

Prodigies 2331

Chapter 2331 Fourth Senior Brother, Seeing Me Is Like Seeing the Heavens

From Zhong Qiu's ragged breathing as he sat alone on the mountain peak, it was obvious that he had suffered critical injuries. Despite this, he still exuded a dominating might.

He remained straight like the backbone of heaven and earth, proud and resolute.

Lin Xun tensed up. What was the situation?

He looked around but didn't see any trace of Heavenly Emperor Shi.

"Master!" shouted Big Yellow.

Zhong Qiu's eyes were shut as there was no response from him at all. An anxious Big Yellow wanted to rush over, but Lin Xun stopped it.

"Second Senior Brother is still alive, so let's not be rash," said Lin Xun.

He was then suddenly stunned when he noticed an old, mottled bronze bell next to Zhong Qiu, the surface of which was engraved with obscure dao runes.

It was clearly the Dao Ruleless Bell!

On top of that, it was not a force of will, but the original object itself!

Lin Xun remembered that this bell had been born at Dao Subduer Cliff, and a long time ago, with the help of the Sacred Cangwu Tree, it had accompanied Senior Brother Li Xuanwei to go to the Ancient Wasteland Domain to train.

Speaking of the Dao Ruleless Bell's heritage and power, it could even be on par with the Treasure Refining Origin Furnace!

Just at this moment, the unmoving Dao Ruthless Bell seemed to sense something and woke up from its silence, emitting a hazy voice, "The power of the Treasure Refining Origin Furnace..."

At the same time, an ancient consciousness swept out, instantly capturing the auras of Lin Xun and Big Yellow.

"So it's you, Little Friend," said the bell with a hint of surprise. "To think that you have incorporated all of Kunlun's nine Emperor weapons into your own life-bound Emperor weapon. Truly impressive."

Back then, when Lin Xun first entered the secret realm of Imperial Dragon Mountain in the Kunlun Dominion, he had received pointers from the Dao Ruleless Bell. Therefore, it wasn't surprising that the bell could recognize him.

Lin Xun wasn't in the mood to reminisce or to exchange pleasantries at the moment. He asked straight away, "Senior, what's going on here?"

The Dao Ruleless Bell's indistinct voice resounded, "Several years ago, your second senior brother challenged Heavenly Emperor Shi to a duel, and this place was the location. In the end, he suppressed and imprisoned Heavenly Emperor Shi under this mountain, but he also ended up with severe injuries."

Lin Xun's and Big Yellow's kept shifting as they listened. Now that they finally knew about the state of Heavenly Emperor Shi, they understood why the latter had summoned so many Emperor experts to attack this divine mountain.

Obviously, that was the only way for Heavenly Emperor Shi to break free!

Lin Xun asked, "How's my senior brother?"

The Dao Ruleless Bell replied, "He had to go all out to keep Heavenly Emperor Shi suppressed, so he has cut off all interference from the world and merged both his mental and physical states into the power of the Nirvana of Transcendence.

“Even so, it is still impossible to kill off Heavenly Emperor Shi in a short time. Per my estimate, he needs to keep a firm guard here for around a hundred years in order to exterminate this great enemy.”

A hundred years!

Both Lin Xun and Big Yellow were visibly worried.

It was also at this moment that Heavenly Emperor Shi’s indifferent voice rang out again, “That’s quite funny. Can Zhong Qiu hold on for a hundred years with the state he’s in? As far as I can see, his injuries will be so severe that his cultivation will collapse in less than a year. That’s when he will fall into eternal oblivion!”

Big Yellow’s eyes instantly bulged out, its fur shooting up in fury as it growled, “So much nonsense for an old bastard who’s been dominated!”

Heavenly Emperor Shi said, “Your anger is useless. I come from the other side of the cosmos and carry the power of immortality. I may be restricted now, but there’ll always be a day I get out!”

After saying that, he returned to silence and never again uttered a sound no matter how much Big Yellow cursed him.

Lin Xun asked, “Senior, is there nothing we can do about Second Senior Brother’s wound?”

“Nothing,” said the Dao Ruleless Bell. “It’s a dao wound. Only your senior brother himself can deal with it. Furthermore, with the current suppression that he’s conducting, outsiders cannot intervene.”

Lin Xun's brows furrowed. He had never thought that the duel that had gathered the attention of the whole nebula would result in such a precarious situation.

“From what I see, Zhong Qiu has great perseverance and wisdom, so he will not let this situation put him in trouble. You need not worry too much, Little Friend,” said the bell.

“How can we not worry when his injuries are this bad?” Big Yellow was burning with anxiety.

Lin Xun also found this very tricky.

If Zhong Qiu could exterminate Heavenly Emperor Shi in a hundred years, then that would naturally be the best outcome.

However, if his injuries flared up to the point they messed up his entire cultivation, then what could even be done?

Lin Xun asked, “Is there really no other way?”

The Dao Ruleless Bell was just about to reply when a wisp of a voice suddenly emerged from the motionless Zhong Qiu.

“Junior Brother, Heavenly Emperor Shi is in an even worse condition than mine. I can kill him once and for all in a hundred years, so neither you nor Big Yellow should worry.”

Zhong Qiu's voice was calm and casual, still as conceited and domineering as ever.

Upon hearing this, Lin Xun's and Big Yellow's spirits were lifted. Their eyes lit up.

Lin Xun said, “Senior Brother, I...”

Zhong Qiu cut him off, “Let Big Yellow stay here, while you, junior brother, take the Dao Ruleless Bell and head to the ruins of Fangchun Mountain. Find your fourth senior brother there, and then...kill him!”

The last two words were said with conviction.

Lin Xun almost jumped in fright, his mind in turmoil.

Of the fifty disciples of Fangchun Mountain, Eldest Senior Brother Combat Emperor, Third Senior Sister Ruo Su, Fifth Senior Brother Blazing Jun, Eighth Senior Brother Clairvoyant, Eleventh Senior Brother Pu Zhen and many others had long since traveled to the other side of the cosmos after killing the Nameless Esteemed Emperor.

Some others, like Ninth Senior Brother Ge Yupu and Fourteenth Senior Brother Ji Xiu, had passed away.

Lin Xun had once wondered about his fourth senior brother, who was among the first five fellow disciples, but he had never gotten to meet him.

Over the years, no matter which senior brother or sister he had come across, none of them had ever mentioned this person.

Even when Lin Xun had inquired about him, he hadn't gotten any answers.

Now, however, Second Senior Brother had just told him to find and kill Fourth Senior Brother!

This was downright horrifying!

What was the reason behind this?

Zhong Qiu's voice sounded once again, "The Dao Ruleless Bell can tell you about this matter after you leave.

"The gist is that, our master didn't kill Fourth Junior Brother because he wanted him to repent for his wrongdoings and reshape his dao, but from how things stand, it seems that he has been taken over by obsession and become a demon. He must be gotten rid of."

There was disappointment and also determination in his voice.

After this, Zhong Qiu fell back into silence. No matter how Lin Xun and Big Yellow tried to communicate further, it was futile.

“Lin Xun, you and the Dao Ruleless Bell should leave. It’ll be alright since I’ll be standing guard here,” finalized Big Yellow as it rushed to the mountain peak and stood protectively in front of Zhong Qiu.

“Little Friend, let's go.” The Dao Ruleless Bell teleported over, shedding an ancient and mottled glow.

After a moment of stupor, Lin Xun sighed softly and nodded, “I’ll be back.”

“Wait.” Xi suddenly said, stepping out from Omega Secret-Realm. “He had helped me before, so this time, I’ll also stay behind to protect him.”

Lin Xun was dumbfounded, then he nodded, “Alright.”

Back then, after he had entered the Underworld for the first time, Xi had fought the purple-haired woman called Yanxing and sustained heavy injuries. It was Second Senior Brother who had then stepped in and saved her.

Now, it was clear that Xi had chosen to stay behind as a way to repay this favor.

With her and Big Yellow guarding him together, it put Lin Xun’s heart at ease.

“Little remnant, you'd better pray that you won’t die too soon. When I get out of here, I will find you, and I will capture you!” Heavenly Emperor Shi's voice suddenly rang out, permeated with bone-drilling frost.

Lin Xun ignored it. Together with the Dao Ruleless Bell, he left the mountain peak.

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On the way down, the raging torrent of law power filling the area could no longer affect Lin Xun thanks to the Dao Ruleless Bell leading the way.

Halfway down the divine mountain, Lin Xun couldn't help but turn around and take a look at the top, where he could vaguely see the figures of Xi, Big Yellow, and his second senior brother Zhong Qiu.

He asked, "What is this mountain called?"

"Dao Subduer," replied the bell. "Where Zhong Qiu is sitting is precisely the Dao Subduer Cliff. Look at all the torrents of law power flooding this area, it's a gathering of countless great dao origin powers. If they leak out, probably over half of the Kunlun Dominion will be destroyed."

Lin Xun nodded. "Senior, can you tell me about Fourth Senior Brother now?"

The Dao Ruleless Bell sank into a short silence before it said, "Your fourth senior brother, whose dao name is Ling Xuanzi, had the best aptitude for cultivation among all the disciples of Fangchun Mountain..."

Ling Xuanzi.

He was born with profound wisdom, a heart of nine apertures, a mind that bloomed like a lotus, a talent that defied heavens, unparalleled throughout the ages. He was an one-in-an-eon genius who had become a disciple to the Lord of Fangchun Mountain at a young age.

At the age of nine, he had explored the wonders of Sainthood and stepped into that realm with a noble aspiration.

"No laws in heavens shall escape my eyes. All the daos in existence shall be mine to wield. Every living being who sees me will worship me, for seeing me is like seeing the Heavens!"

Nine years old!

He had crossed the five great cultivation stages and shattered the nine longevity tribulations to break into the Saint Stage at the age of nine! This kind of advancement speed was sheerly appalling and unique throughout history.

What was even more shocking was his noble aspiration of Sainthood: 'Seeing me is like seeing the Heavens!'

Ten years later, Ling Xuanzi had found the Lord of Fangchun Mountain and said, "Master, I will start breaking through to the Supreme Emperor Stage today. Do you think I have surpassed you?"

The implication was, 'Master, the dao attainments you had achieved when you broke through to the Emperor Stage weren't as great as mine now.'

The Lord of Fangchun Mountain hadn't said a word, only letting out a long sigh.

Sure enough, on that very day, Ling Xuanzi had ushered in the tribulation of Supreme Emperorhood and then became an Emperor in one fell swoop!

This event had stirred up a sensation up and down Fangchun Mountain and amazed all the other disciples. They believed that Ling Xuanzi had the best talent since the beginning of time, and that he was bound to surpass them in his future accomplishments.

However, shortly after Ling Xuanzi became an Emperor, he encountered a sudden calamity in his cultivation. From the deepest part of his heart, a demonic karma had sprouted and grew exponentially, leading him onto an evil path.

At the time, the Lord of Fangchun Mountain had gone out for something. Ling Xuanzi had taken advantage of his absence to declare war on his fellow disciples, wanting to compare their strength through duels.

If they lost, they would have to swear on their dao heart to serve Ling Xuanzi as their master.

If they won, then he, Ling Xuanzi, would demolish his own dao.

This move had been opposed by the other disciples, who had deemed it to be too extreme and deviant. As a result, none of them had agreed to duel him.

However, Ling Xuanzi had refused to leave it at that. He had taken the initiative to attack, forcing them to fight. Proceeding this, he had defeated several other fellow disciples and imprisoned them, saying that they had three days to willingly submit to him.

This completely enraged the other disciples. They then decided to team up to seize Ling Xuanzi.

However, before this infighting could start, the Lord of Fangchun Mountain returned and single-handedly suppressed Ling Xuanzi!

Chapter 2332 Sudden Disruption in Spacetime

This imprisonment went on to last for countless years!

Even after the lineage of Fangchun Mountain collapsed, Ling Xuanzi was still suppressed under its ruins.

The Lord of Fangchun Mountain had once said, "When Ling Xuanzi repents for his mistakes, purges his heart demon, and rebuilds his dao heart, the seal will automatically be undone."

The fact that this seal hadn't been broken until now was clear proof that Ling Xuanzi's heart demon had not been exorcized.

Listening to the story, Lin Xun was full of emotions.

Becoming a Saint at the age of nine and then a supreme Great Emperor ten years after that, one could imagine how heaven-defying the aptitude of his fourth senior brother was.

When compared to this, the so-called geniuses in this day and age were simply a joke.

Even Lin Xun himself, who had been hailed as the first to become a supreme Emperor in a hundred thousand years, was far inferior to him in terms of advancement speed.

Lin Xun asked, "Do you know what exactly my fourth senior brother's heart demon is?"

The Dao Ruleless Bell replied, "Seeing me is like seeing the heavens."

This was Ling Xuanzi's noble aspiration of Sainthood.

However, it had also become his heart demon!

Lin Xun's eyes flickered as he was reminded of his own noble aspiration of Sainthood.

He also finally understood why the other senior brothers and sisters had been unwilling to mention Fourth Senior Brother.

The Dao Ruleless Bell continued, "Cultivating too fast is not a good thing, especially when one is a heaven-defying monster like Ling Xuanzi. They advance rapidly on the path and leap through cultivation realms, so once they take a wrong turn, the consequences are simply unimaginable."

Lin Xun wondered, "He has been locked up for so long. Why would Second Senior Brother want to...kill him now?"

The bell said, "Several years ago, Heavenly Emperor Shi went to the Return Dominion to find the ruins of Fangchun Mountain. In the end, he had only escaped from the dominion with severe injuries."

