like a slideshow.

"I am Yang Yan, I am Yang Yan!"

"Haha! I know, I know! I, Yang Yan, have lived through nine lifetimes and have come back, come back!"

Ecstatic, Yang Yan was overwhelmed in front of the golden key, but his excitement didn't last long. Suddenly, sadness welled up, and he murmured, "Nine lifetimes of reincarnation, the ocean turns to mulberry fields, things change and people are gone. Where are you now?"

Ancient Abyss Sect, Ten Sects, Ten Swords, Guo Guoguo, Lin Zimu... How many still exist in the world today, and is Wandering Dragon Star still there?

Thinking of this, a sharp pain throbbed in Yang Yan's heart.

If old friends are gone and the world has changed, is there still any point in going back to that past world?

At that moment, the golden key in front of him flickered, and it carried Yang Yan through the void, leaving him no time to struggle.

On Wandering Dragon Star, in the Land of the North Cold, beside Yang Yan lying on the icy avenue before the void gateway, a beam of light flickered.

"Hiss!"

A heart-wrenching pain filled Yang Yan's nerves, waking him painfully from unconsciousness.

"This... this is impossible!"

Yang Yan opened his eyes, and what he saw was a sky full of snow and twelve ice sculpture guards battling five Exotic Beasts, including Cold Flood Dragon.

He recalled his nine lifetimes of reincarnation and wondered why no time had passed in reality.

Could it have been just a dream?!

But those scenes were so real, they couldn't be mere dreams...

Suddenly, he remembered something, and he tore open his clothes to reveal a nine-petaled Bodhi outlined in golden light on his chest.

As the light flickered, the twelve battling ice sculpture guards vanished in an instant, reduced to ashes.

"Mas... Master, you... you're still alive?!" Cold Flood Dragon was puzzled. Just moments ago, the twelve ice sculpture guards it had fought with disappeared in an instant. What kind of method is this!

Yang Yan only snapped back to reality upon hearing Cold Flood Dragon's call, murmuring to himself, "So none of this was a dream!"

"Master, are you okay?" The exhausted Cold Flood Dragon and the other four Exotic Beasts appeared beside him in a flash, gazing at the murmuring Yang Yan. The Flying Mantis couldn't help waving its front claw in front of his eyes.

"Has he gone mad?" it said doubtfully.

The Flying Mantis received a slap in response.

Yang Yan rolled his eyes at it and slowly said, "You're the one who's gone mad?"

The five Exotic Beasts couldn't help but swallow after seeing Yang Yan's gaze.

What has he experienced under that sword?

The five Exotic Beasts couldn't help but wonder.

One can use countless methods to mask their appearance, but there's one thing that can never be changed—one's experiences.

The weathering displayed in Yang Yan's eyes couldn't possibly fool them.

They've lived for thousands of years, and strictly speaking, should be in their twilight years, but due to the Demon Cave's richer immortal substance compared to Wandering Dragon Star, they are still in their prime.

Yet, the events they've been through have left unavoidable marks in their eyes, forming an indescribable sense of age.

Yang Yan's eyes, however, reflected an even deeper sense of history.

It was a soul-shaking feeling, deep yet boundless, almost leaving them in a trance.

Upon finally returning to their senses, they realized that Yang Yan's eyes gave them the impression he had lived for millions of years?!

But Yang Yan was not in the mood to care about what was going through the minds of the five Exotic Beasts.

He pondered inwardly, having lived through nine lifetimes, and now returning to the same appearance as when he left. Were those nine lifetimes just dreams?

The nine-petaled Bodhi Seed on his chest was real, but what purpose did it serve?

"Master, are you really alright?" Cold Flood Dragon worriedly looked at the silent Yang Yan, cautiously asking.

They were already shocked that Yang Yan survived the sword of the ice sculpture guard.

Now, the gold light eliminated the twelve ice sculpture guards they couldn't withstand in an instant, leaving them incredulous.

What kind of secrets does this human hold!

"I'm fine, but I wonder how they are now?" Yang Yan snapped out of his daze after Cold Flood Dragon's shout, shook his head and said.

Of course he didn't know that, upon his return and the defeat of the twelve ice sculpture guards, the dangers faced by the people of the Ten Sects dissipated as well.

Yang Yan set his sights on the towering door before him, curious about what lay beyond it.

He looked at the five Exotic Beasts and slowly said, "Are you willing to go in with me and take a look?"

The five Exotic Beasts exchanged glances, pondering before unanimously responding, "We'll follow you to the death!"

Since they had come this far, it would be a shame not to take a look!

Having lived through nine lifetimes and each a calamity, Yang Yan's heart had become more open-minded and resilient.

He smiled lightly, didn't say more, and turned to head toward the door.

As he neared the door, an ancient aura surged, surprisingly stirring Yang Yan's emotions.

"Master, can we open this door?" The Wolf King asked apprehensively, looking at the door with fear.

"Hmph! Watch me!"

Without waiting for Yang Yan's response, Cold Flood Dragon gathered its strength and fiercely whipped its tail toward the door.

Boom!

With a loud bang, Cold Flood Dragon was unexpectedly sent flying far away by the door's rebound.

"Awoooo..."

Evidently a Flood Dragon, yet it let out a canine-like cry of pain, seeming to be in considerable pain.

Yang Yan was also somewhat surprised.

Cold Flood Dragon was a peak expert in the Golden Core Realm; a charging strike, though not earth-shattering, would normally flatten a mountain easily enough.

Yet with this near-full-strength strike, not only did the door not budge, but Cold Flood Dragon was instead sent flying far away, severely injured.

"I refuse to believe it, Black Death, Wolf King, Mantis, Cyan Scale Eagle, let's try together." After some time, Cold Flood Dragon returned, embarrassed and disheartened, calling for support from the other four Exotic Beasts.

They wanted to try as well, eager to discover the door's mysterious nature, and together launched an all-out attack using their combined Spiritual Power.

Ow—

The sound of distress rang out simultaneously as all five Exotic Beasts were repelled, while the door remained unmoved.

So strong!

Yang Yan contemplated the door with deep thought.

He mused inwardly that if the door could freely expand and retract, it would be an excellent Defensive Magical Treasure.

Of course, the priority was to quickly find a way to open the door and explore the fascinating secrets it held.

Chapter 1256: Battle Within the Gate

Said and done.

Yang Yan suddenly reached out his hand, beginning to comprehend the mysteries of this door.

Sure enough, he did not feel even a hint of repulsion, and easily touched the door.

The five somewhat beleaguered Exotic Beasts finally caught their breath and returned to Yang Yan's side.

They looked at Yang Yan's strange behavior, appearing somewhat puzzled.

But they quickly discovered that Yang Yan was indeed able to easily touch the door.

Just moments ago, they had exerted all their strength, without even touching the door, before being flipped over by a massive repelling force.

"Master, have you discovered anything?" Of course, the Cold Flood Dragon didn't know Yang Yan's thoughts, thinking only that he was searching for a way to open the door.

"This door must have some sort of mechanism, brute force like yours can't solve the problem." Yang Yan wouldn't disclose his real thoughts to them and said casually.

But before he finished speaking, he really did discover something.

Not knowing what mechanism was triggered, a hole suddenly appeared in the middle of the door.

It looked like... a keyhole!

All of a sudden, Yang Yan became excited.

The keyhole's shape and size were identical to the Mysterious Key he had obtained.

He had never known what the key was for, but unexpectedly, it awaited him here!

"A keyhole, but where can we possibly find a key?" The Cold Flood Dragon, unaware that Yang Yan held the key, spat out in exasperation.

"Hahaha! There's no need for you to worry about this." Yang Yan suddenly burst into loud laughter. As he spoke, he nonchalantly took an item from his Space Ring, precisely the key he had recently acquired in the Underground Hall of the Demon Cave.

Ka-chink—

As Yang Yan inserted the key, the door shimmered with light, while the key slightly rotated under an irresistible force, and after several turns, the heavy door slowly began to open.

Shff!

Dazzling light shone through, brilliance filling the air, making it hard to gaze directly.

After a few seconds, Yang Yan gradually adjusted.

He rubbed his slightly stinging eyes and looked at the gradually opening heavy door.

Not only him, but the five Exotic Beasts behind him were also astonished.

Regardless of what secrets or dangers lay behind the door, after much effort, they could finally venture inside to find out.

Yang Yan took a deep breath, forcibly suppressing the overwhelming sense of oppression from the ancient aura behind the door, and tentatively released his Divine Sense to probe the inside.

However, his Divine Sense did not cross the threshold, seemingly blocked by an invisible barrier.

Before long, the door fully opened, the light gradually dissipated, and the scene inside quickly came into view, stunning the man and the five beasts.

"Is this... the legendary Immortal Realm?"

The Cold Flood Dragon had its massive eyes wide open, too shocked to speak.

Everything before their eyes was simply too overwhelming.

Inside the door, the palaces stretched endlessly, resplendent with golden light and radiant colors.

In the misty clouds, dragons flew and phoenixes danced, great birds soared across the sky, all exuding auspiciousness.

"Could this possibly be the closed World Gate of the Ancient Times?" Yang Yan murmured suspiciously.

He suspected this was the very World Gate that the Immortal Realm once abandoned and later closed when leaving this Star Universe.

Given how spectacular everything looked, no other explanation seemed plausible.

After a moment of silence, Yang Yan snapped out of his shock, turning to the Cold Flood Dragon and the other beasts and asked, "Would you like to come inside and explore with me?"

The five Exotic Beasts, without even thinking, vigorously nodded in unison, their eyes filled with eagerness.

Obviously, they also harbored a strong yearning for the legendary Immortal Realm.

Said and done, Yang Yan prepared to step inside first.