Lin Xun inwardly nodded as he also remembered this story.

"Zhong Qiu decisively challenged Heavenly Emperor Shi to a duel to the death in this Kunlun Dominion in order to seize this opportunity.

"Zhong Qiu's intention was to use the Dao Subduer Cliff's characteristics. Since that place confines all daos in existence, it can invisibly counteract the taboo law power. As such, killing the injured Heavenly Emperor Shi there should be as easy as pie.

“But something unexpected occurred during the fight.”

At this part, the Dao Ruleless Bell paused and let out a long sigh before it continued, “Heavenly Emperor Shi appeared to know all the skills and daos under Zhong Qiu's control like the back of his hand, as if he knows everything about him to the smallest details. As a result, Zhong Qiu was met with many perils.

“Zhong Qiu realized then that Heavenly Emperor Shi must have in-depth knowledge of the Emperor scripture that he personally created – the True Supreme Art. In this world, only Ling Xuanzi, who is suppressed at the Fangchun ruins, is supposed to have such knowledge.”

Lin Xun's pupils constricted. “It was Ling Xuanzi who imparted it to Heavenly Emperor Shi?”

The bell said, “That should be the case.

“During his disciple days on Fangchun Mountain, Ling Xuanzi explored all of its dao collections and came to master many arts. Combat Emperor, Zhong Qiu, Ruo Su, and the others all gifted him the legacies they created for him to study.

“It’s undeniable that Ling Xuanzi is a top-rate supreme genius of all time. Any dao or art that he wishes to master, he can easily comprehend.

“But this is also why whatever he told Heavenly Emperor Shi about Zhong Qiu's legacy was almost able to foil Zhong Qiu’s plan. Although he suppressed the Heavenly Emperor Shi in the end, he paid a serious price for it.”

Hearing this, a cold gleam flashed in Lin Xun's eyes. “If that's true, then this fourth senior brother of mine is no different from a traitor. No wonder Second Senior Brother wants him dead. As long as this kind of scourge is left unremoved, it will definitely put Fangchun Mountain Lineage in harm’s way!

“This goes to show that during these countless years of confinement, he has been harboring grudges, and his obsession has turned him into a demon, which is why he did such a thing.”

The Dao Ruleless Bell let out another long sigh, "It's truly a pity."

Such a unique cultivation genius could have had a bright future unimaginable to everyone, but instead, his heart had bred a demon that led him astray. How could one not feel sorry for his potential?

"No matter how heaven-defying one's talent and aptitude are, they are still a scourge when they have a malevolent heart. There's nothing to pity. If I were Master, I would have crippled him back then," said Lin Xun indifferently.

As the two talked, they had walked out of the forbidden zone of the Dao Subduer Cliff.

The Dao Ruleless Bell suddenly shrank into the size of a pinky finger and latched on Lin Xun's hair like a pendant. "Little friend, I helped your senior brother because I have a deep connection with Fangchun Mountain. On our way to the Return Dominion, I will likewise give you guidance, but I won't be able to offer you a hand in combat."

Lin Xun was stunned. He then said, "This is natural. Since it's a matter between us disciples of Fangchun Mountain, of course I should resolve it by myself."

"Thanks for your understanding." The bell seemed to be at peace. "All these years, I accompanied your senior brother Li Xuanwei to the Ancient Wasteland Domain, and I was also fortunate enough to meet the Lord of Fangchun Mountain and receive his guidance. However, whether it was before or in the future, I have never killed a single being."

"Not even one?" Lin Xun was shocked.

"Not a single one," the bell's voice was faint. "My sound represents all living beings, and when stepping on the path of cultivation, I finally understand their suffering. I cannot bear to kill. While I cannot control everyone's desire to kill, I can at least...control myself not to kill people."

"Li Xuanwei once said that my dao is too stubborn, obtuse, and that it's false compassion, for true compassion is to enlighten the living beings and free them from suffering, so that they no longer have to experience the hardship of worldly affairs."

“But that is not my dao. As a bell, I sound to give the multitude of beings a moment of enlightenment. And that is enough.”

Lin Xun thought for a moment and commented, “Just because your dao is different doesn’t mean it’s stubborn and obtuse. I rather think that it’s your persistence that has led you to your achievements today.”

After a pause, he asked, “Senior, how should we get to the Return Dominion?”

The bell said, “The Return Dominion is where all the streams of the heavens converge. It is also the source of the Flying Immortal River that flows into the Kunlun Dominion. There exists a spacetime tunnel through which you can enter the Return Dominion.”

Lin Xun contemplated a little, then launched into action per the instruction of the Dao Ruleless Bell.

Originally, he had planned to walk down the memory lane and revisit the realms of Peach Utopia, Imperial Dragon Mountain, and Fengshan Platform.

However, after thinking about it, he had decided not to.

Swish!

Lin Xun's figure flickered as he began teleporting.

The Kunlun Dominion was very big, to the point that even the Dao Ruleless Bell couldn't tell how large it was. It was home to not only the Three Forbidden and Nine Secrets but also many other bizarre and unbelievable places.

The Kunlun Dominion was regarded as the birthplace of the almighty dao. It was rumored that every ancestral aura of all the great daos in existence could be found there.

Unfortunately, Lin Xun didn't have the heart to find them right now.

As a matter of fact, at his current cultivation level, only the world's top and rarest treasures could catch his eyes, as opposed to the ordinary opportunities and small fortunes.

Four hours later, under the guidance of the Dao Ruleless Bell, Lin Xun arrived at a place where 'the world had crumbled.'

Here, there was a series of huge, black holes in the sky dome. They were strangely quiet and motionless, but seeing them sent chills down people's spines for no reason.

The ground was riddled with deep chasms and abysses, the sight of which kept unfurling into the horizon!

At the very end of this zone was a dark void.

According to the Dao Ruleless Bell, that void was the Nameless Forbidden Zone, one of Kunlun's Three Forbidden.[1]

Since the beginning of time, it had been a place where almost no one had ever survived after entering!

Lin Xun stood in the air as he looked at the crumbled world and then at the dark Nameless Forbidden Zone in the distance. Inwardly, he couldn't help but be awe-struck.

Even though he was a supreme Great Emperor, this area gave him an eerie, palpitating, and oppressive feeling.

He asked, "Senior, do you know what is hidden in that Nameless Forbidden Zone?"

The Dao Ruleless Bell said, "From what I've heard, in there is a broken path that cuts off the heavens, the earth, the great dao, and everything. There are also rumors that Nameless Forbidden Zone was where the primal chaos origin of the Kunlun Dominion was born. As for what exactly is hidden in it, I am not sure."

It continued after a short pause, "However, I did hear that your teacher, the Lord of Fangchun Mountain, seemed to have explored it."

Lin Xun was surprised and didn't say anything.

Following the bell, he soon found a massive gully. At the bottom of it, light hazes danced above a rushing river, reflecting up dreamlike splendor.

"This is the end of the Flying Immortal River," the Dao Ruleless Bell introduced. "It's a spring that's intermingled with the mysterious power of spacetime. Enter from here and you will be teleported to the Return Dominion."

Lin Xun nodded. Without any further delay, he teleported to the bottom of that gully.

The rapid flow sent up waves of bubbles, painting a mysterious scene of illusory flickers like smoke and mist.

Within the blink of an eye, Lin Xun spotted the 'spring.'

It spanned around ninety feet and resembled an opening in the deepest part of the earth, from which the water of the Flying Immortal River streamed out.

Looking closely, all four sides of the spring diffused the boundless aura of time that was laced with the law power of space. Together, they formed the mysterious power of spacetime.

If it wasn't for the Dao Ruleless Bell pointing it out, Lin Xun wouldn't have dared to imagine that the source of the Flying Immortal River would be such a marvelous sight.

"Don't worry, little friend. This spacetime force is extremely solid. You won't be hurt one bit after you go in there," said the bell.

“Mhm,” Lin Xun acknowledged and leapt into it without hesitation.

Rustle~

The water splashed, and when the dreamy power of spacetime touched Lin Xun, a strange sensation like an electric shock surged all over him.

Almost at the same time, the Origin Aeth Artery at his chest suddenly released a burning hot breath. It was as though a primeval beast had suddenly been jolted awake from its eternal hibernation.

It was simply uncontrollable as the artery erupted with a terrifying white light, seemingly starving as it took the shape of a great abyss and started devouring the power of spacetime.

Boom!

The area around the spring produced a deafening rumble. The originally stable spacetime power violently quaked.

Even the Dao Ruleless Bell was shocked by this incident. It immediately said, “Quickly go!”

At this moment, Lin Xun only felt his body continuing to burn hotter. There was a storm in him as the raging torrent of spacetime power rushed into his Origin Aeth Artery, causing his vision to go black and his head to go dizzy.

Upon hearing the voice of the Dao Ruleless Bell, Lin Xun, almost out of instinct, raced towards the spring as if his life depended on it.

Chapter 2333 The Most Familiar Stranger

Kaboom!

The entrance to the spring turned into what seemed to be a tornado, shooting out the turbulence of spacetime.

Lin Xun was able to avoid this disaster as he had vanished into the depths of the spring a step earlier. Otherwise, even an Emperor Ancestor would be instantly ground to powder by the turbulence.

Only a long time later did the area of the spring return to calm, but compared to before, the spacetime power in the air had clearly become weaker...

As the stars whirled and the sky spun before him, Lin Xun only felt burning hot as he was uncontrollably teleported away. Nothing but distorted and colorful light filled his vision.

It was unknown how much time had passed when Lin Xun's physical state gradually became normal again. His drowsy mind also gained a trace of clarity.

Examining himself, the first thing he noticed was the change in his Origin Aeth Artery. As if crystallized, it had become shiny and translucent, and within it, a powerful force of time was surging.

It reminded one of a glass bottle that was filled with water...

Lin Xun even had the sensation that his originally starving Origin Aeth Artery had finally had a satisfactory meal.

This change didn't lead to a metamorphosis, but he felt that one was very imminent. This wonderful feeling instantly allowed him to realize something.

Perhaps, when his Origin Aeth Artery completely refined the time power that it had just devoured, it would welcome its third metamorphosis!

It was also known as the third stage of the Grand Abyss Heaven Devourer!

"But the situation was too dangerous. If the smallest thing had gone wrong, then I would have..." Lin Xun's heart palpitated, feeling as though he had just survived a catastrophe as he recalled the mad, chaotic time and space around the spring.

“Little friend, how are you feeling?” rang the concerned voice of the Dao Ruleless Bell.

“I’m okay.” Lin Xun took a deep breath. Looking around, he found himself in front of a swirling portal.

“Beyond this portal is the entrance to the Return Dominion,” said the bell. “But be mentally prepared. Outside of the dominion is Spirit Burial Sea, your power will be restricted by its law power to below the Emperor Stage. However, it’ll be normal again once you enter the Return Dominion.”

Lin Xun nodded.

Spirit Burial Sea!

Connected to the backmost area of the East Sea, which was in the territory of the Ziyao Empire, Spirit Burial Sea was thus considered a part of the lower plane.

A long time ago, when Lone Man and the old seer had been laying low in the Forbidden City of the Ziyao Empire, their power had also been restricted.

Otherwise, they would have been able to poke a big hole through the sky with their cultivation!

From what Lin Xun knew, after the Dao War of Ten Directions erupted in the primeval era, the Ancient Wasteland Domain, also known as the birthplace of all daos, had sunk under the impact. Going down with the domain was its origin power that had later transformed into the lower plane.

In other words, the lower plane was the core of the world where all daos originated from!

Mysterious places such as the Return Dominion, Spirit Burial Sea, Dao Burial Sea Mound, and Blood Kill Battlefield were all located in the lower plane.

With all this knowledge, how could Lin Xun not understand that the lower world was by no means just a barren and forsaken place, but instead one with a great origin?!

The thought that he was now at Spirit Burial Sea when he had just been in the Kunlun Dominion shortly ago sent him into a trance.

Calculating the time, it had already been several decades since Lin Xun had first entered the Ancient Nebula Road. Even he hadn't expected to have this opportunity to return to the lower plane under such special circumstances.

Without further delay, he dashed into the swirling portal.

The first thing that came into view was a vast, turquoise sea. As far as the eye could see, the sky was infinite, the clouds were gauzy, and the waves rolled into the horizon.

Lin Xun simultaneously detected a great dao power that weighted itself on his power, dampening down the latter. Only after his aura fell below the Emperor Stage to the peak of the Supreme Quasi-Emperor Stage did it finally stabilize.

The great dao oppression also disappeared at that same instant.

"The law power of this realm is definitely not simple," lamented Lin Xun as he stood above the blue sea with his hands on his back.

During his youth, when his cultivation was shallow, he had been unable to appreciate the marvels of this world. Now, however, having returned here as the nebula-renowned Emperor Daoyuan, he finally perceived how extraordinary it was.

The Dao Ruleless Bell said, "The boundless Ancient Nebula Road encompasses countless heavens, but there is only one path leading to the Kunlun Dominion, which is the Ancient Star Path. Meanwhile, this lower world appears to host the Return Dominion comfortably, so it's naturally very special."

Lin Xun looked around. Memories from when he was a teenager resurfaced bit by bit.

He remembered being invited by Zhao Jingxuan to go on a journey with a group of disciples from Spirit Treasure Holy Land. Setting out from the Ziyao Empire, they had crossed Spirit Burial Sea, and arrived at the Return Dominion without any real danger.