Yet, just as he lifted his front foot, a sense of crisis suddenly arose in his heart, causing his raised foot to halt abruptly.

Huh?

Raising his eyes to look inside again, a scene of devastation came into view.

This Secret Realm was suddenly shrouded in darkness, no light could be seen, Dragon Scales filled the sky, Great Eagles with broken wings, blood spilled everywhere.

The golden palaces turned dim and gloomy, blood stained everywhere, horrifying to behold.

Vaguely, cries of mourning, screams, pleas for help echoed, shaking the very soul.

The peaceful area instantly turned into Purgatory, with youthful talents bleeding out, the elderly, weak, women, and children powerless to stand...

All was due to that black mist.

Thud!

With a loud crash, an ethereal old man with bones white as jade burst out of the black mist, a majestic aura radiating around him, dispersing part of the black mist.

Behind him stood a group of young men and women.

Each one had an imposing presence, with sharp and outstanding features, clearly born with extraordinary talent and mastery of Ultimate Skills.

Hmm?

That is...

Yang Yan's attention was drawn to the longsword in a young man's hand.

Because the item he held was extraordinarily remarkable.

Yang Yan had only ever seen such a holy, golden-glowing item in ancient texts.

This item was incredibly sturdy, impervious to any methods, everlasting, known as Immortal Gold.

Nowadays, such a thing could no longer be found on the Wandering Dragon Star.

This object is extremely rare, a rare and exceptional treasure.

Even in a spiritually abundant Star Universe, obtaining a piece is uncertain.

Such veins are often formed through countless years of nurturing by the heavens and the earth, and the virtuous possess them.

Yet, to see so many here, and they are crafted into longswords?

What fortune, paired with what cultivation, is required to wield such Immortal Soldiers?

Subsequently, Yang Yan's gaze fell upon the remaining young individuals.

It was fine until he looked, but once he did, envy and jealousy welled up in his heart.

Each of them wielded weapons that were legendary treasures, sought after fervently by everyone in the past and the present.

Yang Yan unconsciously compared them to his own Star Night, Illusory Night, and Asura, items of mid-tier earthly grade, feeling a sense of inferiority.

The weapons held by these young men and women were superior by unknown levels compared to his.

Shifting his gaze to the old man, he saw the old man held a nine-petal disk in front.

How familiar!

Yang Yan was momentarily stunned as the disk greatly resembled the Reincarnation Seal on him.

Could it be that the weapon wielded by the old man is indeed the Reincarnation Seal?!

He had read in ancient texts that on Wandering Dragon Star, a supreme Great Power of this Star Universe, named Time, controlled the art of time.

In an attempt to witness reincarnation, he spent half his life, ultimately falling short, dying in ambush during an Ancient Times battle.

Could everything happening now be a phantom of the Ancient Times?

The Cold Flood Dragon watched the scene before him, not as deep in thought as Yang Yan.

At this moment, its heart surged with excitement, the blood of battle burning within its bones, and its demeanor transformed accordingly.

As if influenced by them, although these existences before them were overwhelmingly beyond their capacity, they were filled with infinite aspiration.

Chapter 1257: Continual Fall

The elder who mastered the Time Law looked at the black mist that enveloped the entire space, at the clansmen being slaughtered everywhere, though he wished to save them, he was powerless to reverse the situation, his expression gradually dimming.

He sighed heavily, turned to the few young people guarding behind him, and said: "Children, you were born in the wrong era. If not for the coming of the black calamity, you would all have become great figures dominating the world in the days to come. But fate doesn't care for the wishes of men, with the black calamity upon us, our clan suffers great misfortunes. I hope you all remember today, and in the future when this world reopens, you can restore our home."

A clear tear slid down the wrinkled face of the elder.

It seemed that this falling was not just a tear, but an entire epoch...

He had the will but lacked the power to guard the Spirit Realm he had protected all his life. Now he could only stand by as it was destroyed, powerless as his clansmen fell one by one into a sea of blood; who could understand the intense pain in his heart.

"Prepare yourselves, I will send you away to find Zhao Heng. Now he may be the only one who can save the Wandering Dragon Star."

Looking at the once vast expanse of Jiuzhou Land, the elder could not hold back his tears from streaming down.

Once upon a time, everything here was lush and verdant, the mountains and rivers magnificent.

Now, as far as the eye could see, there were no longer miles of trees and grass, replaced instead by walls formed of countless white bones, desolate and bleak.

And he stood in front of the mountain of corpses and sea of blood, unmoving like a mountain.

Behind him were the only few young survivors of the Wandering Dragon Star.

His frail yet noble figure seemed to be guarding the last hope of the Wandering Dragon Star.

Looking at the blood-stained rivers and mountains, the elder's eyes carried a hint of nostalgia as he murmured, "It really reminds me of those days when I was in my prime..."

"Who? Come out!" As the elder was reminiscing about the past, he suddenly sensed a presence.

Clearly, someone had arrived.

But after waiting for a while, no one responded.