It was also at Dao Burial Sea Mound that he had met Toady, also known as Jin Duyi, a descendant of the Three-Legged Golden Toad...

Later, he and Toady had barged into Deva Secret Domain together and competed with the young successors of Dragon Whale, Golden Luan, Herculean Demon Bull, Mysterious Ao, Cloud Hou, Winged Spirit, and various other clans.

He had faced many perils, and had reaped many fortunes.

Afterward, he had found Fangchun Ruins. There, by virtue of the Dao Endless Pagoda, he had obtained the daoist verse of teachings left by the Lord of Fangchun Mountain.

It was also at that time that he had seized the legacies of his eldest senior brother, the Sacred Combat Art, in the midst of a fierce battle between a group of rivals!

Lin Xun's mind wandered as he walked down the memory lane.

Youth...

Before he had realized it, over a hundred years had passed. He, himself, was no longer that young man...

After the matter with Fourth Senior Brother is resolved, I'll definitely go back to the Ziyao Empire to take a look. Lin Xun secretly made this decision.

Suddenly, there was a noisy clamor in the distance.

“Everyone, do not panic. The entrance to the Return Dominion has been opened for over a month on end. Moreover, the Venerable Dao Lord said that for three months, all the beings in this world can go to Fangchun Ruins and listen to him expound the wonders of the great dao.”

“There is such a great thing in this world?”

“This is called a fortunate opportunity!”

“Hurry up!”

On the far horizon of the turquoise sea, many figures had appeared, either riding spirit birds and huge sharks or driving a flying treasure. The group amounted to roughly a hundred beings of all kinds, making it quite a grand scene.

The leader was a refined elder in a black robe. He looked ethereal and dashing, standing on an ancient flying sword.

Lin Xun recognized at a glance the origins of those figures.

The waters here had been inhabited by thousands of races who had migrated here since the primeval era. Each of them had formed their own force and survived to this day.

When Lin Xun had first come here during his youth, he had witnessed for himself their power, and had even defeated an unknown number of their dazzling geniuses in the process.

For instance, Niu Tuntian of Herculean Demon Bull Clan, Kong Xiu of Cloud Hou Clan Saint, Meng Lianqing of Golden Luan Clan, and so on.

Those figures who were whistling from the distance in his direction were obviously from those primeval migrant clans. Belonging to different ethnic groups, their appearances greatly varied.

When they saw Lin Xun standing alone above the sea, everyone including the black-robed leader looked surprised. However, they didn't find his presence strange.

During this period of time, the sea area around the Return Dominion had been bustling like never before, attracting numerous experts every day.

None of the black-robed old man's group was willing to delay more than a mere glance for Lin Xun. They immediately resumed flying away.

"Huh?" A slender figure among them suddenly came to a stop and looked at Lin Xun in a daze.

It was a woman clad in a long, light-golden dress. She was tall and strikingly beautiful. Her skin was so fair that it shone, and her black hair cascaded down to her slim waist. Her entirety emanated a stunning, cold, and lofty demeanor.

As she stood still, some of the people around her also followed suit and clustered around her with visible confusion.

"Miss Lianqing, do you know this person?" someone asked.

The group all sized up Lin Xun.

At the same time, Lin Xun was also caught off guard as he recognized the beautiful woman.

Meng Lianqing![1]

Back then, in the Deva Secret Domain, Meng Lianqing had been like a peerless goddess, performing excellently amongst the crowd of Saints.

It was only that everyone had been rivals, and Lin Xun had even had a fierce clash with her over the Sacred Combat Art.

At that time, he had dominated Niu Tuntian, Xuan Luozi, Kong Xiu, and a host of other Saints in a one-against-many. Meng Lianqing had chosen to retreat after realizing that she could not win.

Lin Xun had never thought that he would run into such an 'old acquaintance' just after returning to the sea around the Return Dominion.

He also had no idea that after so many years, Meng Lianqing had long flourished into a dazzling figure among all the races inhabiting this realm.

She was the first junior of the Golden Luan Clan to reach the Quasi-Emperor Stage. Her current status was so high that she could stand shoulder to shoulder with many old monsters who had lived for thousands of years.

Recently, Meng Lianqing had become an expert that no major lineages here could ignore.

Coupled with her stunning appearance, she stood out like a crane would from a flock of chickens. Many outstanding young experts regarded her as the other half of their dream.

In fact, all the reacting young men around Meng Lianqing were her admirers. They either came from extraordinary backgrounds or had impressive attainments in cultivation.

However, Meng Lianqing was in her own little world at the moment, sometimes frowning, sometimes dazed. The emotions in her eyes kept changing as she seemed to reminisce about something.

A long time later, with a hint of doubt, she opened her mouth to speak, "You are..."

She had traveled to the Return Dominion today in order to listen to the Venerable Dao Lord's teachings. Seeing a familiar figure here really took her aback, and she was reminded of the experience in Deva Secret Domain many years ago when she had first been in the Return Dominion.

It had been haunting Meng Lianqing like a nightmare. Such a long time had passed, but whenever she remembered it, she still felt a little unwilling and bitter.

“Is something the matter?” asked Lin Xun.

He had no intention of revealing his identity. Their past competition was no more than a trivial scuffle to the current him.

Even though his strength was currently suppressed, his appearance and facial features had undergone substantial transformations. If he didn’t want people to recognize him, then even a Great Emperor who was familiar with him wouldn’t be able to.

Meeting Lin Xun's clear and calm eyes, Meng Lianqing was hesitant, “I'm sorry, you just look very much like an old acquaintance of mine. I probably have the wrong person, but may I know your name?”

“Daoyuan.” Lin Xun casually gave his dao name.

“Daoyuan? Sure enough, it isn’t him...” Meng Lianqing was stunned and seemingly relieved, but she also looked slightly lost, her eyes were clouding with subtle, complicated emotions.

Chapter 2334 Venerable Dao Lord

The man named Daoyuan in front of her bore some resemblance to the person in her memory in terms of his bearing, but when one made a meticulous comparison, the differences between them were obvious.

The person back then was domineering, overbearing even. Although young, he was like a sun shining alone with heaven-defying power, capable of pushing back an entire army!

Even when under the siege of a group of Saints, he had shown sheer courage and utter disregard for the opponents. His entirety was like a divine blade that could cleave the sky apart and illuminate the nine heavens.

In Deva Secret Domain, he had been unrivaled, dominating everyone until all that was left in them was fear!

Meanwhile, this man called Daoyuan did not exude that kind of dashing elegance. He was too bland, like the kind of cloud that one could always find in the sky. There was no edge nor any sharpness to him.

Meng Lianqing couldn't tell why she felt so lost right now. The tangle of emotions in her heart was indescribable.

Normally, she should loath and spurn that young man, but so many years had passed and time had brought many changes. Now that she looked back as a quasi-Emperor, she suddenly found that the competition of that year was nothing but fleeting smoke of the past.

It was only her heart...that still held regret and unwillingness.

"Sorry for bothering you." Steadying her mind, Meng Lianqing withdrew her gaze, turned, and resumed on the road. Her clothes fluttered as she did, charming and elegantly.

The men around hurriedly chased after her. If it wasn't for Meng Lianqing, they wouldn't have bothered to spare a glance for a stranger like Lin Xun.

In response to this, Lin Xun was unperturbed.

He had struck fear into Great Emperors of the nebula, having killed many of them over these years. He had razed to the ground ancient dao lineages that had once stood at the top of the world. His might had long since overwhelmed the stars, scaring people witless with just his name.

Now, when facing cultivators at the Quasi-Emperor Stage, he viewed them from above whether in his mindset or cognition.

Shaking his head, Lin Xun was about to continue toward the Return Dominion when suddenly, a figure swept in from the distance and greeted him with a sociable smile.

"Brother Daoyuan, are you also heading to the Return Dominion for the Venerable Dao Lord's teachings?" Saying this, the person introduced himself, "I am Yan Juan from Leaf Spirit Clan."

The Leaf Spirit Clan, among the thousands of primeval migrant forces, could only be considered second-rate. Yan Juan was the elected Saint from the younger generation of this clan, but his cultivation was only at the Big Saint Stage.

“Not bad.” Lin Xun assessed Yan Juan for a moment before withdrawing his gaze.

“Brother Daoyuan, are you actually acquainted with Fairy Meng Lianqing?” There was envy and even excitement in Yan Juan's eyes. “She’s the most dazzling beauty of Spirit Burial Sea. It's difficult for even the leader of an average clan to see her.”

“She mistook me for another person.” Lin Xun shook his head with a smile. He finally understood that Meng Lianqing was the reason why this fellow had taken the initiative to start a conversation with him.

“She got the wrong person? Then why didn’t that happen to me?” Yan Juan revealed a look of disbelief. “What's more, Fairy Meng is a quasi-Emperor. If her insightful eyes had actually mistaken someone’s identity, then there must be a good reason for it. My brother, I think you might be in luck!”

“I’m in luck?” Lin Xun was dumbfounded.

“Brother, are you acting or are you really that dense? It’s Fairy Meng we’re talking about here. If she takes a liking to you, then a few casual pointers from her can turn your life around! You will be a lucky carp who leaps through the dragon gate!” exclaimed Yan Juan, his expression and tone full of envy.

Lin Xun was quite entertained. Obviously, this guy looked up at Meng Lianqing with nothing but admiration and respect like she was a lofty goddess.

Lin Xun said nothing more and flew off.

“Brother, wait.” Yan Juan rushed after him like they had been friends forever. “We're both going to the Return Dominion anyway, so let’s travel together and have each other’s back.”

Lin Xun didn’t reject this idea since he happened to have a lot of questions that needed answers to.

He asked, "Can you tell me about...the Venerable Dao Lord?"

Although Yan Juan was a bit puzzled, he spilled everything he knew.

Over a month ago, the entrance to the Return Dominion suddenly emerged above the blue sea. This had caused quite a stir, and many cultivators had entered it without encountering any dangers. On the contrary, they had even been graced with the dao teachings of a mysterious expert before the Fangchun Ruins in Deva Secret Domain.

That mysterious expert called himself 'Dao Lord,' claiming to have fathomed the principles of all daos under heavens. He said he was doing this with the intention to look for a successor because soon, he would go far away to certify his dao, and he couldn't bear to let his cultivation heritage fade into oblivion afterward.

Anyone who went to listen to his teachings would have a chance to be accepted as his heir and receive his full legacy.

Originally, people had been skeptical, but as they listened to this Dao Lord's explanation on the enigmas of the almighty dao, everyone had benefited to some extent regardless of who they were!

A few had even directly broken through to the next level during their session!

Word of this had then spread quickly as a result. In less than a month's time, all the races inhabiting Spirit Burial Sea learned about this matter, leading to a big sensation.

For some time now, the number of cultivators flocking to the Fangchun Ruins had been uncountable. The Return Dominion had been quite crowded and lively.

As time went on, more and more hearsay about the Venerable Dao Lord was produced.

One rumor was that he was a Great Emperor from the ancient times, who possessed world-class power and profound cultivation capable of shaking the ages.

There was another rumor that he was the master of Fangchun Ruins, and that before the dawn of time, he had already been a supreme being who could freely roam universes.

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After recounting all the various information and rumors, Yan Juan's expression was filled with fervent admiration. "I don't seek something so far-fetched as to become the Venerable Dao Lord's official disciple. It's enough as long as I can listen to his teachings."

He was completely oblivious to the icy look flashing across Lin Xun's face as he said that.

Venerable Dao Lord? Lin Xun had a strong premonition that it was merely his fourth senior brother, Ling Xuanzi!

Selecting a successor? It was complete nonsense. After all, Ling Xuanzi was still imprisoned under the Fangchun Ruins. How could he possibly be in the mood to find a disciple?

Making such a grand stage and luring over countless beings to hear his teachings... If this so-called Venerable Dao Lord is really Fourth Senior Brother, then what is he trying to achieve?

Lin Xun mused with strong ripples in his eyes. No matter what, I must eradicate this scourge of a traitor!

Traveling as they talked, the two heard thunderous echoes of water currents coming from a far distance. They looked over and saw a gaping abyss in the turquoise sea!

It was a maelstrom!

The seawater in ten directions surged into it like thousands of streams returning to the source, generating terrifying rumbles.

The sight was exceptionally majestic and soul-shaking. A massive abyss in the middle of the ocean was engulfing water from all around. It was unfathomably deep, like an entrance to a mysterious world.

Compared to this abyss, even the sun and the moon appeared small. Every treasure ship in its vicinity resembled an inconspicuous grain of sand.

This was the Return Dominion!

Legend had it that every river in existence, including even the waters in the deepest part of the nebula, would converge in this arcane and primordial Return Dominion.

Rumors claimed that, in the beginning of time, the Return Dominion was surrounded by five sacred mountains which were Yingzhou, Penglai, Fanghu, Daiyu, and Yuanqiao.

Each of these mountains was seventy thousand feet apart from the ones next to it, and towered thirty thousand miles, connecting the nine underworlds to the sea of stars above!

"Here we are," said Yan Juan excitedly.

Lin Xun's eyes also carried a hint of emotion. He was only a teenager the first time he had come to the Return Dominion, but now, coming back here again, everything was completely different.

Flowers might look as the same as the time went by, but people were not of same with each passing year

The sea area around the Return Dominion had welcomed many figures. There were thousands of them, with visible anticipation and eagerness, leaping into the entrance one after another like splendid rainbows.

Lin Xun spotted members of the Dragon Whale, Mysterious Ao, Cloud Hou, Dark Wood, Blood Lion, and other clans he knew.

However, almost all of them were unfamiliar faces.

There was no delay as Lin Xun also jumped in, followed closely by Yan Juan. After chatting their whole way here, the latter reckoned that Daoyuan was a nice person, as warm and gentle as a spring breeze, and would make a great friend...

He just had no idea how flabbergasted the experts on the Ancient Nebula Road would be if they knew about his evaluation. Emperor Daoyuan, whose hands were stained with the blood of many Great Emperors, was warm and gentle?

What a joke!

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Like the Kunlun Dominion, no one so far knew exactly how big the Return Dominion really was. As one of the four great dao dominions, it was rumored to contain many secret realms and taboo zones.

Deva Secret Domain was merely one of them.

Of course, Deva Secret Domain was only the name the outside world placed on it. Lin Xun had now known that it was actually called 'Fangchun Secret Realm.'

For a long time ago, it had been the established base of Fangchun Mountain Lineage.

Buzz!

After entering the Return Dominion and going through a spacetime shift, Lin Xun stepped into Deva Secret Domain for the second time.

The great dao law power restraining his cultivation also disappeared, returning him to the fourth realm Supreme Emperor Stage in an instant!

However, so as not to alert others and invite unnecessary trouble, Lin Xun still kept his aura below the Emperor Stage.

Yan Juan, who had been by his side the whole time, was completely oblivious to this.

"This is Deva Secret Domain?" Yan Juan let out a gasp of astonishment as he saw the undulating hills, the boundless sky and earth, and the primitive aura in the atmosphere.

The air was permeated with thick and vast chaos qi. The vegetation was beautifully crystalline to the smallest blade of grass, flowing with precious sheens. This world was simply an otherworldly habitat of the divine.

Obviously, it was Yan Juan's first time here.

Lin Xun took a brief look, and all the experiences of the past came to his mind. After discerning the direction, he rushed straight ahead.

"Brother, where are you going?" Yan Juan hurriedly chased after him.

"To that Venerable Dao Lord to listen to his teachings, of course," Lin Xun pulled a convenient excuse. Seeing Yan Juan trying to catch up, he thought about it and eventually slowed down.

It had been quite a long time since he had last been here, so there was no need to be in a hurry. He might as well have a nice, slow walk along the way.

"You know the road?" Yan Juan was surprised.

"Mhm." Lin Xun made no elaboration.

Right at this moment, he seemed to notice something and gazed into the distance.

Yan Juan couldn't help but follow his gaze and saw a delicate figure. It was none other than Meng Lianqing and her group.

Yan Juan immediately looked like something had dawned on him. "That's right, it cannot go wrong, following Fairy Meng's steps. She once entered the Return Dominion many years ago, and was said to have obtained a lot of fortunes..."

Lin Xun found the guy's thought process quite funny. He actually thought that he wanted to follow Meng Lianqing...

Chapter 2335 Fangchun Ruins

At the same time, Meng Lianqing also noticed Lin Xun. She was slightly startled, then she retracted her gaze, and her beautiful face showed a hint of complexity.

After entering the Return Dominion, she couldn't help but recall the past. Inevitably, she would also remember her humiliating defeat at the hands of that man. [1]

Now, upon seeing "Daoyuan," a man who was somewhat similar to that man, she could no longer stay as calm as before.

Taking a deep breath, she turned around and looked at Lin Xun, "Fellow Daoist, we have met again, so why don't we go to the Fangchun Ruins together?"

Everyone nearby was stunned and extremely surprised by this development. In all these years, they had never seen Meng Lianqing take the initiative to invite a person of the opposite sex to travel with her.

The young men around Meng Lianqing all frowned a bit, but in the end they maintained their usual reserve and demeanor.

However, the way they looked at Lin Xun had become scrutinizing with a hint of hostility.

Yan Jun was quite excited by this point, his eyes glowing. He eagerly said, "Brother, do you remember what I said earlier? You're in luck!"

Lin Xun's lips twitched imperceptibly. He was a Great Emperor, yet he needed to rely on a woman to change his fortunes?

Before he could reply, Meng Lianqing took the initiative to come over, her light golden skirt fluttering. Her skin was glowing like crystalline ice, revealing her tender beauty.

Her alluring eyes were misty as she stared at Lin Xun with her red lips slightly parted. She then sighed softly, "Please don't blame me for this presumptuous request, Fellow Daoist. You are just really similar to an old acquaintance of mine. If it hadn't been for the fact that you don't have his arrogant and ostentatious demeanor, I would have thought he was standing in front of me."

Lin Xun couldn't help but be surprised. No wonder people claimed that a woman's intuition could not be underestimated. So many years had passed since they had last met, yet Meng Lianqing had still almost recognized him.

At the same time, Lin Xun noticed that many spiritual consciousnesses were like invisible spider webs, covering this area. They were like a silent warning, telling him not to have any improper thoughts about Meng Lianqing; otherwise, the consequences would be very dire!

Anywhere else, with Lin Xun's current power as a Great Emperor, he could shock the owners of these spiritual consciousnesses to death with just a brief display of his own cultivation.

However, he was in the Return Dominion now. Before he confirmed just who this Venerable Dao Lord was and what he planned to do, he did not intend to cause a fuss.

"Of course, you can't be that person. If it was him, he would have revealed his majesty and dominated the whole place after being spied upon by so many spiritual consciousnesses."

A hint of disappointment colored Meng Lianqing's voice.

These words made the people who had been monitoring them feel a little uncomfortable. Someone couldn't help but ask, "Fairy Meng, who is that person you are talking about?"

Meng Lianqing said casually, "You should have heard of him. Many years ago, when the Return Dominion was opened, this person once swept through everyone who had entered the Deva Secret

Domain on his own, defeating countless opponents. There was Niu Tuntian of the Herculean Demon Bull Clan, Kong Xiu of the Cloud Hou Clan, Xuan Luozi of the Mysterious Ao Clan..."

She reported a series of names, and each name made the people present tremble inwardly and their expressions change. After all, all of those people could be considered to be powerful existences within the thousands of primeval migrant forces in the Spirit Burial Sea.

In the end, Meng Lianqing said, "However, all of those people were all defeated by him back then. If they had not been protected by their Life Soul Bone Talismans, then they would not have been able to walk out of the Return Dominion at all."

At this point, her beautiful eyes were shining as she almost whispered, "Back then, he alone had overwhelmed all heroes, and no one could defeat him!"

In her heart, she sighed with regret. He...is still my nightmare, like a shadow that cannot be driven away...

Someone screamed, "Lin Xun!"[2]

For a moment, the entire area became restless as everyone's faces blanched when they finally realized who Meng Lianqing was talking about.

Although many, many years had passed since the events of that year, among the thousands of primeval migrant forces, who would not know of Demon God Lin, the one who had killed the heroes and routed them?

All of their Saints with dazzling halos on their heads had been suppressed by him!

In fact, this matter was a hot topic back then.

Now, Meng Lianqing was claiming that the man in front of them reminded her of Lin Xun. The expressions of everyone present changed subtly.

Lin Xun listened and watched this unfold quietly, and he couldn't help from feeling a bit strange. Many years had passed, yet there were still people in Spirit Burial Sea who remembered him?

This was beyond his expectation.

"I have always wanted to defeat him. Otherwise, whenever I think of what had happened in the past, I can't help but feel depressed and unwilling. It's like a nightmare."

Meng Lianqing had been staring at Lin Xun the entire time with her beautiful eyes. When she saw his indifferent and plain appearance, she couldn't help but feel a little disappointed.

"It's a pity that you are not him after all... But no matter what, meeting you today has made me realize that if I don't erase this nightmare in my heart, it is very likely to affect my future path, so... That's the reason why I've told you so much."

Lin Xun said, "Miss, the person that you speak of may not care about these things anymore. I think you should let it go."

To be honest, if it wasn't for the fact he had returned to the Return Dominion this time, he would have almost forgotten about the existence of 'Fairy Meng,' the beautiful person who was in front of him now.

Meng Lianqing suppressed her inner emotions and smiled, "You don't understand. Regardless, let's go to the Fangchun Ruins together."

As she said that, she turned and walked forward.

Lin Xun did not refuse and also stepped forward.

Yan Jun, whose cheeks had already turned red with excitement, hurriedly followed him. He then raised his thumbs inconspicuously as he gestured to Lin Xun, as if he was saying, "Brother, you can do it!"

Then he followed obediently to the side, gazing at Meng Lianqing's figure in front of him with admiration, obsession, and even a hint of fanaticism.

This was the first time he had the chance to follow his favorite goddess so closely.

The young men who had been crowding around Meng Lianqing before couldn't help but look at each other before they stared at Lin Xun more vigilantly, as if they regarded him as a rival in love.

Lin Xun was calm and self-assured as he didn't care about these little characters. If he did, then it would actually be a form of self-degradation. In fact, if rumors of this got out, he would be the only one to be laughed at.

After all, it was really not nice of him to bully a bunch of small fish and shrimps with the status of a supreme Emperor...

Fortunately, these young talents all relied on their extraordinary status. Although they inwardly wanted to drive that annoying new guy away from Meng Lianqing, they still maintained an appropriate demeanor on the surface.

Along the way, wherever Meng Lianqing went, all the powerful people along the way would be attracted to her.

This was the result of her current prestige and fame. She was extremely talented and charming, resembling a fairy on earth, so she was destined to attract countless attention.

As for Lin Xun who followed her side... He also attracted a lot of eyes, but most of them were surprised and puzzled. They couldn't understand what kind of identity this strange man had that allowed him to walk shoulder to shoulder with Fairy Meng.

Despite that, most people ended up directly ignoring Lin Xun. With Meng Lianqing around, everyone else was destined to be dim next to her.

This was also the first time that Lin Xun had accidentally become someone who was being disregarded since returning to the lower plane. If the bigwigs on the Ancient Nebula Road found out about this, they would laugh themselves to death.

Regardless, Lin Xun still had his usual calm and composed attitude. In his eyes, there was only the world, and no one else was worth looking at.

This time when he returned to the Deva Secret Domain, he keenly sensed that it was completely different from what it was in the past. He did not encounter any danger along the way!

Looks like he spent a lot of effort to attract people to come and listen to him proclaim his dao.

Lin Xun was lost in his thoughts as they traveled.

The crowd flew further, and the closer they got to the Fangchun Ruins, the more cultivators they met along the way. In the end, there were gorgeous streams of light everywhere, whistling forward like rain.

After a quick scan, Lin Xun was surprised to learn that some of them were old monsters at the Emperor Stage lurking among them!

When did Emperors start to appear in the lower plane?

This discovery caught Lin Xun off guard, and he was extremely surprised.

After all, this was the lower world!

In the past, even a quasi-Emperor was like a dragon in the sky, just like a legend, let alone anyone at the Emperor Stage.

However, when he thought of the Ziyao Empire, he recalled that Lone Man and the Heavenly Seer had been lurking there in the past. Lin Xun vaguely had the sense that perhaps in the years since he left, the lower plane had undergone some major changes that he didn't know about yet!

While he was musing on this, a faint bell sound suddenly appeared in the distance, echoing between the sky, causing a calming solemnity to descend in people's hearts.

The people who had originally been traveling over stopped talking. Their expressions became serious, and they even looked toward the far distance with a sense of piety.

On the ground, there was a huge mountain range that resembled a lotus, with forty-nine mountains standing guard. They were majestic and magnificent and bathed in sacred chaos qi.

In addition, above the lotus-shaped mountain range, there was a figure with his back to all living beings, sitting high, surrounded by billions of auspicious lights. That person resembled a god from ancient legends, becoming the most sacred and only being under the heavens.

Fangchun Ruins!

The Venerable Dao Lord!

In an instant, countless figures, including Meng Lianqing, who had arrived at this moment, were shocked.

It was as if they were seeing the master of the world!

When Lin Xun arrived here, his heart was also fluctuating.

Back then, he had climbed this mountain with Toady and Zhao Jingxuan, and it was also here that he obtained the inheritance of the Lord of Fangchun Mountain and the dao art of his first senior brother, Combat Emperor.

Now, he had returned. That sacred mountain that resembled a lotus was still there, but compared with that year, there was an extra so-called Venerable Dao Lord.

Lin Xun looked over and saw with a glance that the figure sitting high in the heavens with his back to all living beings was just a will projection.

Could it be his fourth senior brother?

"Brother, find a place to sit down." Yan Jun beside him quickly sent a message.

Lin Xun turned his head and saw that the figures who had come one after another had already found a place nearby and were sitting cross-legged one by one.

Furthermore, in the area closest to the sacred mountain, it was already full of figures who had clearly arrived before them. It was densely packed, making the crowd resemble a dark tide that covered the ground.

There were more than a hundred thousand people!

There was a solemn and quiet atmosphere. Everyone sat cross-legged, with pious and serious expressions as they listened to the voice above the nine heavens expounding upon the great dao.

In a trance, it seemed as if they had gone back to the primeval times, when a dao ancestor opened a dao temple, sat and preached, and taught all living beings!

The sound of bells rang out, resembling the sound of the dao, resounding between heaven and earth. It was as if it was explaining the subtle profundities of the great dao. Every word was a pearl, deafening, and went straight to people's hearts.

Everyone had a different cultivation and understanding, but they all gained something from listening. Some were intoxicated, some were thoughtful, some were dazed, and some were happy...

Lin Xun noticed that even some Emperors looked solemn, listening and meditating attentively with piety!

This completely surprised him.