"Heh! Since you've come, why be so sneaky? Please, show yourselves."

The elder had long since sensed the presence of several major heads of the dark forces here, otherwise, it wouldn't have been possible for them to take control of the entire Spirit Realm without a sound.

Who knows how long they've been planning to dare to launch such a massive attack on the Spirit Realm.

"Heh heh heh! Time Elder, even after all these years, I didn't expect your vigilance to still be so sharp!"

As the voice came, the space continued to ripple like layers of waves created by splashing water, endless, layer upon layer.

Soon after, several black silhouettes slowly walked out of the space.

But the newcomers seemed to have some kind of isolating method, looking from afar, they appeared like mist.

No matter how hard Yang Yan strained his eyes, he couldn't see clearly.

"The six Demon Venerables, we've fought for a lifetime, and it's your victory. I, Time, have fallen into your hands today. But it's fine, thirty years of the east river, thirty years of the west river, the fortunes of life always turn, today you cannot kill my young charges, they will eventually return for revenge!"

Saying this, the Time Elder's eyes turned somewhat fierce, his gaze seemingly carrying flames, sweeping over each of the Demon Venerables, as if to eternally imprint their images in his mind and carry this hatred to hell.

The few young people behind him also looked with the same gaze.

Even the devious Demon Venerables felt a chill under this gaze.

One of them couldn't hold back his impatience, and moved, sweeping the surrounding black mist as he charged towards the Time Elder.

"I don't know what other tricks you old death-dodger have, might as well destroy you first and talk later,"

The remaining five Demon Venerables exchanged glances, communicated amongst themselves, and charged as well.

"Children, I will now activate the Star Shifting Technique to teleport you to a safe place, but the array requires time to initiate, you need to hold them off for the duration of one incense stick."

The group responded in unison and quickly began to move.

In an instant, swords and blades swept across, Spiritual Qi rampant.

The remaining few cultivators, even in this moment of crisis, unleashed their greatest potential and coordination, forming an array together.

In no time, everyone stood in position, the shape of the array gradually taking form,

From a distance, they resembled the formation of Five Elements and Eight Trigrams, grand and majestic.

The Time Elder raised an eyebrow, this very array was the most basic one that all sects on the Wandering Dragon Star would know—the Eight Trigrams Yin Yang Array!

As soon as the array formed, the Time Elder flew to its center and began to arrange the Star Shifting Array.

The joint attack of several Demon Venerables, how could a few young unformed cultivators withstand it?

As soon as the two sides clashed, someone within the array was grievously injured, even on the brink of death at any moment.

The Time Elder knew full well what was happening before him.

However, apart from this, he had no other option, setting up the great Star Shifting Array was their only slim chance of survival.

As for who would live or die, that depended on their fortune.

The moments ticked away, soon half of the incense stick's time passed.

During this period, the array was repeatedly assaulted, resulting in casualties on their side.

As everyone persisted in battle, a cultivator suddenly spat a mouthful of blood.

Turns out, while fighting the Demon Venerable, he negligently got his chest pierced by the Demon Venerable's hand, seeing he wouldn't live.

"Heh! Today, I, Qin the Third, had the fortune to meet you all and fight alongside you, hope in the next life, we can drink and laugh together again!"

Saying this, the cultivator named Qin the Third fell with a smile.

With the fall of the first person, the array had a flaw.

Moreover, as more people died, the weaknesses of the array increased.

Sure enough, soon, one after another fell, the array riddled with holes, on the verge of collapse.

"Li Yan, ten years ago, when I was chased by enemies, you took a sword for me, today, I have repaid you!" A cultivator said, standing before another, taking a fatal blow from a Demon Venerable.

"Xuanyuan Gongyu, we've battled our whole lives, today you owe me a life, so I win!"

Elsewhere in the array, a cultivator burned his last essence blood, repelling a Demon Venerable's attack on another nearby cultivator, and then permanently fell himself.

The saved cultivator bellowed upon witnessing this, charging madly at the Demon Venerable ahead.

In this critical moment, former grudges among people vanished.

They now had a common enemy, a shared hatred.

This hatred etched into their bones, so long as they lived, they would never forget.

People continued to fall, others taking damage meant for those around them...

Seeing all this, even Yang Yan couldn't help but be moved.

Even ants desire to live, let alone people of flesh and blood?

Chapter 1258: Treasure Hunt

However, Yang Yan knew very well in his heart that in life, there are things more important than life itself.

So, they would rather shield others from harm, leaving the chance to survive for others!

Wasn't he the same when facing the magical invasion back then?

Willing to merge with the Heavenly Dao, abandoning himself to resist the magical invasion.

Finally, at the instant the Array was about to collapse, Yang Yan moved.

He actually turned into a stream of light and dashed forward, passing through the Gate of Space...

Yang Yan ran forward desperately, hoping to become one of them before the Array collapsed and block the attack of the Demon Venerables.

However, those shadows passed right through his body, he couldn't touch them at all.

At this moment, Yang Yan realized that it was all an illusion!

An illusion left from many years ago.

He didn't have the ability to travel through time and couldn't go back to fight alongside them. He could only silently watch everything unfold before him.

Thinking of this, Yang Yan silently clenched his fists, his nails embedding into his flesh without him noticing.

Finally, the time for an incense stick to burn was up.

But in the end, only two cultivators survived when the Teleportation Array was formed.

And after the Time Elder had teleported away the two cultivators, a satisfied smile appeared on his pale face.

Next, the smile froze, and he detonated all his cultivation and Magical Treasures, delivering the surrounding Demon Venerables a final blow.

With the fall of the Time Elder, Yang Yan sat powerlessly on the ground, gazing silently at the illusion before him.

He knew that the tragic events were a result of the Time Elders not being strong enough.

If they had been strong enough, these tragedies wouldn't have happened again!

One day, he would inevitably face the Demon Race again, so he must not repeat their mistakes.

The only way to stand invincible is to strengthen oneself.

Suddenly, Yang Yan let out a long howl to the sky.

With this howl, like seeing the moon after the clouds parted, the surrounding illusions all dissipated.

The Time Elder was killed, the Divine Soul completely perished, the Spirit Realm was destroyed, the once joyous land turned to ashes, everything fleeing into invisibility.

Yang Yan stepped through the grand door, standing on the ashes, his heart filled with emotions.

This place once gave birth to countless heroes, each having their time, but now the prosperity has vanished, leaving only ruins.

Those people have passed away, yet the spirit of the Time Elder leading his disciples to fight to the last breath is eternally engraved in Yang Yan's heart.

Yang Yan crouched slightly, picked up a handful of yellow earth, allowing it to slip through his fingers silently.

The Cold Flood Dragon frowned slightly, waited for a while before stepping forward to remind Yang Yan: "My lord, this place was once invaded by dark forces, it is now a Cursed Land, it is not advisable to linger."

Yang Yan slowly stood up, sighed deeply, just about to turn and leave, when suddenly he remembered something, and his footsteps halted abruptly.

He turned to the Five Exotic Beasts and said, "Do you remember when the Power of Origin from the Snow Demon we defeated before gathered here?"

The Five Exotic Beasts, having a change from their previously dull expressions, seemed to remember something important, their eyes lighting up at once.

Oh, yes!

How did they almost forget such an important matter?

Even though this place has become a Cursed Land now, it used to be the supreme Spirit Realm of the Wandering Dragon Star, surely it wouldn't lack good things?

"My lord, though this place has been eroded by time, it might nurture something extraordinary, we should definitely explore further."

The Cold Flood Dragon, fearing Yang Yan would not understand, couldn't help reminding.

Of course, Yang Yan knew there was a huge treasure hidden here.

It is known that even if all the good things here were destroyed, as they say, the Heavenly Dao cycles, nature has a self-repairing function, the energy of the world circulates endlessly, where things fall, new things will come.

Considering it's been who knows how many years, new things might emerge from the ruins.

This can be seen from the aggregation of a vast amount of Snow Demon Origin here.

"Then what are we waiting for, let's set off immediately!" Yang Yan smiled, flicked his sleeves, and walked towards the distance.

Half an hour later, within an unnamed great hall, Yang Yan watched as a broken gourd Magical Treasure in his hand slowly disintegrated, and couldn't help but sigh deeply.

Along the way, they saw numerous dilapidated palaces.

The ancient carved dragon jade tiles still revealed the prosperity of those days.

Among the broken walls of the ruins, Yang Yan and the Five Exotic Beasts found many Magical Treasures left from the ancient battles.

But unfortunately, due to the erosion of darkness, these Treasures have all lost their Spiritual Power, turning to ash at a mere touch.

Brushing the dust from his clothes, Yang Yan stood and said to the Exotic Beasts, "Let's move further in, even though these Treasures couldn't withstand the test of time and Demonic Qi, turning to dust, I believe there must be something remarkable waiting for us ahead."

After saying this, Yang Yan didn't wait for the Five Exotic Beasts to speak and proceeded inward.

The Five Exotic Beasts, filled with curiosity about this place, couldn't refuse, and quickly followed Yang Yan's footsteps.

Like this, one person and five beasts followed the direction of the gathering Snow Demon Origin for another hour, finally finding its source.

Yang Yan and the Exotic Beasts were surprised to find that the Snow Demon Origin, which should have existed as a gas, had turned into mist.

The mist eventually became liquid, directly blocking their vision and steps.

"Hahaha! I, the Cold Flood Dragon, have lived so many years and have never seen such rich Power of Origin. If I can absorb it, I'm sure it will allow my strength to advance to a higher level!"

The Cold Flood Dragon looked at the Power of Origin before him, almost unable to close his mouth from smiling.

The other beasts, whose strength was slightly less than his, were even more overwhelmed, their bodies trembling with excitement.

Especially the Black Death Tiger, whose mouth drooled thick saliva at the ocean-like Power of Origin, dripping all over the ground.