Chapter 2336 Your Dao is the Dao of Great Bullshit

Lin Xun looked around and sat down casually, becoming a part of the countless devout believers.

Between heaven and earth, a figure with his back to all living beings was explaining the mystery of the dao.

"The profundities of the dao is nothing more than a word of enlightenment, but the dao that all living beings in the world understand is not the same. Just like the same mountain, which looks like a ridge from the side and a peak from the front, and is different from far and near and high...

"We cultivators are seeking the dao, but we are often obsessed with the dao. How can we resolve such a problem? Different people have different methods. In my opinion, the ultimate goal of seeking the dao is to transcend the dao and learn from the dao. Only in this way can we not be burdened by the dao..."

That person's sonorous voice was like the morning bell and evening drum, and it went straight to people's hearts. The words that were spoken were not obscure, but people of different cultivation levels all obtained different insights from it.

After listening for a while, Lin Xun had to admit that this Venerable Dao Lord's comprehension and understanding of the dao had reached an unbelievable level.

Even ordinary Emperors probably could not explain the subtleties of the great dao in such a simple, direct, and straightforward way.

The great dao was simple.

The same was true for expounding upon the great dao.

The more obscure and complicated something was made to be, the harder it was to directly point to the essence of the great dao in such a fashion.

Furthermore, this Venerable Dao Lord was well versed in the principle that the great dao was simple. The subtle truths of the heavens and the myriad ways were easily picked up and explained one by one by him. In addition, he did it in an interesting way, so it often gave people a sense of enlightenment.

Therefore it wasn't surprising that there were some Emperors present, sitting cross-legged like all the others in a devout way. They resembled disciples listening to the lectures of their teachers.

Several hours passed as they listened like this.

The number of cultivators within the Fangchun Ruins was also increasing, and none of those who were listening to the lecture of the great dao were willing to leave.

Until this moment, Lin Xun did not find anything wrong with what was going on. This was because the dao that was being expounded by Venerable Dao Lord was not a false and bewitching version. Instead, he was truly teaching and resolving peoples' confusion.

Of course, this made Lin Xun feel even more perplexed.

This was someone with incredible attainments in the dao, yet he was willing to expound upon those mysteries to all those who came. What was his purpose in doing so?

Was it really as he claimed? That he wanted to select a successor before he proved his dao and left?

At this point, nearly twelve hours had passed.

Suddenly, Venerable Dao Lord said, "Those who have been listening to my thoughts on the dao here for the past ten days can now go through the gate and continue to listen to the dao.

"Remember, those who have not been here for ten days are not allowed to come. Otherwise, I will expel you."

As soon as that announcement came out...

Crash!

In the previously quiet and solemn place, the crowd surged like water, and the densely packed figures all stood up excitedly, looking at the same place with devout and fanatical eyes.

At this time, Lin Xun saw that in front of the huge, sacred, lotus-shaped mountain, a glittering corridor had appeared, leading to the depths of the sacred mountain. It looked extremely mysterious.

The crowd that stood up then rushed into the corridor, almost as if they were scrambling. No matter how many people entered, they would disappear within moments.

Those who did not have qualifications all revealed envious looks, and it was obvious that they wished that they could go too.

Lin Xun's black eyes flickered. "What's going on?"

"Brother, you don't even know about this?" Yan Jun was surprised.

Meng Lianqing, who was sitting not far away, said, "The Venerable Dao Lord has stipulated that anyone who can listen to the dao here for ten days can enter this gate and have the opportunity to be selected as a direct disciple."

She then continued, "Ever since the Venerable Dao Lord began expounding upon the dao a month ago, almost three hundred thousand cultivators have entered the gate into the courtyard. Rumors say that listening to the dao there will bring unexpected benefits. Even if you are not selected as a direct disciple in the end, the benefits you get are definitely beyond imagination."

There was also a trace of longing and yearning in her clear eyes, "This can be regarded as a layer of screening that the Venerable Dao Lord uses for selecting a direct disciple. No one would give up on such an opportunity."

Hearing Meng Lianqing's explanation, the young talents nearby all looked at Lin Xun with ridicule in their eyes, as if they didn't expect that this guy named Daoyuan didn't even understand these things when he had come to listen to the dao. He was truly too ignorant.

Of course, pure jealousy was surging within them. They didn't expect that Meng Lianqing would personally explain something like this to such a stupid person. It was simply...too hateful.

Lin Xun didn't care about this at all. After listening to Meng Lianqing's explanation, he couldn't help but be shocked, "Nearly three hundred thousand cultivators have entered already?!"

He then asked, "Miss Meng, do you know if anyone has walked out of there during this period of time?"

Meng Lianqing was startled and shook her head, "I, I believe it's...no?"

At this time, a burst of laughter sounded around.

"What a joke! Being able to enter Venerable Dao Lord's gate is the dream of any cultivator. Only a fool would leave without being expelled."

"Brother Daoyuan, you are too clueless, aren't you?"

"Such a stupid fool. I really don't know why Fairy Meng treats you in such a way."

Every single young expert had long been filled with pure envy. Therefore, they all seized this opportunity to sneer and ridicule Lin Xun, as if they wanted to severely suppress him and make Meng Lianqing completely disappointed in him.

However, what surprised them was that before Lin Xun could say anything after being ridiculed, Meng Lianqing had already frowned and said, "Everyone, this is the Venerable Dao Lord's area. Aren't you afraid of angering him by saying such things?"

Everyone was speechless, and their expressions became uncertain. Inwardly, they became more and more indignant. Following that, the way they looked at Lin Xun became more and more unfriendly.

However, Lin Xun continued to ignore them. He frowned as he had keenly sensed something was wrong.

Even if the Venerable Dao Lord was choosing a successor, why was he letting hundreds of thousands of cultivators enter the gate together?

What secrets were hidden there?

In the distance, the cultivators who had gotten up and entered had now disappeared, and the glittering corridor had also disappeared.

Then, the figure sitting high in the sky with his back to all living beings began to explain the mysteries of the great dao again. Soon, all the cultivators present were immersed in it, and the atmosphere became solemn and peaceful.

Only Lin Xun frowned, his black eyes flashing.

If possible, he wanted to go to the so-called gateway to take a look.

There was something off!

The Return Dominion had continued to stay open, and the Deva Secret Domain was not the least bit dangerous. Countless cultivators came one after another, just to listen to the Venerable Dao Lord expound upon the mysteries of the great dao.

All of this looked solemn and peaceful, but Lin Xun was quite aware that Heavenly Emperor Shi had just left here, heavily injured, a few years ago!

Furthermore, under the Fangchun Ruins, there was a demon-like genius being suppressed—Ling Xuanzi!

"My friend, the situation is not good."

Suddenly, the Dao Ruleless Bell, who had transformed itself into the size of a little finger and was hanging on the tip of Lin Xun's hair, suddenly spoke, "I feel that the power of all living beings in the Fangchun Ruins is being used and poured into a seal."

"I suspect that all of this is Ling Xuanzi's plan. He probably wants to use the power as a sacrifice to break the seal that suppresses him!"

A sacrifice!

Lin Xun was shocked. If this was true, didn't it mean that hundreds of thousands of cultivators had died here in just over a month?

"Damn it, he has sensed me somehow." The Dao Ruleless Bell's voice was full of surprise.

At this moment, the voice expounding the great dao suddenly stopped, and at the same time, a willpower filled with supreme majesty quietly swept towards Lin Xun.

"My friend, when I was expounding upon the great dao earlier, why were you the only one absent-minded?" asked the grand voice.

The cultivators who were immersed in listening in the field were all stunned, looking up in confusion, and they didn't understand what was happening.

There were also many people looking at the area where Lin Xun was.

The expressions of Meng Lianqing and the young talents nearby all changed as they felt uncomfortable. What was going on?

In this gloomy and suspicious atmosphere, Lin Xun stood up, and his tall figure instantly attracted the attention of countless eyes.

His dark eyes were deep as he looked at the figure sitting high in the sky. He said calmly, "Your dao is bullshit to me, so why should I let it dirty my ears?"

What?!

At this moment, the whole audience was shocked, and countless people were dumbfounded. They had never expected that there would be someone in this world who dared to comment on the great dao being expounded by the Venerable Dao Lord in this way.

This is just...just crazy!

Yan Jun, who had been sitting next to Lin Xun, was also completely dumbfounded. He was almost scared out of his wits. This is the Venerable Dao Lord's territory. How could Brother Daoyuan... How could he...

He suddenly grabbed the corner of Lin Xun's clothes and stammered, "Brother, hurry up, apologize to the Venerable Dao Lord, hurry up!"

His face was pale, and his mind was confused.

How could the Venerable Dao Lord, who was admired by countless people, be slandered and humiliated like this?

At the same time, Meng Lianqing was also stunned. She didn't expect that this seemingly ordinary man would spew such nonsense.

In addition, the young men around her also had expressions of horror. Is this guy insane?!

Immediately afterwards, the whole place became agitated, and countless cultivators became enraged as they screamed.

"You crazy lunatic! How dare you be so presumptuous?! Kneel down and atone for your sins to the Venerable Dao Lord!"

"Who is this boy, and which tribe is he from? He is simply unbelievable!"

"How dare you regard the great dao expounded by the Venerable Dao Lord as bullshit? Bastard, you are simply guilty of a thousand deaths!"

Various angry voices were like a pot exploding, resounding through the world, making Lin Xun the object of thousands of peoples' criticism and curses.

"Brother! Hurry, apologize! Don't you want to live?"

At this moment, Yan Jun did not stay out of the matter, but instead anxiously persuaded Lin Xun, which surprised the latter.

After fixing the matter here, I should give this person a good fortune to thank him for his kindhearted nature.

"Evil creature, why don't you kneel down and atone for your sins?!"

Amid the indignant and horrified crowd, a roar suddenly rang out, and a figure rushed over, raising his hand to slap Lin Xun's shoulder.

He was an old man in a red robe, with a cultivation level of a quasi-Emperor. Among the thousands of primeval migrant forces, he was also considered a big shot.

Seeing him act so brazenly, the others were stunned at first, and then they realized that he was trying to show off to the Venerable Dao Lord with this opportunity!

Chapter 2337 Fourth Senior Brother Ling Xuanzi

All of a sudden, many experts grew restless, eager to take action.

In their eyes, if they could slay the heretic Lin Xun, they might win the favor of the Venerable Dao Lord, and then perhaps even ascend to greater heights.

“Kneel!” the red-robed man bellowed, his face filled with righteousness.

He had already charged forward in midair and was nearly upon Lin Xun, but Lin Xun merely lifted his gaze and cast a glance at him.

Bang!

The red-robed old man’s body and spirit shattered instantly, exploding into a mist of blood that dissipated into the void. The nearby cultivators screamed in horror.

At that moment, countless people in this world were shaken by the bloody scene before them.

A quasi-Emperor!

In Spirit Burial Sea, such a person was considered an unrivalled authority beneath the Emperor Stage. As they saying went, in the absence of Emperors, quasi-Emperors reigned supreme. Despite that, with just a single glance, one had been obliterated in midair. How could a quasi-Emperor perish so swiftly and easily?!

Many onlookers stood frozen, their minds struggling to process what had just happened.

A heavy silence blanketed the scene.

Those who were eager to strike moments ago felt an icy chill creep into their hearts, their expressions twisting with shock and horror.

Everyone was dumbstruck, especially Yan Juan and Meng Lianqing, along with the surrounding young talents. They struggled to believe their eyes.

A quasi-Emperor had been killed in a mysterious and effortless manner. What was even more terrifying was that this had all happened under the watchful gaze of the Venerable Dao Lord!

After all, in the hearts of those present, the Venerable Dao Lord was akin to a deity. Who would dare commit such an act of defiance?

Furthermore, Lin Xun acted with complete disregard!

In the midst of this stunned silence, Lin Xun put his hands behind his back and uttered indifferently, "You just stood there and watched. That fool leapt to his death just to defend your dignity."

"Who will step forward and help me eliminate this heretic?" From high above the nine heavens, the figure still had his back facing everything, and only his thunderous voice echoed down.

Just as the voice died away.

"I will."

"Venerable Dao Lord, please quell your anger. I will eliminate this heretic!"

Then, one after another, five or six figures emerged, each exuding an even greater presence than the last. Their powerful Emperor might crashed over the battlefield like a landslide and tsunami, shaking the heavens and earth and forcing many cultivators to retreat in terror.

At that moment, Yan Juan's legs buckled beneath him, and he collapsed to the ground, his face ashen. Those were all old monsters who had remained hidden from the world for ages, each possessing unfathomable power and status.

The expression on Meng Lianqing's beautiful face constantly changed as she locked eyes on Lin Xun, as if she was trying to confirm something.

Around her, the young talents were overcome with panic. One after another, they scrambled to distance themselves from Lin Xun, fearing they would be swept into the calamity.

“Fairy Meng, get away quickly! That disaster bringer is throwing his life away, you must not get caught in the crossfire!”

“Miss Lianqing, hurry, move aside!”

Urgent voices rang out, thick with worry.

“Move aside,” said Lin Xun calmly as he glanced at Meng Lianqing. With a flick of his sleeve, a wave of power surged forth and instantly teleported Meng Lianqing and Yan Juan far away from the battlefield.

Meng Lianqing looked as if she had just awoken from a dream, Her expression grew more complicated by the second. She realized then that she had been deceived. The seemingly unremarkable man sent her across space before she even realized what had happened. How could someone like this be an ordinary person?

Could...

Could he be that person from back then?

The six Emperors had already launched their assault, their gazes ice-cold and ruthless. Among them, a black-robed, white haired man reprimanded coldly, “Wretched creature, how dare you cause trouble here? Even if the Venerable Dao Lord had not spoken, I would not have spared you myself!”

The rumbling shook the heavens, distorting the clouds and wind as waves of Emperor might surged. Countless spectators gasped in terror.

Lin Xun remained indifferent.

Over the years, he had lost count of the Emperors he had slain. He had even wiped out the Holy Illumination Ancient Sect and Earth Treasury Realm. Why would he be concerned about the provocations of a mere handful of Emperors?

His dark eyes lifted toward the figure in the distant sky and he spoke calmly, "If they die, you'll have fewer offerings for your sacrifice. Does that not concern you? Or are you simply using them to test my strength?"

Sacrifice?

Many people were bewildered.

"Die!"

At that moment, the white-haired, black-robed man made the first move, unleashing a monstrous surge of Emperor power.

Boom!

Spreading his five fingers. He grasped at the air, conjuring terrifying Emperor dao laws that condensed into a colossal palm and pressed down upon Lin Xun with mighty force.

In response, Lin Xun simply opened his mouth and spat out two words, "Get lost."

Those two words send the world quaking violently. Explosions rumbled across the battlefield. Many figures staggered and collapsed, blood spurting from their mouths and nostrils, their vision spinning.

The massive hand descending toward Lin Xun suddenly ruptured into dust, and the white hair, black-robed man was sent hurtling backward an unknown distance like a broken kite. His body crumpled as he slammed into the ground, mangled beyond recognition, soaked in blood. His internal organs were crushed, and he let out a howling scream of agony.

The other Emperors, who had been poised to strike, froze as if struck by lightning, their souls trembling in terror.

With just two words, an old monster at the third realm Emperor Stage had been severely wounded!

This was unheard of. Unprecedented.

The once solemn battlefield descended into chaos. Fear and horror twisted across every face.

That was an Emperor! How could he be defeated so...tragically?!

"He..." The eyes of the young talents who had retreated far away nearly popped out of their sockets. They were utterly shaken, their minds in complete disarray.

Some were trembling so hard that their teeth chattered, while others stood as if their souls had left their bodies, their eyes dull with shock. Along the way, they had mocked and ridiculed Lin Xun. Who could have imagined that the seemingly unremarkable young man possessed such earth shattering power?

Meng Lianqing also stood frozen in place, her heart pounding violently. She had been wondering if Lin Daoyuan was the same person from back then

Now, she wasn't so sure.

With just his voice, he had gravely wounded an Emperor. Even if that person from back then had spent decades cultivating, could he have possibly reached such an unfathomable level?

The battlefield was thrown into chaos, with screams of terror and shock ringing out.

At that moment, Lin Xun's restrained aura began to spread.

Boom!

The heaven and earth quaked, the great dao roared, mountains and valleys rustled, and the clouds collapsed in all directions.

Lin Xun seemed to have become a different person. His tall figure stood, bathed in swirling dao light, radiating divine brilliance. Even though he stood there casually, he exuded a majesty akin to a deity from beyond the heavens, instilling awe and fear across the mortal world!

For a moment, the entire battlefield fell into deathly silence. Every cultivator was gripped by an indescribable terror. Even Emperors inhaled sharply, their scalps tingling as an oppressive force bore down upon them. Their minds quaked as if suffocating under the unbearable weight.

In truth, Lin Xun had not deliberately unleashed his power. This was merely the natural aura that emanated from him at his current cultivation level.

The aura of a supreme Emperor!

It was a majesty forged through the slaying of countless Emperor powerhouses!

To mortals, it was like witnessing the descent of a god, and they could only kneel in reverence.

To cultivators, it was like standing before the sovereign of the great dao, and they could only look up in awe!

Amidst this suffocating stillness, the figure sitting cross-legged beyond the nine heavens with his back to the world finally began to turn.

His figure was enshrouded in boundless divine light, radiant as the blazing sun, exuding an aura of immeasurable grandeur.

At that moment, all cultivators present felt an unbearable sting in their eyes, struggling to keep them open.

The Venerable Dao Lord had turned around!

Not a single sound could be heard. Countless hearts surged with emotions as if they saw hope.

“We are ashamed of our failure to capture the enemy. We implore the Venerable Dao Lord for forgiveness!” An Emperor flushed with shame.

“Venerable Dao Lord, please take action and suppress this heretic!” Another voice rang out, filled with desperation.

Venerable Dao Lord paid no attention to the Emperors. His eyes, as bright as the sun, swept over Lin Xun and his voice, filled with delight, echoed across the heavens, “Lin Xun, Lin Daoyuan, the fiftieth successor of Fangchun Mountain, the only lotus that Master has awaited for eternity. It really is you. Let me guess, Second Senior Brother sent you, didn’t he, Little Junior Brother?”

The voice, unexpectedly joyful, reverberated through the world.

The words struck everyone like thunder.

“Little Junior Brother?!”

The one who suddenly appeared and dismissed Venerable Dao Lord’s grand teachings as utter nonsense turned out to be his junior brother?

The Emperors who had just pleaded for Venerable Dao Lord to take action instantly turned pale, their minds reeling in disbelief.

“Lin Xun... Lin Xun...it really is you!” Meng Lianqing’s beautiful eyes widened as if struck by lightning. She stared at Lin Xun, her expression shifting between relief, shock, bewilderment and a myriad of other emotions.

She had wanted to erase the shadow in her heart.

Unfortunately, she now realized that this shadow was like an imprint, deeply ingrained and impossible to dispel. She no longer had the strength to feel bitter.

All that remained was an indescribable disappointment.

After all these years, she thought she had already surpassed him in strength, but she never imagined that he had ascended to a height she could only look up to in awe and never reach.

Lin Xun!

Those young talents were also utterly dumbfounded, as if their minds were about to collapse. Of course, they knew how terrifying he had been back then, but they never expected that upon meeting again, he would have already reached a level where he regarded Emperors as ants!

For the rest of their lives, they likely would be haunted by the fear of living under Lin Xun’s shadow.

As for Yan Juan...

He had long fainted...

“Does a traitor like you have the right to call me Junior Brother?” Lin Xun said indifferently, “Master spared you back then and gave you a chance to repent here, to cleanse your heart, to rebuild your state of mind. But instead, you descended into obsession and darkness. You even leaked Second Senior Brother’s dao inheritance to Heavenly Emperor Shi. For that...you deserve death!”

“Descended into obsession and darkness?”

Ling Xuanzi, now known as Venerable Dao Lord, chuckled, “Little Junior Brother, you shouldn’t speak so carelessly. This is the first time we’ve met, so let’s not dig up the past. Otherwise, if the cultivators here overhear, wouldn’t it tarnish Fangchun Mountain’s reputation? What do you think?”

Lin Xun said calmly, “I think if you die now to atone for your sins, we can preserve the reputation of Fangchun Mountain.”

Ling Xuanzi let out a long sigh, “My junior brother, it seems you hold deep prejudice against me. Did Second Senior Brother tell you that I, Ling Xuanzi, was consumed by inner demons, strayed from the right path and was suppressed here because of it?

“If so, then it’s wrong!”

As Ling Xuanzi spoke, he rose from his cross-legged position. The dao light surrounding him expanded like a tide, illuminating the nine heavens. He exuded an air of superiority and defiance. “The reason why I was suppressed back then was simply because Master and I held different views on the great dao we pursued. Otherwise, why didn’t Master kill me, and only...suppress me?”

Chapter 2338 Dao Duel Between Senior and Junior Brothers!

A dispute over the great dao!

Ling Xuanzi’s words carried an air of arrogance, perhaps even defiance.

Back then, he was merely a disciple, yet he dared to claim that his Master suppressing him was due to a personal dispute over their respective paths of the great dao.

How audacious!

Just from these words alone, Lin Xun could tell that after countless years of suppression, Ling Xuanxi had not repented, had not reflected, and had not turned over a new leaf.

Lin Xun’s voice was ice cold. “Ling Xuanzi, I just want to ask you—were you the one who leaked Second Senior Brother’s dao inheritance to Heavenly Emperor Shi?”

Ling Xuanzi chuckled, "Junior Brother, you came here clouded by prejudice. You know nothing about what happened back then. Instead of asking me that, why don't you ask who severely wounded that old thing Luo Yunshi?"

Lin Xun frowned. Luo Yunshi was the real name of Heavenly Emperor Shi. To be honest, he had no idea how Heavenly Emperor Shi had been injured.

Seeing his reaction, Ling Xuanzi let out a long sigh, "Little Junior Brother, this is our first meeting. I only hope that you can set aside your prejudice. Right and wrong, truth and lies, you must not let your prejudice cloud your heart and obscure your vision."

Lin Xun's dark eyes flickered. "Do you think I came here to discuss right and wrong, to distinguish black from white?"

"But the truth is you know very little about what happened back then," Ling Xuanzi stated. "And I believe you must have many questions in your mind. Even if you wish to kill me, there is no need to rush."

"What are you getting at?" Lin Xun questioned.

Ling Xuanzi chuckled and then said in a resounding and grand tone, "Today, I, Ling Xuanzi, shall have a dao duel with my junior brother. Regardless of who wins or loses, let all see whose dao reigns supreme."

Every word rang through heaven and earth like the toll of the great dao itself.

"What?!"

The crowd was thrown into an uproar, their faces filled with disbelief, but very quickly, excitement surged through them.

In their eyes, Venerable Dao Lord was akin to a supreme ruler, a being to be revered.

Furthermore, Lin Xun was someone who had displayed imaginably terrifying strength. In addition, Venerable Dao Lord had acknowledged him as his 'junior brother'. Everyone realized that it was a great blessing and a once in a lifetime fortune to be able to witness such an unprecedented duel with their own eyes.

As for any potential benefits, they had long been forgotten.

Who were they kidding?! Just being able to witness this unprecedented duel was already a fortune beyond reach for ordinary cultivators.

The Emperors were all filled with excitement and anticipation.

Meng Lianqing, Yan Juan, and the others were utterly stunned, their minds in turmoil. Since the Venerable Dao Lord himself acknowledged it, didn't that mean he believed Lin Xun was qualified to face him in a duel?!

To think that Lin Xun had already ascended to such a terrifying height after decades apart, they felt it was more like a dream than reality.

"Dao duel?" Lin Xun raised an eyebrow.

"Yes, I heard from Luo Yunshi long ago that you possess an heaven-defying talent and are considered the 'One Who Escaped' among the successors of Fangchun Mountain. Even Master waited for eternity to finally have a disciple like you. This alone proves that, in Master's eyes, your dao is the dao he most wished to see."

After a pause, Ling Xuanzi continued, "But I disagree. Because of a dispute over the great dao, I was suppressed for countless years. Now, if I defeat you in this dao duel, it will be enough to prove one thing...

"That is, Master...was wrong! And the dao that I, Ling Xuanzi, pursued is the true ultimate dao!"

As he reached the end of his sentence, his voice was filled with superiority, unwavering confidence and an absolute sense of arrogance.

This was his true belief.

Even after countless years of suppression, he had never doubted his dao and path. He refused to believe that he had fallen to inner demons, nor that he had strayed from the right way.

Everything was merely a dispute over the great dao!

One day, sooner or later, he would seek out his Master in person and prove to him with his dao that his view was wrong!

However, the first person he had to defeat was his little junior brother, the 'One Who Escaped,' leaving only forty nine daos to be derived in the world.

It fell deathly silent.

Once Ling Xuanzi finished speaking, he flicked his sleeves, and in an instant, all cultivators near the Fangchun Ruins, regardless of their level of cultivation, were forcibly teleported away.

Now, within the vast world, only Lin Xun stood before the mountain, while Ling Xuanzi remained seated cross-legged in the sky!

The senior and junior brothers faced each other.

The air grew heavy with an oppressive stillness.

.....

Meanwhile, in a mysterious canyon far from Fangchun Ruins.

A golden-robed Toady danced wildly with excitement. "It's Big Brother! Big Brother must have come to save us! Hahaha! Hahahaha..."

"Oh man, are we finally leaving this hellhole?" A'lu also roared, grinning ear to ear.

"It really is Master!" Little Silver stood with his arms folded across his chest, smiling brightly.

On his shoulders, the Sky Splitting Demonic Butterfly fluttered its wings and danced happily.

"Don't celebrate too soon. Over the past days, the guy who calls himself Venerable Dao Lord has demonstrated his terrifying cultivation while expounding on the great dao. Lin Xun may have reached the Emperor Stage, but defeating him in a dao duel won't be easy..." A'hu's bright eyes flickered with a hint of worry.

During their time in the canyon, while they had been trapped, they could still hear voices from the outside world.

When Venerable Dao Lord first began expounding on the great dao, his words had reached them. Even now, they couldn't deny that they had benefited greatly from his teachings. Many times, they felt enlightened, as if a heavy fog was dispelled before their eyes. They had even developed a deep respect for this Venerable Dao Lord.

However, with Lin Xun's arrival, they realized that although this Venerable Dao Lord was Lin Xun's senior brother, the two were clearly enemies!

Unfortunately, this canyon was sealed by powerful and obscure great dao restrictions, preventing them from making a sound. All they could do was worry.

"Since Big Brother is here, he must have absolute confidence. A'hu, you don't have to overthink it." Toady was still full of high spirits.