The Cold Flood Dragon was already at the peak of the Golden Core Realm, the Power of Origin wasn't strictly beneficial to it, at most it could stabilize its realm and prepare adequately for breaking through to the next realm.

But the other four Exotic Beasts were only in the early stages of the Golden Core Realm, so much Power of Origin was undoubtedly a treasure to them.

Given enough time, they could catch up with the Cold Flood Dragon, also becoming peaks of the Golden Core Realm, always on the brink of breaking through.

Seeing the exaggerated reactions of the great Exotic Beasts, Yang Yan couldn't help but smile disdainfully, sarcastically saying: "Look at you, acting like you've never seen the world. Follow me inside! There might be better things in there!"

The Exotic Beasts then realized their behavior, awkwardly exchanging glances.

Though they were eager to meditate and absorb the Power of Origin here, they helplessly put away those thoughts, wiped their saliva, and followed Yang Yan's steps towards the center of the mist.

After just a few steps, Yang Yan realized the five beasts behind him hadn't followed, thinking someone was ambushing them, he quickly turned to look back.

Huh?

What's going on...?

The five big guys were standing there in shock, mouths agape and eyes wide.

Chapter 1259: Nine-Night Soul Reviving Grass

Following their gaze, Yang Yan looked over and discovered that, to the right in front of them, there was actually a small silver-white pool.

Needless to say, this small pool must have been formed by liquefied Power of Origin.

It formed a stark contrast with the surrounding desolation.

All the way here, Yang Yan had not seen a single blade of grass or any water source, yet here there was a pool formed by Power of Origin—this was clearly not simple.

Yang Yan couldn't help folding his arms in thought, muttering to himself, "This doesn't make sense. In theory, after so many years, this Power of Origin should have dispersed everywhere. How come it not only hasn't dissipated, but has instead gathered together and even formed this little pool?"

Just then, his eyes twitched—he seemed to have seen something in the pool move just now!

"Careful!" Yang Yan shouted explosively, instantly rousing all the True Essence in his body and entering battle-ready mode.

The five Exotic Beasts around him heard Yang Yan's explosive shout and all became alert as well; their power circulated as they gathered momentum, ready to strike.

Yang Yan cautiously peered into the pool, but because of the obstructing mist, he couldn't see very clearly.

Could it be that some terrifying Fierce Beast had just been birthed in the pool water?

At this thought, Yang Yan couldn't help but shiver.

A Fierce Beast that could survive within such intense Power of Origin—how could it be anything ordinary?!

Unfortunately, after waiting a full quarter of an hour, there was no movement whatsoever.

Could he have guessed wrong?

"Stay on guard. There's something strange everywhere here, so be as careful as you can," Yang Yan said in a low voice, reminding the five Exotic Beasts behind him.

The Exotic Beasts exchanged a quick glance, still staring fixedly at that pool, not daring to move closer.

In contrast, Yang Yan actually walked straight toward the pool.

"My lord..." the Cold Flood Dragon couldn't help calling out.

Yang Yan's steps, however, did not pause in the slightest, and in no time he had reached the edge of the pool.

What they didn't know was that just now, Yang Yan had in fact already figured some things out.

Think about it: what Fierce Beast born in this place would leave this Power of Origin untouched? It would probably have long since absorbed it all.

The reason he had reacted so violently just now was purely a normal response from a person on high alert.

Yang Yan leaned forward, and only then did he see clearly that what had just caused everyone's alarm in the pool water was actually a verdant green plant!

The leaves of this plant floated on the surface of the pool like duckweed or lotus leaves, brimming with vigorous life.

However, the flower it bore was black, and a layer of black miasma drifted over its surface, making it look somewhat eerie.

"My lord, this plant looks truly sinister! What in the world is it?" At this moment the Cold Flood Dragon also plucked up its courage and came over, wanting to see clearly that plant in the little pool, and couldn't help asking in puzzlement.

Yang Yan also fell into deep thought, constantly comparing the plant before his eyes with the various Heavenly Materials and Earthly Treasures he had seen in his memories.

In the end, the appearance of the plant before him slowly overlapped with an illustration he had seen in an ancient book.

Then, Yang Yan's eyes suddenly lit up!

"I remember now! This thing is called the Nine-Night Soul Reviving Grass. It can Revive the Dead, and can even draw a Primordial Spirit into a body and reshape a physical form!"

Upon hearing this, the Cold Flood Dragon and the others all looked rather uninterested.

For Exotic Beasts like them, this kind of grass was not very useful; their cultivation mainly relied on Bloodline Power.

Yet although this grass was of little use to Exotic Beasts, it made Yang Yan's eyes shine; inwardly he was overjoyed.

Because this Nine-Night Soul Reviving Grass was precisely what he needed to reshape a body for the Void-Devouring Tiger.

Amid his delight, Yang Yan swept his gaze around and discovered that the several Exotic Beasts had already sat down on the spot, each circulating their Cultivation Technique to absorb the pure Power of Origin here.