“While I sometimes can’t stand that brat, I have to admit that he never fights a battle he’s not confident in, and this time will be no different.” The big black bird strode over from the distance, carrying his signature big black pot on his back. He still looked as sneaky as ever, oozing a natural aura of mischief.

Just as A’hu was about to speak, a disturbance arose in the outside world. Instantly, she, Toady, A’lu, Little Silver and the big black bird all fell silent as they focused and listened intently.

.....

Defeat me, and that will prove that Master was wrong?

In front of the Fangchun Ruins, Lin Xun sneered. This Ling Xuanzi...this guy has clearly been consumed by his obsessions, harboring deep-seated resentment in his heart!

He couldn’t be bothered to waste more words and simply asked, “Ling Xuanzi, how do you want to conduct this dao duel?”

“Junior Brother, must you be so impatient?” Ling Xuanzi chuckled nonchalantly.

“It’s very simple. Since this is a battle of the great dao, we will compete with our own dao. As your senior brother, I won’t take advantage of you. We’ll begin from the lower five cultivation stages, then progress to the Longevity Tribulation Stage, the Saint Stage, the Quasi-Emperor Stage, until we reach the Supreme Emperor Stage. Five stages, five rounds.

“In other words, a total of five rounds of dao duel.

“Each round you win, I will answer one of your questions.

“If I lose after five rounds, I will let you decide my fate, Junior Brother.”

At this point, Ling Xuanzi's eyes blazed with divine flames, his presence exuding the supremacy of a deity. "But if you lose, I won't make things difficult for you. You will only need to leave behind a portion of your inheritance."

The rules were not complicated.

The five rounds of the dao duel would determine the final victor.

Countless cultivators in the distance could not help but tremble inwardly upon hearing the rules. Venerable Dao Lord had proposed such a unique dao duel. It was clear that he wanted to challenge Lin Xun across different cultivation stages and suppress him in all, proving beyond doubt that his dao was superior!

Lin Xun's expression remained calm as he said aloud, "You want me to leave behind my inheritance?"

He hadn't expected Ling Xuanzi to make such a demand.

"Rest assured, Little Junior Brother, I am not interested in your inheritance."

Ling Xuanzi's tone was indifferent, "Rather, when I see Master again one day, I want to prove that the lotus he waited eternity for...is nothing special!"

Lin Xun realized that despite being sealed away for countless years, Ling Xuanzi's heart ultimately still harbored deep-seated resentment toward their master, an obsession that had never been dispelled!

Lin Xun thought for a moment and asked, "Are you sure you want to do this?"

Many onlookers were stunned. From their perspective, Lin Xun's words and tone sounded almost as if he were worried that Venerable Dao Lord might regret his decision. How arrogant!

The rules of the dao duel were proposed by Venerable Dao Lord himself, why would he be afraid?

"I am certain." Ling Xuanzi's voice remained composed and unwavering.

"You won't regret it?" Lin Xun asked again, his tone seemingly doubtful.

Ling Xuanzi couldn't help but chuckle as he pointed at Lin Xun from a distance, "Little Junior Brother, among all the successors of Fangchun Mountain, there has never been a fickle or dishonorable person. And I, Ling Xuanzi, in terms of vision, strength of character, and fearless resolve...I doubt there are many in Fangchun Mountain who can compare to me. Even if Master and Eldest Senior Brother were here, they would not be able to criticize my words."

Back then, when he was only nineteen years old and on the verge of stepping into the Supreme Emperor Stage, he had once said to their master, the Lord of Fangchun Mountain, "From today on, my great dao will surpass yours!"

At that time, who in all of Fangchun Mountain would have dared to utter such words to their Master?

Ling Xuanzi dared!

To dare what others would not was not arrogance, it was absolute confidence in his own foundation!

Although Zhong Qiu was proud and arrogant, could he be compared to Ling Xuanzi back then?

But now, his Little Junior Brother who he had just met was questioning whether he would regret his decision...

Ling Xuanzi found it both laughable and offensive. A deep and contemplative glint appeared in his eyes. "I can tell that in all these years, our Senior and Junior Brothers and Sisters have not said anything good about me."

Lin Xun responded indifferently, "You misunderstood this time. Senior Brothers and Senior Sisters...never even bothered to mention a word about you. If it wasn't for Second Senior Brother bringing it up, I wouldn't have known that my so-called Fourth Senior Brother was actually a traitor."

Ling Xuanxi was taken aback. His head lowered slightly as he fell silent.

When he raised his head again, his expression was calm and relaxed. “Little Junior Brother, your prejudice against me runs deep. But I believe that once you lose this dao duel, you will feel ashamed of what you just said.”

Chapter 2339 Your Defeat Would Have Been Far More Miserable

Lin Xun said calmly, “It’s impossible for me to lose, enough talk and let’s begin.”

Boom!

The aura around him suddenly contracted sharply as he deliberately suppressed his cultivation until he reached the Cyclic Derivation Stage.

Seeing this, Ling Xuanzi, still seated cross-legged in the sky, spoke aloud, “No, since I wish to utterly defeat you through my great dao, we should start from the very foundation—the True Martial Stage.”

Without another word, Lin Xun further restrained his cultivation until he was at the True Martial Stage, his gaze fixed on Ling Xuanzi.

He was genuinely curious as to what a suppressed Ling Xuanzi could possibly use to fight him!

“Junior Brother, in the fight for the great dao, one does not need to mobilize one’s true self. A dharma incarnation will suffice.” As he spoke, Ling Xuanzi rose from his cross-legged position and took a step forward, appearing just ten feet away from Lin Xun.

A faint smile curled his lips. “This is the power of my will and where my cultivation stands. Go ahead and attack. I assure you that this will be the fairest dao duel.”

As his voice faded, the aura around him also diminished, revealing the presence of a cultivator at the True Martial Stage.

At that moment, countless spectators widened their eyes in disbelief.

The True Martial Stage was the entry of cultivation, divided into nine layers, establishing the initial foundation of the great dao.

A nine-story tower must begin with a solid foundation!

Because this stage was considered so rudimentary, cultivators with advanced cultivation rarely paid attention to duels at this level.

If not for who Ling Xuanzi and Lin Xun were, the spectators also likely wouldn't have paid any attention to such a basic dao duel at all.

"Little Junior Brother, please."

Ling Xuanzi appeared relaxed, his voice unhurried. He was only standing casually, yet his aura seemed to merge with the heaven and earth, resonating with all things in the world.

His presence alone exuded a feeling of invincibility.

After a brief glance, Lin Xun threw a punch without hesitation—simple, direct, and even somewhat savage.

If Ling Xuanzi exuded an aura as complete and flawless as the dao itself, then Lin Xun's strike was the exact opposite—an unrestrained force that disregarded the dao entirely, aiming to break all restraints with sheer power.

Ling Xuanzi's eyes gleamed as he raised his arms as if embracing the essence of Tai Chi. His movements were relaxed and transcendent, like a crane dancing amid swirling clouds and mist. It was unadorned, ethereal and seemingly aligned with the flow of the dao itself.

Bang!

Lin Xun's punch was blocked.

The ground beneath them suddenly split with countless tiny cracks as smoke and dust surged into the air.

Lin Xun's attacks shifted, transitioning into broad, sweeping movements. Every punch threatened to shatter the void, sink mountains and collapse the heavens. A buzzing, overwhelming force rippled from his fists.

Ling Xuanzi countered each strike effortlessly, activating various profound techniques in a composed manner.

Within moments, the two had exchanged hundreds of blows. Their movements were not overly dramatic, but the power behind each strike was breathtaking. The spectators' expressions grew more and more solemn, beads of cold sweat forming on their foreheads, and their minds reeled in turmoil.

If they hadn't witnessed it with their own eyes, they would never have believed that that True Martial Stage, the entry point to cultivation, could unleash such heaven-defying power.

No one was stupid. They understood that compared to what they had once wielded when at the True Martial Stage, the difference was as vast as the distance between heaven and earth. There was no comparison at all!

Even many Emperors couldn't help but feel a sense of inferiority.

The True Martial Stage had always been regarded as common and insignificant.

However, in the hands of two successors of Fangchun Mountain, it had been honed to an unprecedented, earth shattering level!

Unbelievable.

“Junior Brother, if Master hadn’t forbidden me from traveling in the world, my mastery of the Supreme True Martial Stage would have been ranked among the top three in history!”

During the battle, Ling Xuanzi spoke calmly, his voice brimming with pride and superiority.

“Then how do you compare to Senior Brother Pu Zhen?” Lin Xun asked.

Ling Xuanzi narrowed his eyes and replied indifferently, “Junior Brother Pu Zhen was a late bloomer. It took him a hundred years to ascend the True Martial Stage. When I stepped into the Supreme True Martial Stage, I was only seven years old.”

“Then you are inferior to Senior Brother Pu Zhen.” As Lin Xun spoke, a sharp light flashed in his dark eyes. Bending his arm, he extended his hand, his five fingers stretching outward like a sky-encompassing prison before pressing down with immense force.

Boom!

The space within ten feet was instantly sealed and suppressed.

Ling Xuanzi’s pupils contracted as he flipped his hand and struck. Though he managed to block the attack, the force sent him stumbling back several steps.

A wave of exclamations rippled through the distant spectators. No one had expected Venerable Dao Lord to show signs of being pushed back!

At this moment, Lin Xun uttered calmly, “And you, are even more inferior to me.”

Back when he was in the reincarnation world of the Nirvana of Transcendence, he had already claimed the title of the strongest in the Supreme True Martial Stage in all of history.

It should be noted that before Lin Xun, the one who had always been ranked at the top was Pu Zhen!

Ling Xuanzi did not dare to claim that he surpassed Pu Zhen, so how could he possibly be a match for Lin Xun?

“Interesting.” Ling Xuanzi steadied his figure and studied Lin Xun intently. “You are indeed worthy of being my little junior brother.”

Boom!

His aura shifted dramatically, surging with the power of the Spirit Dipper Stage. His presence became razor-sharp, like an unsheathed sword, radiating a dazzling intensity. “Come again.”

He pointed forward and a ray of sword qi burst forth, light cascading like rain, vast as the sky, as if to suppress all living beings.

Lin Xun chuckled, “Even at this stage, you still won’t be good enough.”

He stretched his body, unleashing the power of the Spirit Dipper Stage. Without hesitation, he charged forward to meet the attack head-on, his palm and fingers forming into a fist, crushing everything in its path.

The fist light and sword qi clashed, erupting in a blinding explosion that scattered into countless dazzling streaks of light.

“That’s not necessarily true.” Ling Xuanzi’s long hair billowed, his eyes as sharp as swords, his very being as radiant and fierce as a blade.

Despite that, Lin Xun was just as formidable, refusing to yield. He charged forward to meet every attack head-on. One fought like a peerless sovereign who had mastered the ultimate mysteries of swordsmanship, while the other was like an earthshaking overlord, his strikes carrying unstoppable force and crushing everything in his path.

The sight left countless cultivators in stunned silence.

It wasn't that the power of the Spirit Dipper Stage was particularly extraordinary, but instead no one had imagined that someone at the Spirit Dipper Stage could push their cultivation to such a terrifying extreme!

Boom!

Before long, Ling Xuanzi was sent staggering backward by a punch. His robes fluttered, his long hair whipped wildly in the air, and a flicker of astonishment crossed his gaze.

Immediately after that, his composure returned. "Again!"

With a shift of his form, he unleashed the power of the Spirit Sea Stage. He soared skyward, moving gracefully and swiftly, with streaks of terrifying lightning crackling around him.

"So what if you're indignant? If you're not good enough, you're not good enough!" Lin Xun laughed.

He flipped through the air, meeting Ling Xuanzi's attack head-on. The two clashed within the clouds. Lightning flashed, thunder roared, and the wind howled in chaos. A dazzling torrent of primal energy exploded outward with immeasurable force.

The cultivators watching from afar were left speechless.

From the True Martial Stage to the Spirit Dipper Stage and now to the Spirit Sea Stage, both Ling Xuanzi and Lin Xun had demonstrated heaven-defying power, shattering all conventional understanding and overturning everything people thought they knew about these cultivation realms.

However, it was Lin Xun's performance that shocked everyone the most

Ling Xuanzi had long been revered as the supreme Venerable Dao Lord, an existence deeply ingrained in the minds of countless cultivators. Before today, no one had even considered the possibility that Lin Xun could rival him.

Even Meng Lianqing and the others had no confidence in Lin Xun.

Now, at least in the battles of the True Martial and Spirit Dipper Stages, Lin Xun had completely overshadowed Ling Xuanzi!

The reality was so unbelievable that many struggled to accept it.

Boom!

Above the sky, the battle raged on, like a clash between a dragon and a tiger. Their exchanges sent shockwaves through the world, dimming the sky and making the sun and moon lose their brilliance.

“Again!” Before the battle at the Spirit Sea Stage had even concluded, Ling Xuanzi let out a thunderous roar and unleashed the power of the Heaven Ascension Stage.

“All your struggle is meaningless.” Lin Xun remarked indifferently as his cultivation suddenly surged, instantly reaching the Heaven Ascension Stage.

He recalled his breakthrough to this stage back in the Return Dominion.

Now, it was entirely different. After reshaping his dao and refining his path in the reincarnation world of the Nirvana of Transcendence, across time and space, past and the present, he had already become invincible in this realm!

Rumble!

Before long, Ling Xuanzi transformed once more, displaying the power of the Cyclic Derivation Stage. A trace of solemnity was flickering in his eyes.

He went all out. His figure radiated boundless power, and every technique he unleashed was earth shattering, overflowing with divine might.