Even the Cold Flood Dragon at the peak of Golden Core had joined in the fun.

Although this Power of Origin was already of limited use to it, meat is still meat no matter how small the mosquito; how could it let this opportunity slip by!

Seeing this, Yang Yan also hurriedly sat cross-legged, quickly calming his mind and running his Cultivation Technique.

As soon as the Cultivation Technique started operating, the five Exotic Beasts around him immediately felt the Power of Origin here tilt toward him.

The mist within several meters around Yang Yan seemed to be drawn by some invisible force, surging toward where he sat.

From afar, it looked like a whale swallowing, like a rainbow being sucked in.

The five Exotic Beasts quickly exchanged glances, and there was a hint of added awe in their eyes as they looked at Yang Yan.

Then, with great tacit understanding, they all stood up and moved away, finding spots at a distance from Yang Yan—far enough not to disturb him, yet close enough to rush to his aid should anything happen—to continue their meditation.

Foundation Establishment, as the name implied, was the stage of laying the groundwork on the path of cultivation, a comparatively basic yet crucial phase on the road of cultivation.

Because the solidity of one's Foundation Establishment determined how broad the path of future cultivation would be.

During the Foundation Establishment Realm, a foundation platform would form inside a person's body; this was the manifestation of True Qi becoming solid.

At the start of Foundation Establishment, the foundation platform formed within the body would be very large and would rotate continuously.

This was because, although the True Qi had solidified, it was still not condensed enough and contained many impurities.

The subsequent period was a process of stabilizing the foundation platform, making it grow smaller and smaller.

Until in the end it became incomparably round and smooth—that was the sign of the Golden Core, representing entry into the Three Minor Realms Before Core Formation.

In the way of cultivation, though all paths led to the same destination, there were still differences between demons and humans.

Demonic cultivation required power that was even more violent, let alone when it came to Power of Origin.

Once the Power of Origin entered the body, it immediately transformed into astonishing Spiritual Power, which in that instant poured fiercely into Yang Yan's Foundation Establishment, causing the originally extremely solid foundation platform to become restless due to the influx of Demon Dao Origin and, in that instant, suffer a violent impact.

The impact of the Demon Dao Origin forcibly expanded Yang Yan's meridians in an instant; the indescribable pain elicited a muffled groan from him, and beads of sweat faintly appeared on his forehead.

Yang Yan's mind stirred; he hastily stopped absorbing the Power of Origin from the pool and took something out from his Space Ring—it was the Puduan he had obtained in the Demon Cave.

Aside from calming the mind and soothing the rampaging Spiritual Power within the body, Yang Yan had not discovered any other function of this Puduan.

However, right now it was exactly what he needed.

With the help of this Puduan, the violent factors within the Snow Demon's Power of Origin were suppressed quite a bit.

At the same time, Yang Yan's speed in absorbing the Power of Origin also increased greatly.

This change once again startled the five Exotic Beasts; they stared at Yang Yan, dumbfounded.

Very soon they noticed the Puduan beneath him, their eyes filled with envy.

But envy was envy; they did not dare disturb Yang Yan in the slightest. Instead, they hurriedly closed their eyes and once more raced against time to absorb and refine this Power of Origin.

With the Puduan's blessing, the Spiritual Power within Yang Yan's body gradually became saturated and began to clash and collide within him.

This impact instantly caused Yang Yan's foundation platform to shine with golden light; its rotation speed seemed to slow for an instant, and then it actually came to a stop.

Chapter 1260: Golden Core Achieved

At this moment, the eternally rotating platform's motion halted for just an instant.

Yang Yan's Foundation Establishment Spiritual Qi surged tremendously, and with another resounding impact, finally stopped the platform's tendency to continue rotating after the pause, completely motionless like a rock.

At the very moment it stably paused, the entire world seemed to vanish and stop, with even the forces losing their fluctuations.

One second...

Two seconds...

Three seconds...

This situation lasted for about ten seconds when a cracking sound suddenly emanated from Yang Yan's entire platform.

The sound reverberated inside Yang Yan's body, and the platform, akin to ice forming, within a few breaths, instantly solidified completely.

Sensing the changes within his body, Yang Yan's breathing slowly became increasingly prolonged.

His body trembled slightly, but his eyes were exceptionally bright.

Taking a deep breath, he did his best to concentrate his mind, as the cultivation technique running through his mind caused the solidified platform within him to begin shrinking.

This wasn't indicative of Yang Yan's cultivation regressing; rather, it meant his foundation was becoming more condensed.

Soon, the entire Foundation Establishment gradually transformed into a lustrous, transparent platform enveloped with Spirit Liquid through continual shrinking and condensing.

Subsequently, more waves of Demon Dao Power of Origin surged in, causing the remaining Foundation Establishment residue within Yang Yan's body to slowly dissipate.