In this first round of the dao duel, this was his last chance to turn the tide!

However, as the battle raged on and Lin Xun unleashed the full power of the Supreme Cyclic Derivation Stage, Ling Xuanzi felt the pressure on him intensifying!

His heart trembled, but outwardly he remained as composed as a glacier, summoning every offensive technique at his disposal. Each strike carried enough power to easily obliterate any cultivator of the same stage!

Unfortunately, that did not include Lin Xun.

No matter how fierce or powerful Ling Xuanzi's attacks had become, they were all crushed and annihilated by Lin Xun, unable to shake him in the slightest.

If Ling Xuanzi was the ruler of the Cyclic Derivation Stage, then Lin Xun was the sovereign above all rulers.

Many cultivators in the distance, especially those still at the Cyclic Derivation Stage, were left dazzled by the duel, their emotions surging and their bodies quivering.

Even those with a higher level of cultivation could not conceal their astonishment. Some of the older generations even felt a chill run down their spines, realizing that the Cyclic Derivation Stage they had once cultivated was no more than a mere flicker of a flame and not even worth mentioning before the power these two displayed!

Suddenly, a deafening rumble shook the sky as Lin Xun's palm slammed into Ling Xuanzi, nearly knocking him out of midair, leaving him disoriented for a moment.

"Do you still want to continue?"

Lin Xun calmly withdrew his hand. Only his black eyes, sharp as lightning, remained locked onto Ling Xuanzi.

Ling Xuanzi exhaled a long breath of turbid air, and after a brief silence, he smiled as if nothing had happened. "In terms of the lower five cultivation stages, I must admit I am not as good as my Little Junior Brother."

Wow!

In the distance, countless people stirred restlessly, exchanging looks of stunned disbelief. Venerable Dao Lord actually admitted defeat just like that?

Far away in the canyon, A'hu, Toady, and the others, who had been closely watching the duel, finally felt a wave of relief wash over them. Smiles spread across their faces, as if a great weight had been lifted from their hearts.

Lin Xun was still the same Lin Xun—he never disappointed!

"He...he actually defeated Venerable Dao Lord at the lower five cultivation stages..." Meng Lianqing murmured, dazed. It was like a heavy blow had struck her.

As for those young talents who had always gathered around her, they all felt a bitter taste in their mouth and wailed inwardly, realizing that they had actually offended such a terrifying figure before. They must have been out of their minds!

"You are rather self-aware. Otherwise, your defeat would have been far more miserable," Lin Xun remarked indifferently.

His words were sharp and unapologetic. He had no intention of showing Ling Xuanzi any courtesy from the very beginning.

Ling Xuanzi let out a sigh, "Little Junior Brother, your words are really unpleasant to hear... But since you've won, according to our agreement, I will answer one of your questions." He raised his eyes to look at Lin Xun, calm and composed as before. "Go ahead."

Chapter 2340 A Stable Victory

Ling Xuanzi seemed unfazed by his defeat.

Despite that, when he looked at Lin Xun again, a new seriousness flickered in his eyes.

It was as if from this moment on, he finally saw this 'little junior brother' as a worthy opponent.

Before, he spoke with a relaxed smile, but his attitude carried an air of aloof superiority, as though he regarded everything beneath him.

Now, this attitude had subtly changed.

"Did you leak Second Senior Brother's inheritance to Heavenly Emperor Shi?" This was the answer that Lin Xun wanted to know the most.

"As I thought." Ling Xuanxi chuckled softly, his expression untroubled, and he answered directly. "That's correct, I used Second Senior Brother's inheritance to exchange for a chance to free myself. It was a good deal."

Lin Xun's gaze turned chillingly sharp. "You committed an act of betrayal, yet you speak of it as if it were nothing. Shameless! Do you realize that your actions could have cost Second Senior Brother his life?"

"You're mistaken." Ling Xuanzi remained indifferent. "What I did was kill two birds with one stone.

"First, it allowed me to escape.

"Second, I know Second Senior Brother's cultivation and foundation far better than you. Even if an old bastard like Luo Yunshi obtained his inheritance, he would never be a match for him.

"And third, if Second Senior Brother defeated Luo Yunshi, he would only feel grateful to me rather than resentful." His voice was calm and measured, as if everything had been accounted for.

“Little Junior Brother, the fact that you were able to come to Return Dominion proves that Second Senior Brother has already suppressed Luo Yunshi. Otherwise, you wouldn’t be here confronting me, unconcerned about his safety.

“Of course, he hasn’t killed Luo Yunshi yet. I expected him to hate me... But one day, his perspective will definitely change.”

Lin Xun couldn’t help but scoff, “So, what you’re saying is you did it for Second Senior Brother’s sake?” There was a cold, mocking edge in his tone.

Ling Xuanzi simply nodded. “I may hold resentment from my years of suppression, but from the beginning to the end, I have never once thought of harming our sect.”

“Does betraying Second Senior Brother’s inheritance not count as harming him?” Lin Xun’s voice grew even icier.

Ling Xuanzi countered, “Then do you know who seriously injured Luo Yunshi?”

Without waiting for Lin Xun’s answer, he continued, “Of course it was me. I have been the only one in Fangchun Ruins for countless years. If not me, who else could have stopped that old thing Luo Yunshi from destroying our Fangchun Mountain?”

A faint, unreadable smile tugged at his lips. “If I hadn’t crippled that old thing first, would Second Senior Brother have been able to suppress him so smoothly?”

Hearing that, Lin Xun said expressionlessly, “No matter how you justify it, it does not change the fact that you leaked Second Senior Brother’s inheritance.”

Ling Xuanzi froze for a moment, and there was a flicker of disappointment and frustration in his eyes. “Little Junior Brother, I stepped into the Saint Stage at the age of nine and became an Emperor at nineteen. Had I not been suppressed, with my foundation, I would have surpassed all Emperor Ancestors across the heavens in less than a hundred years. Even striving for immortal powers would not have been beyond my reach...”

His voice carried a deep melancholy. His talent was undeniable—an anomaly rarely seen in tens of thousands of years.

Unfortunately, from the moment he ascended to the Emperor Stage, he had been sealed away for countless years. No one could truly grasp what that meant for a heaven-defying monster like him who could not be measured by worldly standards.

“Forget it, let’s not dwell on this. Shall we continue?”

Ling Xuanzi looked at Lin Xun as the aura around him surged, transforming to that of a Longevity Tribulation King.

“For a dao duel, you’ve set so many rules. It seems to me, deep down, even you aren’t certain you can win,” Lin Xun said indifferently. “If you really insist on doing this, then I’ll show you what utter defeat means!”

Boom!

His aura erupted, his dark eyes turned razor-sharp, his long hair billowed wildly, and an unparalleled radiance surrounded him.

“Utter defeat...” Ling Xuanzi savored the words, his eyes flashing with a sharp light. “I just worry that you, my little junior brother, won’t be able to.”

He charged forward, his aura skyrocketing. With a single strike of his hand, thunderclouds churned and a catastrophic storm crashed down from the sky, drowning the world in destruction.

Lin Xun responded with a flick of his sleeve. A torrent of sword qi burst forth, swirling around him as he advanced to meet the attack.

Rumble!

The battle erupted once more. The world quaked, and divine radiance roared.

Sometimes, they clashed beyond the nine heavens, their blows tearing through the clouds. Sometimes, they battled across the land, shaking mountains and rivers. Every exchange radiated power that defied the natural order.

Most of the spectators in the distance could no longer keep up, their minds overwhelmed by the intensity of the battle. The intricate mysteries of the fight were beyond their comprehension.

Only cultivators at the Longevity Tribulation Stage and above felt their hearts tremble, their bodies shaken again and again.

In an instant, it was as if a battle between supreme kings was unfolding before Fangchun Ruins, unveiling the profound mysteries of all nine levels of the Longevity Tribulation Stage to their fullest.

Even Lin Xun had to admit that his fourth senior brother was extraordinary. His state of mind, willpower, cultivation, techniques, strength, aura...were beyond measure, defying the heavens.

Unfortunately, it was still not enough.

Boom!

Minutes later, as Lin Xun unleashed his full strength in a deadly strike, Ling Xuanzi was directly blasted backward. The surrounding void collapsed, scattering chaotic currents in every direction.

"How is that possible?"

"In the second round of the dao duel... Venerable Dao Lord lost again?"

"This can't be happening..."

Clamor erupted in the distance. Shock and disbelief crossed everyone's faces. At this moment, Ling Xuanzi's unshakable image in their hearts began to waver.

Meng Lianqing, Yan Juan and the others were also speechless. Everything they had just witnessed crashed down on them like a landslide, a tsunami, completely shattering their understanding of the world.

Venerable Dao Lord had lost twice in a row.

Who would have imagined such an outcome?!

"Good!"

On the battlefield, Ling Xuanzi suddenly let out a soft exclamation of admiration. There was no trace of frustration, bitterness, or anger on his face. Instead, he seemed even more composed and serene.

"You've already lost two out of the five rounds. If you lose again, this duel will be over for you." Lin Xun was just as composed, his expression devoid of any joy or sorrow.

Ling Xuanzi chuckled, "For cultivators like us, the hardest thing is finding a truly worthy opponent. My little junior brother...you did not disappoint me."

Lin Xun frowned. "You talk too much nonsense. Let me ask you, why did you take advantage of Master's absence to challenge the other senior brothers and sisters to dao duels, forcing them to acknowledge you as their leader?"

Ling Xuanzi shook his head. "I only want them to recognize my dao, to make them understand that within Fangchun Mountain, besides Master, my dao also deserves respect. It was never about making them my subordinates as you claim."

"You are absurdly arrogant," Lin Xun stated coldly.

Ling Xuanzi smiled. "That's because I have the strength to back it up. My dao is destined to soar above the heavens."

Lin Xun had no patience for further debates. "Then let me tell you this, as long as I, Lin Xun, am here, your dao will have no chance of soaring above the heavens!"

Boom!

His aura surged once again, revealing the power of the Saint Stage. "Let's begin."

Ling Xuanzi's smile deepened as his aura also rose to the Saint Stage. "When I was nine years old, I stepped into the Saint Stage and made a noble aspiration: One day, all living beings in the world will look upon me as they look upon the heavens. I am very curious, Little Junior Brother, what was yours?"

As he spoke, he made a grasping motion, and the power of the vast cosmos seemed to gather in his palm, condensing into a dao sword.

Buzz!

The dao sword roared, carrying the might of heaven and earth and encompassing the power of all directions!

At that moment, Ling Xuanzi seemed to have become the ruler of the cosmos itself.

"Do you really want to know?" said Lin Xun.

"Of course." Ling Xuanzi's tone was indifferent.

"Better than yours."

Ling Xuanzi was taken aback at first before bursting into laughter. "Only a child would respond like that in a quarrel!"

In response, Lin Xun launched a decisive attack.

Boom!

His figure drifted through the cosmic void, radiating divine brilliance as dao sound roared around him. His aura was vast and unfathomable, like an abyss, like a prison. With a flick of his sleeve, a sea of dao light swept forth, shrouding the sun and the sky.

"You're so impatient..." Ling Xuanzi shook his head with a smile. With a single stride forward, he seemed to step upon the celestial dipper stars, and he swung his sword in a deadly strike.

From the very start, both had relied solely on their own cultivation and dao, manifesting their mastery of the great dao through battle.

In an instant, it was as if two ancient sages had descended for a duel. Dao sound rose like crashing tides, dao light spread in dazzling waves, and boundless incredible visions unfolded across heaven and earth.

Saints watching from afar were struck with admiration, but also a sense of inferiority.

Quasi-Emperors trembled repeatedly. As they compared their past mastery at the Saint Stage, a deep sense of shame washed over them.

Even Emperors felt a chill creep down their spines and broke out in cold sweat.

The higher one's cultivation, the clearer their flaws were to them. The imperfections in their past dao path now loomed like insurmountable barriers in the future.

It was at this time that they realized that their dao, though not terrible, was also not the best either.

As for cultivators below the Saint Stage, they had long since lost the ability to comprehend the depth of the battle before them.

True Saint Stage.

Big Saint Stage.

Saint-King Stage.

The battle only grew fiercer, more intense. The dao techniques and divine power unleashed had surpassed everyone's imagination.

Not to mention the distant spectators, even mighty figures of the Ancient Nebula Road would have been shaken!

In the end, in this third round, Ling Xuanzi lost once more.

With the full force of his Saint cultivation, Lin Xun suppressed him in one move, slamming him to the ground. The earth cracked apart, dust and debris exploded into the air, and Ling Xuanzi was left in an utterly wretched state.

The entire battlefield fell into a deathly silence.

Countless onlookers were frozen in disbelief, their eyes wide with shock, as if they couldn't comprehend Venerable Dao Lord, the supreme existence in their hearts, had suffered yet another crushing defeat!

Amidst the heavy silence, Ling Xuanzi slowly got to his feet. He dusted off his robes with an air of nonchalance, then looked at Lin Xun for a long moment. Suddenly, he broke into a grin. "You truly are a lotus unseen in eternity. No wonder Master was willing to wait eternity for you. Little Junior Brother, what would you like to ask this time?"

His tone was calm and unhurried, devoid of anger, frustration, or bitterness. It was as if suffering three consecutive losses had done nothing to shake his composure.

That kind of unshakable state of mind alone was already terrifying beyond words!

“You have already lost completely.”

Lin Xun’s dark eyes were clear as he said calmly, “According to the rules you set, from this moment onward, your fate is in my hands!”