At this moment, a wave of fluctuation spread from Yang Yan's body, astonishingly breaking through to the peak of Foundation Establishment.

Such phenomena startled the five Exotic Beasts awake from their meditation, turning their gaze towards Yang Yan.

Although they had various guesses in their hearts, none could have imagined Yang Yan's realm breakthrough happening so swiftly.

Ignoring others' gazes, Yang Yan continued his relentless charge towards higher realms.

Time flowed, as Power of Origin from the surroundings continuously surged in.

Yang Yan knew this process would be long and required immense Power of Origin, hence his choice to absorb them by the water.

At this moment, he resolutely opened his storage bag and continuously consumed various elixirs.

His platform was repeatedly filled with Spiritual Power, again and again, transformed into Foundation platforms.

And the platform continued to expand and shrink, refining all impurities.

In this constant transformation, Yang Yan completely lost track of time.

As time passed, the other Exotic Beasts also sensed the surrounding Demon Dao Power of Origin dwindling, being absorbed fervently by Yang Yan's position.

Thus, stimulated by this phenomenon, their own cultivation pace involuntarily sped up.

Time kept passing gradually. After Yang Yan's Foundation recondensed once more, with a loud rumble, the platform spun chaotically.

Then, suddenly merging together, it actually formed into a circular amber-like shape.

Yang Yan abruptly opened his eyes, bright light bursting forth from them, as an unmistakable expression of joy appeared on his face.

For no other reason, he had already broken through the Foundation Establishment realm, forming a pill shape within.

Yang Yan knew this was the first step before becoming Golden Core—the Elixir Embryo Realm!

With this pill embryo's emergence, Yang Yan's breath gradually disappeared, his eyes slowly dimmed, and his heartbeat became exceptionally slow.

Eventually, almost coming to a halt.

At this moment, his blood ceased to flow within, as though the whole person entered a false death state.

Silently sitting cross-legged there, his mind continually reverberated with his cultivation technique as if immersed in a peculiar state.

On the surface, his flesh seemed unaltered, yet, in truth, it had begun to differ from the Foundation Establishment.

His meridians continuously expanded, no spiritual power coursing within, yet they became even more resilient and unobstructed.

His bones exhibited speckles of brilliance, like a transformation different from the mundane.

This change was earth-shattering; his hair unwittingly lengthened, and even his height increased somewhat.

Within him, there was no trace of the foundation anymore, only a golden Dan Tai.

That was a spherical shape without golden light, exceedingly dim, like desolation, yet, vaguely existed an indescribable feeling, quietly floating where the platform once was.

If one looked closely, they could see a faint halo subtly flowing at the center of this pill embryo, barely perceptible.

Heartbeat gone, blood unmoving, meridians static, breath vanished, Yang Yan as a whole, withered, sitting cross-legged there.

His body's Dan Tai was the same, seeming to consolidate even his breath to the utmost.

Next, what Yang Yan had to break through was the Spirit Gathering Realm of the Three Minor Realms Before Core Formation.

He sat again, another hour.

He had spent a full three to four hours attacking the Golden Core.

Such duration, from an outsider's perspective, seemed incredible.

Because generally, when cultivators encounter abundant Power of Origin, they'd naturally want to absorb it quickly to expedite their breakthrough.

Yet Yang Yan was steady and methodical, ensuring his foundation became extraordinarily solid.

Therefore, the spiritual qi absorbed by others during Foundation Establishment would far not be as abundant a Power of Origin, nor would it take as long as Yang Yan.

Due to the rapid absorption from one human and five beasts, the mist above the pool had completely dissipated.

Yang Yan, being the closest and advancing rapidly in cultivation, naturally noticed this point.

He straightforwardly removed his shirt and dove into the pool.

This accelerated the influx of Power of Origin even more violently.

And the other Exotic Beasts dared only to meditate by the pool's edge, cautiously absorbing the mist from the water.

Another hour passed, Yang Yan's Dan Tai inside trembled slightly and began to quiver gently.

This was the first place to move within his body, then followed by the heart.

The heartbeat, Dan Tai's tremor, sparked a series of transformations within Yang Yan.

His blood gradually started to flow; his meridians slowly stretched, his breath gradually regained vitality...

He as a whole started to awaken slowly as if from slumber.

Soon, the golden light of the Dan Tai grew increasingly bright, the tremble gaining strength.

His heartbeat was perceptible even outside, echoing around the pool.

His meridians fully stretched, his blood began to flow swiftly, with each pulse of the heart flooding his entire being with blood.

His breath was exceptionally powerful, even allowing his eyes to seem empowered to open.

The five Exotic Beasts surrounding him were disturbed once more, waking from meditation.

Seeing Yang Yan preparing for yet another breakthrough, some beasts, albeit accustomed, found it rather helpless.

Comparison can be deadly, things reduced to junk when contrasted!

A prodigy is a prodigy, and it's incomparable!

Then, choosing simply to ignore, they collected themselves in meditation, deciding not to concern themselves with Yang Yan's movements.